EDITORIAL: Chalking On Campus
By Ann Marie Cataño

"I just spoke with District Lawyers this afternoon and they made it very clear that under no condition is "sidewalk" chalk allowable. It is vandalism and should be treated as such. Any sidewalk chalk is to be cleaned up immediately.

Also, we have a "defined" free speech area and we do not have the authority to extend this area. The District has litigated this in the past and they strongly encourage us not to "allow" extension of the free speech area due to potential litigation."

Daniel G. Villanueva
Los Angeles Mission College
Vice President of Administrative Services

At Los Angeles Mission College, students are being targeted for their level of activism on campus, and for the message they are trying to communicate. On Tuesday, August 28, 2012, several students began "chalking" at Los Angeles Mission College. What seemed as a non-violent action and an exercise of their rights of freedom of speech was quickly washed away by administrators, custodians, and water hoses. However, Los Angeles Mission College does NOT prevent the children from the Child Development Center from chalking on campus, nor were the students prevented from doing so on Denim Day, April 25th, 2012, when they chalked the sidewalk as well. This is clearly an act of censorship, political suppression, retaliation and intimidation. Students are being treated differently in order to silence their collective student voice, and keep them from exposing issues that affect all of the campus community, not just students.

The question is, why? At around 7 am, it was noted that Ms. Stephanie Atkinson-Alston began snapping pictures and walking around the sidewalks that were being chalked on. Messages included "Stop the Budget Cuts", "We Demand Fair and Equal Treatments for Staff and Students", and also

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DIRECTION OF THE STEM PROGRAM
by Liana M. Cabrera

During the last week of summer vacation it was made public that Dr. Parvaneh Mohammadian would be stepping down from her position as STEM director in order to accept a position as a full time science professor at LAMC. A few days after that announcement was made, Dr. Par (as she is affectionately known on campus) announced that she would, in fact, be maintaining her position as STEM director, in addition to teaching full time on campus (Dr. Par was unavailable for an interview). So the big question on everyone's mind is: is Dr. Par only filling the position temporarily? If so, who will be the new director of the

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STEM Program (Cont.)

STEM program?

According to the United States Department of Education, Los Angeles Mission College "is a public, two-year community college located in the Northeast San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles, California and serves 10,275 students of whom 71 percent are Hispanic. Mission has high numbers of academically under-prepared Hispanic students, the lowest transfer rate of all the Los Angeles Community Colleges and one of the lowest in the state. Over the past decade, the College has served an increasing inflow of students with diverse needs that severely test its ability to reach and maintain the levels of student retention, progression and program completion that it strives to achieve, especially in the area of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Historically, the majority of Mission students have been low-income and under-prepared for college-level coursework."

Additionally, one of the main objectives of the grant is to "increase Hispanic graduation, degree attainment, and transfer rates." According to Project Abstracts for New Grantees for FY (Fiscal Year) 2011 report written by the United States Department of Education, the STEM project will use the grant to improve STEM Success and access for "Hispanic" Students at Los Angeles Mission College, establish a comprehensive STEM Center combining academic and student support services.

The STEM grant is important because it was specifically created to target the "Hispanic" population. Therefore, the leadership and administration of the STEM grant must be reflective of the grant's purpose. In meetings with President Monte Perez during the spring 2012 semester, students were told by Dr. Perez that although the director was not "Latina/o", the administrator of the grant would be "Latina/o" (this remains to be seen). However, since the position for STEM director is now open (Dr. Par will be stepping down as STEM director at the end of the fall 2012 semester) Dr. Perez and the hiring committee must take advantage of this opportunity not only make sure that the grant is directed by a qualified "Latina/o" but to also extend that vision to the direction of the grant.

