This document contains the press clippings for the 1st Quarter of 2013 (Jan. – Mar.), gathered by the Department of Public Information, Communications & Media, so that you can stay informed about the contributions the Peralta Colleges make to the community and the interest this generates in the press.

Enjoy reading about the newsworthy events that took place at the colleges and within the District during the past three months, and please share this report with colleagues so that everyone can benefit from this information.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or comments.
Solano women fall short against Laney

DAILY REPUBLIC STAFF

OAKLAND — After fouling five times in a 30-second span to put Laney College on the line, the Solano Community College women's basketball team had a chance to tie or take the lead but fell short in dropping a 62-58 Bay Valley Conference decision on Friday.

"It was a really great basketball game, we led early then they took over," Falcons coach Matt Borchert said. "We came back from nine points twice in the game. The last nine minutes were back and forth, it was fantastic. They made a few more points than we did down the stretch."

Solano (4-8, 1-1 BVC) got 17 points from Ariel Clay and 12 from Ariella Harper.

The Falcons host Napa Valley on Tuesday.

Vallejo, CA
(Solano Co)
Times Herald
(cir D 15,817)

Womens Basketball

Laney 62, Solano 58

The Solano College women's basketball team fell to Laney College 62-58 in a Bay Valley Conference game.

Ariel Clay led the Falcons (4-8, 1-1) with 17 points. St. Pat's graduate Taylor Hamilton finished with nine points and Ariella Harper had nine points.
TRIP IN TIME » 1940s

College-trained workers during WWII

At left, Central Trade School students Gladys Neecker, from left, Faye Henson and Laura Phillips learn drill-press operation for employment at local plants in July 1944. The United States Employment Service and Oakland public schools joined together to recruit students for wartime production training during World War II. At right, Eva Szmaragd, of Poland, gives a permanent wave to C.V. Brooks in 1942. Szmaragd studied cosmetology at the school while her husband fought with the British armed forces.

The Oakland Board of Education founded the Central Trade School in 1927. Classes in carpentry, cooking, metalworking, sewing and others commenced in fall 1928 in the old Oakland High School building at 12th and Jefferson streets. The school was renamed the Joseph C. Laney Trade and Technical Institute in 1948. We know it today as Laney College.

"Trip in Time" runs every first Sunday and is selected by librarian Veronica Martinez. Email feedback to vmartinez@bayareanewsgroup.com or follow us at http://oaklandtribunearchives.tumblr.com.
The College of Marin men's basketball team squandered an opportunity to make a bold statement Saturday night against Bay Valley Conference leader and visiting Merritt College (8-7, 5-0).

The Mariners (9-5, 2-2), instead of playing inspired ball, "played terrible," according to coach Dave Granucci and dropped a 64-50 decision.

"We didn't play hard, we didn't execute, we played absolutely horribly," Granucci said. "I'm trying to figure it out. We had a great opportunity to beat the first place team in league and we didn't come ready to play."

Rashaad Allen led COM with 15 points and teammate Josh Hayworth chipped in with 10.

The Mariners return to BVC play Tuesday at Solano. Game time is 7:30 p.m.
Merritt College 73, Solano 65

The Solano College men's basketball team fell to Merritt College 73-65 on Thursday in Bay Valley Conference play.

Jamarae Moss led the Falcons (7-11, 2-5) with 19 points. Corey Durant scored 10 points.

Vallejo, CA
(Solano Co)
Times Herald
(cir D 15,817)

JAN 18 2013

Merritt College 73, Solano 65

The Solano College men's basketball team fell to Merritt College 73-65 on Thursday in Bay Valley Conference play.

Jamarae Moss led the Falcons (7-11, 2-5) with 19 points. Corey Durant scored 10 points.

Vacaville, CA
(Solano Co.)
Reporter
(Cir. D. 19,500)
(Cir. S. 20,800)

JAN 18 2013

Merritt College 73, Solano 65

The Solano College men's basketball team fell to Merritt College 73-65 in Oakland.

Jamarae Moss led the Falcons with 14 points and Corey Doran added 10. Solano had a 32-25 halftime lead before Merritt took the game over in the second half.

Solano fell to 2-5 in the Bay Valley Conference and 7-11 overall. The Falcons host Contra Costa on Wednesday.
By Nanette Asimov

If City College of San Francisco has to shut down next fall, its leaders would help students transfer to other colleges, store their transcripts in a safe place, and grant name-brand degrees and certificates to students who have completed 75 percent of their program. That's according to a draft version of the "closure report" that City College is required to prepare in case it loses accreditation in June.

Hundreds of faculty and staff members would lose their jobs. The college would help them "in good faith" to find new employment, but with no guarantees of success.

According to the report, each employee will be notified of possible unemployment by March 15, a legal deadline that falls on the same deadline.
Just in case — draft plan if CCSF closes

for City College to submit its closure report to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. (That's also when it must provide a separate report showing why it should remain accredited.)

"The closure report is contingency planning. We're talking about things we hope never come to fruition, but which we're required to think through," said Larry Kramer, spokesman for Chancellor Thelma Scott-Skillman, who wrote the closure report but couldn't be reached for comment on Monday's deadline.

While the troubled college must create the just-in-case scenario — symbolically the most distasteful piece of its effort to improve finances and governance to satisfy accreditation standards — City College is today "fully accredited, and its credits are fully transferable," said Bob Agrella, the state-appointed trustee overseeing the process.

"That's a point many students and people in the community don't understand," Agrella said. Even if the college loses accreditation, "those credits do not go away."

3 scenarios

Agrella said three possible scenarios await City College when the accrediting commission meets in June: closure, probation or full accreditation.

"I don't think (full accreditation) is likely because we will have not completed everything that's required," Agrella said.

The college has accomplished much since learning in July that it teetered on the edge. It's transformed instruction, completed a technology plan and adopted a new mission statement, among other things. But administrators still haven't calculated the cost of all nine campuses nor locked in labor contracts. And they remain uncertain around hiring and financial planning.

