PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

A NOTE TO OUR COMMUNITY

On the cover of this annual report are names of actual Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) students impacted by college scholarships during the 2013-2014 academic year.

As a learning college, EMCC supports learning for all students, community members and employees. We understand that no one can fulfill their educational journey alone. Annually, college employees reflect on the past year to envision ways to create and improve support and engagement for students. The team attends the Learning Summit, during which daily team discussions produce ideas and brainstorm possibilities for student success.

During the most recent summit, Uri Treisman – professor of Mathematics from the University of Texas at Austin – delivered a provocative keynote address. Entering college students focus on three questions:

1. **Ability**
   Can I actually do this?

2. **Belongingness**
   Do I really belong here? Are the people who are successful like me?

3. **Purpose**
   Does this have anything to do with what I want to become?

Estrella employees are asked to be intentional in their efforts for student success and strive to create a learning environment in which each student answers "yes" to each question. I believe Estrella’s third consecutive nomination for the Aspen Award indicates we are making meaningful changes for students.

Innovative employees create opportunities and resources to target student engagement. The Student Success Fair, Engage Estrella Mentoring, Career and Transfer Center, Tutoring and Academic Success Center … all are free and available to EMCC students. By formally establishing an office of alumni, Estrella graduates can also connect to students and demonstrate that goals are achievable and dreams do materialize. The support we provide each other and the partnerships we establish benefit us all – individual, community and society.

Providing experiences in which questions of belongingness, ability and purpose can be answered requires support and dedication. Scholarships and campus events contribute to student persistence, while community expertise connects students to broader life experiences. As Estrella continues to deliver learning opportunities for the West Valley, I thank you for joining Estrella Mountain in our learning college journey.

Regards,

Ernest A. Lara, Ph.D., President
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STRATEGIC DIRECTION I: MAXIMIZING STUDENT SUCCESS

Estrella Mountain will create and expand learning-centered programs and strategies that support the success of students.

1. Improve student goal identification and goal achievement.
2. Develop strategies to help students graduate.
3. Increase student engagement.
4. Develop programs/initiatives to help reduce performance gaps among targeted populations.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION II: CREATING A CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT

Estrella Mountain will commit to assessing and documenting learning outcomes across divisions that result in strategies to improve learning.

1. Close the loop for all learning assessments to ensure continuous curriculum and program improvements.
2. Increase the depth and breadth of faculty participation in assessment and improve student awareness of EMCC General Education Abilities.
3. Strengthen the connection of assessment of learning outcomes with decision making across campus.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION III: CREATING AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THAT SUPPORTS LEARNING

Estrella Mountain will cultivate an organizational culture in which policies, programs, practices, and employees support learning as the major priority. This includes professional development programs and diversity initiatives that prepare all employees to become more effective facilitators of learning.

1. Improve, develop and expand programs which support current employees and assist new employees in their transition to EMCC’s culture based on the Learning College model and principles.
2. Expand and create new opportunities for professional development and career planning.
3. Cultivate an environment and develop opportunities in which employees connect with individual students to create meaningful learning experiences.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION IV: CREATING DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

Estrella Mountain will promote and support the expansion of dynamic learning environments that integrate technology to enable effective teaching and improve student learning and engagement.

1. Research, build consensus for, and implement effective teaching strategies, inclusive of technology, that support student engagement, learning, persistence, and success.
2. Support student completion and success through continuance of e-learning options for EMCC students.
3. Provide specialized and informal learning spaces to support comprehensive growth of the institution to support student and employee engagement and success.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION V: MAXIMIZING PARTNERSHIPS + RESOURCES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Estrella Mountain will maximize existing partnerships and resources (capital and human), while continuing to pursue new opportunities, increase access and support learning.

1. Increase partnerships to support learning and student completion.
2. Expand fourth revenue stream.
3. Prioritize and reallocate resources to support college programs and services.
YEAR IN REVIEW

ASPEN AWARD

For the third consecutive year, EMCC was identified as one of the nation’s 150 best community colleges by the Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program. Of the 1,000 potential candidates, EMCC progressed to the second round and received an interview with the selection committee for the 2015 awards. EMCC is the only community college in Arizona to receive successive and continuous nominations since initiation of the Aspen Award in 2011.

DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

EMCC President Dr. Ernest A. Lara received the West Valley Foundation’s 2014 Diversity Award. Nominated for his contributions to diversity and support of education, Dr. Lara was commended for focusing on West Valley communities during the 2014 Cesar Chavez breakfast.

NISOD AWARDEES

Three employees received recognition from the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) for educational and leadership excellence.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

• EMCC’s Instructional Computing division chair was appointed to the Association of Computing Machinery Committee for Computing Education in Community Colleges.
• EMCC Mathematics faculty received the 2013 CPED Dissertation in Practice Award for her work in developmental coursework.
• Two EMCC adjunct faculty received Outstanding Adjunct Faculty recognition by the MCCCD Adjunct Faculty Association.

INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

EMCC’s Innovation of the Year was awarded to the Student Success Fair (SSF), a unique two-day event designed to connect students to graduation goals and student success resources. The SSF was selected as a pilot program in MCCCD, launched in fall 2014 at five institutions.

2014 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD

EMCC Business faculty received one of five awards given annually by MCCCD’s Foundation. Employees who have made outstanding contributions to advance the District’s mission receive the award in the form of a $1,000 scholarship, for which they may help select criteria for award.

WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP

EMCC Honors faculty advisor was selected as EMCC’s 2013 Woman of Distinction (WOD) for her leadership and mentorship of women. She was one of 10 women recognized at the 16th Annual WOD Luncheon.

DIVERSITY AWARD

Collaborative efforts between employees received the Diversity Advisory Council Award of Excellence for their leadership of the ADA/Empower Task Force to build an inclusive and accessible college environment.

LEARNING COLLEGE

A team of more than 30 employees attended the League for Innovation Learning College Summit.
Adding more than 40,000 square feet of learning space and a new conference center, the Estrella Hall expansion project was completed as part of the 2004 voter-approved bond. With the additional space, student success resources (Library, Computer Commons, tutoring and developmental education faculty) were co-located, creating a centralized location for academic resources. In addition to study rooms, quiet spaces and areas for laptop uplinks, Estrella Hall has 18 new classrooms and 18 new offices.
18 new learning studios

35% more shelf space for library materials

1 centralized tutoring center
More than 1,000 students participated in 2013 and 1,500 students in 2014. By interacting with faculty and staff in an informal setting, students explore degree requirements, career fields, graduation timelines and college success resources.

The fair uniquely engages students with EMCC employees through:

- **Passports.** Using a ‘treasure hunt’ strategy, students work to complete their individual passports by visiting different learning destinations. By visiting a minimum number of learning destinations, students collect passport stamps and earn college memorabilia.

- **“I Will Graduate” t-shirts.** Completing the entire passport earns a collectible t-shirt. Students ‘own’ their individual completion goals by identifying their personal completion tasks and timeline.

- **Photo booth.** Students don graduation regalia and costume props to envision their ‘future self.’ Their “I Will Graduate” picture is a reminder of their goals and personal expectations.

By connecting students to all facets of student success (faculty, learning resources, college requirements, best practices), students develop a broader understanding of student success.
YEARS IN REVIEW

ALL-USA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS
Two EMCC students received 2014 All-USA Scholarships, with one of the two also selected as a 2014 Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team Silver Scholar.

PTK HONORS
Beta Alpha Xi, EMCC’s Phi Theta Kappa chapter, received international and regional distinctions including Distinguished Chapter and, for the 18th consecutive time, five-star chapter status. Other wins were Honors in Action Project, Top College Project and Distinguished Chapter Officer.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES
• Available to all MCCCD students, EMCC hosted the eighth annual Undergraduate Research Conference. More than 80 research proposals were received and 32 were selected for the conference. Six EMCC students placed in the top three awards for their oral presentations during the Student Conference.
• Six EMCC Honors students presented at the 2014 Western Regional Honors Conference, representing more students than any other Maricopa Community College.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
• More than 140 unique student activities, advancing civic and global learning, were offered by EMCC. The college supported 500+ students in various leadership opportunities and workshops.
• The second issue of the “Lion’s Perspective” was published online in spring 2014. Written by students, articles focus on topics within the campus community.
• EMCC students voted to name the college mascot Roary. A new costumed mascot debuted during the grand opening of Estrella Hall, which involved a student scavenger hunt and engagement with learning resources.

CAREER + TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES
• EMCC’s centralized Career and Transfer Center actively engaged 210 businesses and hosted outreach events to stimulate student transfer and job placement.
• More than 130 internships were posted and 71 students were placed.
• More than 8,000 career assessments were administered during the year to high school and college students.
During 2013-14, EMCC:

• Provided scholarships for 1,480 students
• Received donations from 180 scholarship donors
• Raised almost $18,000 with the Estrella Rotary Foundation’s annual scholarship fundraiser

Estrella is committed to doing more for students, including connecting current students with alumni. During the 2014-15 academic year, EMCC is encouraging community leaders and members to:

• Join EMCC’s Alumni Association
• Connect with the “Educating Our Community, Ensuring Our Future” campaign
• Showcase contributions through EMCC’s Donor Wall in the Estrella Conference Center foyer
• Explore recurring and sustainable funding through scholarships and the endowment

Individuals are the facilitators and cultivators of learning environments. Helping students develop habits for success includes time and effort as much as securing resources. Community members and leaders are essential to comprehensive achievement.

To be involved, contact the Office of Alumni, Corporate and Foundation Relations at 623-935-8050.
2014-2015 GROWTH

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
State-of-the-art theatre with seating for approximately 300 will have a black box, orchestra pit, dance studio, and classrooms. Grand opening for the community is expected in spring 2015.

CYBER SECURITY
Leading the Arizona Sun Corridor-Get Into Energy Consortium on a $13.5 million capacity-building grant. EMCC is expanding the energy-related program offerings. Launching in fall 2014, a new AAS degree in IT and Power Systems Security will provide an energy-focused track for cybersecurity.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Since opening the doors in 1992, Estrella Mountain graduation ceremonies have continued to increase in size. Connecting and engaging EMCC alumni with the college is essential and will be formally organized under the Office of Alumni, Corporate and Foundation Relations.

$13.5 million grant for energy workforce development

YEAR IN REVIEW

VETERANS CENTER
To provide quality service to a growing population of veterans, EMCC remodeled existing space into a dedicated Veterans Center. The opening in fall 2013 included partnerships from local, veteran-owned businesses.

WEST VALLEY THINK TANK K-12 PARTNERSHIP
EMCC hosted the fourth Math Summit with the West Valley Think Tank to increase student transfer rates and alleviate developmental education needs. More than 75 K-12 instructors attended the summits.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
The Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Buckeye Valley Chamber of Commerce and Estrella Mountain offered a series of business courses to support West Valley economic growth.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
• Three student clubs – Future Teachers, Administration of Justice and Phi Theta Kappa – made a positive impact within the community by renovating four family apartments for the New Life Center.
• The EMCC Veterans Club raised $2,000 for Garfield Commons to help create living spaces for homeless veterans.
• A team of 50 students, employees and family participated in the 2013 AIDS Walk Phoenix, raising more than $1,000.
• For the fourth year, EMCC partnered with Valley of the Sun United Way to provide free tax preparation services through the federal Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.
• EMCC employees raised more than $30,000 for the Valley of the Sun United Way through the college’s 2013 campaign.

COMMUNITY CONFERENCES + EVENTS
• EMCC hosted more than 100 students during the national Tour for Diversity in Medicine Conference, the only event in Arizona.
• Partnering with APS and Intel, EMCC hosted the annual Hermanas Conference. Young women in middle and high school attended learning sessions focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
• The third annual Health Awareness and Career Expo provided students and community members with information and resources about healthy living and career development.
• The cities of Avondale and Goodyear hosted a third annual parade and community festival at EMCC.
• EMCC’s Buckeye Educational Center hosted the college’s annual Student Success Fair, tailoring information specifically for Buckeye community members and outlying areas.