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Dr. Kathleen A. Rose, Superintendent/President

August 21, 2019

Dear Gavilan Community,

Welcome all to Fall 2019, the start of Gavilan College's Centennial Year!

In 1907, the California State Legislature took action to create a system of "junior colleges" titled the **Upward Extension Law** to help meet the need for education beyond a high school diploma. The Legislature followed-up the **Upward Extension Law** with the passage of the **Ballard Junior College Act** in 1917, which provided state and county support for junior colleges, and expanded the mission of junior colleges to include education opportunities in the trades—what we now call "career education." Just two years later, San Benito County Junior College was established as the 11<sup>th</sup> California Community College. We have been serving our community and our students ever since.

In Fall 2019, we start our Centennial Celebration at the Gavilan Joint Community College District at Convocation on Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at our Theater. Breakfast will be served from 7:45a to 8:15a in the Theater courtyard with the Convocation program beginning at 8:30a. The theme for our Centennial Year is "*Student Voices*" - at Convocation we will be listening to our student voices, past and present. During our morning session, we will welcome our new staff and faculty members and listen to a host of student voices that will speak about what Gavilan has meant - and still means - to their lives. The Theater morning session is scheduled to end at 10a. Beginning at 10:10a and continuing throughout remainder of the day, our fantastic and tireless Professional Learning group - led by Professional Learning Liaison, Leah Halper - have built a very robust schedule for learning sessions, several of which focus on showcasing student voices. For the full schedule of afternoon sessions, please visit the TLC homepage (<http://www.gavilan.edu/staff/flex/index.php>) and click on the link for the FLEX day schedule. At 12:30p we will gather as a community for lunch in the Student Center to celebrate and embrace the anticipation of a new semester and a new year.

As we look forward to our Centennial Year with excitement, we find our anticipation tempered by the recent tragedy at the Garlic Festival. As we start our year it is important to remember that many members of our community have been impacted by the shooting at the Garlic Festival on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Gavilan offers counseling services through Discovery Counseling Center for all students needing assistance. If you have a student in crisis, please walk them to the Counseling Department office for assistance and referral as needed. For employees and staff, the College offers an Employee Assistance Program that provides counseling and supportive resources. Any staff or faculty needing assistance should contact Human Resources for referral information.



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At Gavilan we take great pride in the ethos of care we bring to our work every day. Please help connect students and staff to resources that they might not be aware of—and as always, please continue the continuity of care that our students and community have come to expect.

A donation box for the Gilroy Foundation will be available at the Theater during the morning Convocation for individuals wanting to contribute funds to provide assistance and relief to those families who have been impacted by this heartbreaking event, especially to the families of Stephen Romero, Keyla Salazar, and Trevor Irby. Gavilan College is a core member of the Gilroy Community – and we are #GILROYSTRONG.

In reflecting on our past year, it is important to note the accomplishments of a successful accreditation visit in March 2019. We received a commendation for our College’s work in partnering with the community as well as two compliance recommendations for improvement. One of those compliance recommendations was to ensure that all students receive syllabi with correct and current course student learning outcomes (SLOs). While deans and department chairs will be reviewing all syllabi submitted this year to ensure compliance, I would like to challenge all Gavilan faculty to take the quality of syllabi one step beyond compliance. A syllabus serves as the first introduction to a course and to an instructor. While the temptation exists to create a syllabus comprised of “musts”, “don’ts”, and “dos”, I want to encourage our teaching community to re-envision their syllabus as a warm invitation into the life of academic discourse, not just the policies and deadlines students must follow. The syllabus can welcome students into their courses and their overall college journey, and can reflect the commitment of our equity-mindedness at Gavilan College. Again, Leah Halper, supported by Carla Velarde-Barros, Nikki Dequin and others, has created an iLearn course shell designed to help faculty rethink and revise their syllabi. You can enroll in the iLearn shell by going to <https://ilearn.gavilan.edu/enroll/CTCG4Y> and accepting your invitation. We will be writing our follow-up report to the Commission at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, and I know we will be reporting not only on our compliance, but more importantly, on our overall excellence when it comes to our syllabus project.

Finally, we will be spending much of this year laying the foundations (literally and figuratively) for the Measure X construction work. As a part of these efforts, aligned with our Centennial Year theme of “Student Voices,” we will be placing student voices at the center of our design work—just as they remain central to our ongoing design work in Guided Pathways. Our students and all of our campus community members remain an essential part of this foundational work that will serve our community for the next one hundred years.

Thank you for all that you do every day for every student and for our college.

Best wishes for a great year,



Denée Pescarmona

Vice President, Academic Affairs/Interim Vice President, Student Services