

College of San Mateo

Executive Report to the Board of Trustees • October 28, 2009

CSM WELCOMES RETURNING VETS

College of San Mateo's Veterans Services teamed up with the local Veterans Administration to participate in the second annual "Welcome Home" veterans event held at the Presidio of San Francisco on September 26. CSM admissions staff members **Mario Mihelcic** and **Jeremy Mileo** attended the event to not only welcome veterans but to provide information about opportunities at CSM that support their transition from active duty in the military to civilian life. Hundreds of veterans and their families showed up at the event which featured a surprise



visit by Grammy award winning musician **John Mayer**. Mayer has adopted the cause of raising public awareness about issues facing returning veterans. According to Mihelcic, "Mayer spoke from the heart when he urged everyone to greet and thank veterans for their service." Mayer was inspired to bring attention to veterans after visiting a clinic while on a break from a concert tour and was especially moved by veterans dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Mileo had a chance to speak with Mayer about the support that CSM provides for veterans and shared his joy of working with vets. *(Photo, left to right: Mario Mihelcic, John Mayer & Jeremy Mileo)*

MORE VETERAN STUDENT NEWS

As veterans return from the Iraq War, the number of veterans certified for the GI Bill at CSM continues to grow. In fall 2009, the college experienced a 33 percent increase (from 72 to 108 students) over the previous fall. This sizeable increase can be attributed to the enhanced benefits provided by the newly implemented Chapter 33/Post 911 program. Of the 108 veterans receiving benefits, 75 percent are participating in this new program. CSM has an outstanding team of staff that provides critical support to our veteran students: Counselors **Dean Chowenhill** and **Kevin Sinarle**, and admissions staff **Mario Mihelcic** and **Jeremy Mileo** (see previous article).

STUDENTS REACHING OUT TO STUDENTS

For fall 2009, CSM has mobilized a team of eight talented students to participate in the college's Student Ambassador Program. The program, currently in its third year, has become a vital component of college's outreach efforts. Student ambassadors serve as liaisons between the college and local high schools, give campus tours and assist with on campus activities such as Operation Welcome Mat and Connect to College; they also represent the college at community events. This semester's student ambassadors are **Eric Thurston, Jacqui Guilbault, Melissa Vizcarra, Arianna Avendano, Shawn McGriff, Anna Keilo, Alexis Madayag and Sandi Bello**. They were introduced to the college community at a reception last week. The program is conducted by **Alex Guiriba**, program services coordinator in the Public Relations and Marketing Office.



Student Ambassadors & Mike Claire



HUGE TURNOUT FOR TRANSFER DAY

Based on the number of students who showed up to speak with university representatives, this fall's Transfer Day was a huge success! With many UC and CSU campuses facing impacted enrollment, it's no surprise that this event would be well attended by our transfer-bound students. University representatives spoke with approximately 700 students, and in fact, several of the representatives ran out of materials before the end of the event. Forty representatives from

UC and CSU campuses and numerous private universities participated. University of Hawaii also sent a representative who reported speaking with more than 100 students. According to **Mike Mitchell**, the coordinator of the event, some high school parents also showed up to make contacts in the hope of giving their children a head start in community college and the transfer process.

In conjunction with Transfer Day, a UC Application/Personal Statement Workshop was conducted by staff from UC Davis and UC Santa Cruz with more than 50 students attending. While originally scheduled for one hour, the workshop extended to well over two hours due to the large volume of student questions. Representatives reported that they have not such a large turnout of students for one workshop with so many questions in a long time.

STUDENT SUCCESS STORY: AMBER KLINK SHE FOUND HER WAY AT CSM

Amber Klink looks back on her young life and credits CSM in getting her to where she is today: a senior at Sarah Lawrence College in New York and concurrently enrolled in graduate courses in social work and child development. “CSM has given me everything I have today: I literally and figuratively owe it my life.” While that is a remarkable statement, her success story is equally remarkable. Amber experienced a particularly traumatic childhood and spent her entire adolescence in the child welfare and mental health systems. By her own admission, she was a runaway, often homeless, and never attended formal high school. When Amber first enrolled at CSM, she recalls, “I had what I equated to a meager seventh-grade education.”



While at CSM, Amber maximized every resource and opportunity that could help her to not only catch up, but to excel academically. She describes her experience in the **Disabled Students Program and Services** as “life-changing” and attributes much of her success to its staff for providing comprehensive assistance and unfaltering support. She also benefited from individualized tutoring, study skills, transfer workshops, financial aid and a network of supportive faculty. To round out her CSM experience, Amber participated in co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), serving as its co-president; CSM Connects, a service learning program; and the college’s learning communities offerings, all of which nurtured her personal and professional development. According to **Dr. Jeremy Ball**, professor of philosophy and PTK advisor, “Through Amber’s persistence and determination, she found her way at CSM and it transformed her life.”

