

President's Monthly Message (archived)  
- updated **August 1, 2005**

**CCA President, Carolyn Inmon**

### **Fighting to Maintain the Vision**

Community colleges are the miracle workers of the system. We do more with less. We do more than most. If you ask the community college instructors or professors you know what are we about, their answers will be similar.

- We educate those who need it most.
- We are there for those who can't afford to pay the prices of the university.
- We are there for those who had inferior K-12 education.
- We are there for those who take a while to figure out their dreams, goals, and future.
- We are there for those who need remediation.
- We are there for those who are new to the country.
- We are there for those who need a second chance.

I am deeply troubled by forces in society that would ignore our vision and change our mission. They don't seem to understand us at all. They exist in the legislature, in the universities, and in society.

**LEGISLATION:** Recent proposed legislation is very troubling. AB 473 by Liu seeks to change our vision. It claims to understand that the State of California should maintain its primary responsibility to fund the predominant share of the cost of public community college education in California. It goes on to talk about how changes in resident student fees should be gradual, moderate, and predictable. They are, of course, talking about raising fees. Most disturbing of all are three provisions:

- Community college student fees should not be increased by more than 10 percent in any academic year.
- Annually, except in fiscal emergencies, the student fee amount should be adjusted by the annual changes in statewide per capita personal income as compiled by the Department of Finance.
- Students attending the campuses of the California Community Colleges should pay student fees that do not exceed 20 percent of the overall cost of education at the community college.

While there is a methodology to raise fees, there seems to be no methodology to lower fees. This legislation amounts to an automatic annual increase. Clearly, forces are out to place into legislation permanent structures for raising fees on an annual basis. This is major policy change and a major philosophical departure from the Master Plan. These proposals would have a tremendous negative impact on our work.

**TRANSFER:** At the same time, transfer and articulation issues are equally troubling. The CSU system has pulled out of the CAN system and replaced it with LDTP which is aimed at high performing students. It is fine for some of our students and will shorten the time they spend in college, but it ignores the other 80% of our students. Again, we must fight to keep our commitment real.

It would appear that legislative forces are ignoring our traditional commitment to have free or inexpensive community college education for all students, and university forces are ignoring the needs of our students who often need courses for remediation and time to find their way. We must fight these forces or cease to be what we are - a system for all California students.

**Any questions? Call the CCA office at 916/726-4207.**



