



**DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING - MINUTES  
45524 OASIS STREET, INDIO, CA 92201  
CLASSROOMS 101-103  
FRIDAY, MAY 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
9:30 AM**

- I. CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM, and asked Trustee Stefan to lead the pledge of allegiance.

President Kinnamon conducted the roll call:

Trustee Broughton  
Trustee Stefan  
Trustee Sanchez-Fulton (Absent)  
Trustee Jandt  
Trustee Wilson  
Student Trustee Estrada  
Parliamentarian – Carlos Maldonado  
Recorder – Julia Breyer

- II. BOARD MEETING AGENDA:** Confirmation of Agenda: Approve the agenda of the Regular Meeting of May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, with any additions, corrections, or deletions.

The agenda was approved as presented.

**III. CLOSED SESSION**

1. **CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR:** Pursuant to Section 54957.6; unrepresented groups & labor unions on campus include CTA, CODAA, and CSEA; Agency Designated Representative: President Joel L. Kinnamon
2. **PERSONNEL**
  - a) **DISCIPLINE/DISMISSAL/RELEASE/APPOINTMENT**  
(Government Code Section 54957)
  - b) **PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:**
    - o Superintendent/President
3. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL ANTICIPATED LITIGATION:**  
**Section 54956.9 (d) (2/3/4)** Number of potential cases: 4

4. **CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS:** Property: Parcel Numbers: 669-330-047, 502-190-003, 502-190-004, 502-190-008, 502-190-015, 502-190-017, 502-190-018, 502-190-020, 611-211-013, 611-211-014, 611-211-019, 687-510-043, 687-510-044, 687-510-045, 687-510-049, 687-510-050, 759-060-024

#### IV. OPEN SESSION

**Closed Session report** – Chair Wilson noted there was reportable action taken in closed session.

In closed session a motion was made by Vice Chair, Trustee Broughton, seconded by Trustee Stefan to authorize the Superintendent/President to negotiate salary and benefits with candidates for three leadership positions:

- Dean, School of Mathematics and Sciences
- Dean, School of Social Sciences and Arts
- Dean, Counseling

The motion carried with four members voting in favor and zero members voting against the motion. The motion carried four to zero.

Trustee Sanchez-Fulton was absent.

#### V. PUBLIC UPDATES

President Kinnamon requested to speak on study session items; Celebration of Success and Budget Update. There were no objections from the board members.

President Kinnamon provided a presentation on the year end success of the college.

President Kinnamon introduced Vice President, Lisa Howell who provided the budget update.

Lisa Howell reported out on the Governor's 2017-2018 May revise:

- \$250 million more for California Community Colleges
- Base allocation has increased to \$184 million
- COLA increased from 1.48% to 1.56%
- A decrease in growth funding to 1%; equates to approximately 8600 FTES
- \$28.5 million for declining enrollment (stability)
- \$23.6 million increase unused enrollment growth
- A decrease of \$24.8 million to offset increase in student enrollment fee revenues
- Deferred maintenance and instructional equipment, one time funds were increased to \$135.8 million with no matching requirement.

- Only \$10.8 million is provided in 2017-2018 with the remaining \$125 million disbursed in May 2019

2017-2018 Budget Calendar

Governor’s Proposed Budget – January 10<sup>th</sup>  
 Budget Sub-Committee Meeting – February 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Base Budget Projection – March 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Budget Sub-Committee meeting – March 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Budget Sub-Committee Meeting – April 24<sup>th</sup>  
 Governor’s May Revise – May 11<sup>th</sup>  
 Budget Sub-Committee Meeting – May 22<sup>nd</sup>  
 Budget Sub-Committee Meeting – June 12<sup>th</sup>  
 COD Tentative Budget Adoption – June 16<sup>th</sup>  
 State Budget Adoption – June TBD  
 Final Budget Adoption – September 15<sup>th</sup>

President Kinnamon provided additional clarification on the impact this would have on the college.

Chair Wilson asked who is on the Budget Sub-Committee. Lisa Howell provided Chair Wilson the committee membership information.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Lauro Jimenez submitted a request to speak on Human Resources consent item #1, Personnel Items.
2. Professor, Ruth Nolan, distributed a soft cover of ‘Solstice 2017’ Literary and Visual Arts Magazine, Vol. 8. She read an excerpt from the magazine.
3. Tubeh Durrani, merchant at College of the Desert Street Fair. She has been merchant since 2006. She congratulated the board on their decision for making the changes to the College of the Desert Street Fair. She commented Mrs. Howell and her team are making an excellent difference for the merchants. She congratulated President Kinnamon on his appointments for the Alumni Association board.
4. Robert Pellenbarg, Adjunct Professor at College of the Desert. Mr. Pellenbarg distributed a hand out on his remarks to the board.
5. Julie Rescigno, Adjunct Faculty, Accounting, School of Applied Sciences and Business. Ms. Rescigno distributed a packet to the board. She spoke about the case, reviewed the SWACC letter, discussed an email from February 17<sup>th</sup> from the District and referenced her legal bills.

**VII. INTRODUCTION OF STAFF** – President Kinnamon introduced new employees:

- Kristie Camacho - Full-time faculty, English
- Alison Airhart-Bolze – Full-time faculty, English as a Second Language, Non-

- Credit
- Robert St. Juliana – Director of the Career and Workforce Solutions Center
- Peter Ali – Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Department
- Lawrence Ponce - Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Department

**VIII. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:**

Regular meeting of March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 minutes. There were no corrections to the minutes of March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Approved as presented.

Regular meeting of April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017 minutes. There were no corrections to the minutes of April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Approved as presented.

**IX. REPORTS**

- A. ASCOD (Associated Students of College of the Desert)** – ASCOD representative, Arturo Delgado provided a brief report.
- B. CSEA (California School Employees Association)** – Lauro Jimenez was present, and provided a brief report.
- C. CODAA (College of the Desert Adjunct Association)** – Robert Holmes was present, and provided a brief report.
- D. CODFA (College of the Desert Faculty Association)** – Denise Diamond: President, was present, and provided a brief update.

**X. CLOSED SESSION: 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm**

**OPEN SESSION (1:30pm)**

**Closed session report** – Chair Wilson noted there was no reportable action taken in closed session.

**REPORTS (continued)**

- E. Academic Senate** – Christen Smith, President, was present and provided a brief report.
- F. College of the Desert Foundation** –Peter Sturgeon was not present. President Kinnamon provided a brief report on Mr. Sturgeon’s behalf.

Chair Wilson left the board meeting at 1:30 p.m. Vice Chair, Becky Broughton continued the meeting on Chair Wilson’s behalf.

**G. GOVERNING BOARD**

**Student Trustee Estrada**



- Attended the FIND food bank event. Expressed his thanks to everyone involved, and was happy to see administrators present and participating in the event.
- Attended a voice class presentation in the Pollock theater. Very interesting event, and learned of a wonderful signer.
- Attended a jazz ensemble at the Pollock theater. Very amazing, but had to leave early.
- ASCOD Election Report Out:  
 Student Trustee – Arturo Delgado  
 President – Isiah Estrada  
 Vice-President – Diego Valdez  
 Officer of Fiscal Affairs – Alexander Locklear  
 Officer of Communications – Yazmin Castillo  
 Officer of Academic Affairs – Jean Paul Cedeno  
 Officer of External Affairs – Andrea Aldana  
 Student Senator – Alejandro Meza Aguilar  
 Student Senator – Luisa Mayoral  
 Student Senator – Nicholas Morelli  
 Student Senator – Exequiel Nuno  
 Student Senator – Jesus Felix
- Shared that he will be attending College of the Desert for an additional year.
- Thanked the board of trustees for allowing him to join and participate in the meetings.
- Thanked everyone for putting the board room together and all involved.

### **Trustee Jandt**

- May is a happy but busy month in the academic calendar; he mentioned that it is a time of celebration.
- Thanked the communication program. He was a judge for them, and looks forward to more events.
- Attended the memorial for Al Karnig. He spoke about Mr. Karnig, and noted what a wonderful and successful individual he was.
- Congratulated all of the graduates this year, and hopes they become loyal alumni.
- Thanked everyone at the Indio campus, and all of the off campus employees.
- He thanked Imelda Tafoya for all of her work.

### **Trustee Stefan**

- Apologized for missing the previous board meeting.
- Attended the ACCT GLI conference in Hawaii. She enjoyed the event, and reported that 127 attendees were at the conference.
- She shared a book with the board that pertains to running effective meetings, key indicators of an effective board, complexity of equity and diversity, emerging trends In higher education, emergency planning – security, outcomes, quality and student

success, roles and responsibilities and presidential evaluations.

- Road Runner farms is a work in progress and they are looking forward to future progress.
- College of the Desert students participated in the Palm Springs Museum Art Collection, and one of the pieces was purchased.
- There are health issues for students and faculty on campus. There was recently a child who had an incident, and a student was able to assist and provided a thorough report to the first responders upon arrival. She feels that others may require training to better assist with medical emergencies that could arise on campus.
- A Veteran provided a speech at the annual ceremony. This veteran noted how much the college meant to him.
- She commented that she enjoys working on the board and feels thankful to work with people who she can depend on.

### **Trustee Broughton**

- Trustee Broughton was happy to be at the Indio campus for the board meeting.
- The observatory was delivered to the Mecca/Thermal site, and staff was assigned to coordinate educational and operational assignments. They will utilize the input for the development of the Mecca/Thermal observatory facility, as well as, the corresponding educational program.
- New building expansion along with the wet lab. Construction will begin this summer.
- Coachella Valley High School students toured the Mecca/Thermal campus. A closer relationship with Coachella Valley High School is being established. She thanked everyone involved, especially Lynda Vent and Zerryl Becker.
- EDGE and robotics classes will be offered at the Mecca/Thermal campus.
- Robotics class will be offered at the Indio campus.
- Individuals from the Salton Sea project will be at the site on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- CODE outreach sessions will take place at the Indio campus this summer.
- College of the Desert is offering more services for students that attend classes not taught on the main (Palm Desert) campus.
- Bookstore – working to provide free shipping to classes in Desert Hot Springs and Mecca/Thermal campuses. She is happy to see that they are looking at resources.
- Ceremony will be held this evening at Indio campus for Early Childhood Education.
- Enrollment Services Specialists were provided so that students can receive direct support in both Indio and Mecca/Thermal campuses. Students do not have to go to the Palm Desert campus (or be transferred via phone). This allows for services that are more direct and for an interpersonal, more successful student experience.
- Communities are reaching out for schedules and she assisted in providing those.
- The expansion of the Indio facility was on the agenda and in the works. The additional space is needed as the Indio buildings have reached capacity. The Indio

campus will host CODE, pLEDGE, and, if space permits, a Robotics camp this summer. Course offerings have also been increased from the previous year.

- Summer will be a busy time for students and staff at College of the Desert.

### **President Kinnamon**

- Thanked Student Trustee Estrada for his year on the board.
- President Kinnamon looks forward to working with Arturo Delgado as the newly elected Student Trustee.
- He expressed his heartfelt appreciation to Christen Smith, Academic Senate this year.
- He thanked Jessica Enders for her efforts towards assisting with today's board meeting.

**XI. CONSENT AGENDA: All items on the Consent Agenda will be considered for approval by a single vote without discussion. Any Board member may request that an item be pulled from the Consent Agenda to be discussed and considered separately in the Action Agenda.**

#### **A. HUMAN RESOURCES**

1. Personnel Items

#### **B. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

1. Purchase Orders and Contracts for Supplies, Services and Construction
2. Warrants
3. Approval of Contracts/Agreements and Amendments
4. Payroll #10
5. Out-of-State/Country Travel
6. Gifts/Donations to the District
7. Declare Equipment as Surplus
8. Budget Transfers
9. 2016-2017 CCFS-311Q/Quarterly Financial Status Report
10. Amendment to Contracts – Measure B Bond Project
11. Change Order – Measure B Bond Project
12. Notice of Completion – Measure B Bond Project

#### **C. STUDENT LEARNING**

1. Updated Program Narratives for Career Technical Programs
2. Courses Approved by Curriculum Committee

Trustee Stefan requested to pull consent item, A. Human Resources, 1. Personnel Items.