The question now becomes this: If the STEM grant is targeted to "Latina/o" students, why wouldn't the administration give the opportunity to qualified "Latina/o" professionals to administer and direct the program? La Misión would also like to know: what is preventing Dr. Perez from hiring qualified "Latina/o" professionals? The Student Empowerment Movement originally approved of Dr. Par's selection because she is an excellent Biology professor, now that she is stepping down at the end of the fall semester and being this is a grant given to "Hispanic" students would it not be prudent to have a "Hispanic" director that can identify and empathize with the community he/she is serving? In California, 7.3 percent of the state’s superintendents are "Latino" with a 47 percent statewide "Latino" student population.

Though this campus is Federally designated as a "Hispanic" serving institution, it faces many cultural challenges as there is much resistance to promoting or even hiring Latino Faculty. According to an Academic Journal titled "Hispanic-Serving Institutions through the Eyes of Students and Administrators", written in 2004, the authors drive home the point that "Teachers with similar experiences and backgrounds can encourage more low-income and first-generation students to continue with their education. They can serve as role models for Latino youth, showing them that they too can attain a college degree; this will be a crucial ingredient in achieving the goal of educating Latinos. Latino teachers will understand many of the unique needs of Latinos and the cultural challenges they face; and thus, they will be uniquely equipped to guide Latino students through the educational process." The same goes for directors, administrators, counselors, etc.

These are questions that have to be answered. If necessary the campus should host another STEM forum where the students and community can speak with STEM career professionals in addition to asking Dr. Perez more in depth questions regarding the administration of the grant. As President of the campus Dr. Perez should be held accountable for the management of this multimillion dollar grant. However, faculty and district administration should also be held liable for preventing these funds from reaching their intended recipients. We can do better for our students, the STEM Grant is one opportunity.
OCCUPYING FOR A DREAM
By Kimberly Calito

Sacrifice (n.): a global practice that originates from the beginnings of history and has continued to modern day civilization; giving up something deemed as valuable for what is perceived to have even greater value.

Everyday students make sacrifices to come to school to get a better education. They sacrifice their time to work their way up to better lives of comfort and financial security, but how much sacrificing would you do for your education? Would you go as far as sacrificing food, studying, or the comfort of your bed? On May 30th 2012, several students from Student Empowerment took the initiative and sacrificed it all; they occupied Los Angeles Mission College. Why would a group of about 20 students Occupy the campus for a week prior to graduation?

These students are not part of the Occupy movement, they merely adopted this old form of protesting. This predates the modern Occupy movement and goes back to the union strikes, boycotts, student sit-ins, and civil rights protestors like Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Cesar Chavez, Black Panthers, and Brown Berets. MEChA. These people and groups refused to be subjugated to social, economic, financial, political, and educational inequalities and sought to change the world. Thankfully their sacrifices were not in vain, but today we find ourselves with new battles. Activists today from many different movements have the objective to reach social and economical equality, and spread the message of solidarity with the hope for a better future. Their message “Together we are the 99%, and we are known for getting the stale, moldy leftovers. It is a stand that says we are here, we are ready to fight and we are not leaving until our demands are met.”

The Student Empowerment movement originally had the intention of occupying on June 6th, which was the night before the Academic Senate meeting. They had planned a massive demonstration with dozens of community organizations and hundreds of students. They planned to protest the abusive behavior of the Academic Senate towards students, and the allegations of corruption that they had uncovered. Due to the Academic Senate abruptly changing their meeting date to a week sooner than they had posted on their website, the protest plans needed to be altered and a vote was made to immediately start the occupation. As preparations for the occupation were underway Randy Gamez, the ASO Executive Administrator lodged a complaint with the Administration that the Academic Senate was violating the Brown Act by not following proper posting procedures of proposed meetings. “

Though the occupation was rather spur-of-the-moment it received media attention from a local blog, and social media. The organizers spoke on the Fresno radio show, community members and even faculty and staff came out to show their support for the protesting students. They donated time, money, food and supplies. During the day the Student Empowerment Movement had an information booth where people were able to ask questions about the labor movement in the United States. They would share their struggle almost every night through folk tales (Aztec, Mayan, etc.) and a multitude of other activities where everyone was invited to join. They set up several tents and made the mess hall into a family room. Their main goal was to have other occupations prepared to fight against discrimination and injustice. They were ready for the circumstances of tomorrow, or the day after.

