



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DECEMBER  
2023

REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT KARAS



As the year draws to a close, let's take a moment to celebrate the spirit of our college community. We have much to be grateful for and much to be proud of this year. I hope that during this festive season, you will have a moment to reflect on the impact this College has upon our students and our community, as well as your role in helping us achieve our mission. "Mendocino College partners with a dynamic community of diverse students to help them achieve their educational goals. Informed by research, reflection, dialogue, equity and anti-racist practices the College is committed to student success and achievement. Mendocino College embraces its role as an intellectual, economic, and cultural anchor for the region." My hope is that as a member of the Mendocino College community, you have the support you need to thrive and collegiality you need to succeed. There is no limit to what we can accomplish if we all work together!

Wishing you a peaceful and restorative winter break and the happiest of festive seasons.

I was notified that Mendocino College is being named as an example of equitable dual enrollment in a memo from the CCC Chancellor's Office. The purpose of this memo is to support and "empower" college faculty, staff, and administrators in providing more equitable dual enrollment, specifically by demonstrating how dual enrollment advances the three goals of Vision 2030: Equity in Access, Equity in Support, and Equity in Success.

Specifically, we are noted "Between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years, Mendocino College nearly doubled the number of Native students in dual enrollment. In a concentrated, post-pandemic effort to support more Native students, Mendocino College increased the dual enrollment offerings at the high school that serves the highest number of Native students...".

## SPRING 2024 ENROLLMENT

SEMESTER	DAY	ACTIVE ENROLLMENTS	ACTIVE STUDENTS	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	TOTAL FTES
SPRING 2024	-49	4466	1615	413	1202	448.02
SPRING 2023	-49	2777	974	261	713	292.43
SPRING 2020	-49	3516	1149	389	760	351.2

Enrollment for Spring 2024 is open. Early indications are very positive. I want to acknowledge the staff, faculty, and managers from across the district who have worked diligently to re-connect with our community and create additional opportunities for student support and success.

## NURSING ADMISSION PROCESS

As a follow-up to public comments related to our nursing program application and selection process, I want to provide some core information. Districts are not allowed by law to give preference to residents of the district or base admissions on race/ethnicity. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office allows nursing programs in community colleges to use either a straight lottery system (once required prerequisites are met) OR a multi-criteria (merit-based) screening tool.

After doing extensive research into the feasibility of adopting the multi-criteria admissions tool, the director of the nursing program at Mendocino College found that this process, which gives points for high GPAs and high scores on the ATI TEAS test (and no points for residing in the district or for being of a certain race or ethnicity), actually benefits students who have taken many college-level classes, have accumulated large numbers of college credits, or have advanced college degrees. Typically, these students are more apt to live in urban areas where there are a number of colleges and universities within a reasonable distance. The student living in a rural area, where the opportunities for college education are fewer, are at a disadvantage. Many of the applicants who have had the luxury of attending several colleges submit applications with GPA's between 3.8 and 4.0. They also score well on the ATI TEAS test (80% and above).

Mendocino College currently uses the approved random selection process (lottery) for admissions. In general, see chart below for the number of students admitted to the program who live in our district.

Year of Graduation	Mendocino County	Lake County	Sonoma County	Beyond Sonoma
2023	14	4	6	0
2022	18	5	3	0
2021	17	6	1	0
2020	17	4	1	2
2019	22	5	0	0

It is important to note that, approximately 30% of nursing students enrolled at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) are from Mendocino and Lake Counties. In fact, of the four full time faculty in the Mendocino College RN Program, two are graduates of the Mendocino College RN Program, one graduated from SRJC, and one graduated from Sonoma State. Many students who apply to the nursing program at Mendocino College also apply to SRJC.

For the currently enrolled cohort of nursing students (Class of 2025), 54% of the students identify as Hispanic/Latino, 42% identify as Caucasian, and 4% identify as Native American. Of these 24 students, 8% are male and 92% are female.

The program is in dialog with the Chancellor's Office about altering the current admissions process concerning repeated applications. Because there is definitely the potential for an applicant to the Mendocino College RN Program to never be chosen in the lottery, we hope to begin to offer admission to applicants who have submitted a predetermined number of qualified, eligible applications to the program but have not been chosen by the lottery. We hope to roll out this plan with the upcoming RN Program Application Period in Spring 2024.

