Orange Coast College Meet and Greet

On Thursday, August 6, I was pleased to participate in a Meet and Greet at Orange Coast College. President Dennis Harkins, along with his dedicated staff, faculty and administrators hosted a warm welcome reception in the Student Center Lounge. I learned of OCC’s upcoming Focus Day – an all day campus event featuring various speakers to be held on August 28. A soft opening of the new Business, Math and Computing Center will take place on that same day for the students and faculty. We were lucky to have scheduled the welcome reception near the same time as the OCC Classified Senate’s Cow Pie Bingo Fundraiser for Scholarships. Without delay from many of the reception attendees, we mosied on down to the OCC Softball Field to enjoy refreshments, watch the roping demonstrations, and of course, wait for ol’ Bessie to place her pie in a number of bingo squares. Thank you to Trustee Mary Hornbuckle for joining in the fun and to all those that came out to help raise funds for scholarships. The Meet and Greet put me in great spirits for the Party ‘til the Cows Come Home event tonight.
Don’t Wait, Until It’s Too Late
Open Enrollment Available Through September 2

This week I have been working with Vice Chancellor Cindy Vyskocil and her staff on spreading the message about Open Enrollment. During this time of the year, it’s vital that we as a district, share the options available to meet the health care needs of our employees. Throughout the year, the District’s Benefits Office follow the changes of regulations and fluctuations in costs as it may relate to our existing benefits package. Currently, we are keeping a watchful eye on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirements that lie ahead: the employee mandate, IRS reporting, the Cadillac tax and more.

Planning ahead – effective Jan. 1, 2018 – the ACA will impose a tax on high-cost health coverage, commonly referred to as the “Cadillac tax.” The tax is a 40 percent nondeductible excise tax that applies for any month where the employees’ coverage exceeds a threshold amount. Our goal over time will be to reduce costs to ensure that coverage falls beneath the threshold. Due to the cost sharing formula for high-cost coverage, any district employees with PPO plans will be subject to incur portions of the Cadillac Tax -- approximated to be nearly 3.8 million dollars.

During Open Enrollment it’s important that employees are active participants by educating themselves about their existing plan, assess their needs, re-evaluate their choices, and save money where they can. The District Benefits Office is here to help.

Employees can visit http://www.cccd.edu/employees/benefitsinformation/Documents/MedicalPlanComparison.pdf to compare our medical plans and can contact the Benefits Office if they have additional questions.
Public Awareness Campaign – Don’t Forget. Double Check.

In coordination with Coastline Community College, Golden West College and Orange Coast College, the District will collaborate with the Raise Foundation and various other partners including the Orange County Fire Authority and the Orange County Sheriff’s Department to promote a public awareness campaign focused on Kaitlyn’s Law. This California law, which passed in 2002, makes it illegal to leave a child unattended in a car.

On average, 37 children perish each year from heat-related deaths after being left inside a car. As of June 2015, 32 children nationwide have perished this way. In California, the law is named after a southern California infant, Kaitlyn, who at 6-months-old perished from heat-related complications after being left unattended in a motor vehicle. California is one of 19 states to have such a law.

This life saving message will be displayed on signs through the month of August. The signs will be sparsely posted on all three college campuses—Coastline Community College, Golden West College and Orange Coast College. The purpose of the campaign is to inform and educate college students, faculty and administrators about the threats of leaving children unattended in a vehicle, despite any weather conditions. View the district press release to learn more (attached).

Activities Calendar

As an active and engaged Trustee, you understand the challenges that exist when managing your schedule so that you may attend college, district and community events. In an effort to ensure continuity in scheduling and to avoid the overlapping of college events, I have requested that all College Presidents work with their staff to create one central Activities Calendar. I am asking that college and district staff work with each other to ensure that the most relevant information about activities exist on one main calendar. I will be sure to keep you updated about the progress of this helpful tool.

Sincerely,

Gene Farrell, Interim Chancellor
Coast Colleges Partner with County Agencies to Launch Kaitlyn’s Law Awareness Campaign – Don’t Forget. Double Check.

Costa Mesa, Calif. – In collaboration with The Raise Foundation (Orange County’s Child Abuse Prevention Council), the Orange County Social Services Agency, the Orange County Fire Authority, and the Orange County Sheriff’s Department, the Coast Community College District will be participating in a month-long campaign to spread the awareness of Kaitlyn’s Law. This California law, which passed in 2002, makes it illegal to leave a child unattended in a car. The importance of educating communities about Kaitlyn’s Law is most critical during the hottest months of the year.

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“On behalf of Coast Colleges, we are eager to participate in such an important awareness campaign,” noted Gene Farrell, the District’s Interim Chancellor. “It is a dangerous mistake that parents or caregivers could easily make. The chance to educate the community we serve is an opportunity that we cannot pass up.”

This life saving message will be displayed on signs through the month of August. The signs will be posted near health and child-care centers on all three college campuses—Coastline Community College, Golden West College and Orange Coast College. The purpose of the campaign is to inform and educate college students, faculty and administrators about the threats of leaving children unattended in a vehicle, despite any weather conditions.

“The Don't Forget. Double Check. awareness campaign message is first and foremost to serve as a reminder to families and caregivers; yet we also ask the entire community to become and remain vigilant. No matter how rushed a person is, please glance into cars—especially at baby car seats—to ensure no child is left unattended,” said The Raise Foundation Executive Director, Eldon Baber.
What should someone do if they see a child left unattended in a car? Call 911 immediately. Alert the parent/caregiver and a security guard if they are nearby. Other reminder tips, downloadable fliers, and other FAQs can be found at www.RaiseForKaitlyn.Weebly.com

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The Coast Community College District is headquartered in Costa Mesa and is the ninth largest district in the country. The District’s three colleges—Coastline Community College in Fountain Valley, Golden West College in Huntington Beach and Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa—serve over 60,000 students annually, providing traditional degree and transfer opportunities, career and technical training, basic skills, English as a Second Language and other community programs.