

The Luna Light



*“The People’s College”
Becoming The Premier Rural Community College in America*

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We are turning the corner

By Dr. Pete Campos/President

The work put into making Luna Community College a premier teaching and learning institution is significant. We have reviewed student needs and interests; curriculum relevance and rigor; program offerings and purpose; infrastructure placement and condition; building and equipment needs; recruitment and commitment to student retention, job placement and career development; and, professor input, guidance and instruction for lifetime student success.

Great strides have been made to ensure that degree and certificate programs are well structured; classes are rigorous and prepare students well; staff sign up for a class because they want or need it for their own personal growth, not because it is a mandate; individualized financial aid, work study and tuition payment plans are being developed so students can afford to attend LCC; our human resources department has strengthened our hiring practices and employment processes so highly qualified employees will serve the needs of students; and, all-around best practices to build a good reputation and provide a top-notch educational institution are regularly being considered and adopted.

We take our work very seriously: personnel from every department have reviewed their goals, objectives and obligations and are routinely making progressive adjustments that best serve staff and students; degreed and experienced

personnel are being employed according to need, contrary to some just wanting people hired from a specific locale; and, necessary changes are being made in policy and curriculum to prepare students for their careers.

Convincing students to stay at home and seek an education is becoming more difficult because of the many attractions and opportunities they have in larger communities. For example: there are new and good paying jobs, educational opportunities, affordable housing, shopping centers, health care and a night life in places like Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. This is the scenario with which we are competing.

Here is what we have to offer! Established and new degreed and certificate programs that meet student interests and job preparation; students can live at home and enjoy home cooked meals; a friendly and safe region; friends and family to support our student population; and, outdoor recreation, clean air and a beautiful environment. Overall, we have the environment where students can learn, do their homework and build an educational foundation second-to-none that will prepare them to live and work wherever they choose.

We will continue with the highest level of due diligence, commitment, passion and zest to make Luna Community College the most attractive college possible for students. After all, students are our reason for being here!



Elaine Luna, who was in charge of day-to-day operations while President Dr. Pete Campos was at the State Capitol, told the LCC Board of Trustees recently that the “college is constantly moving forward.”

Luna CC: Taking the initiative

By Mary Ward/Vice-President of Student Services

Recruitment and retention of students is a growing concern for leaders of colleges and universities across the United States. More often than not, colleges and universities are perceived as non-intrusive institutions. In this view, institutions make available courses, programs, and services; it would behoove students to take full advantage of these educational opportunities. The college remains essentially non-

intrusive or passive. This passivity is based on the prime expectation that many institutions have students and that they will value their experience and will voluntarily become involved with and connect to the environment on their own.

For some students, this philosophy will hold true. Such students do take advantage time and time again of the opportunities and resources awaiting them in the classroom

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ACCESS Center retention initiatives

By Veronica Serna/ACCESS Center Director

ACCESS Center—"Advisement, Counseling, Career Placement, and Educational Support Services", provides a collaborative venture among students, ACCESS Center staff and the academic disciplines. Since the college admits students with varying degrees of educational preparation, accurate and coordinated academic advisement is crucial to student progress and institutional planning.

Accordingly, new students, transfer students, pre-nursing, alumni, and students who have not declared a program of study are advised through the ACCESS Center. Returning students who have declared a program of study or who intend on pursuing a particular certificate or degree program are advised through the appropriate academic discipline.

Counseling and guidance services are available to all students; these services are complemented with a community listing of local resources that contain crisis intervention services as well as referral services.

These services will provide assistance for common issues that pose problems for college students. These services are confidential. Additional information may be obtained at the ACCESS Center from one of the advisors or counselor.

Early Alert is an intervention process in an effort to improve retention whereby students who are performing below average and/or have excessive class absences are referred by their instructors to the ACCESS Center for follow-up. This process takes place at 4-, 8-, and 12-week intervals. At 8-weeks, midterm grades of "U"s, "D" s or "F" s are used to determine who should be placed on 8-week Early Alert. Letters are sent out to students and then followed up with phone calls

from ACCESS Center staff. If the student is experiencing a situation or issue that may be affecting successful completion, it will be up to the student to identify the situation at which time ACCESS Center staff may be able to intervene in assisting the student. In the event that all efforts fail, it is at that point that a student is advised of the final opportunity to withdraw in order to avoid receiving a failing grade; however, the student will not receive credit for any portion of this class which may also have long term implications on future financial aid awards.

