

# The Luna Light



*"Creating Opportunities for You!"*

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## HLC site visit March 25-27

With its accreditation at stake, Luna Community College is preparing for a crucial visit by a peer review team representing the Higher Learning Commission this coming week, March 25-27.

There has been a whirlwind of activity in recent months for many across campus in anticipation of the visit. Teams of faculty, staff and administrators have collaborated to draft the college's assurance argument, documenting the ways in which Luna is working toward five major criteria areas deemed essential to accreditation. The assurance argument was submitted to the HLC in February. Meanwhile, a series of forums – each detailing the college's work to

meet standards in each criterion area – was held on campus.

The HLC site visit team now will meet with various groups of students, faculty, staff, administrators and members of the LCC Board of Trustees over a full two-day schedule, asking questions and gathering more information. At the conclusion of its visit, the team will make a recommendation to the HLC as to Luna's accreditation status. The HLC Board of Trustees is scheduled to make a determination by November as to whether Luna is in compliance with its accreditation criteria.

**Continued on Page 2**



**Luna Humanities Director Dr. Anita Roybal and developmental coordinator Nathan V. Baker present honorary certificates of completion to Luna students and journal contributors Dillian Lucero, Dominique Maes, Briana Sanchez, and Faith Flores at the reading and journal launch of "Puente Juntos," a Luna literary magazine of student poetry and prose on March 18. Also presenting was Luna instructor and co-editor of "Puente Juntos," Justine Crespin.**

# HLC visit...

## Continued from Page 1

Luna has been continuously accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1982. Luna was issued a show-cause order on Nov. 8, 2017. The order cited issues of non-compliance with HLC criteria and required action by the college to assure continued accreditation.

A collaborative effort ensued to correct the issues cited in the show-cause order. On July 9, 2018, the HLC removed the show-cause order and placed Luna on probation.

Since then, the college has worked to remedy the issues that led to the HLC's sanctions. Furthermore, the college has solicited public comment, to be made directly to the HLC via its website or to the president's office.

More information on Luna Community College's current accreditation status can be found at



**Luna Vice President of Instruction Dr. Sharon Lalla leads a student forum recently in preparation for next week's Higher Learning Commission visit. The student forum was one of four that took place. Other forums included information on Criteria 1 through 5.**

[hlcommission.org](http://hlcommission.org). The HLC is an entity that accredits colleges and universities in 19 states across the country.



**Luna's Dominique Maes, Briana Sanchez and Dillian Lucero read their poetry during the journal launch of Puente Juntos.**

# Luna students, LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD.

STUDENT-ONLY MEETING WITH HLC

12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Monday, March 25

Allied Health Auditorium

FREE LUNCH PROVIDED.

All students are encouraged to attend and meet with the Higher Learning Commission's site visit team.

The team's visit will be critical in determining the future accreditation of Luna Community College. Your attendance and input are highly valued.



#LCCmatters

The college's accreditation status was upgraded from a previous show-cause order to probation in July 2018. The Higher Learning Commission is expected to make a decision on the college's accreditation by November 2019. For more information about the college's current status, you may visit the [hlcommission.org](http://hlcommission.org) website.

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**The next staff advisory senate meeting is at 10 a.m. on April 4 in the Student Services Center Boardroom. The meeting is open to all that would like to attend. The agenda will be made available on the Luna website, under the Shared Governance tab, then by selecting Staff Advisory Senate.**



## Luna Community College Las Vegas, NM

### Board of Trustees District 5 Vacancy

Luna Community College is seeking individuals interested in filling the vacancy for the Board of Trustees in District 5 (San Miguel County, Las Vegas area). To be considered for the Board of Trustees, an individual must be a qualified elector and a resident of that community college district.

For further details regarding district maps, visit [www.luna.edu](http://www.luna.edu).

**Individuals must submit a letter of interest and resume to:**

**Luna Community College  
Office of the President  
366 Luna Drive  
Las Vegas, NM 87701**

Packets may also be hand-delivered to the Office of the President.  
Letters of interest must be received by Wednesday, April 3, 2019.

The Board of Trustees holds the authority to fill the vacancy in District 5.  
Trustees are expected to review applicant packets at their April meeting and interview finalists shortly thereafter.

The individual who is selected shall serve until the next community college board election.