Ultimately, the Academic Senate could not have their meeting. They were warned by the campus legal counsel that they indeed were in violation of the Brown Act and anything it may have implied in their meeting. They were not able to occupy for the Student Empowerment Movement, but the fight was not over.

The Academic Senate President, Angela Echeverri, went out to the camp on the first day and began building a deal that the students had all of the opinions and freedom to express themselves in protest. When she first talked with the students she had a right to protest and filed the appropriate paperwork they insisted that the students be charged $200 an hour to use the fire sprayer. That was not the only time that Mrs. Echeverri went out to the camp. She returned a couple days later on Friday and went on Sunday. The students felt that they were there only to have the police say that they had protested against both Lassen Admin-
Chalking Incident (cont.)

“Screw off Academic Senate President”, the students responded, “Do you think it’s ok for certain faculty and Administrators to harass and intimidate students?” Of course, there was no logical response for this question. Ms. Atkinson-Alston stated that she had “more power than the students.” She ignored all questions, laughed and snickered at them with her arms crossed as they walked by.

As the students continued chalking, Ms. Atkinson-Alston was in clear view, making several phone calls. There were two sheriffs present as well. She continued harassing the students, telling them to stop, when in fact they were only, engaging in a peaceful demonstration, exercising their freedom of speech. The students continued chalking, until several custodians, including Wally Bortman, came out to wash the chalk away. With the students still clearly chalking, Mr. Bortman began hosing down the sidewalk, stating “If she doesn’t move Ima squirt her.” (referring to Ann Marie Catano) He proceeded to squirt her, ruining her shoes, as well as those of fellow students Victor Martinez and Kimberly Calito.

The question remains: why? Mr. Bortman claimed the students were wasting his time, and the students claimed their rights were being violated. Is a washable substance like chalk indeed vandalism, or were these students being targeted for their level of activism on campus? For raising awareness against people such as Ms. Angela Echeverri.

The students continued chalking throughout the week, on campus and public property, but it was later made clear to the students that they were no longer allowed to chalk on campus property, and any further chalking would be treated as vandalism.

On Friday, August 31, 2012 President Perez sent out an email in regards to chalking. However, his report was incorrect. Chalking was not done on Monday, and his email in fact communicated the wrong information.

Clearly, chalking is not a crime, and should not be treated as such. By their actions against certain students over the past week, the Los Angeles Mission College administration and the Los Angeles Community College District’s Legal Office is depriving students of their freedom of speech. It is clear that the campus and district administration would rather give in to the faculty at LAMC (who are the real problem), rather than take into account what the students have to say. However, what is more disturbing is the fact that it is clear that it is NOT the chalking that is the problem, but that these actions against students’ free speech rights are an act of retaliation against the students for courageously exposing the corruption in the academic senate.
DREAMERS..  
It's Time To Apply for DEFERRED ACTION!  
By Christine M. Chavarri

On June 15, 2012, President Obama announced that young immigrants who entered the country without authorization before the age of 16, and are between the ages of 15-30 years old, can qualify for an immigration relief benefit known as "Deferred Action". An applicant who is granted deferred action will not be deported and qualifies for a work permit renewable every two years, as well as a driver’s license and a Social Security Number.

Spotlight on Deferred Action

In order to be eligible for the program the individual must meet certain requirements:
1. 15-30 years old as of June 15, 2012
2. Arrived in United States before the age of 16
3. Had a continuous presence from June 15, 2007 to June 15, 2012
4. Physical Presence on June 15, 2012 and on date you submit the application.
5. Be in school, have a high school diploma, or GED
6. Be In “unlawful” status as of June 15, 2012
7. Have no criminal record

In order to file for deferred action you must file the I-821D and the I-765 and the I-765WS.

Along with these forms, an applicant must also provide complete evidence showing that they have been in the United States continuously from 2007 to 2012 and that they were physically present on June 15, 2012 and the date of submission.

