



President's Board Report

June 12, 2008

Mother Nature Forces Commencement to June 11th on SBVC Campus

Now that the tornadoes, lightning bolts, thunder, hail and snow are gone, all signs point to a safe and celebratory San Bernardino Valley College commencement on Wednesday, June 11th back on campus in the Greek Theatre.

The Greek Theatre was the home of SBVC's graduations since the late 1930's, but due to an increase in the number of graduates and a major construction project, the college outgrew the facility. The Inland Empire 66er's baseball club offered the use of its 5,000 seat major league ballpark and SBVC has conducted its graduations in that facility since 2004.

Over the last few weeks, SBVC staff has been busy re-planning an event that will honor our graduates and notifying graduates of the rescheduled date through the web, e-mail and telephone. To catch a recap of the event, look for a report at www.valleycollege.edu.



Unlike the scene above at Arrowhead Credit Union Park on May 22nd, the preliminary forecast for Wednesday, June 11th calls for sunny skies in the upper 80's.

13th Annual "Spotlighting Our Success" Event Recognizes Top Faculty & Staff

The 13th Annual "Spotlighting Our Success" faculty/staff awards celebration was held on Tuesday, May 13th at the Campus Center with approximately 150 employees in attendance.

Emceed by Dr. Debra Daniels, nine awards were given in seven categories along with certificates for individual faculty members who advanced in academic rank in 2008. In addition, Chef Stacy Meyer (herself a nominee in the Outstanding Professor category) and her culinary arts team provided a dazzling array of hors d'oeuvres and desserts for all in attendance.

Here is the list of winners:



Honored Retiree

Stephen Sandlin - Geography

Manager of the Year

Dr. Queen Hamilton – Dean, Career/Technical Division

Innovator of the Year

Paul Rubalcaba – Community Relations & Resource Development, SBVC Foundation

Outstanding Service Award

Dr. Diana Avila - Mathematics

SBCCD District Employee of the Year Award

Donna Hoffmann – District Director, Marketing & Public Relations

Outstanding Professors

Carol Cook - Physiology

Leticia Hector - Speech

Classified Employees of the Year

Rose Garcia - Administrative Secretary, Science Division

Joy Hadnot - Administrative Secretary, Counseling and Matriculation Division



Carol Cook (far left) receives the 2008 Outstanding Professor Award from 2007 recipients Patti Wall and Allen Moore.

SBVC Takes Active Role in Extra Edge Program

Three separate events in April and May with SBVC and Cesar E. Chavez Middle School were aimed at focusing middle school students on making college a goal.

The first, a Parent Night held at the middle school on April 16th featured welcoming remarks by Principal Stephanie Cereceres, a former SBCCD board member and President of the SBVC Foundation, opening remarks by President Deb Daniels, and presentations by Damon Bell, Dan Angelo, and Kericia Sarpy on reasons to attend college, college opportunities, and financial aid. Approximately 140 students and parents attended.

The second component of the program took place on April 18th and included in-class presentations by SBVC faculty and administrators to students in the AVID program. The presenters talked about the importance of education in their lives, their own career paths, and career choices within their own fields.

The third component of the program entailed a campus tour on April 30th. More than 200 students from Cesar Chavez Middle School, as well as teachers and counselors arrived for a tour along with lunch and an opportunity drawing in the Greek Theatre.

High School Seniors Visit SBVC For Financial Aid Day

SBVC welcomed 450 high school seniors from local high schools on Friday, April 25th to view the programs and services at the college and to provide information about the types of financial aid available.

Students heard a financial aid presentation, enjoyed a performance of a scene from Nunsense, April's Theatre Arts musical production, and attended a variety of workshops on such topics as glassblowing, graphic arts, careers in business, college choices, and technology training. Students also took a general tour of the campus and were treated to lunch in the Greek Theatre.



Art Professor James Stewart gives a glass-blowing demonstration to prospective students.

\$55,000 in Scholarships Awarded to SBVC Students

More than 222 scholarships were awarded at the San Bernardino Valley College Annual Scholarship Awards Night on Wednesday, May 7th in the SBVC Auditorium.

Including the ongoing textbook scholarships granted throughout the academic year, the evening's gifting totaled nearly \$55,000 in aid directly to students currently pursuing their education at San Bernardino Valley College. Students Robert Young and Michelle Sambrano each received the most scholarships of the night with four.

Beyond the groundbreaking Valley-Bound Commitment which will provide a free SBVC education to graduating students from Colton High School that meet the basic requirements, several new scholarships were announced that will be given beginning next academic year:

- Margaret Dodds-Schumacher Memorial Scholarship – In honor of the long-time faculty member who passed away earlier this Spring.
- San Bernardino Confidential Management Association Endowed Scholarship – For local high school seniors of parents who work for the city of San Bernardino (\$500 per semester beginning this fall).
- Children's Fund for Foster Youth – A \$24,000 endowed scholarship that will provide two \$500 scholarships per semester for a qualified foster youth attending SBVC.

In addition, a general announcement was shared about the historic gift of \$50 million to the California Community Colleges by the Bernard Osher Foundation. The donation represents the single largest gift to a community college system in the nation and will assist students at each of California's 109 community colleges beginning in 2009—including San Bernardino Valley College.

SBVC Students Visit California State Capitol

Leaving late on Sunday, May 11th at 11:45 p.m., more than two dozen SBVC students traveled through the night via bus to reach Sacramento by morning to speak with California state legislators about education, school fees, and the issues that affect students seeking a higher education.

Jointly sponsored by the Associated Students and Political Science Departments, this trip was an excellent opportunity for SBVC students to interact with politicians, trainers and aides face to face.

The following legislators and VIPs were met and greeted by SBVC students.

Assemblyman Bill Emmerson of Redlands
Steve Henderson of the California School Employee Association
Senator Robert Dutton
Senator Jack Scott
Assemblymember and SBVC Alumnus Wilmer Amina Carter
Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod
Assemblymember Mervyn M. Dymally
Senator Lloyd Levine
Office of Lieutenant Governor, John Garamendi

A strong believer in public service, Assemblymember Carter recounted her political path and encouraged students to continue pursuing educational opportunities. In the words of her grandfather, "If you get an education, no one can take it away from you, and education will take you into any field you want to go."

Special thanks to Dr. Edward Millican, Professor John Longville, and Mary Valdemar for making the trip memorable for our students.

May Outreach Activities

Beyond the regularly scheduled school appearances and campus visitations, one notable event was very well attended:

Saturday, 5/10

New Community Center Opening at Anne Shirrells Park -- Over 850 people attended the day-long event which included a table for San Bernardino Valley College. The opening of the new community center at Anne Shirrells Park is consistent with Mayor Patrick J. Morris 18-point plan to reduce crime and violence in the city of San Bernardino and improving long-term measurable outcomes for children, families, and youth through a holistic approach which is inclusive of prevention, intervention, and suppression initiatives as well as education.

Student Profile: SBVC Student Aretha Franklin Is The “Queen of Determination”

Most people may know soul singer Aretha Franklin as the undisputed “Queen of Soul”, but the Inland Empire’s version of Aretha Franklin graduated on June 11th from San Bernardino Valley College and could very well be nicknamed the “Queen of Determination”.

Aretha’s inspiring story is not just about overcoming tragedies and the results of persevering through sheer determination, it’s about positively changing her future and the opportunities of those around her forever.

This San Bernardino resident graduated with an A.A. degree in Liberal Studies along with a 3.6 GPA, and is transferring to Cal State University San Bernardino in the Fall—none of which came easily.

FAMILY TRAGEDIES

As the oldest of four children growing up in Pasadena, Aretha never knew that losing her father to cancer when she was 22 would only be the first hurdle she would face in her life.

In 2001, when Aretha was 31, her mother was also diagnosed with cancer but refused to let her family know until she could no longer hide the effects of the disease.

“We didn’t even know she was dying” Aretha shared. “We knew that she was sick and I was already helping take care of my younger brother while mom tried desperately to provide for our family.”

Before cancer could take her life, and before Aretha and her family had a chance to say goodbye, her mother was at home in her L.A. apartment when someone she had a previous altercation with over money knocked on her door, forced their way inside the apartment and murdered her.

The still-as-yet unsolved crime left Aretha as the de facto parent figure to her family and has left wounds that may never completely heal.

“We’ve never had any closure as a family because we know the person who did this is still out there,” Aretha said.



SBVC graduate Aretha Franklin

MOVING BEYOND

Fast forward to 2004, and Aretha is now living in San Bernardino, married with a 4-year old daughter named Ahtera (Aretha spelled backwards), and trying to make ends meet for their family—which includes her younger brother Chauncey.

After moving from one dead end job to the next, Aretha realized that she didn’t want to continue living in the awkward financial state of barely getting by from month to month, yet making too much money to qualify for any assistance.

So, in 2004, at the age of 34, Aretha took matters into her own hands and applied to San Bernardino Valley College—something that nobody in her family has ever tried.

“I realized that I needed to focus on my future, and I immediately qualified for financial aid to help offset some of my expenses which was a tremendous relief,” Aretha said. “It was difficult to train myself to go back into a school setting with so many young people around me, but I was determined.”

Aretha joined the STAR Program which helped provide her with additional services—including tutoring for those pesky math classes.

“Math was always an obstacle, and I needed all the help I could get just to pass,” Aretha admitted.

NEW CHALLENGES

But, when her marriage began to fall apart in 2007, she was once again faced with a new set of challenges—court mediation, child support, new financial obstacles and emotional frustration.

“I quickly realized that I had no emotional outlet without my mother or father to help me through this stage of life—and, honestly, I don’t know how I didn’t fail all my classes,” Aretha said. “My only method of coping was to lock myself in the house, turn off my social life, and not let anybody in while I poured myself into my books and tried to focus on a brighter future.”

Throughout the last year, Aretha has persevered as a full-time student, full-time mom, and a full-time employee as a security guard working the graveyard shift. A typical day finds her trying to keep up with her family commitments, focusing on her classes and studying, and then reporting to work at 11 p.m. before managing a measly 4-5 hours of sleep each night.

“I keep telling my daughter that she can be whatever she wants to be in life because she won’t have things as difficult as I did,” Aretha said. “I’m practically begging her to stay in school and stay with me so that she can focus solely on her education and not on all the distractions that I faced in life.”

On Wednesday, June 11th, with more than 20 friends and extended family members in attendance, she’ll be the first in her family to receive a college degree as the next chapter in her quest to become an elementary school teacher—and eventually a school principal.

“I’m on my way to the top. There’s no stopping me now. I just might dance across that graduation stage,” Aretha said.

And that is something the “Queen of Soul” could certainly “R-E-S-P-E-C-T”.