Students are also encouraged to take advantage of tutoring services available at the ACCESS Center, LRC, and the Allied Health Department. If a particular subject of tutoring is not available, students are encouraged to mention this to ACCESS Center staff so that we may make an effort to provide tutoring in this area. Tutoring services are available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Fridays and summer session.

Student Activities are also coordinated through the ACCESS Center in an effort to improve campus life and retention. Activities are geared towards encouraging student participation and involvement. All activities are educational, whether cultural, academic, and/or social. Many activities are coordinated to promote students skills or accomplishments. Below are a few of the scheduled events for the remainder of the year: April 21, 2009—Hair Show; May, 2009—End of Semester BBQ; June 13, 2009—Car Show; Resume Development Workshop—TBA; Interview Techniques—TBA and May through June 2009—Summer Online Orientation

Recruitment initiatives and efforts: it has become a science

By Tom Herrera/Senior Recruiter

In competing for modern day high school graduates and other potential students, colleges and universities find the need to become ever-so-creative, if not scientific, in marketing their educational products and services to the general public. It is no different at Luna Community College as recruitment initiatives means an interpretation of statistics and technology-infused media indicate where LCC's student populations are at.

"Collectively, we listen to and share information about student trends," say Moses Marquez, LCC Interim Director of Recruitment. "We are members of several statewide organizations that set specific initiatives for recruitment and outreach. It's important that we (LCC) do our part in these initiatives."

The initiatives come from such notables as Governor Bill Richardson, and Dr. Reed Dasenbrock, N.M. Secretary of Higher Ed.



Tom Herrera giving a speech to high school students

They want increased college access and increased completion rates for young people of New Mexico. They say we need to catch up to the rest of the country who is busy catching up to the rest of the civilized world. Initiatives have given fuel to such existing programs like Advanced Placement, on-line courses and dual credit courses, where more high school students can now take part in the college experience earlier. Summer Tech Prep and the Pecos High School Initiative are examples of other LCC programs aimed at getting students to college.

The College Success Network (CSN) has become one key initiative that colleges such as LCC rely on for enhanced recruitment and outreach efforts. CSN is at the hub of workshops and trainings for college personnel; over 65 educational and program organizations in New Mexico meet regularly throughout the year to coordinate college-related efforts. The

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LCC: Taking the initiative

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and throughout the rest of campus. There are many students, however, who never fully sample—much less take advantage of the college offerings where they are enrolled. Do institutions have some obligations in these situations? Do institutions share some of the responsibility for the level of a student's involvement thus resulting in successful or unsuccessful completions?

Research has shown that the most successful colleges and universities are those that see themselves as active participants in the student's intellectual, social and personal growth. These institutions do not sit by and wait for students to take on all of the responsibility alone. On the contrary, they take steps to ensure that the students do become involved with college resources.

Luna Community College acknowledges this research and is taking an active role in ensuring student involvement and success. The primary goal is to move students to high levels of involvement with staff, faculty, tutors, clubs, organizations, and peers. Luna Community College staff are committed to take certain risks to ensure student success among today's student population. When we don't help those who are in need of support systems, they tend to fall through the cracks and are left by the side of the educational highway. Following examples are becoming commonplace:

- Instructors do not let multiple absences go unnoticed. Through efforts of Early Alerts which are facilitated through the ACCESS Center, there are telephone calls or scheduled meetings to discuss any issues or difficulties that the student may be experiencing.
- Students who may be earning below average grades are contacted via a phone call or letter to inquire about issues being

experienced. Support systems are put into place in order to assist students raise their grades and avoid failing courses.

- Staff will do everything possible to make reasonable accommodations for students who learn differently from the “traditional setting.”
- Advisors will meet with students who may need assistance with tutoring, course advisement, assistance in connecting with community resources in order to resolve issues becoming barriers in their success.
- More events and activities are being scheduled in an effort to create an environment that is conducive to student involvement.
- Processes are constantly refined in order to better serve students qualifying for financial assistance, Dual Credit/ Concurrent Enrollment, work study, tutoring services, transfers to four-year institutions, and career placements.

