

Victor Valley College Press Release

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Victor Valley College Celebrates Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Encourages African-American Students to Pursue Higher Education Dreams

As part of its efforts to celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., Victor Valley College is encouraging African-Americans to seek higher education and utilize financial aid resources that are available to help students reach their education dreams.

“A high quality and affordable education is within reach for African-Americans, or persons of any race, who want to make their higher education dreams a reality,” said California Community Colleges Chancellor Marshall “Mark” Drummond. “Our commitment to ALL Californians is to ensure access and affordability. California’s community colleges welcome any student who wants to seek education beyond high

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school – whether they’re interested in expanding their job skills, attaining a two-year degree or transferring to a four-year college.”

Annually, there are approximately 195,000 African-Americans attending one of the 109 community college campuses and approximately 48 percent of these students receive some form of financial aid.

“Victor Valley College is an invaluable resource for ALL students,” said Greg Ryan, Director of Financial Aid. “Regardless of ethnic background, age, or socio-economic status, one thing I can promise everyone who attends our college: When you step through our doors, you have become a part of the most vibrant higher education community in the world and we are committed to your success.”

Effective January 1, 2007, community college fees decreased from \$26 per unit to \$20 per unit. This is one reason why enrollments are growing at Victor Valley College.

The community colleges have kept their pledge to help underserved communities by promoting financial aid availability through a statewide financial aid awareness campaign. The “*I Can Afford College*” campaign encourages students to visit www.icanaffordcollege.com or call toll-free 1.800.987.ICAN (4226) to learn about

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financial aid available year round to help students pay for fees, books, supplies and other educationally related expenses. The site provides basic information and can directly connect visitors to their closest community college financial aid office where they can receive free one-on-one assistance identifying options and completing the forms.

“Education is the sole equalizer in our transitioning economy and with the help of financial aid and the welcomed news of a fee reduction, *all* Californians have access to an affordable, high quality education through the community college system,” said Drummond. “As we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., it is important to remember the role he felt education played in equality in the United States.”

California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the world with 109 colleges and 72 districts that provided educational, vocational and transfer programs to more than 2.5 million students during the 2004-2005 academic year.

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