

Contact!

A newsletter for the faculty and staff of Doña Ana Community College | FEBRUARY 2008

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Accreditation site visit around the corner

In preparation for DACC's site visit taking place in three months, from April 28 to 30, this is the first in a series of three informational articles designed to make staff and faculty aware of DACC's history in the accreditation process, in addition to what to expect during the visit.

In 1998, when the Higher Learning Commission – then known as the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools – last visited the community college, the team spent only three hours on our campus because of a very tight schedule. At that time, enrolled were 4,197 students and DACC's staff and faculty numbered 193. We offered a total of 28 programs.

This year, when our statistics have grown to 7,809 students, 335 personnel, and 40 programs, the HCL evaluation team members will spend three full days instead of just three hours as they did last time, and they will have unlimited access to students, staff and faculty. Records, publications, receipts, and any materials they wish to see, also will be at their disposal, said President Margie C.

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David Burleson

Burleson named Roush Award winner

2007 Roush Award for Teaching Excellence Winner David Burleson began with DACC as an adjunct history instructor in 2003, moving to full time in 2005. He also currently is serving as interim department chair of Arts and Humanities.

Burleson retired from the U.S. Air Force after 25 years. Eighteen years were spent overseas, including tours in Europe, Asia and South America.

While in college, he was a work-study student in the NMSU Government Department, in which he earned a B.A. He also holds a Master's Degree in International Relations from Troy State University, European Division.

With years of experience in training in the service and having always wanted to teach,

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Adam Saiz

Saiz passes away at his home

With great sadness, we announce the passing of Adam Saiz, who worked in the DACC Snack Bar while completing his DACC degree in education.

He graduated from DACC in May of 2007, and was still working in the Snack Bar while an NMSU student.

The lifelong Las Cruces resident was 41.

He is survived by fiancée Melanie Wellborn, son Dillon and daughter Katlyn. Other survivors include parents Lorenzo and Jennie Saiz, brothers Lorenzo and Sammy, sister Marissa, and many others.

A fund has been set up for children Dillon and Katlyn; call 993-6813.

Everyone who came into contact with Adam remembers his jovial, optimistic nature and his wonderful kindness.

A Message from the President



This new year will be a great year for DACC. To start with, on April 28, the Higher Learning Commission, formerly the North Central Association, will be sending a site team of four community college staff members to visit DACC. Much has changed since their last visit in 1998, and I anticipate they will be impressed with the improvements in place and the growth of the college.

We have three months to finalize preparations for the visit. I am once again asking everyone to memorize the mission, vision and values statements. This time of preparation is also an opportunity to learn more about the college by reading and/or re-reading the self-study available on the web. The self-study is a document of great importance. It is expected that everyone will have become familiarized with it before the April visit.

Of major significance will be the amount of time the team will spend at our college. During the last visit, only a couple of the team members came to our college and were here only a few hours. This time they will be here three days and will meet with students, faculty and staff individually and by groups. We must be well prepared and poised to answer a range of questions about the college.

Accreditation of a program or institution is not only a process of peer review which ensures that the highest standards are being met; it is a reflection of the commitment to excellence shared by faculty, staff and students. I am confident that when the team arrives in April they will discover that the employees of DACC are among the best in the country!

Dr. Margie Huerta, President
Doña Ana Community College



Danny Mísquez

Mísquez retires after decades of service

Danny Mísquez, former construction technician supervisor II with Facilities Support at DACC, retired at the end of the fall 2007 semester, after having worked for DACC and NMSU for nearly 40 years.

His former co-worker in Facilities Support, Tony Sánchez, retired last year after more than 35 years of service.

He also is retired from a long period of service with the National Guard.

When asked what he's going to be doing, he said, "Taking it easy." We hope his retirement is very happy, and as successful as his career has been. We miss seeing him around the campus.



"DACC" sung to the tune of "YMCA" was a highlight of the recent convocation marking the beginning of the spring 2008 semester. Singing along were, from left, President Margie Huerta, Health and Public Services Dean David Pearse, and Interim Associate Interim Associate Campus Academic Officer John Walker. Campus Academic Officer Anna Chieffo is behind Pearse, and Campus Financial Officer Andy Burke is holding the first "C."