All of these examples show individual faculty members, advisors, or staff members responding to intervention in a fairly non-intrusive manner. Institutional support for these initiatives encourage these goals to be met—then ensures that the desired environment is sustained. Luna Community College is committed to creating an environment where students find themselves in a supportive and enriching environment in order to satisfy students with their educational experiences and successes. We strive to provide students with the right proportion of independence and support in order to encourage students take the risks they are able to handle at any given time, while simultaneously helping them build their capacity for taking ever-greater risks and responsibilities for their own learning.



Luna Community College Board member Donald Shaw (middle) was honored for his eight years of service on the board. Also honored was Kenneth Flores (not pictured) who served eight years on the LCC Board. Shaw represented the Springer area, while Flores represented the Santa Rosa area. Pictured (l-r) Tony Valdez, board vice-chairman; Levi Alcon Jr.; Jerry Maestas, board secretary; Shaw; Ambrose Castellano, board chairman; Abelino Montoya, LCC President Dr. Pete Campos and Maria Paiz, executive office manager for the president.

A few thoughts from an old coach

By Henry Sanchez/Humanities Faculty Member

In looking at the Luna Community College softball team coached by Dawnette Garcia and the baseball team coached by Peter Ortiz we can relate to many successes with the foundation for a winning programs being set in place.

Success in athletics can be defined as doing the best with what you have and learning the lessons of life. Winning is having the most points or runs at the end of the game. Successes and lessons are learned daily in athletics, since it is one of the best experiences to prepare students for life. As we all know, life is made up of the good, bad and ugly times we all live daily.

The Luna Community College coaches and players knowing that there is always a price to pay for success worked and prepared hard in the preseason for their demanding schedule. They have worked as a team learning lessons of sacrifices, hard work and being a part of a group with common purposes and goals.

The foundation for future successes is being built one day at a time. We must recognize the dedication and hard work that these athletes

have dedicated to represent our school. Without making excuses our softball team is in its first year and has played the majority of their games on the road. The baseball team has also played the majority of its games out of Las Vegas.

The old adage "it's tough on the road," has always been a constant fact. The home field advantage is improved with the opponents having to travel, sleeping in a strange bed, change of diets and schedules, a hostile crowd, two strange umpires and a home team that is rested and waiting to play you. The home team, meanwhile, has its loyal emotional and loving fans that help to influence the outcomes of games.

It is important that after spring break we come out and support our teams that represent our school, our community and you the student body, faculty and staff.

Notes: Henry Sanchez is faculty member in the humanities department and is a former National High School Basketball Coach of Year. He has given dozens of motivational speeches in New Mexico and across the country.

Recruitment initiatives and efforts...

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exchange of information, the updating of information means a recruiter is better informed to relay the all important message to the student—to go to college. When a student challenges the message by asking why, you have all the ammunition to answer.

Other initiatives through CSN have recruiters reaching out to younger students (mid school) and relaying the same message. The

presentation is now that of a highly-skilled recruiter with the same message, different, effective approach. Some initiatives are specifically aimed at science and math outreach, technology outreach or vocational outreach. Staying abreast means enhanced training, self-motivation and the Internet. We've learned by now many students are confined to the Internet for research, and also information! CSN has developed some snappy and navigable

websites for students to find all kinds of information on college possibilities and opportunities. Links on these websites also provide stats and viable information to college personnel.

The traditional recruitment ideas are still effective as long as the passion is there as well. Passion also allows the college spokesman to be creative and to recognize the logic behind an aggressive approach to recruiting and outreach. It is a science.

Blast from the past

Can you guess which LCC employee's baby picture this is? The first person to give the right answer will get a free meal from the LCC Rough Rider Grill. You may enter the contest by e-mailing your answer to jgallegos@luna.edu or calling extension 1200. LCC employees are encouraged to turn in a baby photo of themselves to Jesse Gallegos at the LCC Student Services Building.

**Last week's winners: Cindy Branch and Linda Salazar
Last week's picture: Eudelia Tarr**



Quote of the Week

"Forgiveness is the economy of the heart... forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred, the waste of spirits,"—*Hannah More*

Luna Light available

If you wish to be put on The Luna Light electronic mailing list please contact Jesse Gallegos at jgallegos@luna.edu or you may visit the LCC Website at www.luna.edu to view any of the newsletters.

LCC Half Hour Radio Show

Anyone interested in being a guest on the Luna Community College Half Hour Radio Show please contact Jesse Gallegos at 454-2510 or e-mail him at jgallegos@luna.edu. The show is aired at 1 p.m. every Thursday on KNMX, 540 on the AM radio dial.