Probation would buy time if the accrediting commission agrees CCSF has made substantial progress, Agrella said. If not, the closure report would point to what happens next.

The draft is just 14 pages, "a skeletal report" that is not likely to offer many more details in final form, Agrella said.

But it says the college would help its more than 40,000 students pursue college credit or vocational certificates to find new programs. There are no plans to help the college's other 40,000 students, who take free, noncredit classes, ranging from fun memoir writing courses to helpful vocational offerings such as fashion design and computer skills.

Those who have completed 75 percent of their program — three out of four semesters — could potentially stay on at City College to complete their work "if the college gained permission" from the accrediting commission, Agrella said.

"They would not take on new students, but work with those students to either get their degree from City College or find another program for them."

Also in the draft report is one line referring to "alternatives to closing (merging, forming consortiums, institutional sharing/corporation)."

The report doesn't elaborate, but "I know it's under strong consideration that we attempt to merge or in some form be subsumed under another college," said Joshua Beisiegel, a business major and vice president of the Associated Students Council, who has been involved.

"I think it's unlikely that we'd actually close, but we'd work out some sort of arrangement with a neighboring college," Beisiegel said.

Not all neighboring college districts are on firm footing, however, including those named as possible transfer sites for City College students.

The East Bay's Peralta College District — with Berkeley City College, College of Alameda, Merritt College and Laney College — is on warning from the accrediting commission. And at the two-college San Jose/Evergreen District, one college is on warning, while the other is on probation.

Being "on warning" or on probation are just short of City College's dire "show cause" status, in which it must prove it should retain accreditation.

Faculty 'very concerned'

Meanwhile, faculty are "very concerned" about the possibility of closure.

"We have definitely made a lot of progress, but we have a lot of progress still to make," said Karen Saginor, the chair of the Academic Senate who serves on the college's Accreditation Steering Committee.

"Faculty have been nervous about this since July," Saginor said. "We're still nervous."

Nanette Asimov is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer.
E-mail: nasimov@sfgate.com
Twitter: @NanetteAsimov
Marie Hampton has been promoted to director of purchasing services by the Peralta Community College District, based in Oakland. Previously, Hampton was buyer.
Falcons fall in battle for BVC lead

By Reporter Sports Staff

Solano College women’s basketball team suffered through a tough second half and eventually lost to visiting Laney of Oakland 64-61 on Wednesday night.

The Falcons fell to 7-2 in Bay Valley Conference games, a half-game behind both Laney (7-1) and Mendocino (7-1).

Solano led 29-24 at halftime, but Laney opened the second half with a 10-1 run.

“We fought back, but that was a big turning point,” Solano head coach Matt Borchert said. “We came out really slow, and we got some of the energy back, but then we couldn’t make shots.”

The Falcons suffered through a six-minute scoreless drought in the second half, but still battled back and took a 59-58 lead with 1:35 left.

But Laney scored four points in a row after a timeout to take the lead for good.

Ariel Clay led Solano with 23 points. Taylor Hamilton added 15, and Nicole White scored nine, all on 3-pointers.

Charlena Gibson scored all 23 of her points in the second half for Laney.

Solano (10-9 overall) plays at Napa Valley on Friday night.
THE PEOPLE WILL RISE UP AGAINST AUSTERITY

INTERVIEW: SHAMAKO NOBLE

The People's Tribune interviewed Shamako Noble, the Racial and Economic Justice Organizer for Jill Stein's 2012 Green Party campaign for President. He is also the co-founder and Executive Director of Hip Hop Congress.

Peoples Tribune: Why is the Green Party strategic at this time, and what are the challenges it faces today?
Shamako Noble: The Democratic Party has historically positioned itself as the “progressive” choice in elections, but its policies are getting more and more conservative and harmful. The drama over the “fiscal cliff” is a good example. Our movement needs electoral politics, so we are going to have to look for alternatives beyond the two major parties. Right now, the Green Party is the best alternative out there. It has a rudimentary infrastructure and was on the ballot in almost forty states.

However, the Green Party cannot move forward unless it recruits new leaders at the state and local levels. And it cannot recruit new leaders unless it gets involved in the day-to-day survival struggles of people for the basic necessities of life. The Green Party up to now does not have the reputation of being there on the ground in these battles. The will and the potential are there, but decisions need to be made and the work needs to be done.

PT: What lessons did you learn in the 2012 election campaign?
SN: The most important lesson was that elections are a critical area of resistance, and the struggle there is intensifying. We cannot say our vote does not count, when the ruling class just spent $6 billion fighting for it. We cannot say our vote does not count, when they handcuffed the Green Party candidates, Jill Stein and Cheri Honkala, in an empty warehouse for eight hours, just to stop them from participating in a presidential debate.

Our campaign was important because it raised the issues of jobs, human needs, and the environment at exactly the time when Republicans and Democrats were both promoting austerity and fossil fuels. It offered an alternative to the growing merger of the state with corporations.

PT: Will the Green Party have a significant impact on electoral politics in the near future?
SN: Yes. There is a raging debate in Hip Hop between some artists who are active in the Democratic Party, and others who are open about totally rejecting it. This will only get more intense as people rise up against the austerity policies and school-to-prison pipeline pushed by Republicans and Democrats. The debate on economic human rights is getting sharper, and both the Green Party and Hip Hop are well-positioned to enter it.

Hip Hop Congress this year will be rolling out what we call the Love Movement: love for ourselves, love for our families, love for our communities, love for our work, and love for our planet. We also will be promoting an initiative called Hip Hop for Health. Both these ideas are under attack by the program of austerity and violence coming out of the two major parties in Washington, DC. But both are totally consistent with the values of the Green Party. Our work is cut out for us.
Digital Arts Club at Berkeley City College presents Portals, tomorrow at 6 p.m.

The City of Berkeley is actually a community of smaller communities, each with its own characteristics and rituals. Among them is the Digital Arts Club at Berkeley City College (BCC), a group of talented folks who gather most days to nurture their abilities to express themselves in digital media. It’s about growth and learning, and it’s about sharing visual stories with the broader community.

