Thanksgiving Holiday Message
Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza
Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

As we all move into this week of thankfulness and reflection, please take time to acknowledge how we may experience this holiday differently. To some, it may be a day of Thanksgiving, while to others, it may be a day of remembrance or even mourning for indigenous peoples, the original inhabitants of this land. As CSM works towards formally drafting our college land acknowledgment, I encourage all of you to consider the native land upon which your city or community is built.

“Thanksgiving Day” represents something very different for all of us. And while we enjoy the opportunity for a much-deserved respite from our regular routines, I hope that we individually take time to honor the special moments of understanding and care that have brought us growth and awareness this past year.

As I continue in my role, I am grateful for the opportunities to better understand our college—to learn from the individuals who have shaped our institution and played pivotal roles in paving the way for others to find their voice. For example, at the beginning of my presidency, I was fortunate to spend time with a CSM legend, Adrian Orozco, a retired Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) counselor and former director of CSM’s College Readiness Program. Adrian Orozco played a historic role in serving and representing students of color and moving our institution forward. This week, I spent time with Claire and Eddie Mack, both CSM alumni. If you don’t know, Claire Mack served for three terms as San Mateo’s first Black mayor. She was also the Community Affairs Coordinator for KCSM-TV and KCSM-FM, and the founder of Jazz on the Hill. Claire is a generational San Matean, her family having lived in the county for ninety-five years. She has been a social justice activist and leader for decades.

Their stories represent our college’s centennial legacy and help chart the course for our future.

In giving thanks, we honor those who have come before us. We take time to appreciate their achievements and life’s work. And, remember, it’s not just one day of being grateful but every day.

Resilience, love, and care are the basic foundation of our humanity.

Enjoy family, loved ones, and friends this holiday. I know that some of us in our college community have suffered hardship and loss recently. We are thinking of you; may you find solace and peace during this break.

In community,

Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza