



the messenger

A Publication of Berkeley City College

Mid-semester Re-FLEX-tions



In recent presentations on the California Guided Pathways (GP) Project, the oft-repeated motto “We ask students to prepare for college, but how is the college preparing for the student?” helps succinctly shape the challenges ahead for Berkeley City College as we develop our five-year plan. It was also the underlying theme in the mid-semester Flex Day that had a



record attendance of over 125 faculty, staff, students, and administration.

From the Guided Pathways kickoff interactive discussion to the Gender & Sexuality Alliance Q&A Panel on improving support for LGBTQ+ students, all of the day’s events focused on strengthening our commitment to student equity success and campus collaboration.

Documentary: “From Incarceration to Education”

Berkeley City College recently screened “From Incarceration to Education” (FITE) that features the lives of students and their triumph from challenges in pursuing education and careers despite the odds. Shot on location, the documentary follows formerly incarcerated students as they share their lives, how they ended up in jail, how they turned things around, and what continues to be their challenges and hopes. A panel followed the screening including BCC and UCB Underground Scholar student mentors, producers Skylar Economy and Christian Collins, and Shalita Lawanda Williams, one of the students featured in the film. Over 50 students, faculty, and staff attended this event. For more information or to support FITE, please visit: www.fitefilm.com.



Educating BCC Community on Islam and Its Culture

Unfortunately, as a nation, we have seen a rise in Islamophobia but by better educating ourselves on the religion and Muslim culture, we can dispel unwarranted fears. The BCC Muslim Student Association (MSA) has taken the initiative by offering a plethora of events to inform the BCC community.

Art In Islam (April 16th)

Gathering All Muslim Artists (GAMA) includes many different Islamic artists who have helped put this event together. Many different Islamic artists will demonstrate art such as calligraphy, paintings, and contemporary art.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Event

Earlier this week, a representative from The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) lectured on the life and mannerism of Prophet Muhammad. The national organization CAIR was established in 1994 to challenge stereotypes of Islam and Muslims.

Happy Nowruz

Persian New Year, known as “Nowruz,” is the celebration of the first day of the year and the first day of spring in the solar Persian calendar. This traditional holiday has Iranian and religious Zoroastrian origins, but it has been celebrated by people from diverse ethno-linguistic communities



for over 3,000 years in Western Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Black Sea Basin, and the Balkans.

There was a live music performance by Mr. Mokhtabad, videos on the Nowruz culture in the auditorium, and a traditional Haft-Sin table, set with items representing regeneracy, fertility, abundance, wealth, life, and other forms of prosperity. The large turnout of the BCC community enjoyed the music, art, and food, and also learned about Iranian culture.

Ahmad Rashid Salim Lecture series

Earlier this month, Ahmad Rashid Salim, the spiritual services leader at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California and a PhD student at UC Berkeley, gave a series of educational lectures on various subjects related to Islam, including cultural and media influences on Islam, and the different Islamic sects and gender roles.

Videos from all three lectures are on the facebook page “BCC Muslim Student Association.”

Food Bank Volunteers “Produce” Great Results

BCC Student Services volunteered at the Alameda Food Bank for their Service Day on Friday, March 23, 2018. Staff and Counselors from the Vice President’s Office, Counseling Department, EOPS, DSPS, Learning Communities, Admissions and Records, Veteran’s Resource Center, and Assessment Center helped pack fruits and produce for

distribution. In addition, the team learned about the food insecurity needs in the area and toured the facilities. The Alameda Food Bank supports the BCC Food Bank every Monday from 11:00am to 1:00pm. Thank you to Susan Truong and Gabriel Martinez for coordinating and to all volunteers who participated.



Poetry Series

S Sharon Coleman, adjunct English and Creative writing instructor and faculty coordinator of “Milvia Street,” BCC’s art and literary journal, and Jason Cifra, the VP of Student Affairs, launched the Spring 2018 Poetry Series in the Student Lounge with a reading by BCC creative writing student and writing coach Julie Southworth.

Barbara Jane Reyes, the featured poet, read her newly written poems and poetry from several of her books. Her work explores the many voices of Filipina and Filipina-American women. She also answered questions from the audience and gave advice on developing as a writer. Many lucky audience members received copies of Barbara Jane Reyes’ books and copies of “Milvia Street.” After a short break of book signing and refreshments, 20 students shared poems during the open mike.



calendar/deadlines

Lecture Series Presented by BCC Muslim Student Association

Thu, Apr 12, 12:15 pm
Room 34

Art in Islam

Mon, Apr 16, 5–7 pm
Atrium

Poetry at Berkeley City College

Tue, Apr 24, Thu, May 10, 6:30–9 pm
Students’ Lounge, 5th Fl.

Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive Free Admission Day for BCC

Wed Apr 25, 12 noon–7 pm

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Berkeley City College is part of the Peralta Community College District which includes College of Alameda, Laney, and Merritt colleges.