Trustee Stefan also requested to pull consent item, B. Administrative Services, 6. Gifts/Donations to the District.

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Discussion: None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Aurora Wilson, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, and Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada.

**Discussion:** A. Human Resources, 1. Personnel Items

Lauro Jimenez thanked the board and President Kinnamon and the Administration for the new staff being hired. Mr. Jimenez expressed his concerns for the Human Resources, Personnel Items on the consent agenda. In prior years, the personnel items included back up documentation for the board to reference. That no longer occurs, and he wanted to express his sincerest concerns. He commented on an item pertaining to a technical glitch and there was another individual that should have been on the agenda today. Mr. Jimenez noted he is happy that that they are filling vacancies, there are many of positions that have gone vacant for months, even years. He feels there will be headway made on this moving forward. He hopes the (technical errors) won't happen as much, and wants the board to know that this is a serious concern.

President Kinnamon noted as you can see there are significant items under Human Resources, item 1. There is a lot effort made to prepare and create these lists. He expressed his appreciation towards staff who facilitates the process and his appreciation to Dr. Gularte. President Kinnamon concluded by noting the employee that was not listed under the personnel items will be brought to the next board meeting.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Aurora Wilson, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.



**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada.

**Discussion:** B. Administrative Services, 6. Gifts/Donations to the District

Trustee Stefan commented on the exciting gifts/donations the college received and she expressed her thanks to all the donations because it helps the students tremendously.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**XII. ACTION AGENDA**

**A. ITEMS PULLED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR SEPARATE DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION**

**B. BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**1. Board Policy Review – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

**BP 1100 The Desert Community College District**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve board policy 1100 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 1300 Legal Authority**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve board policy 1300 as presented.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 2735 Board Member Travel**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve board policy 2735 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 7380 Retiree Health Benefits**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 7380 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**2. Board Policy Review – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading**

**BP 5015 Residency Determination**

**Motion:** Motion by Student Trustee Estrada, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 5015 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 5035 Withholding of Student Records**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 5035 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 5052 Open Enrollment**

**Motion:** Motion by Student Trustee Estrada, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 5052 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 5120 Transfer Center**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 5120 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 5130 Financial Aid**

**Motion:** Motion by Student Trustee Estrada, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 5130 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**BP 5400 Associated Students Organization**

**Motion:** Motion by Student Trustee Estrada, seconded by Trustee Stefan to approve board policy 5400 as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez



**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

### **3. Approval of Emeritus Status**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve emeriti status as presented.

**Discussion:** Trustee Stefan commented she is very excited and she enjoys attending the Emeriti Celebration event every year to celebrate and congratulate the individuals. Trustee Jandt congratulated all on their accomplishments. Student Trustee Estrada commented he had Jack Tapleshay for a number of classes and congratulated him on his achievement.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

## **C. PRESIDENT**

### **1. Post Sabbatical Leave Verbal Reports**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve the post sabbatical reports as presented.

**Discussion:** Dr. Ralston introduced Professor, Ruth Nolan.

Professor, Ruth Nolan provided a verbal report out on Fire on the Mojave: Stories from the Deserts and Mountains of Inland Southern California.

Dr. Ralston introduced Professor, Kurt Leuschner.

Professor, Kurt Leuschner provided a verbal report out on a number of projects that will serve to be beneficial to the College of the Desert Natural Resources Program, the community and his professional growth. The main focus of his sabbatical centered on the sound recordings of different subspecies of Scrub-Jay across the country.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.  
**No:** None  
**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez  
**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **D. HUMAN RESOURCES**

##### **1. Initial Proposal for Reopener Negotiations from the California School Employees Association and its Chapter 407 to the Desert Community College District.**

The board conducted a public hearing under the Educational Employment Relations Act regarding negotiation proposals.

The board opened the public hearing for the proposal for reopener negotiations from the California School Employees Association to the Desert Community College.

Lauro Jimenez was present and spoke on the topic.

The public hearing was closed.

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to vote to acknowledge the reopener proposal from CESA.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.  
**No:** None  
**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez  
**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Broughton reported the Board of Trustees acknowledged the initial proposal for the reopener negotiations from the California School Employees Association and the parties may commence negotiations.

#### **E. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

##### **1. Budget Revisions**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve the budget revisions as presented.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**2. Notice of Intent to Award Contracts for the Palm Springs Modular Campus Project and Mecca/Thermal Expansion Lab Redesign Project**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Jandt, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve Contracts for the Palm Springs Modular Campus Project and Mecca/Thermal Expansion Lab Redesign Project as presented.

**Discussion:** Vice President, Lisa Howell provided a brief update.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

**No:** None

**Absent:** Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez

**Abstain:** None

The motion carried unanimously.

**3. Approve Disposition and Development Agreement by and between the City of Indio and the Indio Housing Authority and the Desert Community College District**

**Motion:** Motion by Trustee Stefan, seconded by Student Trustee Estrada to approve Disposition and Development Agreement by and between the City of Indio and the Indio Housing Authority and the Desert Community College District as presented.

**Discussion:** Vice President, Lisa Howell commented they are about 95% completed.

**Vote:**

**Yes:** Student Trustee Isiah Estrada, Becky Broughton, Bonnie Stefan, & Fred Jandt.

No: None  
Absent: Aurora Wilson & Mary Jane Sanchez  
Abstain: None

The motion carried unanimously.

**XIII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. PRESIDENT**

**1. Administrative Procedure Review**

- AP 5012 International Students
- AP 5015 Residency Determination
- AP 5035 Withholding of Student Records
- AP 5045 Student Records: Challenging Content and Access Log
- AP 5052 Open Enrollment
- AP 5120 Transfer Center
- AP 5130 Financial Aid
- AP 5400 Associated Students Organization

**Discussion:** President Kinnamon commented these are part of the ongoing review for the college's procedures and are in compliance with the Community College League of California's recommendations.

**XIV. STUDY SESSION**

1. Budget Update – Lisa Howell, Vice President, Administrative Services  
(Completed during President Kinnamon's Public Update)
2. Accreditation Update – Bert Bitanga, Associate Professor of Architecture and Accreditation  
Dr. Nery introduced Bert Bitanga who provided an accreditation update.
3. Celebration of Success – President, Joel Kinnamon  
(Completed during President Kinnamon's Public Update)

**XV. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: None.**

**XVI. ADJOURN**

Vice Chair, Broughton stated the meeting adjourned at 3:43 PM.

  
Bonnie Stefan, Clerk



-----  
(DETACH HERE AND RETURN THIS PORTION TO THE BOARD ASSISTANT)

**REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

BOARD MEETING DATE: 19 May 17

NAME: Robert Pellenbary  
*(Please print legibly)*

AFFILIATION: PUBLIC        STAFF         
FACULTY X STUDENT       

IF SPEAKING TO AN AGENDA ITEM PLEASE INDICATE THE ITEM TO WHICH YOU WISH TO SPEAK:

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESSING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. Complete a "Request to Address the Board of Trustees" form (see below) and present it to the Board Executive Assistant prior to the beginning of the meeting at which you wish to address the Board.
2. You will be called to speak at the section set aside for PUBLIC COMMENTS. Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes per topic. Fifteen (15) minutes shall be the maximum time allotment for public speakers on any one subject regardless of the number of speakers at any one Board meeting. (per Board Policy 2350)
3. You will be asked to state your name and appropriate affiliation for the record before your statements to the Board.
4. The Board Chair may rule members of the public out of order if their remarks do not pertain to matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board or if their remarks are unduly repetitive. (per Board Policy 2350)

\*For the complete text of Board Policy 2350 [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu) – "Community", "Board of Trustees", "Board Policies and Procedures".

-----  
(DETACH HERE AND RETURN THIS PORTION TO THE BOARD ASSISTANT)

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING DATE: 5/18/2017

NAME: LAURO JIMENEZ  
(Please print legibly)

AFFILIATION: PUBLIC \_\_\_\_\_ STAFF  \_\_\_\_\_  
FACULTY \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

IF SPEAKING TO AN AGENDA ITEM PLEASE INDICATE THE ITEM TO WHICH YOU WISH TO SPEAK:

AGENDA ITEM NO. HR CONSENT # 1

TITLE PERSONNEL ITEMS

during agenda item.



ADDRESSING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. Complete a "Request to Address the Board of Trustees" form (see below) and present it to the Board Executive Assistant prior to the beginning of the meeting at which you wish to address the Board.
2. You will be called to speak at the section set aside for PUBLIC COMMENTS. Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes per topic. Fifteen (15) minutes shall be the maximum time allotment for public speakers on any one subject regardless of the number of speakers at any one Board meeting. *(per Board Policy 2350)*
3. You will be asked to state your name and appropriate affiliation for the record before your statements to the Board.
4. The Board Chair may rule members of the public out of order if their remarks do not pertain to matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board or if their remarks are unduly repetitive. *(per Board Policy 2350)*

*\*For the complete text of Board Policy 2350 [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu) – "Community", "Board of Trustees", "Board Policies and Procedures".*

-----  
(DETACH HERE AND RETURN THIS PORTION TO THE BOARD ASSISTANT)

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING DATE: 05/19/17

NAME: TUBEH DURRANI  
*(Please print legibly)*

AFFILIATION: PUBLIC  STAFF \_\_\_\_\_  
FACULTY \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

IF SPEAKING TO AN AGENDA ITEM PLEASE INDICATE THE ITEM TO WHICH YOU WISH TO SPEAK:

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESSING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. Complete a "Request to Address the Board of Trustees" form (see below) and present it to the Board Executive Assistant prior to the beginning of the meeting at which you wish to address the Board.
2. You will be called to speak at the section set aside for **PUBLIC COMMENTS**. Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes per topic. Fifteen (15) minutes shall be the maximum time allotment for public speakers on any one subject regardless of the number of speakers at any one Board meeting. *(per Board Policy 2350)*
3. You will be asked to state your name and appropriate affiliation for the record before your statements to the Board.
4. The Board Chair may rule members of the public out of order if their remarks do not pertain to matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board or if their remarks are unduly repetitive. *(per Board Policy 2350)*

*\*For the complete text of Board Policy 2350 [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu) - "Community", "Board of Trustees", "Board Policies and Procedures".*

-----  
(DETACH HERE AND RETURN THIS PORTION TO THE BOARD ASSISTANT)

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING DATE: 5-19-17

NAME: Rh Nolan  
*(Please print legibly)*

AFFILIATION: PUBLIC  STAFF   
FACULTY  STUDENT

IF SPEAKING TO AN AGENDA ITEM PLEASE INDICATE THE ITEM TO WHICH YOU WISH TO SPEAK:

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE Solstice 2017 presentation



ADDRESSING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. Complete a "Request to Address the Board of Trustees" form (see below) and present it to the Board Executive Assistant prior to the beginning of the meeting at which you wish to address the Board.
2. You will be called to speak at the section set aside for PUBLIC COMMENTS. Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes per topic. Fifteen (15) minutes shall be the maximum time allotment for public speakers on any one subject regardless of the number of speakers at any one Board meeting. *(per Board Policy 2350)*
3. You will be asked to state your name and appropriate affiliation for the record before your statements to the Board.
4. The Board Chair may rule members of the public out of order if their remarks do not pertain to matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board or if their remarks are unduly repetitive. *(per Board Policy 2350)*

*\*For the complete text of Board Policy 2350 [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu) – "Community", "Board of Trustees", "Board Policies and Procedures".*

-----  
(DETACH HERE AND RETURN THIS PORTION TO THE BOARD ASSISTANT)

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING DATE: 4/19/17

NAME: Julie RESCIGNO  
*(Please print legibly)*

AFFILIATION: PUBLIC  STAFF   
FACULTY  STUDENT

IF SPEAKING TO AN AGENDA ITEM PLEASE INDICATE THE ITEM TO WHICH YOU WISH TO SPEAK:

AGENDA ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

## COMMENTS FOR BOARD MEETING

Hello. I am Robert Pellenberg, an Adjunct Professor at COD, and have taught for over 12 years at College of the Desert. My teaching opportunities include The Earth Sciences, An Introduction to Oceanography, and, in the past, instructor for Chemistry Laboratory, and substitute for a variety of Chemistry courses. Further, I am very active in the COD MESA program, and have served our STEM students for over 6 years. Importantly, I work closely with STEM students on a daily basis (e.g. mentoring / advising) and over the MESA Winternship program where I mentor groups of students engaged in original research projects.

