

July 29, 2009

Dear Umoja Community Consortium Members,

First, we would like to thank you for your continued support of the Umoja Community of California Community Colleges. As you know, your contributions to the consortium are the only funds sustaining this statewide organization's efforts.

The organization continues to conduct many professional development trainings throughout the year, including two regional symposia focused on culturally responsive pedagogy in northern and southern California. The most significant training provided by the Umoja Community was the week-long Summer Learning Institute with 50 attendees, along with administrators from ten community colleges. The Institute included program development and implementation, culturally responsive pedagogy and practices, development of program-level student learning outcomes, building a sustainable learning community, effective student support services, grant-proposal writing strategies, and the basics in budget development.

The fifth annual Umoja Conference will be held at the Wyndham Hotel, San Jose, November 5-7, 2009, and will feature prominent keynote speakers: Dr. Molefi Kete Asante, Professor, Department of African Studies, Temple University; Dr. Mary Montle Bacon, CEO of Images of a Culture, and Mr. A. Saleem Shakir, Executive Director of Leadership Excellence, Incorporated.

Despite the dire economic outlook for California, the Umoja Community intentionally and deliberately strives to make *a way out of no way*. The system Budget Change Proposal (BCP) for 2009-2010, which would have provided statewide coordination funds, never made it out of the Department of Finance. However, the Umoja Community was successful in securing a small organizational effectiveness grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for \$50,000 which provides grant-proposal consultation services, the creation of marketing materials and website development. We will also pursue federal-appropriation grant opportunities as they arise.

We want to thank you for your support thus far; our ongoing work requires your continued support. We are twenty-seven colleges strong, including five community college districts in the consortium. In order for the Umoja Community to move forward and make progress, we must ask that you pay an annual membership fee of \$1000. This is a small price to pay for the success of our students, as our reward will be returned many times over in higher persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

We will send an invoice to your college for the annual membership. Please return it with your check made payable to the Foundation for California Community Colleges and mail it to the following address:

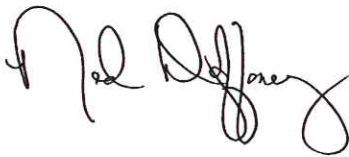
Foundation for California Community Colleges
Attn: Simon Lee, Senior Accountant
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If you have any questions regarding the program, feel free to contact me or the program co-chairs, Tom deWit, Northern California, 510-723-6821; tdewit@chabotcollege.edu or Donna Colondres, Southern California, 909-652-6226, donna.colondres@chaffey.edu.

Sincerely,



Dr. Helen Benjamin
Chancellor
Contra Costa Community College District



Dr. Ned Doffoney
Chancellor
North Orange County Community College District



Dr. Joel Kinnamon
Chancellor
Chabot-Las Positas Community College District