News Notes

- DACC's Adult Basic Education Division earned a prestigious distinction from the NMSU President's Office for being one of the top 30 divisions or departments university-wide that secured more than \$1,000,000 in 2006/2007. "Earning one of the NMSU's Millionaire Achievement Awards required the dedicated effort that each and every one of us brings to the table," said Division Dean Sylvia Durán Nickerson. "I proudly share this special distinction with the entire division staff!"
- An informational session will be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Jan. 31 at the East Mesa Campus for the HOST Club's trip to the Caribbean. "Bring along your sun block, snorkel, mask and fins," says Adviser Gemma Nicolson. Burgers will be sold for \$2 during the session. Trip dates: May 29–June 2, 2008. Total cost of trip: \$1500.00; includes airfare, hotel, island tour (St. Thomas and St. John), transportation to and from all group activities, and some meals. A deposit of \$500.00 (nonrefundable) is due on Jan. 31. Guest speakers will make presentations.

Getting to know our colleagues

DACC now employs more than 335 faculty and staff members. It seems the larger we get, the less opportunity we have to get to know our co-workers personally. To help bring us together a little more, Contact! will be featuring some of the newest additions to our family along with some who have been with us awhile.



Mike Teitsworth

Assistant Professor of English Mike Teitsworth is a familiar face to many old-timers at DACC — not only to personnel, but to many students and graduates.

His current position started August of '07, but he's been associated with DACC since 1987 — first as a student. He then began working in the tutor center, where he continued for many years. Teitsworth worked as an English tutor beginning in 1989, and served as the tutor coordinator from 1997 until last August.

"Tutoring strongly influenced my decision to go into education," he said. "I earned a bachelor's in journalism and master's in English rhetoric and composition — both from NMSU."

Tutor of the Year, the Extra Mile Award and the Faculty Service Award are some of his honors earned at DACC.

Seemingly blessed with infinite energy, Teitsworth's hobbies include playing and coaching soccer, working out, photography, music and spending time with family and friends.

"I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area but moved here to be closer to family — I'm now truly a desert rat," he said. His mom, Mary Teitsworth, is employed at DACC, and so is his aunt, Roberta Parker. "I have a big, wonderful family."

He also has three dogs — a retriever mix, a black lab and a 170-lb. English mastiff, along with a little cat "who thinks she's a dog," he said.



Karen Heard

Anyone who has heard Heard — Karen Heard, that is — sing at DACC's talent show (or a similar event) knows that this lady can really belt 'em out!

She's had the opportunity to sing with some country and Western songwriters, such as Steve Spurgin, the writer for Gene Watson, and fiddle player Bruce Johnson, who played with Reba McEntyre.

Karen also runs a free coffee house on Wednesday nights at Calvary Baptist Church. She invites anyone to drop by for a cup of coffee, hot chocolate or hot apple cider.

Heard volunteers as the "prop mistress" for the Las Cruces Community Theater. Aside from singing and theater, she loves arts and crafts and bowling.

A Mayfield H.S. alum, Karen works in the Personnel Office at DACC as a records tech II. She has worked in purchasing and risk management at NMSU and has been an associate librarian with Las Cruces Public Schools.

The New Orleans native moved here in 1969 with her parents. Heard lives on campus with her two daughters, one of whom, Connie, is in DACC's Emergency Medical Technician Program.

She is a published poet, and her poetry can be read online at Poetry.com. She has received many awards for her poetry, and once received a letter from the late comedian Milton Berle, complimenting her on a humorous poem called, "Ode to a Golfer."



Paula Leighton

Paula Leighton says she "enjoys seeing that satisfied look on learners' faces when they have that wonderful 'aha!' moment," and adds that she can empathize because she learned "new math."

The instructional specialist with Adult Basic Education's Literacy Volunteers of Doña Ana County also is a GED instructor in math, English, science and social studies.

She holds numerous degrees, all from Eastern New Mexico University–Portales. These include two bachelor's degrees, one in elementary and special education, and the other in Secondary English. She also has an M.A. in reading instruction and has held administrative and lead instructor licensure since 1990.