During my tenure at COD, I am proud to have taught over 2000 students in my various classes, especially in the Summer Sessions at Indio. I have taught at the old EVC location on Monroe Street, and at the facility in which we meet today. Indeed, one summer, a water pipe burst in the ceiling of the third floor science room, causing a great flood, and yielding a great story! Further, while at COD, I have:

- Restarted the College Radio Station KCOD

- Designed, obtained approval for, and implemented a course in Oceanography at COD.

- In both the Oceanography and Earth Science classes I have provided extensive hands – on laboratory experiences for all the students in both classes.

- Served as Adjunct Senator on the Academic Senate, and as a member of the Senate Executive Committee.

-Served as member of many science faculty hiring committees. This past semester alone, I served on hiring committees for Biology (on very short notice), Chemistry, and Geology.

-Been nominated for Faculty of the Year for 2017 (a first for the Adjunct teaching staff).

-Worked to support the acquisition of our new 17 inch telescope, and provided input as to how we can effectively use the remarkable abilities of what is a research – grade instrument.

Specifically, I have prepared several White Papers for the COD Science Department on how best to utilize the new telescope. I look forward to seeing the Observatory up – and – running at the Mecca/Thermal Campus.

At this point in time, I have no assigned course work for either the Summer Session, or for the coming Fall Semester. Thus, I stand ready to assist in bringing Science to the Eastern Valley at either the Indio Campus, the expanding Mecca/Thermal Campus, or both, as the opportunities develop.

In closing, I state without hesitation that it has been a privilege, and a distinct honor, to work with the students at College of the Desert, and support them in their educational careers.

Thank you.



# Table of Contents for Handout

1. My Words
2. SWACC Letter
3. February 17 email from District indicating indemnification
4. My legal bills

My name is Julie Rescigno and I am an adjunct faculty member with the District. I teach various accounting classes. I am sure you are familiar with the Montes lawsuit. In the event you have not heard, the District, Dean Maldonado and myself prevailed in a jury trial although there can be an appeal.

My purpose today is to make the Board aware of an internal process that has failed a teacher with a hope it be corrected for all future employees. This lack of process created a great deal of personal stress, many unpaid hours in depositions and trial preparation and \$6,000 of personal expenses. I do not want another District employee to experience this. I love my students and 99.5% of them would not resort to a frivolous lawsuit to settle a dispute but what I went through will repeat itself.

This case began on August 2015 and the jury trial was completed on April 28, 2017. The District represented to me and the adjunct union that the school would be representing me and any liability. This initial position was accepted by the union and they walked away assuming I was being assisted by the district.

May of 2016, I received a letter from the District Insurance company SWACC (Statewide Association of Community Colleges) that I was at risk by limiting my coverage.

September of 2016 it became apparent that my personal assets were at risk with the wrong verdict and I obtained a personal attorney to review the case.

January 30, 2017, my personal attorney approached the attorney given to me by the District, Ms. Gayer, requesting an indemnification to waive the conflict of interest. Ms. Gayer approached SWACC which promptly turned the request down. Ms. Gayer then approached the District.

February 17, the District responded with an email agreeing to the indemnification. I then instructed my personal attorney to draw up the agreement.

March 15, the agreement was then sent to Ms Gayer who promptly forwarded to the HR department on March 31. There were many follow-up emails but a signed document was not received.

April 10, I was reassured that the signed agreement was coming and the risk manager apologized for the delay-it never was and we never received any communication that it would not be forwarded to us.

April 19, the week before trial I decided to move forward with this trial and not delay it further

April 26, I was now putting all my assets on the line. I had no input on settlement unless I offered up my own cash. I was being sued for simply doing my job and yet nobody contacted me from the district. It was very scary, risky and I felt deceived. I spent several thousand dollars preparing and following up on a document that apparently, nobody intended to sign. If the District believed I was guilty they should **not** have had their attorney represent me and if they

believed I was not guilty there should have been no problem giving me a signed indemnification agreement.

All district personnel are at risk for being in the same situation. The District should be transparent with all its employees and the risks they take—especially from a frivolous lawsuit. I was fortunate to have Ms. Gayer representing me and a jury that could see through Mr. Montes false claims. There will be a next time and the next employee might not be as fortunate nor may not have the resources to protect themselves.

A transparent process needs to be established for all District employees involved in a District lawsuit. If the District legal strategy requires one attorney for all parties in the lawsuit then an indemnification must be given to the employee, otherwise; the school must develop an alternative legal strategy such as a settlement. No District employee should have to risk a lifetime of wealth accumulation for simply doing their job.



# SWACC

Statewide Association of Community Colleges

**PRESIDENT**  
Mr. Ed Maduli  
Bay Area Community  
College Districts JP-1

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Ms. Ann-Marie Gabel  
Long Beach  
Community College District

**SECRETARY**  
Mr. Bill Kerwin  
Coast Community College  
District

**TREASURER**  
Mr. Ken Stoppenbrink  
West Hills  
Community College District

May 5, 2016

Ms. Julie Freedman-Rescigno  
c/o Mr. Gene Durand, Director of Human Resources  
Desert Community College District  
43-500 Monterey Avenue  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Re: *Montes v. Desert Community College District, et al.*  
Keenan File No.: 514880

Dear Ms. Freedman-Rescigno:

The SWACC Claims and Coverage Committee reviewed this matter at its quarterly meeting and approved funding for your defense, upon exhaustion of the District's Member Retained Limit.

