



February 8, 2019

President's Waypoint: My Retirement

After 31 years in education, I have decided to retire this summer, after serving SBCC for three years. This was not planned, but as many of you know, I have been struggling with significant health-related issues, including cancer and heart problems. Not addressing these issues has caught up with me, and I now need to focus on my health.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Santa Barbara City College community for permitting me the incredible experience, opportunity, and honor to serve as your Superintendent/President. I also want to thank the SBCC Board of Trustees for its consistent and unwavering support. This is an incredible group of dedicated volunteers for the college. While my time here has been challenging, we have had many memorable experiences and several accomplishments of which to be proud.

This college faculty, staff, administrators, and students have pulled together in unprecedented ways, whether it was launching Guided Pathways, establishing the new School of Extended Learning (adult education), promoting the SBCC Promise, creating the new Equity and Social Justice and Umoja Centers, advocating for our Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students, or crafting a new college Vision Statement.

Certainly, I will never forget coming in as a new President faced with a significant budget deficit. The college launched an amazing effort to rally around reducing the structural budget deficit with the Supplemental Early Retirement Program (SERP), the Budget Resource Allocation Committee (BRAC), and the Workforce Reduction Attrition Plan (WRAP). This was a tremendous effort and allowed the College to emerge with a stronger financial footing.

Over the last few years we have been able to hire several faculty, classified staff, and administrators in new or replacement positions in critically needed areas. An additional cohort of hiring is coming this spring. I am also proud to have made significant progress towards increasing the median salaries of all faculty, classified staff, and administrators by 7% in recent negotiations. Any raise beyond COLA hadn't happened for more than a decade – and it was certainly well deserved. My hope is that this progress will continue.

One of our greatest efforts has been working with the community, telling the SBCC story and connecting people to the college. I have had the opportunity and joy of speaking to hundreds of community groups, reaching thousands of community members. Being the Board President of Partners in Education was certainly exciting and helpful in making community connections. I am particularly proud of the relationship we have built with the SBCC Foundation leadership and the wonderfully supportive Foundation Board members.

Of course, we all remember the horrific Montecito debris flows and opening an American Red Cross Evacuation Center in our Campus Center and Sports Pavilion. Certainly, we were being the best neighbors possible when we opened our doors to the children of Montecito Union School when they were unable to access their own school.

The above is just a small sample of the efforts of the college over the last few years. I see the heart of our college every day in our dedicated staff, administration, and faculty, and how deeply you all care about our students and our mission here at SBCC. I have witnessed first-hand during my classroom visits the exceptional teaching and learning for which SBCC is known. For all of these reasons, while we always have work to do, I feel good about the progress we are have made at the college.

I want to leave you with this poem I wrote awhile back about SBCC:

Change “Forever”

Listen closely to the winds and the waves,
And you will hear ancient Chumash members,
Singing about Dark Water crossings,
To the Islands under light from a fine moon.
Songs about brave tribal men,
But also about a brave Lone Woman, on an island.

The sun rises, and morning fires cast gentle wafts of smoke
Along the coastline and warm Chumash families,
As they prepare for a busy day.
Tribal members teach their children
And care and love each other, learning the important,
Precious things of life.

Franciscans bring new dynamics and change,
Not all in good ways.
Proven traditions of a thousand years, overlooked,
Focusing on water and land production,
Harnessing the free-spirited mountain water,
Turning golden fields, green.

An education center is born on the mesa,
Extending high school and the potential of all students.
Rich and poor, far and near, young and old,
Black, brown, and white, ready or not –
All students come, and are forever changed and, in turn –
Change, forever...

Together forward,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anthony', written in a cursive style.