Records that are acceptable include school records, financial records, bank records, phone records, photographs, and other relevant documents.

Commonly Asked Questions

1. Am I eligible?
2. What are the benefits of deferred action?
3. Will applying for deferred action increase the risk that my family members may get deported?
4. What should I do if I am stopped by immigration law enforcement officials?
5. Should I apply if I am not in deportation proceedings already?
6. If I am in deportation proceedings what should I do?

7. How do I meet the education requirement?
8. What types of evidence do I need?
9. What if I left the country within the past 5 years? Do I still meet the requirement of continuous presence?
10. What type of criminal history makes a person ineligible?
11. Do I need an attorney?

If you want answers to these frequently asked questions visit the CHIRLA website listed below.

Resources
* CHIRLA The Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles is a non-profit organization that was put in place to help immigrants and offers more information on their website www.chirla.org

* Immigration & Family Law Center is a newly opened law firm located inside the Panorama Mall, located in Panorama City. They consist of licensed Immigration lawyers who are determined to help the surrounding communities with all deferred action cases. Their mission is to provide professional service at affordable prices. They are offering free Initial Consultations and are always happy to answer all questions and concerns one might have. www.facebook.com/myilfe
Call for your Free Consultation at (818) 660-5291
Lip Service One More Time?
By Randy Gamez

On October 17th we learned a great thing, the Spirit of Milli Vanilli is not dead! Those of you too young or not cool enough to know who Milli Vanilli were, they were the infamous pop and dance duo who rose to fame for their catchy songs and dance moves only to be outed as frauds when they confessed to be lip syncing all their songs. The duo lost their Grammy Award and faced public scorn.

People should know better than to say words that hold no truth, use double speak, or lip synch. It is not being honest. Why do they continue doing so? On October 17th, 2012 during an LACCD Board of Trustees meeting the LAMC Academic Senate President Angela Echeverri and Mike Reynolds, the Department Chair of Life Sciences, addressed the Board of Trustees claiming difficult working conditions and “ethnocentrism” that exists at LAMC.

It is stupefying to think that the person who openly referred to Chicano students as “Dogs” would bring up allegations of ethnocentrism on this campus. This statement in which he called Chicanos dogs was blurted out at a Union meeting to Chicano Faculty after false allegations were made by the former University President that she was threatened by a Chicano Student. La Misión would challenge anyone from the Board of Trustees to perform an investigation on the campus. Who are the allegations of ethnocentrism directed to? Against himself, perhaps the person that accompanied Mr. Reynolds? Perhaps Mr. Reynolds feels slighted that a “Hispanic” grant (the STEM Grant) in which he was written in as the sole candidate for the Director position, was not given to him? Who knows.

Indeed La Misión dares the Board of Trustees to look into why for the past 12 years the graduation rate has not changed. Would they please look into why in a campus that is over 70% “Latino”, only 5 percent of the faculty are “Latino”. Is that the kind of Diversity that they are “lip synching” about? Could it be that for the past 12 years we have had the same Academic Senate President? There are faculty that have created for themselves a very prosperous niche in holding on to a position. They have done so for the past 12 years. Maybe the Board of Trustees should look into that and then they will uncover where the hostile work environment and ethnocentrism is coming from.

November elections are just around the corner and two very important propositions that will be affecting your education are on the ballot. Proposition 30, which was created by Gov. Jerry Brown and Proposition 38, which is backed by Molly Munger, a millionaire civil rights attorney, who has largely funded this initiative using her own money. There has been much controversy surrounding both of these ballots, and many students interviewed either have no idea what both measures are about or have some misconceptions of what they are about. So hopefully these facts will help you make a more informed decision if you decide to vote.