Luna's current Higher Learning Commission Accreditation is probation.  
For more information about the college's current status, you may visit the [hlcommission.org](http://hlcommission.org) website.

# Luna board to fill two vacancies

Luna Community College is looking for two new trustees for its seven-member governing board.

Specifically, the college needs to fill vacancies in District 5 and District 6 due to the recent resignations of trustees Abelino Montoya Jr. and David Gutierrez, respectively. District 5 is the Las Vegas City Schools district.

District 6 includes the Springer, Maxwell and Wagon Mound areas. It includes parts of Colfax, Mora and San Miguel counties, extending as far south as rural areas just south of Las Vegas on the east side of Interstate 25.

For more information on district boundaries or the trustee positions, those interested may visit [www.luna.edu](http://www.luna.edu). Under the top menu link "About," select "Board of Trustees Information."

To be considered for the LCC Board of Trustees, an individual must be a qualified elector and a resident of the district they intend to represent. Deadline to submit application materials – which should include a letter of interest and resume – is Wednesday, April 3. Application packets may be mailed to Luna Community College, Office of the President, 366 Luna Drive, Las Vegas, NM, 87701, or hand-delivered to the president's office on campus.

The board, which has the authority to fill the vacancies, will begin review of applications at its April meeting and conduct interviews shortly thereafter.



## Luna Community College Las Vegas, NM

### Board of Trustees District 6 Vacancy

Luna Community College is seeking individuals interested in filling the vacancy for the Board of Trustees in District 6 (includes parts of Colfax, Mora and San Miguel counties, Springer, Maxwell and Wagon Mound areas). To be considered for the Board of Trustees, an individual must be a qualified elector and a resident of that community college district.

For further details regarding district maps, visit [www.luna.edu](http://www.luna.edu).

**Individuals must submit a letter of interest and resume to:**

**Luna Community College  
Office of the President  
366 Luna Drive  
Las Vegas, NM 87701**

Packets may also be hand-delivered to the Office of the President.  
Letters of interest must be received by Wednesday, April 3, 2019.

The Board of Trustees holds the authority to fill the vacancy in District 6.  
Trustees are expected to review applicant packets at their April meeting and interview finalists shortly thereafter.

The individual selected shall serve until the next community college board election, at which time candidates shall file for and be elected to fill the vacant position to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

Luna's current Higher Learning Commission Accreditation is probation.  
For more information about the college's current status, you may visit the [hlcommission.org](http://hlcommission.org) website.



**Luna Community College nursing students Emma Peoble and Maria Ouska Merritt receive the Alta Vista Auxiliary Scholarship from Janet Reminik. The scholarship is awarded each year in the spring to Level 2 students who have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher and have demonstrated commitment to the field of nursing. The Alta Vista Auxiliary has provided this scholarship to nursing students since 2001.**



**Rough Rider baseball players and coaches brave chilly conditions for a recent home game.**



**Pecos High School seniors and Luna Community College dual-credit students DeAnza Dimas, Faith Flores and Mikayla Gonzales were members of the girls' basketball team that won a Class 2A state basketball championship.**



**Laura Salazar, Melissa Cordova, Nash Segura and Jessica McGee talk shop during the recent Las Vegas-San Miguel –Mora-Pecos Night at the Legislature.**

# Rael selected as Luna president



**Dr. Rolando Rael**

The Luna Board of Trustees recently selected and approved Dr. Rolando Rael as the next president of Luna Community College.

## Familiarity with students, region hailed as strengths

“I’m humbled and honored,” said Rael. “I’ve always considered San Miguel County and northeastern New Mexico my home. My hope is to work with the Luna community and the communities we serve to continue moving in a positive and meaningful direction.”

Rael is currently the director of Luna Community College’s Allied Health Sciences department, a position he’s held since 2016. Rael has served as a professor and administrator at other institutions of higher education in New Mexico and Colorado. Rael earned a doctorate degree from University of California-

Riverside.

“I looked closely at all the candidates who were in the selection committee pool of applicants,” said Luna Trustee Mark Dominguez. “All were considered. I based my selection on the search committee’s work and criteria. I considered all, but felt that my selection best fits our area needs, understands our educational system, our student needs, our region’s culture and our economic situation. I also considered the candidate’s knowledge and experience with the Higher Learning Commission which is very important to LCC at this time. Our best interest is our students at LCC. I feel that Dr. Rael best suits LCC’s needs at this time.”