Tomorrow, in celebration of Jerry Adams Gallery at BCC, the Digital Arts Club (DAC) is hosting an Artists Reception. And many club members are expected to attend. They will be there in support of each other, in support of their quest for even higher levels of expression using digital media.

For more info about the reception, and to see more of the Club’s digital artworks, turn to page 13.
Digital Arts Club presents *Portals*, tomorrow at 6 p.m.

There are many reasons that artists are drawn to digital media. With an MFA in graphic design, Erica Gagnon was a photographer and painter living in Canada, but so impressed with the dynamism of digital media that she moved here to learn how to make it.

Marcia Poole of Berkeley had been a painter for years, but grew hypersensitive to all the chemicals. So when she discovered the large-format printing program at Berkeley City College (BCC), she felt liberated. "No matter what was the original inspiration, the truth of digital media is that there is a lot to learn about it. The process of making it can become extremely complicated, and some techniques take years to master."

In other words, the love of digital media is a perfectly good reason for people to gather and share ideas about the process of creating images. That's why BCC faculty member Joe Doyle co-founded the Digital Arts Club about 8 years ago-to support the students using the media.

The Club has grown over time, but remains a very supportive environment according to BCC faculty member Jan Dove, who currently sponsors the group. "We work together, learn from each other. We also support each other by getting our art out there," said Dove before offering comments about the current exhibition.

"I'm proud of the work. The artists took risks, and the payoff is in the quality of this show."

Poole, who co-curated *Portals*, explained why digital media is so important, so relevant to our times.

"It's a responsive media," she explained. "Relatively quickly and easily, one can incorporate images that are recognizable and relevant to an audience—whether it be local or a global one." According to Poole, that's why DAC artists are so often represented in the annual exhibition of local artists in the City's administration building.

As group shows go, *Portals* is better than most because it represents such a vast diversity of techniques and styles. In all there are 21 artworks that were fashioned with digital software such as Photoshop, Lightroom, Z Brush, 3D, and Cinema 4D; and then printed with archival inks on a range of materials including archival watercolor paper, canvas and metal.

Through March 6, *Portals* is showing at Jerry Adams Gallery on the first floor of Berkeley City College, located at 2050 Center St. Gallery hours are Monday—Friday, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Attendance is always free.

Also, there's an Artist's Reception tomorrow, Friday, February 8 from 6 – 8 p.m. For more info, contact Chris Roche at (510) 418-3162, rochephotol@gmail.com. To learn more about the Digital Arts Club at BCC, go to digitalartsclub.com.

Berkeley, CA
(Alameda Co)
Berkeley Times
(cir 2×M 32,000)

FEB 07 2013
Baseball

Laney narrowly defeats City College in double header season openers

By Dan Harrington

It was San Francisco versus Oakland this past Friday and Saturday, the first baseball games of the season for the City College Rams and the Laney College Eagles.

Laney won both games, 6-0 and 9-2.

Freshman John Patrick Dunne started the home opener for City in the first meeting. Dunne went four-plus innings in his Ram debut at Fairmont Field in Pacifica.

After two scoreless innings, the visiting Eagles plated three runs on four hits in the third inning off Dunne. Four seeing-eye singles snuck through on the synthetic turf to put Laney ahead.

In the fifth, Dunne was chased off after a potential double play ball became an error at second base.

Two singles by Eagle batters Jacob Schobert and Todd Burgos followed and made the score 5-0. Laney added an unearned run in the seventh.

Three of the six runs allowed were unearned by four Rams pitchers.

Offensively, Rams sophomore Ben Ladner etched singles in the first and third innings, and also walked in the sixth. Ladner would trade those pluses for a different outcome with the bases full in his last at-bat, as he struck-out to end the seventh with the bases loaded.

"A knuckleball got me," Ladner said later. "Next time with the bases loaded I'm not going down that easy."

Saturday, as temperatures neared 70 degrees at Laney College Field. In the first inning in Oakland, Ladner fought off hot pitches by Burgos, the Eagles' game two starting pitcher. Then Ladner laced the third two-and-two count pitch down the third base line for a double.

The two-bagger went for naught, with a punch-out on strikes, a great catch in right field, and a groundout.

Laney scored three runs in the first frame, all unearned, off Rams starting pitcher, Kyle Orwig.

The key play was an overthrow of first by Rams shortstop, Juan Miguel Perez on a ball hit by Schobert after a one-out Eagle single. Orwig struck-out the next hitter, but a one-run double and two-run single immediately thereafter made it 3-0 Laney.

City scored its first run of 2013 in the second inning, with freshman center fielder Bryce Jones laying down a bunt that imperiled Eagle third baseman Jacob Schobert, who couldn't throw home in time to get Ram baserunner Geoff Ogata racing in from third, making it 3-1 Laney lead.

The run scoring play followed a Perez smash off the Laney pitcher for an infield hit. Ladner then struck his fourth hit in five at bats, but a bases loaded errant pitch bunted perfectly for Laney. Catcher Kenney Chavez threw to Burgos covering the plate to nab the diving Perez. The Ram threat ended.

After one earned and one unearned run scored for Laney, City College came back to set the table in the top of the fifth.

With one out, Ladner reached on an error on a hard hit ball. Talbot launched a double to right, and Ladner galloped the distance home to make it 5-2. Sebastian walked and both runners moved up on a wild pitch by Eagle reliever Matt Pomykala.

The big hit with the tying run up was elusive once more.

After a strikeout, Murphy's drive into the right-field corner was snared on another brilliant grab by a Laney outfielder to end the inning.

"It comes down to a few crucial plays," Ladner said. "As the season goes, we'll get those bounces."

The Eagles earned some cushion in the bottom of the seventh, with two doubles, a triple, a walk and a sacrifice fly. The four runs garnered completed the scoring.

"They hit with runners in scoring position, and we didn't," in the series, Rams head coach John Vanoncini said. "We just need to play catch and limit the damage."