Members of the public can advocate through their elected officials to make changes to the laws governing admissions to Community College nursing programs. The University of California and California State University systems are not controlled by the legal requirements pertaining to California Community Colleges. Therefore, they can give local residents preference in the application process, while community colleges are not able to give preference to local applicants.

## AGRICULTURE UPDATES

### EDIBLE GARDEN

In spring of 2023, our landscape construction class designed and built an “edible garden” landscape with 5 different kinds of media- moss rock, ledgerstone, Arizona flagstone, and Country Manor and Country Cobble block for walls and pavers. It is also getting a fountain in the middle that the ceramics class offered to design and create. The students designed it with a little help from me picking the material, however they did all of the work installing it. We will be adding the plants this year. You should check it out!



### HOOPHOUSE

We are adding a new permanent hoophouse that my Greenhouse Projects class is currently building. The students learned a little math, geometry, and how to use a laser level.



## AGRICULTURE UPDATES CONT.

### AGRICULTURE IN THE JAIL

In other news, we just had our second semester of agriculture classes taught at the Ukiah jail courtesy of Rising Scholars grant program, and an excellent faculty to teach it, Joshua Sternberg. Here is a quote from Joshua: "It was a bit of a grind, but we got through the material and the students were able to get the fall garden planted with crops they seeded and some donations from Jake. It looks beautiful. Some of the students had never been to school and some said that it had been a very long time since they completed anything. So, all in all, a lot of wins over here".

### DRONE PROGRAM

We are also in the middle of starting a drone program here at MCC with a pilot course starting soon. We have the instructor, covered marketing, and now working on curriculum. We'll be 1 of only 3 community colleges in California with a program.

### COAST CENTER CLASSES

We also just finished our first semester out at the North Coast Center with an agriculture class taught on campus and conducting their labs out at the Victory Gardens of Peace at the Stanford Inn. We have a wonderful instructor who is well known in the organic farming circles for his teachings at the Victory Gardens of Peace. Some of our ag classes have taken field trips out there. We are very fortunate to have Matthew Drewno as an adjunct instructor out there. He has a good connection to the local community.

### PLANT SALE

And last but not least...we are working on a Q&R code usage for the plant sale. On the plant cards themselves that sit in front of all the plants that show a picture of the flower, cultural requirements, and zones, we will have a Q&R code to scan that will give you all the ethnobotany information on that specific plant. A lot of customers have been asking about pertinent information on medicinal usage, Native American usages, etc. So, this will allow us to add more information without having to make a bigger card. This will greatly advance our nursery in the "computer and information age". I think the public will love it!!

Always keeping busy down here trying to improve things, making things more accessible, and stay up with current trends.

## ART ON CAMPUS

The Art Departments have been working on creating displays to make art more visible on campus.

The Coast Center is currently hosting a Student Art Show until December 14th that includes ceramics, photography, and drawing.



In the Library Building Lobby there is a display in memory of Doug Browe with a selection of his works.

In the Library there is a display of works from ART Clay Sculpture Students interpreting the heart as a metaphor. Included are select sculptures by our new head of the Ceramics, Wesley Wright.



The Library is also hosting a display featuring work from Fundamentals of Drawing and Color and Composition.

Lastly, the Ceramics Department hosted a successful Ceramics Sale on December 2nd along with the Agriculture Department and Caring Kitchen. Thank you for supporting the arts at Mendocino College!

## COLEGAS: COUNSELING WITH CARINO

### Puente's Approach to Transfer Prep

Some members of our Counseling department and new HSI grant staff attended the COLEGAS Counseling with Cariño workshop led by Luis Chavez, Senior Director at Career Ladders Project on November 17th at Chabot College. Those in attendance included Counselors, HSI Grant Director, Retention specialists and the Vice President of Student Services. They discussed the critical role counselors play in helping implement the Guided Pathways initiative. The discussions focused on how to turn to student success teams, coaching and advising models to support our marginalized students. These approaches can be infused into our guided pathways redesign work.



## SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

On November 30, 2023, we hosted a group of Sonoma State University leaders, lead by Vice-President of Strategic Enrollment Dr. Ed Mills, to discuss strengthening our partnership. A signature partnership is the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program offered at Mendocino College. We look forward to growing this program and the addition of a teacher education pathway.