Due to what Amber refers to as the many “gifts” that CSM gave her, she graduated with high honors, earning an AA degree in English literature and liberal studies. Subsequently, she received acceptances to numerous universities, several with offers of full scholarships. With a talent for writing, she chose Sarah Lawrence College, which among other innovative practices, offers a writing intensive education. In spring 2010, Amber graduates from Sarah Lawrence with her bachelor’s degree and plans to continue working on a master’s in social work next fall.

While Amber gives credit to CSM for helping her realize her dream of becoming an educated person, in return, she left a meaningful impression on faculty and staff that worked with her. In the words of CSM **Professor of English Jean Mach**, “It was my great honor and constant delight to know Amber both in the classroom, where I could hardly wait to read every paper or assignment I received from her, and in her leadership role in Phi Theta Kappa, as co-president. Amber is generous, sensitive, creative, energetic, smart, and funny. How lucky we were to have her at CSM!”



STUDENTS CREATE PARK(ING) SPACES

CSM architecture students took their class project to the streets of San Mateo – literally. As participants in PARK(ing) Day, an annual worldwide project to support adding park space in urban areas, the students transformed parking spaces on B Street (between Third and Fourth Avenues) into comfortable outdoor seating areas. They created three distinct spaces: a seating area with a table holding games; a recycling park made of materials that would later be recycled; and a small outdoor play area with a small homemade

soccer game. People on the street joined in the spirit of the event by spending time in seating areas and playing the games. Part of the assignment, given by Instructor **George Sun**, was to design each space using a zero cost model. Much of the furnishings were loaned by local businesses or borrowed from students' homes. *(Photo by Sandra Santos, San Mateo Daily Journal)*

LEARNING COMMUNITY HELPS FIGHT HUNGER

The Food for Thought Learning Community recently hosted a presentation by Joe Pert and Michelle Wall of the Second Harvest Food Bank on the topic of hunger in our community. In addition to speaking about how the campus can help, they encouraged our students to become “hunger fighters” and possibly volunteer with Second Harvest. In lieu of a monetary donation for their presentation, Pert requested food donations from students and staff as part of a campus-wide food drive which is currently underway and runs to December 11. The Food for Thought Learning Community involves participation of seven professors over a range of disciplines: English - **Lucia Olson, Allison Miller, Joyce Heyman**; ethnic studies - **Lewis Kawahara**; geography - **Angela Skinner**; political science - **Erin Scholnick**; and sociology - **Minu Mathur**. Their classes meet at a common time and they are collaborating on a common assignment and common topics, with food as the current topic. Joyce Heyman and Lucia Olson are co-coordinators of the learning community.



JERRY HILL RETURNS TO CSM

Assemblymember **Jerry Hill** paid a return visit to campus last month to speak with political science students. Among the topics he discussed were his reasons for becoming involved in politics, the importance of the community college system, budget reductions that impact education, the two-thirds supermajority, among other topics. His visit was arranged by **Erin Scholnick**, adjunct assistant professor of political science. A CSM alumnus, Assemblymember Hill finds time at least once a semester to meet with students on campus.



KUDOS★

CSM's cosmetology student team (photo) captured a top award at the Annual Hair Design and Beauty Expo Santa Cruz Student Competition held on Oct. 11. Student hairstylist, **Irma Ramirez**, won second place out of 32 excellent student teams. The other members of CSM's winning team were: **Magdalena Molina** (makeup), **Raquel Toledo** (nails), and **Allison Naff** (model). The student competition is sponsored by the California Cosmetology Association.

★ CSM Alumnus **Dr. J. Craig Venter** (photo) was one of nine eminent researchers to receive the National Medal of Science from President Barack Obama on October 7 during a White House ceremony. In his comments, President Obama said this about the recipients, "Their extraordinary achievements strengthen our nation every day-not just intellectually and technologically but also economically, by helping create new industries and opportunities that others before them could never have imagined." The National Medal of Science recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to science and engineering.



Venter is regarded as one of the leading scientists of the 21st century for significant contributions to genomic research. He is the founder and president of the J. Craig Venter Institute, a not-for-profit, research and support organization with more than 400 scientists and staff dedicated to human, microbial, plant and environmental genomic research. In 1995, Dr. Venter and his teams decoded the genome of the first free-living organism and have since sequenced hundreds of genomes using techniques and tools he developed. He attended CSM for a year and a half in the late 1960's and transferred to University of California at San Diego where he earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and a Ph.D. in physiology and pharmacology.