Retired from more than 30 years of teaching in New Mexico, Leighton taught second grade in Ruidoso, secondary special education in Texico, secondary special education and night school in Clovis, and secondary special education at Mayfield High School. She also spent a year working for an independent school improvement company with Navajos in New Mexico. Educators run in her family.

Born in Oklahoma, Leighton and her parents moved to Hatch and later Las Cruces. After graduating from Las Cruces High, she left for school in Portales, and finally returned to this area in 1997.

"I can be a fountain of trivial information, but not so much about sports. That's the kind of thing that usually sparks a learner's interest," she said. Gardening, photography, theatre, volunteering, horseback riding and RVing are other interests.

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Getting Acquainted, continued from page 1



Mary Ann Graver

Mary Ann Graver is now the administrative secretary III for the Business and Information Systems Division at the East Mesa Campus. She started with DACC in November.

She earned an associate degree in Secretarial Administration and Microcomputer Bookkeeping from DACC, and also a bachelor's degree in marketing and management with an economics minor from NMSU.

Before joining DACC, she worked on the NMSU main campus, first at the Office of Facilities Services work-order desk and later with the Payroll Office in Hadley Hall.

"I have my own bookkeeping service which I do on weekends or evenings. I started it in 1993, first doing it full-time and now just doing it part-time," she said.

New York born and bred with NYC as her birthplace, Graver came to Las Cruces in 1975 "for the warm, sunny climate seeking to improve my health. I have had rheumatoid arthritis for over 40 years). Needless to say, I do much better in the warm, dry air," she said.

She was twice hired to do marketing, but each employer then started using her secretarial skills, which she also enjoys.

She has three grown daughters, three sons-in-law, five granddaughters, and a grandson. "My oldest daughter is about to adopt a second boy so I will have two grandsons by next month," Graver said.

Hobbies include oil painting – mainly landscapes; and all types of needle craft – sewing, knitting, crocheting, counted cross stitch, etc.

"I love to travel, and three years ago got to take a trip to Australia – in one word – fantastic!" she said. "I plan to purchase a camper soon so that I can tour the whole Southwest thoroughly, starting in my spare time now and then continuing later when I retire."



John Scarbrough

"I relocated here to enjoy the sunshine and escape the high price-tag of 'paradise' in Hawaii," says John Scarbrough, adding, "there's lots of beach here, just not so much water."

He's very much a newcomer at DACC, having started in his position as Nursing instructor on Jan. 2.

His several degrees include a bachelor's in music performance from the University of Southern Mississippi, a bachelor's in physical therapy from the University of South Alabama, and an associate degree in nursing from St. Petersburg College (Florida). A master's degree in nursing education from the University of Hawaii is anticipated for May '08.

"Next is a Ph.D. in nursing," he said.

He worked as a physical therapist in rehabilitation 1995-2003 after having been a transporter, aide, etc. while in school. Telemetry, wound/skin/os-tomy clinician, and nurse manager for hospital-based skilled nursing unit make up his nursing background.

"I went into teaching after years of precepting physical therapy and nursing students, and finding that is what I truly love," he said.

Originally from the Deep South, John admits, "You can hear it in my voice."

Not a slacker, he has completed four full marathons (26.2 miles each).

Scarbrough's partner, Kevin, is a computer programmer, and is working from home and telecommuting with a company in San Francisco. He designs Websites and programs for a travel agency company. It's like working for Expedia, Travelocity, Orbitz, Scarbrough says.

"We love living here," Scarbrough says, "and I'm extremely happy to be a part of the DACC Nursing Program Faculty."



Sandy Katayanagi

Administrative Secretary II Sandy Katayanagi began working at DACC's East Mesa Center last October. She is with the Business and Information Systems Division.

Katayanagi shares an office with Mary Ann Graver, featured on page 3.

She holds a B.A. in radio and television from San Francisco State University,

Sandy worked in radio for three years in California, but found that she didn't enjoy it. Other prior employers include ClientLogic, Aldershot of New Mexico, Kaiser Permanente, and Levi Strauss & Co., for which her last position was business analyst for ladies' and men's wear. She has worked in human resources and as a sales representative and a training consultant.