## PUENTE'S FIRST NOCHE DE FAMILIA

Our first cohort of Puente students participated in the inaugural Noche de Familia on November 7th. The event took place in Lowery and students came together to enjoy a delicious meal, as well as activities, and discussions. Many went home with prizes from a plethora of wonderful raffle options. The students were provided with final exam goodie packs filled with all the items a student might find useful while preparing for the Fall final exams. Puente leaders: Apryl Guisasola, John Rall and Leslie Banta coordinated activities to celebrate the students' commitment to their academic goals and had a panel discussion to provide pointers on how to stay on track. Puente members were encouraged to invite their support team. Some brought family members all the way from Fort Bragg, while others brought teammates straight from softball practice. It was a great kick-off for our first year offering Puente to students.



## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE CELEBRATION

The 2023 Native American Heritage Celebration went exceptionally well on November 15th. With a lot of positive response and feedback from the community, a highlight was having Black Horse Blues Band perform live music at the Eagle's Nest. The event opened with a prayer from Lori Laiwa Thomas and a welcome from Vice President of Instruction



Debra Polak and Trustee TeMashio Anderson. Another great aspect was the inclusion of the Native Art Exhibit located in the Transfer Center. The exhibit included handmade regalia and baskets from elders and students. Our Elder Gift Giveaway was a fun experience for our very eager and attentive attendees. And lastly, having guest speakers and student speakers give their words on the college, and the importance of community and inclusivity. All student speakers represented Pomo Pathway program past and present. We were very grateful to host Round Valley Feather Dancers and their group of intertribal dancers, many of whom are our current students. The event concluded with a community meal provided by JC's Tacos. Celebrating Native American heritage supports the college's efforts to generate a sense of belonging for all Native American students, their families, and tribal communities.

## HOLIDAY FEAST



Turkeys, Hams, Mashed Potatoes, Salads, and Pies!  
Mendocino College brought joy into students' lives!  
As we gathered together around the table with friends,  
we enjoyed warm cider and food from beginning to end!  
Thank you to all who helped at our Fall Holiday Feast,  
without your help, this couldn't be complete!

Our Fall Holiday Feast was a success, we fed over 300 students! Thank you to all the committee members and volunteers that made this even happen! A huge shout out to the Mendocino College Culinary Center for cooking a delicious meal for students and staff to enjoy. We appreciate you all and hope to see you next year at our holiday feast!

## EVENTS

**Dec 2nd - 3rd - Ukiah Symphony Strings**  
Center Theatre

**Dec 4th - Choral Concert**  
Ukiah Campus

**Dec 5th Choral Concert**  
North County Center

**Dec 13th - NARCAN Distribution**  
Lowery Student Center

**Dec 15th - Fall Semester Ends**

**Dec 15th - Physical Therapist Assistant  
Completion Ceremony**  
Center Theatre

**Dec 18th - Jan 19th - Winter Break**

**Dec 22 - Jan 1st - Campus Closed**

**Jan 19th - Inservice**

**Jan 22nd - Spring Semester Starts**

**Jan 27th - Professional Pianist Concert**  
Center Theatre

## The Heart as a Metaphor

Original works by Mendocino College Ceramic Arts students



On display in the  
Mendocino College Library - Ukiah Campus  
through Friday, December 15th.



## VISITING ARTIST LECTURE SERIES



Eunkang Koh, Printmaker

### Mendocino College Art Gallery Visiting Artist Lecture Series

Eunkang Koh is an Associate Professor of printmaking and drawing in the Art Department at the University of Nevada, Reno. Born and raised in the Korean myth culture, Koh often uses half-animal and half-human figures in her work. These hybrid creatures represent a portrait of us, humans as social animals, and the society that we live in.

Koh will discuss her process and specifically the intaglio prints included in the 'First Person: Explorations in Printmaking' exhibition, on view through February 5th at the Mendocino College Art Gallery on the Ukiah Campus.

**DECEMBER 6**  
**11:15-12:15PM**

Mendocino College  
CVPA #5310  
ZOOM Lecture

[www.mendocino.edu/gallery](http://www.mendocino.edu/gallery)

Regular Gallery Hours:  
Tues/Thurs 12-3pm & Wed 3-6pm