The head coaches of the two teams both started their 13th seasons in charge of their respective squads with this year's trans-bay matchup.

"They hit line drives, put the ball in play, and compete," Laney head coach Francisco Zapata said of the City College team. "It seems like they've gotten better since seeing them in the fall."

The Rams play Los Medanos in Pittsburg, Calif. on Feb. 7 at 2 p.m. and are back at Fairmont Field in Pacifica to conclude their series with the Mustangs at noon on Feb. 9.
LEFT: CCSF Rams' sophomore catcher Ben Ladner prepares to catch a pitch during the game against the Laney College Eagles on Feb. 2, 2013 in Oakland. Shelly Scott / The Guardsman

RIGHT: Freshman Geoff Ogata pitches for the Rams in the seventh inning during the game vs. Laney College on Feb. 2, 2013 in Oakland. Shelly Scott / The Guardsman
Falcons lose heartbreaker against Laney

John Gidden
Staff writer
jgidden@solanotempest.net

Fans witnessed a tight and close game with Laney College winning over Solano, 64-61. The Falcons don't like to hear "Laney College in January" for both of the Falcons' only losses in the month of January have come at the hands of Laney College.

Solano lost on Jan. 4, 62-58, at Laney College.

The Falcon's started out the first half with freshman guard/forward Ariel Clay leading the Falcons with 16 points. For a good portion of the first half, Clay was the only Falcon on the score sheet. Clay would end the game with 23 points.

Freshman guard Necole White added a buzzer-beating three point shot to lead the Falcons to an emphatic 29-24 lead over Laney College. White recorded three 3 point shots to end the game with nine points. Then the bottom fell out.

See HEARTBREAKER PAGE 8

Necole White of Solano College shooting one of her three 3-pointers over Laney College in the second half. Becky Smith/Tempest

For new and updated games and stories visit: solanotempest.net

Laney takes over the game against the Falcons

Laney proceeded to go on a double-digit run against the Falcons to open up the second half.

"We fought hard during the first half but we let up in the second half," said Solano's Clay.

"We lost our energy," said Solano's White after the game.

Freshman guard Taylor Hamilton stressed that the Falcons were focused for the game but lost the energy for the second half. Hamilton had 15 points for the game.

Solano's head coach, Matt Borchert, after the game, echoed the sentiments of his players by saying that the team game out of the half-time with less energy.

With two minutes gone in the second half, Borchert called a timeout. After Laney had begun the half with an eight to one run, informing the Falcons that "the first five minutes of a half are the most important."

Seven minutes later Borchert called another timeout.

"You're not playing defense, and this is for the championship on your home court," Borchert shouted to his players during a full timeout.

Complicating the matters for the Falcons was sophomore guard Shatrina Gibson who recorded all of her scoring for Laney College during the second half; all 26 points.

With the loss, Solano drops to third place in the Bay Valley Conference with an overall record of 10-9 and 7-2 in BVC play.

Laney moves into a tie with Mendocino College with 7-1 BVC records.

Next Solano plays against Napa Valley College, 5:30 p.m., Friday at Napa.
COM: College off warning list

From page 3

ment to the continuing hard work and dedication of faculty, staff, students and our board of trustees to take very seriously the commission's accrediting standards and its recommendations," he said.

The commission issued a formal warning last February, saying the college failed to make sufficient progress on recommendations such as more thorough campus planning, increased services at the Novato campus, better distance learning and more effective board governance.

The recommendations stem from a series of site visits and commission actions dating to the the 1990s, including a five-month period in 2008 when the college was placed on probation.

College of Marin is not the only institution that has been targeted in recent years. From 2005 to early 2012, more than half of the state's 110 community colleges were issued sanctions, according to a list compiled by the Community College Association, part of the California Teachers Association.

The decision to remove College of Marin from the warning list was based on a site visit in November 2012.

Jose Ortiz, chancellor for Oakland's Peralta Community College District, led the visit and praised the college in a follow-up memo.

According to the memo, which was kept confidential until this week, the college made progress on all of the commission's recommendations. For example, the college created a "solid, well-developed facilities master plan," Ortiz said.

"The college has made remarkable strides in addressing the recommendation on facilities planning," Ortiz said in the memo.

Among many other improvements, Ortiz also praised the college's increased use of data on students' academic progress.

"What began as a compliance issue has transformed into a quest for quality assurance," he said.

Jim Namnath, president of the college board of trustees, said he was not surprised by the commission's decision.

"I was expecting good news because of the efforts by a lot of people at the college — the faculty, the administration," he said. "They took it very seriously and they took a lot of special effort, on their own time, to make sure this was a good result."

Contact Will Jason via email at wjason@marinij.com or via Twitter at http://twitter.com/willjason
College Women's Basketball

- Laney 61, Napa Valley 45

Laney (10-1 BVC) led 29-14 at halftime of Wednesday night's Bay Valley Conference game in Oakland. The Storm (8-15 overall, 5-7 BVC) pulled to within nine points twice, with six minutes and one minute left, but couldn't get any closer.

"It was a great effort tonight from our whole team, with very balanced scoring," Napa Valley head coach Vincent Shaw said. "Laney was just too strong and they made plays down the stretch."

Allana Burnham and Jenna Pena led the Storm with eight points apiece, and Natasha Wallace, Kelsey Heard and Krystle Terrado each added seven.

Napa Valley will host second-place Mendocino in its final home game at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 20.
Herrick leads COM to victory

MARIN BRIEFS

Laney beats COM

Even in defeat, College of Marin women's basketball coach Tannea Nelson called it her team's best game of the season.

The Mariners (3-21, 1-13) finished the season by losing to co-Bay Valley Conference champ Laney (15-11, 12-2) 57-45.

"They beat us by 25 the first time we played them," Nelson said. "But tonight we played under control and with poise. It would have been a different season if we played like this all season."

