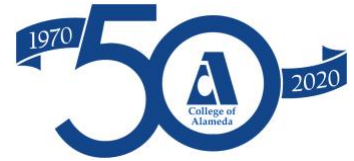




President's Report to the PCCD Board of Trustees



May 25, 2021

Dr. Nathaniel Jones III, President



Featured from the left: Julie Saechao, Amy H. Lee, Vanson Nguyen, and Marissa Nakano

CoA Celebrates Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month

CoA's Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month Planning Committee hosted a virtual event on May 12, 2021, titled *Hello, My Name Is*, featuring pre-recorded presentations by faculty and staff, and a live interactive discussion with students. The event provided a safe space for students to heal and share their stories. Several CoA faculty and staff pre-recorded their comments and shared the origins of their names and thoughts on healing during these challenging times for the AAPI community. Pre-recorded video participants included: Counselor [Marissa Nakano](#), Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) Counselor/Coordinator [Julie Saechao](#), Enrollment Services Dean [Dr. Amy H. Lee](#), Mathematics Professor and Department Co-Chair [Dr. Vanson Nguyen](#), and Psychology Professor and Department Chair [Sarah Peterson-Guada](#). (You may view their recordings by clicking on their names above.)

This powerful and timely event received glowing reviews from participants and also from those who viewed the videos at a later time. Art Professor **Drew Burgess** remarked: "I enjoyed seeing my CoA family and listening to the meaningful stories. Keep going friends, you are strong and beautiful."



Class of 2021 Valetorian Donna Hooper Shares a Few Words About Her Personal and Education Journey with Us

While her journey has not been an easy one, **Valetorian Donna Jean Hopper** has overcome many obstacles to achieve her goal of higher education. She shares with us what has helped her endure hardships and what her hopes are for the future:

“My name is Donna Jean Hooper. I am honored to be Valetorian for the CoA class of 2021. I graduated from Castlemont High School in 1979. I have over 40 years of experience in the fast-food sector, from cashier to manager.

My life took a turn in 1996, when I became addicted to drugs and alcohol. This time in my life was the darkest place I had ever been. I did not see any way out until January 19, 2012, when I entered the Epiphany House for Women and Children in S.F. This was the beginning of the new me.

CoA Class of 2021 Valetorian Donna Hooper

I am now celebrating nine years of sobriety. I attend ReGenesis Christian Center in Oakland. I surrendered my life over to God and I give him all the glory and praise for my success. I am now successfully fulfilling my lifelong dream to further my education.

I am a recent graduate of CoA with a double Associate of Arts degree in Sociology and Social and Behavioral Science. I am also completing my pursuit of my third AA degree, in African American Studies, to be awarded in May 2021. My greatest accomplishment was successfully completing the program at Epiphany House for Women and Children. My goal is to give back to the community, and inspire and give hope to those who are suffering from the social pandemic of addiction.”

CoA Commencement 2021

Of CoA’s 356 eligible graduates, 125 students will participate in this year’s virtual graduation. The pre-recorded virtual ceremony will take place on **Friday, May 28, 2021, at 3 p.m., online at <https://alameda.peralta.edu/commencement/>.**



Hongying (Angel) Huang, CoA's 2021 President's Medallion Recipient

Congratulations to Our President's Medallion Recipient: Hongying Angel Huang

This year's President's Medallion Recipient, **Hongying Angel Huang**, is looking forward to continuing her college education this fall at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Here is what she has to say about her recent experience at CoA:

"I am Hongying (Angel) Huang and I have been studying at College of Alameda since August 2018. I am a mother of two. In June 2017, my family and I immigrated to the United States from China. Before migrating, I was a writer in Chinese and an editor for a Chinese magazine. Before coming to the U.S., I rarely used English in my daily work and life. My English was very poor as a new immigrant to the United States. Since entering College of Alameda and after three years of hard study, my English level has greatly improved. In November 2020, I applied for transfer with a 4.0 GPA. In April 2021, I received transfer offers from four universities in California. I have accepted the offer from UC Santa Cruz as the four-year undergraduate university where I will continue my academic career in the fall of 2021."



Benjamin Wilson-Ripsom, 2021 Salutatorian

Congratulations to Our 2021 Salutatorian: Benjamin Wilson-Ripsom

Don't try to tell CoA's 16-year old **Salutatorian Benjamin Wilson-Ripsom** that he's too young to do something, because chances are he'll work very hard to prove you wrong!

"My name is Benjamin Wilson-Ripsom. I'm 16 years old and I've been a concurrently enrolled student at both Encinal High School and CoA for the past two years. A few interesting things about me are that before the beginning of the pandemic, I was very engaged in both track and cross country running, as well as our school's business-related club, Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA.) In the Fall, I will be returning to in-person high school for my final year as a senior. I had the option to graduate high school early, but I really enjoy spending time with my friends and community. I will be working to transfer the year after this one. I was motivated to join our concurrent enrollment program by a counselor who said I couldn't do it. I really wanted to prove them wrong, and I think I was able to do so. As I am still 16, I am unsure of where I want to go career-wise, however, I'm leaning towards something in the field of psychology or political science. I'm very excited and honored to be this year's salutatorian, and I'm incredibly proud of how far we have come as a community! Congratulations graduating class of 2021!"

Strategic Enrollment Management Update

Focus on Expanding Admissions Services

This month the focus is on admissions! CoA's Enrollment Services Department is ramping up for Spring Intersession, Summer Sessions, and Fall Semester by introducing a new online form to follow up with students who are interested in enrolling. Enrollment Services staff members and **Dean Lee** have been working closely with **Aaron Harbour** from the PCCD PIO office to create [automated work flows](#) designed to facilitate the admissions process while offering hands-on admissions assistance to prospective students. In addition, they are hosting [Virtual Enrollment Hub](#) events comprised of a one-stop Zoom drop-in session for students who need help with [application, registration, financial aid, counseling, or connecting to special programs](#). These enrollment sessions are scheduled throughout the next few months and will continue through September 2021.