★ Students in Adjunct Assistant Professor **Erin Scholnick's** Spring 2009 American Politics class, in conjunction with the college's Phi Theta Kappa Chapter, collected 5,057 books for the National Books for Africa campaign, which distributes books to children throughout the African continent. Of the 567 book drives across the United States and Canada, CSM's collection ranked 19th making it one of the program's top performers.

★ **Bev Madden**, director of college development and marketing will participate in a panel for "Building Social Networks into Your College Communications Strategy," at the Community College League of California 2009 Annual Convention to be held on November 18-21 in Burlingame.

★ Former CSM baseball player **Mikael Ryder**, now with the Chico Outlaws, an independent professional baseball team, has been named the Golden Baseball League's Rookie Pitcher of the Year. Ryder, the ace of the Outlaws, transferred to Menlo College from CSM.



BRIAN COPELAND MAKES APPEARANCE AT CSM

The President's Lecture Series hosted an appearance by **Brian Copeland**, a multi-talented comedian, writer, talk radio host, commentator and actor. Copeland's presentation focused on his story of growing up as a lone black child in a white community which is the subject of his long-running one-man show and recently published memoir, "Not a Genuine Black Man." An engaging and entertaining speaker, Copeland combined humor, heartbreak and inspiration as he related his experiences and answered questions from the audience. "Not a

Genuine Black Man" was selected as the 2009 pick for the Silicon Valley Reads Program and is currently being developed into a feature film and television series. Following the lecture, Copeland signed copies of his book. The President's Lecture Series is made possible by a generous grant from the Lane Family Charitable Trust. *(Photo, left to right: Mike Claire, Brian Copeland, Sandra Comerford, Frederick Gaines)*

MASTERWORKS EMBARKS ON 46TH SEASON

CSM's Masterworks Chorale of College of San Mateo opened its 46th season with "Tapestry of Treasures" at Notre Dame de Namur University's Cunningham Memorial Chapel this past weekend. The program featured a range of selections from Schubert's "Mass No. 2 in G Major" to Vivaldi's energetic "Magnificat," Handel's "Laudate Pueri Dominum" and Mozart's "Ave Verum Corpus." **Bryan Baker**, artistic director, conducted the chorus, orchestra and professional soloists.



Masterworks' next concerts will celebrate the holiday season with Hark! on December 9 and 13th at the Transfiguration Episcopal Church in San Mateo. The program highlights will include Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols" and Camille St-Saëns' inspiring and jubilant re-telling of the Christmas story, "Christmas Oratorio" in addition to holiday favorites and sing-along carols.

Events

- ▶ Throughout the semester, Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) is hosting a brown bag lunch series of forums for faculty, staff and students to learn about disability, develop classroom strategies and ask questions in a safe and open environment. On October 16, the forum featured speaker **Renee Harris**, a successful re-entry student, who found a path to wellness and recovery through CSM's collaboration with San Mateo County Mental Health Services. The forums also offer flex credit.
- ▶ As part of Disability Awareness Month, DSPS and the Health Center co-sponsored a Disability Health and Resource Fair, an event designed to promote good health and services for students with disabilities. In addition, DSPS held a screening of "The Soloist," the 2009 biographical film, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx. The film tells the story of a friendship between a *Los Angeles Times* columnist and a homeless schizophrenic man who was a Julliard –trained cellist.
- ▶ On October 14, Psychological Services sponsored *In Our Own Voice*, a presentation by the National Alliance on Mental Illness. A trained *In Our Own Voice* speaker shared compelling and personal testimony of living and overcoming the challenges posed by mental illness.
- ▶ Over a three-day period in mid October, CSM's Career Services Center sponsored the 6th Annual Autumn Job Fair. Students spoke with human resources staff about available positions, completed applications and submitted resumes. A sample of employers that attended included Bank of America, Radio Disney, nelson Staffing, Social Security Administration, i-Immersion, Bay Area News Group, City of San Mateo and Allan Lund Company.



CSM's Autumn Job Fair

- ▶ The college recently held a Let's Get Acquainted Reception for the 2009-10 student services interns. Interns serving in the Career Services Center include: **Emily White** from San Francisco State University and **Janelle Eaton** from Santa Clara University. The six interns working with Psychological Services are: **Kim-Lien Chavez** and **Hagit Zeev**, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology; **Brad Smallwood** and **Angela Yang**, University of San Francisco; and **Matt Vrablik** and **Travis Woodmansee**, Santa Clara University.
- ▶ Throughout the month of October, the Classified Planning Committee is collecting donations for its annual Parking Space Raffle, a fund raiser for student scholarships. Two parking spaces in Lot 3 are designated for winners of the raffle; each winner has "rights" to their prized space for a month.