Anna Guzman scored 15 points to lead COM and teammates Kathleen Mira and Christina Thermidor both had 11.
Glenn Keator speaks on flowering plants at next San Pedro Valley Park talk

Almost two years ago, when Glenn Keator delivered his presentation on the Oaks of California at SPVP, the audience was thrilled to hear about some of their favorite trees from a real expert, author of “The Life of an Oak: An Intimate Portrait.”

But many were hoping he would one day tell them about the plants of San Pedro Valley Park. Now, on Saturday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m., he will present a program on the flowering plants of our burgeoning park, plants such as a rare manzanita, the lovely pink flowering currant, the delicately designed wild gooseberry, and the fragrant blue-blossom.

Keator is a real communicator and teacher. He is an instructor at several local institutions, including Merritt College. He has taught many classes at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens, Regional Parks Botanical Gardens at Tilden Park, College of Marin, and the California Academy of Sciences.

Glenn was brought up in the Bay Area. He is the author of several other books on his favorite spots in his home state, including: “Designing California Native Gardens,” “California Native Plant Families—West of the Sierra Crest and Desert” and a series of popular, fast-selling California pocket guide books. His freelance status has enabled him to travel around the world, studying plants, and has led many botanizing field trips on the West Coast and to Hawaii, and Alaska, and has studied the plants dwelling far afield, as in Australia.

To get to the “wilds” of San Pedro Valley Park, and especially to its visitor center, travel east on Linda Mar Boulevard until you reach its end at 600 Oddstad Blvd. Here you will see the sign for the park. Drive into the open gate and up into the parking lot.

The program will be free, and this is one of the last programs for which the parking will also be free. Refreshments will be available.
To the commissioners poised to shut down City College of San Francisco next fall if it can’t meet its accreditation requirements, their work as enforcers is like tough love — painful but necessary to maintain quality standards in academia.

Sitting on the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges are college chancellors and faculty members; education experts from California, Hawaii and Palau; an assistant auditor; and a former Marine. Most of the mild-mannered crew of 19 commissioners

City College continues on A8
Critics brand college regulators ‘agency gone wild’

City College from page A1

have doctorates.
But faculty union leaders and many students up and
down the state say the private,
nonprofit accrediting commis-
sion located in Novato is overly
harsh and out of touch with
what colleges need to improve.
The commission sanctioned
California colleges nearly five
times as often as commissions
around the country sanctioned
colleges in their regions last
year, and up to 16 times as often
between 2003 and 2008, writes
Marty Hittelman, former presi-
dent of the California Federa-
tion of Teachers, in a thick
manifesto about the commis-
sion that has become required
reading for critics.
The commission is nothing
short of an ‘agency gone wild’
that is ‘cloaked in secrecy,’ he
writes.

Renewed criticism
Complaints have percolated
for years. Now they’re resur-
faced with vigor because the
commission has held the vast
City College of San Francisco
in its sights like a pinned insect
since July, demanding that it
live within its budget, adhere
to more mainstream govern-
ance practices and — most
painfully — shrink to an af-
fordable size.

Many college leaders, em-
ployees and students have
worked up a sweat trying to
transform the school before its
March 15 deadline to prove it
should remain accredited. But
many others who resist those
efforts say the problem with
City College isn’t with accredi-
tation, but with the accrediting
commission.

Critics are especially bothered
that the commission never
placed City College on warn-
ing, its mildest sanction, or on
probation, the next strongest.
Instead, it took the college
directly to the most severe
level, “show cause,” and gave it
eight months between July and
March to show why it should
remain open. The commission
will make a decision in June on
whether to yank its accredita-
tion.

Now, as the March 15 dead-
line for the “show cause” report
looms, critics are staging sit-
inns, appealing to politicians
and planning a march on City
Hall.

“This accrediting board has
done a good job frightening
the people of San Francisco!” Josh
Peelhalt, president of the
California Federation of Teach-
ers, told a crowd of teachers
and students who had gathered
outside the trustees’ meeting
the other night to protest the
shrinking college — and the
teachers’ shrinking pay. “We
need to make sure City College
stays for the people!” he said to
applause.

Misunderstood
Those who work with the
commission, and commission-
ers themselves, say they are
used to such attacks and that
their work is misunderstood.
“I’ve lived through it,” said
Frank Gornick, a commissioner
who is chancellor of the
West Hills Community College
District in Fresno County. “I
was one of the biggest critics of
the commission.”

A decade ago, a college in his
district was placed “on warn-
ing” by the commission for
muddy decision-making and
delayed planning. It serves stu-
dents from some of the nation’s
poorest families, and Gornick
felt indignant on their behalf.
Couldn’t the commission have
told them what to fix without
issuing a public sanction?

“Now that I’m on the com-
mission,” Gornick said, he
sees things differently. “Just
telling someone to do it doesn’t
give it done. We worked our way
off the warning, and we’re a much
better college.”

Blaming the commission “is
like blaming the iceberg for
the Titanic.”

The Accrediting Commis-
sion for Community and Junior
Colleges, which evaluates col-
leges in California, Hawaii and
the U.S. Pacific Islands, is one
of six regional accrediting
agencies — all private nonprof-
it organizations — overseen by
the U.S. Department of Educa-
tion, which funds only schools
accredited by one of them. In
turn, the Education Department
accredits, or “recognizes,” the
agencies, evaluating them every
five years.

Commission too lenient
In its last review in 2008, the
commission was found too
lenient in enforcing a rule that
colleges fix deficiencies within
two years. That slap on the
wrist may have had repercus-
sions in San Francisco when
the commission showed little
mercy on City College last year
for failing to fix deficiencies
from six years earlier.

Barbara Beno, the commis-
sion’s president of 12 years,
said the commission is neither
“wild” nor “rogue.”

She also rejected the notion
that her commission is harsher
than others.

“California colleges are re-
cieving sanctions because they
are not meeting standards,” she
said.

As president, Beno doesn’t
vote or evaluate schools. That’s
left to volunteers with adminis-
trative experience who are
trained in accrediting stan-
dards and who visit the college
campuses.

The volunteers report their
findings to the 19 commission-
ers, who meet twice yearly,
evolve each campus every six

Learn more
List: To see the current list of
community colleges, including
those on warning, probation or
probation or pre-scrutiny, visit
http://bit.ly/YokWlQ

Accreditation: Visit the website
of the Accrediting Commission
for Community and Junior
Colleges: www.accjc.org

Previous coverage: To see all
chronicles on City College of
San Francisco’s struggle to
remain accredited, visit
www.sfchronicle.com/citycollege

Usher-in of ‘ferocity’
Carl Frieblender, statewide
president of the faculty union’s
Community College Council,
who also serves on the council
advising the state chancellor,
says the commission “san-
cctions colleges with a frequency
and ferocity unheard of in any
other region of the U.S.”

Of California’s 112 colleges, 12
— nearly 11 percent — are on
warning. Another six colleges,
5 percent, are on probation.
City College — with 85,000
students, the state’s largest
school — is one of two
colleges on “show cause.”

The other is College of the
Sequoias in Visalia.

A study by Hittelman, the
former union president, shows
that other accrediting agencies
issue sanctions infrequently
compared with California’s.
Hittelman’s report flatly
accuses Beno of carrying out a
“reign of terror” in which any
sign of disloyalty or difference
from colleagues is met with threats
of more severe sanctions.

Beno, a former president of
Berkeley City College, makes it
clear that she’s unwilling to
enter into a war with her crit-
ics.

The commission is “compe-
tent and effective,” she said.
Its “members, institutions, commis-
sioners and evaluation team
members have committed to
setting high standards for the
region that are in line with best
practices nationally, and to
implementing those standards
with integrity and rigor.”

Nanette Asimov is a San Fran-
cisco Chronicle staff writer.
E-mail: nasimov@sfbchronicle.com
Twitter: @NanetteAsimov
LATE WINTER

PLUM FULL OF COLOR

Gayle Tomasson walks her dogs, Texas and Gilly, in North Oakland beneath flowering plums. The trees burst into flower for just a few weeks a year.
PLUM FULL OF COLOR

Flowering trees bloom only in late February, March

By Laura Casey
Correspondent

OAKLAND — Dotted along the thoroughfares and side streets throughout the Bay Area are bursts of pink and white blooms of the flowering plum tree, an ornamental, non-fruit tree with flowers so beautiful it has inspired centuries of artists in paintings and poetry.

The tree is unmistakable in its look among the stark cement urban landscape with its rush of color standing out among other street trees that have yet to regrow their leaves since fall.

They can be seen now near Children's Hospital Oakland, along the side streets around MacArthur BART and in parts of the Rockridge district.

"I jog the local streets, and it's so beautiful to run by these trees, to get that heady perfume in your face," said Steve Wethy, who has a round flowering plum blooming in front of his home on Genoa Street in North Oakland. "It's wonderful to have this unified color this time of year, and I even love the pools of flowers below the trees."

Flowering plum trees are winter trees, not spring ones. They only bloom for a few weeks out of the year, usually in late February and early March. They are native to Asia and because they bloom so close to the Chinese Lunar New Year, they are considered to be the "flower of the first month," said Blaine Sedlack, a horticulturist at the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden.

Sedlack, who cares for the Asian collection at the garden, said poems about the plum tree can be traced back in Chinese culture to as early as the Song Dynasty which ruled the country between A.D. 960 and 1279. In paintings, they are often paired with bamboo and pine as the "three friends of winter" symbolizing perseverance, integrity and modesty.

"Plum trees are one of the most enduring and pervasive images in East Asian art," Sedlack said. "Even now people are using them in poetry and art."

There are many varieties and hybrids of plum trees that flower in late winter. While many bear fruit, the majority planted in urban landscapes do not because the fruit-bearing trees often go unpicked and the fruit falls to the ground, said Judy Thomas, an arborist and retired horticulture professor at Merritt College.

"People love the flowers but don't want to deal with messy fruit," she said.

The trees are planted as street trees in the Bay Area because they are robust growers in this climate and have non-aggressive roots that don't tend to pull up sidewalks. It doesn't hurt that they bring a splash of color at the end of a season known for plant dormancy.

"I think they're lovely," said Chelsea Brunett who lives just down the block from Wethy in a corner home with surrounding sidewalks dominated by the trees. "It's amazing how many I see in this neighborhood. I have a lot of friends in the area, and there's at least one on every street. They make it feel like it is spring already."

While spring doesn't officially start until March 20, there are other plants and trees blooming around Oakland in late winter, Thomas said.

The manzanita tree, native to the Oakland hills and in the parks, are showing white flowers now while the pink flowering currant shrub, also in the Oakland hills and parks, are presenting pink hanging flowers, and beside the city's freeways, the non-native acacia tree is offering blankets of yellow blooms.
Merritt men pick up the pace

Thunderbirds still alive as basketball playoffs reach final four; CCSF is cruising

The Merritt College Thunderbirds have taken their fans on quite a ride.

Four teams remain in the state men's basketball playoffs, and Merritt, which finished third in the Bay Valley Conference and was seeded No. 15 in the Northern Regional playoffs, is still playing.

Merritt (18-12) will face favored Mt. San Antonio College-Walnut (27-3) at 4 p.m. Friday in the state semifinals at Cosumnes River in Sacramento, with the winner advancing to Saturday's championship game at 1 p.m.

In Friday's other semifinal, City College of San Francisco (31-0), which has crushed three straight playoff opponents by an average of 36 points, will play Chaffey-Rancho Cucamonga (26-6) at 7 p.m.

The Thunderbirds are the lowest seed from the north ever to advance to the state's final four. The 1958 Merritt team was the state runner-up.

"The key element for us is we just stayed determined throughout all the adversity we have faced," said Merritt forward Eric Nelson, an El Cerrito High graduate averaging 11.2 points and nearly 10 rebounds a game. "We showed a lot of heart and have good chemistry together. I feel like we're really underrated. Internally, we feel like we're the favorite to win the entire thing."