By complaint dated September 9, 2015, Raymond Montes filed a District Court lawsuit against the District and two of its employees, Carlos Maldonado and you (collectively "Defendants"). Mr. Montes alleges the following five causes of action against Defendants: (1) intentional infliction of emotional distress; (2) violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"); (3) violation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (4) violation of the Unruh Act, Civil Code §51, *et seq.*; and (5) violation of the Disabled Persons Act, Civil Code §54, *et seq.* Mr. Montes prays for general damages, special damages, punitive damages against the individually-named defendants, and for his attorneys' fees and costs.

You presently qualify as a Covered Party and will receive Loss Adjustment Expense funding for Mr. Montes' lawsuit. A Loss Occurrence under Coverage A – Liability, Paragraph 1 is alleged against you by Mr. Montes as a result of his claims asserting Personal Injury and Bodily Injury. You will receive coverage for awards of Liability Damages to Mr. Montes, subject to the following limitations.

There is no coverage for certain types of damages, including awards of punitive/exemplary damages, statutory penalties, and multiples of damages (See Exclusion 9 to Coverage A – Liability.) Furthermore, the MOC bars coverage for "willful acts which are expected, intended, or motivated by a desire to cause damage to property or injury to another." (See "global" Exclusion 1.) The causes of action for intentional infliction of emotional distress and violation of the ADA require proof of intent to injure on the part of a directly liable defendant. Where proof of your intent to injure is established, resulting direct awards of Liability Damages against you would be precluded from coverage. You will also not receive Liability Damages coverage as to any cause of action where your conduct is established to have been malicious in nature.



# SWACC

Statewide Association of Community Colleges

**PRESIDENT**

Mr. Ed Maduli  
Bay Area Community  
College District JPA

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Ms. Ann-Marie Gabel  
Long Beach  
Community College District

**SECRETARY**

Mr. Bill Kerwin  
Coast Community College  
District

**TREASURER**

Mr. Ken Stoppenbrink  
West Hills  
Community College District

Ms. Julie Freedman-Rescigno

Re: *Montes v. Desert Community College District, et al.*

May 5, 2016

Page 2

Attorneys' fees and costs awarded to Mr. Montes will only be covered when awarded along with a covered claim for Liability Damages.

As you are probably aware, the vast majority of lawsuits are dismissed or compromised for economic reasons, and this one is likely to be no different. In the event of an adverse judgment however, the Authority will only pay for any covered Liability Damages awarded.

If you have any questions about the information in this letter, please contact Arlene LaCoste of Keenan & Associates in Torrance at (800) 654-8102.

Sincerely,



Bill Poland  
JPA Manager

Cc: Arlene LaCoste, JPA Claims Manager  
Patricia Murray, Claims Examiner  
Suzanne Trowbridge, Account Executive







Julie Rescigno &lt;julierescigno@gmail.com&gt;

**FW: Raymond Montes vs. Desert Community College District (514880)**

2 messages

Catherine A. Gayer <cgayer@wpgchlaw.com>  
To: Julie Rescigno <julierescigno@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 21, 2017 at 4:28 PM

Here is the agreement.

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrea Staehle [mailto:astaehle@collegeofthedesert.edu]

Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 3:48 PM

To: Catherine A. Gayer <cgayer@wpgchlaw.com>; Patricia Murray <pmurray@Keenan.com>

Cc: Misti Santana <MSantana@collegeofthedesert.edu>

Subject: RE: Raymond Montes vs. Desert Community College District (514880)

Hi All,

The District is college today & Monday. I spoke with Mary Anne and she agrees to the request for indemnity for both COD employees. Please let me know if you need anything else. (I am checking email while the District is closed.)

Thank you.

- Andrea

Julie Rescigno <julierescigno@gmail.com>  
To: joerescigno@aol.com

Fri, Apr 21, 2017 at 4:30 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Catherine A. Gayer" <cgayer@wpgchlaw.com>

**Date:** April 21, 2017 at 4:28:11 PM PDT

**To:** Julie Rescigno <julierescigno@gmail.com>

**Subject:** FW: Raymond Montes vs. Desert Community College District (514880)

[Quoted text hidden]

# ROEMER & HARNIK LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES  
45-025 Mantou Drive • Indian Wells, California 92210  
PHONE 760-360-2400 • FAX 760-360-1211

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

## ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM

November 09, 2016

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

Invoice # 40664

### Professional Services

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
9/13/2016 BSH Review complaint and letter from insurance company.	0.30	
9/26/2016 BSH Lengthy phone conference with Gayer. Draft email to Julie.	0.40	
9/27/2016 BSH Phone conference with Rescigno regarding strategy.	0.25	
10/4/2016 BSH Draft email to Gaylor. Review email from Gaylor regarding status.	0.25	
BSH Draft email to Gayer. Telephone conference with Gayer.	0.20	
10/25/2016 BSH Phone conference with Julie. Phone conference with Ms. Gayer (multiple) regarding strategy.	0.30	
10/26/2016 BSH Multiple phone conferences with Gayer. Attend Montes deposition. Conference with client and Gayer.	2.50	
For professional services rendered	<u>4.20</u>	<u>\$1,827.00</u>
11/8/2016 Courtesy reduction per Mr. Harnik.		(\$500.00)

Julie Rescigno

Page 2

	<u>Amount</u>
Total payments and adjustments	(\$500.00)
Balance due	<u>\$1,327.00</u>

Payment is due by November 21, 2016. Thank you.

---

For your convenience and at no additional charge, you may pay your invoice or retainer online by visiting our website: [www.rhlawfirm.com](http://www.rhlawfirm.com). The option to pay is at the bottom of our home screen.

Effective November 1, 2016, the billing rate for Richard Umbenhauer will be \$425.00.



