



West Los Angeles College 13th Annual Leadership Retreat

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION IN/THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

(Updated 11/5/14)

SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Check-in. Light breakfast	GC lobby & courtyard
9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Opening Remarks <i>President Nabil Abu-Ghazaleh & Chancellor Francisco Rodriguez</i>	GC 160
9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Reviewing, Reaffirming West’s Mission Statement & Self-Evaluation <i>Fran Leonard</i>	
9:30 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.	What Gap? What the Data Shows Us <i>Rebecca Tillberg</i>	
9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Panel Discussion <i>Dr. Dawn Person, CSU Fullerton Professor of Education</i> <i>Ms. Avis Ridley Thomas, Dispute Resolution Office</i> <i>Dr. Tyrone Howard, UCLA, Black Male Institute</i>	

West pursues its mission resolutely and with the intellectual honesty to ask assiduously how we will provide a transformative educational experience. Our eminent panelists will challenge us to create an environment that appreciates the diversity of worlds our students come from and supports them to prepare for the unfathomable universe into which they must launch themselves.

How is social justice manifested on our campus in practice, policy and instruction?

- What does it look like? What will be the outcome for students, faculty, staff?
- How does an agent of change remain energized and focused through the long process to achieve a desired change?



BREAK OUT SESSIONS I & II

10:25 a.m. – 11:25 a.m. & 11:35 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Select one of the following for each session

- I. **Cultural Competence: Creating Equitable Learning Environments through Valuing Diversity and Building Trust** GC 140
Noami Duckworth and Arnita Porter
The ability to create quality and trusting relationships between students and educators who are culturally different is a necessary step to increase student engagement. By improving connections and dispelling misconceptions within a cross-cultural population, we can boost student success rate. We will discuss these and other ideas to improve cultural competency across campus.

- II. **Frontline Leaders and Bridging the Gap** GC 110
Dr. Tyrone Howard, Ashanti Lyles
This session will cultivate a discussion between students and staff on their experience on campus that impacts the real fiber of the educational experience at West. The goals are to empower the students by exposing them to the college's practices and processes while developing a pathway of resources and logistics on campus. The staff will share their observations and experiences implemented to embrace the challenges of the students they serve.

- III. **Social Justice through Summer Bridge** GC 150
Mayra Perez, Danielle Wilson
Social Justice is a necessary component in the growth and maturity of individuals. In this session you will participate in a Social Justice activity that will aid in your personal understanding of race, gender, class, religion, and how these topics affect society. Through Summer Bridge, students joined together to participate in multiple empowering Social Justice activities. At the conclusion of this session Summer Bridge students will speak about this experiences through the multiple activities and how it has empowered them as individuals.

Student Panel: Stacy Hernandez, Jasmine Martin, Terysha Paxton, Stephon Hathaway

- IV. **Leading from the Middle** GC 130
Jan Connal, Cerritos College 3CSN
This session introduces an organizational change framework known as Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and explores how each of us, regardless of position, can be an agent for positive change. The basis of AI builds on the notion that an organization moves in the direction of what gets talked about the most. It is evidenced by research showing that the greatest potential for producing positive change and inspiring collective action comes about when we evoke stories that affirm and compel people to envision a positive future grounded in the best of the past. When people focus on problems and conflicts, they inadvertently magnify the very problems they seek to resolve. In contrast, when groups work to uncover shared human values and valued achievements -- like peak experiences, best practices, and worthy accomplishments -- these phenomena tend to flourish.



12:40 p.m. – 1:25 p.m.

LUNCH

1:35 p.m. - 2:50 p.m.

**Transforming the Campus Culture One Interaction
at a Time**

GC 160

*Members of Faculty, Staff, and Administrator FELI Graduates
Featuring Walter Jones, Kenyatta Bakeer and Vicky Nesia*

This session focuses on an interactive exploration of empathy and how the awareness of our perceptions and their sources can transform our college community.

2:50 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks

GC 160



PANEL DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS



DR. DAWN PERSON is a Professor in the Educational Leadership Department at California State University, Fullerton. She serves as Coordinator of the Community College, Higher Education Specialization for the Educational Doctorate. She also serves as the Director of the Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership (C-REAL), a solution-focused, data-driven research center that services community partners in Los Angeles and Orange Counties as well as national and international associates committed to issues of educational leadership and student achievement. She serves as a consultant to colleges and universities on program evaluation, student retention, organizational change and multicultural issues. Dr. Person has written numerous articles and book chapters on student retention for African American men, women, and women and student athletes of color. Among her many honors and awards, Dr. Person received the American College Personnel Association's Diamond Honoree Award, a lifetime achievement award and the Most Valuable Professor Award. Ed.D Higher and Adult Education Teacher College; M.Ed Special Education, Learning Disabilities, Slippery Rock University, Pennsylvania.



AVIS RIDLEY-THOMAS served as the Director of the Dispute Resolution Program since its inception in 1989, retiring after 30 years of service to the Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney. The program, which has grown from four staff members to include over 2,000 volunteer conciliators, mediators, facilitators and peacemakers, specializes in mediation, violence prevention, cross cultural relations and has provided consultation, training and support to institutions, businesses, organizations and communities through the Southern California Region. Ridley-Thomas' program received numerous awards from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors as well as other awards recognizing outstanding contributions to dispute resolution. Ridley-Thomas graduated Cum Laude from Pomona College in 1976 and attended graduate school at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Since 1979, she has been married to LA County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, and is the mother of twin boys Sebastian and Sinclair who graduated from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2009.