The Thunderbirds' postseason thrill ride began with a 63-62 win over No. 18 American River in an out-bracket game. Merritt then upset defending state champion and No. 2 seed Fresno City 100-83 and No. 7 Odlone 79-76, both on the road. The latter game was marred by a postgame melee among the spectators, which resulted in two Merritt players being suspended for leaving the bench.

Undaunted by the drama off the court, Merritt upset defending No. 14 Delta in Stockton 79-75 in the fourth round to earn a trip to the state's final four. Sophomore point guard Joshua Amey (Berkeley) agrees that it's tougher winning on the road, but it's nothing the Thunderbirds can't handle.

"It only makes us focus more and come together as a team more, because we know as a team everybody else is pulling against us," said Amey, a team captain.

Mt. San Antonio, which was the No. 3 seed in the Southern regional, is paced by Corey Allen (21.1 ppg) and Garrett Nevels (19.8 ppg).
Merritt's dream playoff run ends

SACRAMENTO — The Merritt College men's basketball team's storybook run ended with an 84-75 loss to Mt. San Antonio-Walnut in the semifinals of the state playoffs on Friday at Colusa River College.

Corey Allen had a game-high 24 points for the Mounties (28-3), who will face Chaffey-Rancho Cucamonga in Sunday's 1 p.m. title game. Chaffey beat City College of San Francisco 87-85 in the other semifinal.

Eric Nelson and Marcus Green each had 17 points for Merritt, the 15th seed in the Northern regional.

The Thunderbirds (18-13) had playoff wins over American River, defending state champion Fresno City, Ohlone and Deita.

Merritt trailed 63-57 with 1:14 remaining on a pair of free throws by Elliott Herald. The Thunderbirds came within six three times, the last at 81-75 with 43 seconds left.
Hartnell grad to head Oakland college

By CLAUDIA MELENDEZ SALINAS
Herald Staff Writer

Growing up at a ranch in Moss Landing, Norma Ambriz-Galaviz saw how the law was applied to her young Latino neighbors. They would be treated differently for having baggy pants or cruising in lowriders, she said, which she thought was unfair.

"I grew up with these kids and they were good kids, but if they chose to dress differently, they kept always being ... singled out," Ambriz-Galaviz said Wednesday. These were "profiling issues that people didn't really hear about back then. I told myself: Sometimes when you see injustices, the only way you can change them is to be part of the system."

Ambriz-Galaviz wanted a career in law enforcement and enrolled in the administration of justice program at Hartnell College after graduating from North Salinas High School in 1974. Eventually, her desire to be in law enforcement changed, but not her desire to serve the community.

On Wednesday, Ambriz-Galaviz, 57, returned to her alma mater to address students during Women's History Month and share her education experiences, including her recent appointment as president of Merritt College in Oakland.

She advised students to focus on something they love and be persistent in trying to achieve their dreams. After graduating from Hartnell, Ambriz-Galaviz transferred to San Diego State University and began working for its extended opportunity programs and services departments.

Her experiences counseling students made her realize there were other ways to serve her community. When she was required to complete an internship at a police department, she realized law enforcement wasn't for her.

"Back then, in the 70s, women in law enforcement were patronized," she said. "They wanted women to do office work, be meter maids. Remember, I'm the one who wants to be the police chief. I realized quickly I would have to be in the system for a long, long time, and I could not envision a woman police chief. There weren't any back then."

With a new commitment to help students, Ambriz-Galaviz decided to pursue a master's degree in counseling. She returned to Hartnell as a counselor, then worked for Cabrillo College, Chabot College and Mission College before landing her position at Merritt.

Miriam Muñoz, 20, a clinical psychology student at Hartnell, enjoyed listening to someone whose life story closely resembled her own.

"It was awesome. I can relate a lot to what she went through," she said.

Joe Martinez, a retired Hartnell counselor, met Ambriz-Galaviz when she was a student.

In some students, like Ambriz-Galaviz, "you just sense the dynamism and you just have to point them (in the right direction) and they'll take care of the rest," Martinez said. "No wonder where she's at. It's a joy. It's something expected."
Evento / Event

Saturday, March 30 from 1 – 6 p.m.

20th anniversary celebration of César E. Chávez
honoring our beloved brother and members
of the community “for keeping the fire alive”

Featuring: Frobén Lozada,
Angel Award; Peralta Colleges,
Professor of Ethnic Studies;
Norma Ambriz-Galaviz,
President, Merritt College; Terry
Bautista, lifelong organizer
for social justice; Rafael Jesús
González, poet; Ana M. Rojas,
patient care advocate; César
E. Chávez Committee and
the PUENTE Program from
Peralta Community Colleges
Merritt College; Selia Melero,
education advocate; and Peter
D. Roos, immigration attorney,
community activist.

Corazón del Pueblo, 4814 International Boulevard, Oakland (be-
tween 48th & 49th Avenues)

Co-sponsored by Corazón del Pueblo and The Unity Council. For
more info, call (510) 355-2438
Community college enrollment falls

By Nanette Asimov

California's famously open-door community colleges have experienced an unprecedented drop in enrollment of nearly half a million students during the state’s recent economic crisis, say a new report that looks at the wreckage of $3.5 billion in cuts over the last four years.

State law forbids the state's 112 community colleges from denying admission to any student with a high school diploma. But researchers studying the impact of the cuts in the colleges say that in many cases, students were simply unable to find the classes they needed at the colleges they hoped to attend.

Colleges slashed 68,000 courses and let go thousands of instructors between 2008 and 2012, says the report released Monday from the Public Policy Institute of California.

"This is a major concern for the 2.8 million students and for the community colleges," said economist Sarah Bohn, who authored the study.

A sea change

The cuts — and their aftermath — represent "a sea change in the goals" of the community college system, says the report.

For more than half a century, California's Master Plan for Higher Education established community colleges as a "cultural safety net for every resident who could benefit from instruction."