# ROEMER & HARNIK LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES

45-025 Manitou Drive • Indian Wells, California 92210

PHONE 760-360-2400 • FAX 760-360-1211

[www.rhllp.com](http://www.rhllp.com)

**ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION**

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM

December 07, 2016

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

Invoice # 40751

## Professional Services

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11/19/2016 BSH Review request for admissions and proposed responses. Draft email to Rescigno.	0.25	
For professional services rendered	0.25	\$108.75
Previous balance		\$1,327.00
11/11/2016 Payment - thank you		(\$1,327.00)
Total payments and adjustments		(\$1,327.00)
Balance due		<u>\$108.75</u>

Payment is due by December 23, 2016. Thank you.



# ROEMER & HARNIK LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES  
45-025 Manitou Drive • Indian Wells, California 92210

PHONE 760-360-2400 • FAX 760-360-1211

[rhlawfirm.com](http://rhlawfirm.com)

**ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION**

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: [JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM)

January 09, 2017

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

	<u>Amount</u>
Previous balance	\$108.75
12/9/2016 Payment - thank you	<u>(\$108.75)</u>
Total payments and adjustments	<u>(\$108.75)</u>
Balance due	<u><u>\$0.00</u></u>

Payment is due by January 23, 2016. Thank you.

---

For your convenience and at no additional charge, you may pay your invoice or retainer online by visiting our website: [www.rhlawfirm.com](http://www.rhlawfirm.com). The option to pay is at the bottom of our home screen.

# ROEMER & HARNIK LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES  
45-025 Manitou Drive • Indian Wells, California 92210  
PHONE 760-360-2400 • FAX 760-360-1211  
rhlawfirm.com

## ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM

February 06, 2017

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

Invoice # 40949

### Professional Services

		<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/4/2017	MEG Telephone conference with Julie Rescigno and attorney Harnik regarding matter.	0.30	
	BSH Conference call with Attorney Gilstrap and Julie. Legal research. Review collective bargaining agreement.	0.30	
1/5/2017	BSH Conference with client and Attorney Gilstrap regarding indemnification strategy.	1.00	
	MEG Prepare for and attend meeting with client and attorney Harnik.	1.30	
1/6/2017	MEG Telephone conference with attorney Catherine Gayer regarding setting up appointment.	0.10	NO CHARGE
1/13/2017	BSH Conference with Catherine Gayer and Attorney Gilstrap in Palm Springs. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap.	1.50	

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/14/2017 BSH Draft e-mail to Gayer regarding Cumis counsel.	0.10	
1/16/2017 BSH Telephone conference with Julie. Draft e-mail to Julie regarding conflict claim.	0.20	
1/17/2017 BSH Draft e-mail to client explaining Cumis counsel. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap regarding conflict issue for Gayer.	0.25	
1/25/2017 BSH Draft e-mail to Gayer. Review e-mail from Gayer. Draft multiple e-mails to client. Review e-mail from Ms. Rescigno.	0.20	
1/27/2017 BSH Review e-mail from Gayer. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap.	0.25	
1/30/2017 BSH Review letter from Gayer. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap. Draft e-mail to Julie Rescigno.	0.30	
MEG Conduct legal research regarding government code provisions pertaining to punitive damages. Draft letter to attorney Gayer regarding request for indemnity for punitive damages from the Joint Powers Authority.	1.00	
1/31/2017 BSH Review e-mail from Julie Rescigno regarding conflict issues. Draft e-mail to Ms. Rescigno.	0.20	
For professional services rendered	<u>7.00</u>	<u>\$2,910.50</u>
2/3/2017 Courtesy reduction per Mr. Harnik.		<u>(\$500.00)</u>
Total payments and adjustments		<u>(\$500.00)</u>
Balance due		<u><u>\$2,410.50</u></u>

Payment is due by February 20, 2017. Thank you.



# ROEMER & HARNIK LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES  
45-025 Manitou Drive • Indian Wells, California 92210  
PHONE 760-360-2400 • FAX 760-360-1211

[rhlawfirm.com](http://rhlawfirm.com)

## ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM

March 07, 2017

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

Invoice # 41030

### Professional Services

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2/3/2017 BSH Review e-mail from Gayer. Draft e-mail to client regarding offer. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap.	0.10	
2/16/2017 MEG Telephone conference with attorney Gayer regarding matter status. Telephone conference with client regarding same.	0.30	
2/17/2017 MEG Intra-office conference with attorney Harnik regarding COD's decision to indemnify client for punitive damages.	0.20	
BSH Draft e-mail to Rescigno regarding written indemnity. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap.	0.20	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
For professional services rendered	0.80	\$343.00
Previous balance		\$2,410.50
2/12/2017 Payment - thank you		(\$2,410.50)
Total payments and adjustments		<hr/> (\$2,410.50)

Julie Rescigno

Balance due

Amount

\$343.00

Payment is due by March 20, 2017. Thank you.

---

For your convenience and at no additional charge, you may pay your invoice or retainer online by visiting our website: [www.rhlawfirm.com](http://www.rhlawfirm.com). The option to pay is at the bottom of our home screen.

# ROEMER & HARNIK LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES  
45-025 Manicou Drive · Indian Wells, California 92210  
PHONE 760-360-2400 · FAX 760-360-1211  
rhlawfirm.com

## ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM

April 13, 2017

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

Invoice # 41132

### Professional Services

		<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3/2/2017	DBB Legal research provisions in Indemnity Agreement. Draft and revise Indemnity Agreement.	1.20	
3/3/2017	DBB Legal research provisions in Indemnity Agreement. Draft and revise Indemnity Agreement.	2.00	
3/7/2017	MEG Review and revise proposed indemnity agreement.	0.50	
3/8/2017	DBB Review revised indemnity agreement.	0.30	
	BSH Review and revise indemnity agreement and conflict waiver. Conference with Attorney Gilstrap.	0.30	
3/24/2017	MEG Telephone conference with attorney Catherine Gayer regarding matter status.	0.20	
3/31/2017	BSH Conference with Attorney Gilstrap. Review e-mail from Geyer regarding agreement.	0.20	
	For professional services rendered	<u>4.70</u>	<u>\$1,565.00</u>



Julie Rescigno

## Additional Charges :

	<u>Price</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/30/2017 Federal court document search and retrieval.	5.20	5.20
4/3/2017 Online legal research.	30.61	30.61
Total costs		<u>\$35.81</u>
Total amount of this bill		<u>\$1,600.81</u>
Previous balance		\$343.00
3/13/2017 Payment - thank you		<u>(\$343.00)</u>
Total payments and adjustments		<u>(\$343.00)</u>
Balance due		<u><u>\$1,600.81</u></u>

Payment is due by April 24, 2017. Thank you.