Rael accepted the contract, which is for 15 months at \$130,000 annually. Rael began his new job on Monday, March 11.

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## Luna rallies with eight-run sixth, snaps streak

Down but not out, the Luna Community College Rough Riders rallied back from a 7-0 chasm to seize a 10-7 comeback victory over visiting Trinidad State Junior College on Tuesday, March 19, at Brandt Park.

Luna ended what had been a 19-game losing skid, picking up its fourth win of the season.

The Trojans scored three runs in the first inning and four in the second. Luna cut the lead to 7-2 in the bottom of the second, and strong defense by both sides kept that score intact until the bottom of the sixth.

That’s when the Rough Riders surged for an eight-run inning to steal control.

Adrian Munoz doubled twice as part of a 3-for-4 outing for LCC (4-23). He drove in two runs, as did teammates Spencer Heyden and Patrick McGee. A.J. Knowles and Dustin Sipe also drove in runs for the Rough Riders.

Sipe, Sam Creed and Nick Rodriguez were credited with double plays for Luna, helping relief pitcher Tyler Wilkinson (1-0) pick up the win. Wilkinson went five

innings, limiting the Trojans to no runs on three hits and one walk, striking out two. Luna’s Dylan Begay threw two innings of shutout relief, and he and starter Keaton Christy also recorded two strikeouts apiece.

Tuesday’s game was a makeup game after the team’s original date with TSJC on Feb. 25 was cancelled due to weather. It gave the teams a split of their season series; TSJC won a 7-6 nailbiter back on Feb. 20 in Trinidad, Colo.

Trinidad State saw its three-game win streak end, slipping to 13-12 overall.

Luna is scheduled to resume conference play at El Paso Community College for a four-game series Friday and Saturday in El Paso, Texas.

A Luna softball doubleheader at Otero Junior College, originally scheduled for March 14 in La Junta, Colo., was cancelled.

The Rough Rider women (6-11) are scheduled to play four games at Western Texas this Friday and Saturday in Snyder, Texas.

# Luna dental assistant students showcase their work



**Pictured from left: Destiny Lujan, Terrilee Vasquez, Gloria Wiggins, Dawna Ortega-Gallegos, Candace Maestas, Destiny DeHerrera, Gloria Pacheco and Mariano Gallegos get ready to share a special cake in honor of Dental Assistant Recognition Week. Lujan, Vasquez, DeHerrera and Gallegos are current Luna dental assistant students. Pacheco is the program administrator. Ortega-Gallegos is a faculty member. Wiggins and Maestas are both program alumni and members of the LCC Dental Assisting Advisory Board.**

As part of Dental Assistants Recognition Week, four Luna Community College students in the dental assistant program demonstrated clinical techniques and procedures they've learned during a special event on Friday, March 8, on campus.

Three of the students – Mariano Gallegos, Destiny Lujan and Terrilee Vasquez – showed guests video presentations of their work. A fourth, Destiny DeHerrera, made her presentation live.

The presentations highlighted a meeting of the LCC Dental Assisting

Advisory Committee, which elected Gloria Wiggins into another year as chairman. Wiggins is an alumnus of the Luna dental assisting program (Class of 1985) and is a veteran of the dental health field.

Among the other noted guests Friday were committee members Candace Maestas, another program alumnus (Class of 2008) and Lorraine Roybal, a Luna alumnus who said her history with the college dates back 50 years. New LCC President Dr. Rolando Rael, who has been the director of Luna's Allied Health Sciences department, was

also on hand, joining program administrator Gloria Pacheco and faculty member Dawna Ortega-Gallegos.

March 3-9 was designated Dental Assistant Recognition Week by the American Dental Assistants Association, with its theme "Today's Dental Assistants: Polished Poised and Professional" acknowledging "the growing importance of dentistry's role in health care and the responsibilities of dental assistants," according to a news release from the ADA.

The need for dental assistants is projected to increase at a rate of 19.5 percent between 2016 and 2026, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Pacheco points out that a career in dental assisting can lead to other avenues in the dental health field.

For more information on the Luna dental assistant program, you may call Pacheco at 454-2528 or visit the campus or luna.edu.



# Luna pre-school hosts science and math extravaganza



Luna Early Childhood Education students and parents of the pre-schoolers assist with the Science and Math Extravaganza. It is part of a Dia de Familia activity Luna has every month.