DR. TYRONE HOWARD is Professor of Education at UCLA, faculty director of Center X, dedicated to working to transform public schooling to create a more just, equitable and humane society; and Director of the Black Male Institute. His teaching and research interests include: multicultural education, social and political context of schools, urban education and the educational experience of African American students. His most recent book is *Why Race and Culture Matters in Schools: Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classrooms*. Dr. Howard earned his Ph.D at the University of Washington, his M.A. at California State University, Dominguez Hills and his B.A. at the University of California, Irvine.



BREAKOUT SESSION PRESENTERS



KENYATTA BAKEER has been at West for 4 years as a Fulltime Professor in the Child Development Department. She enjoys teaching her students through different modalities of learning. She is a hands on learner and enjoy participating in Professional Developments to enhance her teaching. She is a 2013 FELI Graduate and a 2012 FTLA Graduate. She is also a co-advisor of the Child Development Club with Dr. Dolores Gallegos, a member of the SLO Committee and Academic Senate.

DR. JAN CONNAL, Cerritos College & 3CSN, has a depth of knowledge about improving student success and extensive experience coordinating projects and providing professional development. For the last three years, she has participated with 3CSN as the [Orange County Learning Network \(OCLN\)](#) regional coordinators and, more recently, as its Habits of Mind Project Coordinator. Prior to this, she also served on the Steering Committee for the [Basic Skills Initiative \(BSI\)](#) in California's community colleges for three years, with responsibility for faculty development in effective practices. At Cerritos College, Jan is an Academic Counselor; she also works across her campus to coordinate SLO assessment activities and has chaired the Developmental Education Committee (promoting assessment and evidence-based effective practices). Previous to assuming her current position she served a variety of administrative posts, including Dean for Institutional Advancement and Planning, Dean of Educational Support Services, Director of Research, Development and Planning. Jan earned her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology (Research Methods and Evaluation) from UCLA.



NOAMI DUCKWORTH lived and worked in New York City for 10 years as a Digital Artist, Graphic Designer & Fashion Designer for several major fashion companies, including Calvin Klein, Gap and Armani Exchange. Naomi moved to Los Angeles in 2011 to work in the visual effects industry and joined West Los Angeles College in 2012. She is as an adjunct instructor in Multimedia, covering several courses including video editing, interactive media and the online introduction to multimedia class. She has participated in 2014 Faculty Teaching Learning Academy, Five-Day Experiential Learning Institute and currently in "Cultivating a Growth Mindset" project at West.



DR. WALTER C. JONES has served as an administrator in higher education for over 15 years. His experience as an educator at the secondary, community college and university levels spans over 25 years. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University Northridge in English (Reading Instruction). He attended California State University Dominguez Hills where he received his Master of Arts degree in Education (Teaching/Curriculum). At the University of California Los Angeles he attained his Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership. He currently serves as the Dean of Academic Affairs at West. He has been married to his wife, Trish, for 19 years and they have three children (Brandon, Jade and Jennifer).



ASHANTI LYLES joined West Los Angeles College in September 2007 as a senior secretary in the Office of Academic Affairs. Prior to joining West, she went to Trade Tech where she completed an associate of arts degree in Child



Development and a bachelor of science degree in Social Work from Cal State University, Los Angeles. She is currently pursuing an MBA degree from National University that is to be completed in Fall 2015. In Academic Affairs, Ashanti assists the administrators with class schedule preparation for the Career Technical Education divisions as well as helping faculty, students, other administrators and staff members with their needs. Aside from being a part of the Leadership Retreat planning committee, she is also involved in activities related to the AFT Staff Guild and represents the Guild at the Budget Committee.

VICKY NESIA works in the Office of the President. She came to West Los Angeles College in the summer of 2009 after over 10 years at ELAC where she also received an AA degree in Computer Application and Office Technology-Executive Assistant. In addition to her duties, Vicky also takes part in other campus activities such as the Leadership Retreat, Cultivating Growth Mindset project, and FELI. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Cal State University, Los Angeles and is currently working on completing a master's degree in human development at Pacific Oaks College.



MAYRA PEREZ is a Student Recruiter at West Los Angeles College who specializes in the outreach and recruitment of High School students in the Greater Los Angeles County. Daily she supports and guides students and families with the enrollment process in order to meet their future educational and career goals. She has earned her Bachelors of Art degree in Social Work and a minor in Sociology from the California State University, Los Angeles.



DR. ARNITA PORTER hails from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where she earned her BA from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and JD from North Carolina Central University School of Law. As In-House Counsel and Legislative Analyst for the Police Foundation, a law enforcement think tank, Arnita lobbied Congress on important legislative measures, including the Brady Bill, the Assault Weapons Ban, the Hate Crimes Bill, and other public safety-related issues. A love for the arts and desire to work in the entertainment industry brought Arnita to Los Angeles, where she worked for Def Jam Records, Motown Records, and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz. Currently, Arnita is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Business Division (Real Estate) at West. She chairs the Student Grievance Committee and serves as Adjunct Representative to the Academic Senate. She is also an Academic Senate appointee to the Online Education Initiative (OEI) Steering Committee and chairs the Consortium Workgroup. Arnita also serves on the ASCCC Professional Development Committee. She is a mother, a foodie, and a lover of politics, old movies, traveling, and jazz. Always jazz.

DANIELLE WILSON started her educational career at Long Beach State where she completed her Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She later moved to northern California to pursue her Master's degree in Educational Counseling. Mrs. Wilson has had the opportunity to work for E.O.P. Summer Bridge programs at both Long Beach State and San Diego State. It was at San Diego State where she received her training in social justice activities. Mrs. Wilson has been an Adjunct Counselor/Instructor at West Los Angeles College since spring 2014. She was excited when asked to teach a personal development course for the Summer Bridge 2014 program at West which was themed: Social Justice. She believes that the activities promote growth in all individuals and lead to a more effective and well diverse society.