Proposition 30 will provide funds to education not directly but by raising the income tax on people making $500,000 or more for the next seven years. This money would then help balance the state budget which would free up money to be spent on education. Also, Prop. 30 will raise the state sales tax by a quarter cent. The funds created by Prop. 30 will be put into a special account known as the Education Protection Account. From the funds that are raised the money will be divided and 89% will be given to K-12 schools while the other 11% will be given to community colleges.

So it seems simple, right? Vote for this Prop. and I get my financial aid so I can hit the liquor store and get me a 12 pack and party!!! Not necessarily, this Prop. has several constitutional amendments that are attached to it that will pay for public safety programs that are tied to prisons, supervision of parolees and substance abuse treatments and not all funds are guaranteed to go to the schools.

Another controversy is that if Prop. 30 does not pass then the Gov. will put into effect a series of spending cuts known as “trigger cuts”. Education would receive a total of $5.4 billion dollar budget cuts along with many other social services.
DID YOU KNOW?
• CERTAIN FACULTY ON THIS CAMPUS MAKE OVER $6,000 A MONTH AND DO RELATIVELY NOTHING?
• THE STEM GRANT WAS AWARDED $864,000 A YEAR FOR 5 YEARS AND THIS PAST YEAR NOTHING OF SIGNIFICANCE TO HELP THE STUDENTS WAS DONE.
• THERE ARE EMPTY CLASSROOMS, BUT NOT ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY FOR CLASSES BECAUSE THE STATE HAS CUT OUR BUDGET, YET A CERTAIN FACULTY MEMBER GETS PAID OVER $11,000 A MONTH TO TEACH ONLY ONE CLASS!

DOES THAT SEEM FAIR TO YOU?
If you want to know where the money is at, follow the breadcrumbs...

PROPOSITIONS (Cont.)

- New funding for education this year.
- Establishes a guarantee for public safety funding in the state's constitution, where it can't be changed without voter approval. "It keeps cops on the street."
- Balances the budget and pays down California's debt.
- Only the highest income earners pay more income tax. Couples earning below $500,000 a year will pay no additional income taxes.
- It's temporary. PIT goes up for 7 years and sales tax for 4 years.
- The money goes into a special account the legislature can't touch.
- Mandatory, independent audits will ensure funds are spent only for schools and public safety.

Against Prop. 30
Legislature can take existing money for schools and use it for other purposes, replacing it with money from Prop 30, effectively resulting in no new money for education.
There are no requirements or assurances that any money actually goes to classrooms.
Prop 30 rewards the dangerous behavior of spending more than the state has by giving politicians billions of dollars more with no real reforms.
The governor, politicians and special interests are threatening voters by saying, "vote for our massive tax increase or we'll take it out on schools," but they refuse to reform the education or pension system to save money.

(Source cited: "Prop 30 Cheat Sheet: Jerry Brown's Tax Measure")

OCCUPY (Cont.)

Man, a supporter from CSUN, was one of the people Mrs. Echeverri approached at the campsite, "I was just sitting here and this woman approached me," said Jason, "She started talking about the Chicano Studies professors calling them racists and said that the problem with the campus was their fault." She then left and came back a few minutes later with a newspaper clipping that claimed that the Chicanos on campus were racist against Central and Southern Americans.

This is not the first time that Ms. Echeverri has attempted to deflect attention away from herself by leveling these accusations against the Chicano Studies faculty or other Mexican American faculty members on campus. "According to Professor Maldonado, both he and Professors Morales, both as teachers and as faculty advisors for MEChA and AB 540 and other organizations, have always treated their students in these organizations and in their classes with the same level of respect, regardless of race, class, ethnicity or gender. And contrary to what some might believe, membership in these organizations is not restricted to students of Mexican descent. In fact, the current chair of MEChA is of Salvadorian descent. We are open to and challenge anyone to prove otherwise.

The Student Empowerment Movement occupied until graduation and gave each of the graduates a small note of appreciation along with a rose. In spite of everything that occurs on campus, the voices of the students will rise and their demands will be heard, because after all, "it is my hope that every student and employee feels welcomed and appreciated at Mission. Let's work harder than ever to make that vision a reality."