More than 2.9 million students were enrolled when the crisis hit in 2008. Since then, enrollment has plunged.

By 2012, enrollment was just above 2.4 million — a decline of 470,000 students, or 16 percent, even though the number of college-aged Californians rose by 7 percent.

The researchers aren't sure where the would-be students went. Enrollment has declined at California State and the University of California, Bohn said.

The college system didn't reject the students. In many cases, say the researchers, they were simply crowded out because there weren't enough classes for them.

Cracking under the weight of an unprecedented plunge in funding — $3.5 billion between 2008 and 2012 — the colleges cut courses by 21 percent, going from 420,000 to 334,000 in four years.

The arts suffered most, as they often do, with a loss of 3,667 course sections across the state, the report says. But more career-oriented subjects also were gutted. Nearly 2,300 business and management courses were erased, and more than 1,800 engineering courses vanished.

Other subjects most affected were education, interdisciplinary studies, humanities and public and protective services, says the report.

This also led to the loss of 3,017 "full-time equivalent" faculty jobs in that time — a figure that includes part-timers and therefore translates to the loss of many more individual instructors.

The loss is "horribly awful, but unfortunately not surprising," said Rich Copenhagen, president of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges and a student at the College of Alameda.

"I do know a number of students who just said screw it and worked instead of going to college," he said.

Frustrated students

"Students say, 'I can't get into my English or math classes, and I can't see a counselor, and I'm wasting tons of time,'" Copenhagen said. "And maybe they have a kid to feed or a family, so eventually the benefit just isn't there relative to the cost."

Eric Blanc, who studies computer science at City College of San Francisco, fears that people who are pushed out of community colleges will take out loans for expensive schools.

"That's what pushes them into debt," Blanc said. "The travesty is that voters have clearly expressed that they want more funds for education."

In November, nearly three-fourths of San Francisco voters approved Proposition A, a parcel tax for City College. Statewide, voters approved Proposition 30, a tax measure that allowed public colleges and universities to avoid additional deep cuts.

"Hundreds of thousands of students have been denied the opportunity to achieve their educational goals," said Paul Feist, a spokesman for Brice Harris, the state's community college chancellor.

"At the same time, economic forecasters have unanimously pointed to the need for more college-educated workers in California," Feist said. "With the passage of Prop. 30, community colleges are slowly starting to restore the access that was lost, but it will take years for the system to regain its original financial footing."

The new report questions whether that will ever happen and says the consequences will probably backfire.

"The likelihood of full restoration is slim," the study says.

"The current levels of funding, access (especially for first-time students) has become more difficult, thus raising concern about the ability of our public higher education system to produce the number of skilled workers demanded by California's economy."

Fewer students, courses at California's community colleges

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN ENROLLMENT

By category of student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Fall '08 - Fall '11</th>
<th>Spring '09 - Spring '12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuing student</td>
<td>-14.8</td>
<td>-10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning student</td>
<td>-36.5</td>
<td>-27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time student</td>
<td>-23.3</td>
<td>-28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time transfer student</td>
<td>-43.2</td>
<td>-36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special-admit student</td>
<td>-40.7</td>
<td>-44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncollected/unreported</td>
<td>-46.7</td>
<td>-46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State total</td>
<td>-7.8%</td>
<td>-9.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LARGEST CHANGES IN NUMBER OF COURSES

By course program category, fall 2008 to fall 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CREDIT COURSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine and applied arts</td>
<td>-3,617</td>
<td>-18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-3,568</td>
<td>-24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and management</td>
<td>-2,265</td>
<td>-21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary studies</td>
<td>-2,045</td>
<td>-21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and industrial technologies</td>
<td>-1,802</td>
<td>-20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities (letters)</td>
<td>-1,479</td>
<td>-6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public and protective services</td>
<td>-1,363</td>
<td>-21.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-22,886</td>
<td>-14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONCREDIT COURSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses for older adults</td>
<td>-2,646</td>
<td>-57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term vocational program</td>
<td>-957</td>
<td>-30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a second language</td>
<td>-436</td>
<td>-15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-5,058</td>
<td>-34.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Policy Institute of California

Todd Trumbull / The Chronicle

Nanette Asimov is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: nasimov@sfgate.com.
Thousands of tulips to be on showcase

Many Oakland florists will display exhibits

By J.M. Brown
Correspondent

OAKLAND — Spring will be in full bloom next weekend at Mountain View Cemetery as local florists show off their creative side during the eighth annual Tower Chapel Tulip Exhibition.

The Piedmont Avenue cemetery's Tower Chapel will be full of interesting arrangements and exhibits April 5-7, from garden club members and floral designers, some of whom will give demonstrations each day.

There will be a total of 25 exhibits.

"Every year it gets better and better," said Doreen Herbruger, customer service manager at the cemetery and organizer of the exhibition.

There is no cost to enter the cemetery or tulip event. Founders designed the exhibition to be free in hopes that it would attract many visitors at a time when people are tempted to use online florists rather than local businesses. "That was the first reason we decided to put together the show," Herbruger said. "This way it gives an opportunity for local florists to show what they can do."

IF YOU GO

What: Eighth annual Tower Chapel Tulip Exhibition

Where: Tower Chapel, Mountain View Cemetery, 5000 Piedmont Ave, Oakland

Cost: Free

Information: http://www.mountainviewcemetery.org/tulip.html

Artists often incorporate other kinds of flowers, branches, baskets and other props to bring the tulips alive. In 2010, an artist did a take on the animated Pixar film "Up," which incorporated a bounty of colorful balloons.

Kay Wolff, who teaches floral design at Merritt College, will demonstrate how to tie bouquets by hand on April 7. One of her students, an avid gardener, will use her own greenery and tulips to create a bouquet.

The hope is to get members of the audience in on the demonstration, Wolff said.

"It's a chance to interact with the public in a different format and give something back to the community that supports us," Wolff said.

"Celebrating spring is a big part of it."