



President's Communiqué

FROM THE DESK OF THUY THI NGUYEN

Identity of the Other(s)

Greetings Foothill College,

Last week, *PEOPLE* profiled a grandmother who started at Foothill College more than fifty years ago:

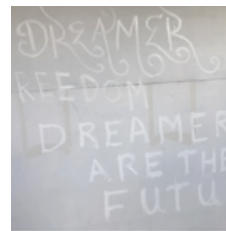


Picture by Southern New Hampshire University

[This 94-Year-Old Grandmother Just Earned Her Bachelor's Degree: 'Education Gives Me Life!'](#)

With a fervor for education, Foothill alum Amy Craton became one of the world's oldest college graduates. As I read about Amy, I am reminded of images from the Women's March this past weekend (believed to be the largest protest in U.S. history). Amy became a single mother and stopped her education, but persevered and is now a college graduate with a 4.0 G.P.A. Even then, she has not stopped and is working on her Master's degree.

Thank you to all those who came to the commissioning of the Dreamers Mural last Friday. I cannot wait to see what our students and staff, led by Professors **Hilary Gomes** and **Joe Ragey** and Foothill alum and artist (once undocumented) **Oscar Lopez Guerrero**, will produce. Special thanks to 3SP Program Coordinator **Marco Tovar**, student **Carlos Pacheco Miranda**, and the teams at the Family Engagement Institute and CAP for organizing the public forum. If students and employees wish to volunteer to design/paint, please contact Dean **Simon Pennington** (penningtonsimon@fhda.edu). Many thanks to Dean Pennington who first approached me with this idea!



Our students and former students spoke passionately about their struggles and deep appreciation for you, Foothill College for helping them feel safe and loved. The last student who spoke (an international student from China) reminded us that “the undocumented” have other intersectionality (with communities of color, disabilities, and LGBTQ+, for instance).

Last Thursday evening, the Theater Arts department was part of a national effort called “Ghostlight Project” where students, faculty, staff, and I casted light, read famous quotes about tolerance and inclusion, and sang “Imagine”.



Ralph Ellison in *Invisible Man* wrote (*with emphasis*):

*If you can **show me how I can cling to that which is real to me, while teaching me a way into the larger society**, then and only then will I drop my defenses and hostility, and I will sing your praises and help you to make the desert bear fruit.*

Last Thursday and Friday, a group of 32 employees and I were completing Part II of the *Beyond Diversity (Courageous Conversation)* training where we learned to better understand the identity and role of race in our everyday interactions and to serve as “equity leaders” at our college. It is my hope that we will continue to provide the training for all interested employees and new employees.

In the past few days, we also witnessed the inauguration of Donald Trump and the first White House press conference contending press assertion of low attendance at the inauguration. I found myself going through many inauguration footages from different sources just to decipher for myself what is the truth. The age of fake news, “alternative facts,” and “war with the press” make it even more important for our students (and us) to stay engaged and informed. Please encourage student to join us on Wednesday as our own Library (led by **Micaela Agyare**) does just that. We have many talented employees at Foothill, and I am grateful to them for taking on several “Teaching Moments” topics.

Speaking of outstanding employees, the League for Innovation in the Community College honors the contributions and leadership of community college faculty and staff with the Roueche Excellence Award each year . This year, I (with counsel from cabinet) had the distinct privilege of nominating the following individuals whom the League will honor at the League's Innovations Conference this March in San Francisco:

Dean of Online Learning **Judy Baker**

Admission and Records Supervisor **Anthony Cervantes**

Anthropology Professor **Samuel Connell**

Accounting Professor **Jose Nava**

Congratulations!

Of Service,



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