Originally from Lafayette, Calif., Katayanagi moved here "to live a pleasant, less rushed life," she said.

She has a husband and two stepchildren ages 26 and 23.

Photography is a hobby, and she's currently taking a Creative Media Technology class at EMC to learn more about the digital aspects of photography. She reports that she very much enjoys learning the marvelous things that can be done through digital photography.

Dental lab nears completion

Things are shaping up nicely in the new Dental Lab, which eventually will offer dental services to the public, giving students hands-on training under the watchful eyes of Evelyn Hobbs, Martha McCaslin, and other faculty members, who are eager to get the facilities into operation. Left: state-of-the-art lab facilities. Below: waiting room for patients from the community.



Accreditation, continued from page 1

Huerta. A DACC team has been compiling materials for the team members to review; however, members may ask others of you for items. Offices need to be organized and files easily accessible.

“Unlike the 1998 visit, this will be much more comprehensive,” Huerta said. “We will feel their presence. We want our faculty and staff to be prepared for their visit, and to be able to answer any questions about the community college.”

All personnel are expected to be flexible and available to talk to team members at any time in order to provide them with what they need. Group meetings may be called, or staff and/or faculty members may be met with on an individual basis. This includes nonexempt personnel, as well, Huerta said. She also says that she is not certain how much time members will be able to spend at the East Mesa Campus and our satellites, but she does expect them to do so.

“This will be an opportunity to show that we are a strong institution, prepared for their visit,” Huerta said.

Among things everyone should know are the DACC Mission Statement, Core Values, and Vision Statement, concepts that are printed, framed and hanging in every classroom.

In addition, Huerta said that faculty and staff alike should know of the changes we’ve made since the last visit, and our success in meeting the goals the team set for us. In 1998, the team named two primary challenges for the community college to meet. The first of these was making General Education courses more available in order to meet the needs of the students.

“In the fall of 2001, we were offering 11 sections of General Education. Now, not only do we have many more sections, we also offer Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. And they are offered at each of our locations,” Huerta said.

The second challenge had to do with offering freshmen at DACC developmental education while, at the same time, streamlining the transfer process for those who wanted to go on to NMSU with a transition plan. This is when the University Transition Program was developed.

“We have successfully addressed those challenges,” Huerta said, adding that this year’s visiting team will have read all of the challenges and will be asking personnel and even students how the community college has met these goals.

Huerta brought up the good news that, at its recent meeting, the NMSU Board of Regents approved NMSU’s and DACC’s HLC self-studies.

Watch for more helpful information in the upcoming newsletters concerning preparation for the HLC evaluation visit.

Burleson, continued from page 1

Burleson chose college level after being discouraged by the state from teaching in the public schools.

His father also was in the Air Force, so Burleson moved around a lot while growing up. He was born in Couvron, Aisne, France. He finished High School in Alamogordo, and moved to Las Cruces for his final assignment as the Air Force Representative to the US Army Air Defense Artillery School.

His family includes wife, Tanya Montoya, systems engineer at WSMR; daughter, Adriana Celeste Burke of Abilene, Tex.; son, SSG Geoffrey, US Army, currently serving in Iraq; and son, Roque Burleson, senior at N.M. Tech, graduating in May 2008 with a dual degree in electrical engineering and computer science; son Jeremiah, a senior at NMSU, graduating in May 2008 with a B.A. in history and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, as well as a part-time DACC employee; son Micah, an Airman, in the U.S. Air Force, currently in Chinese linguist training in Monterey, Calif.

Burleson is the guardian of Aikaterina (Kat), 4 years old, and Jacqueline, 1, while their mother and father are in Iraq for 15 months.

Concerning the Roush Award for Excellence in Teaching, named for Donald C. Roush, a former NMSU executive vice president in recognition of his 35 years of teaching improvement in New Mexico, Burleson says he is honored.

“For me the true measure of the award is the list of those who have won the award before me—a group I consider to be great instructors,” he said. “It is humbling to join their ranks.”