

November 28, 2022

In a time of uncertainty...remember the horses and Back to the Future

Hope everyone has had a thoughtful and restful Thanksgiving holiday and perhaps some time for reflection. We had three presidential candidates visit campus before our break. While that should generate a climate of excitement and anticipation, it can also generate a climate of uncertainty, and even fear of the unknown, and particularly, a fear of instability. However, I want to remind you of the marvelous work that you and the college have accomplished in the last 12 months, and to assure you that many of these milestones do not/will not change with a new president but will be the next chapter in the continuous work of the college - same theme, same plot. Even when I returned as president a year ago, November 1, after 15 years in retirement, much of Foothill was new or changed but much had not and not at the core. It is the core which makes this college what it is and no one leader can or should disrupt or change it. To facilitate the transition, I am slated to remain until April 1, and my goal is to assure a forward moving progression. Foothill has never been at a standstill and all the initiatives that have been started or restarted are well-grounded and well-funded to continue.

This and the upcoming Winter Quarter should be one of anticipation for a new leader and my goal is to assure that we don't lose our momentum which we have begun to regain since Covid. Foothill is an institution that is well-grounded and a new leader will begin with learning about our history, hence this year's theme of Back to the Future, and understand our culture, embrace our values, and deeply understand who we are. It is truly understandable that the impending change in the presidency will generate uncertainty, apprehension, and distrust based on the past, but a change is also an opportunity to move forward, to let go of the now more distant past, and to trust in ourselves, yourselves. When I first returned to Foothill in November 2021, I began with ways to engender and reignite trust in the organization and among ourselves. Sixty student, staff, faculty and administrative leaders engaged in an "Equinimity Retreat" last December where horses taught us something about trust, sensitivity, caring and how to work together as a team. The word cloud below represents that day's experience, and I ask all of you, whether you were at the retreat or not, to reflect on the words below and how they represent what is important in how we continue to come together as a fully functional entity. And as we transition to new leadership, these are the areas that I will personally point out and how the work can be continued.



Best regards,

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