---

For your convenience and at no additional charge, you may pay your invoice or retainer online by visiting our website: [www.rhlawfirm.com](http://www.rhlawfirm.com). The option to pay is at the bottom of our home screen.

**ROEMER & HARNIK**  
LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE | LITIGATION | TRUSTS & ESTATES  
45-025 Manitou Drive • Indian Wells, California 92210  
PHONE 760-360-2400 • FAX 760-360-1211  
rhlawfirm.com

**ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION**

JULIE RESCIGNO  
EMAIL: JULIERESCIGNO@GMAIL.COM

May 08, 2017

In Reference To: Montes v. COD

Invoice # 41260

Professional Services

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
4/3/2017 MEG Telephone conference with client regarding matter status. Intra-office conference with attorney Harnik regarding same. Telephone with attorney Gayer and attorney Harnik regarding same. Review Government Code Section 825 et seq.	0.70	
4/14/2017 BSH Draft lengthy e-mail to Ms. Rescigno regarding bifurcation. Review e-mail from client (4/13).	0.10	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
For professional services rendered	0.80	\$341.00
Previous balance		\$1,600.81
4/17/2017 Payment - thank you		(\$1,600.80)
4/17/2017 Write off		(\$0.01)
5/8/2017 Courtesy reductions as per Mr. Harnik and Ms. Gilstrap.		(\$341.00)
		<hr/>
Total payments and adjustments		(\$1,941.81)
		<hr/>
Balance due		\$0.00
		<hr/> <hr/>



Desert Community College District  
2017-18 Governor's Budget  
May Revise

Lisa Howell  
Vice President, Administrative Services  
May 19, 2017

Desert Community College District

Governor's 2017-18 May Revise

- A slightly brighter picture for Community Colleges than the January Budget
- Governor returns to his theme of fiscal prudence
  - Concerns of the length of our current economic recovery
  - "The next recession is just around the corner"
  - Forecasts continue to project growth





## Desert Community College District

### Governor's 2017-18 May Revise

- \$250M more for California Community Colleges
  - Base Allocation is increased to \$184M
  - COLA increases from 1.48% to 1.56%
  - **Decrease in growth funding to 1%**
    - Equates to approximately 8600 FTES
  - \$28.5M for declining enrollment (stability)
  - \$23.6M increase unused enrollment growth
  - **Decrease of \$24.8M** to offset increase in student enrollment fee revenues



## Desert Community College District

### Governor's 2017-18 May Revise

- Deferred Maintenance and Instructional Equipment – one time funds are increased to \$135.8M with no matching requirement
  - Only \$10.8M is provided in 2017-18 with the remaining \$125M disbursed in May 2019



Desert Community College District

**2017-18 Budget Calendar**

- ✓ Governor's Proposed Budget. . . . . January 10<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Budget Sub-Committee Meeting . . . . . February 13<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Base Budget Projection. . . . . March 1<sup>st</sup>
- ✓ Budget Sub-Committee Meeting . . . . . March 13<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Budget Sub-Committee Meeting . . . . . April 24<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Governor's May Revise . . . . . May 11<sup>th</sup>
- Budget Sub-Committee Meeting . . . . . May 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Budget Sub-Committee Meeting . . . . . June 12<sup>th</sup>
- COD Tentative Budget Adoption . . . . . June 16<sup>th</sup>
- State Budget Adoption . . . . . June ?
- Final Budget Adoption . . . . . September 15<sup>th</sup>



Desert Community College District

COD Tentative Budget





Financial Update – May 2017



Ruth Nolan, M.F.A., M.A.  
Professor of English, College of the Desert  
Post Sabbatical Report, May 19, 2017

**Fire On the Mojave:  
Stories from the Deserts and Mountains of Inland Southern California**

**Post-Sabbatical Overview**

During the 2015-16 academic year, thanks to the support and generosity of the College of the Desert board, administration and faculty, I embarked on an amazing journey into the world of wildland firefighters and firefighting here in the California deserts and inland mountains.

As a former seasonal wildland firefighter in this very region and the Western U.S. during my college years, I felt that the topic of wildland fire, for both our college campus and community at large, and career opportunities available to our young adult students here at College of the Desert – through our excellent wildland fire courses and Public Safety Academy, part of the statewide California Community College PSA program initiatives – is a critical one, and felt this warranted my researched, narrated nonfiction book project, which is also complemented by photography, short videos, a facebook page, and power point presentations suitable for educational lectures throughout inland So Cal.

If I learned one thing during this sabbatical, it is this: every single person in our region who I spoke with about my project – to interview, or just to talk about the topic – has a wildfire story! And many people have more than one. I was also inspired, as an educator, at the avid excitement among the students enrolled here at the COD PSA Fire Academy – a fulltime, yearlong course - during the 2015-16 academic year as their training progressed; many even had jobs and were working, or soon to be working, in wildland and city fire crew positions by the time they graduated from the program.

I also was, and am, excited that many of my COD students are now considering enrolling in COD PSA and wildland fire courses, now that they are more aware, as a result of my talking about this project and also sharing some of the book's chapters with them; many had no idea of the opportunities here on our campus of our courses and training programs that can help them enter into seasonal or fulltime positions in wildland fire and the many excellent career choices they have in this field.

Most of all, the finished book, *Fire On the Mojave: Stories from Inland Southern California*, which is in production now and will soon be published and available to instructors for use in their classes across the disciplines as a resource reader with questions and writing prompts, as well as general readers, is a sparkling showcase of the many faces of wildfire in our desert and mountain areas. The sub-topics in my book range



from early Native American uses of wildfire as a resource management too; to the development of wildfire fighting and training programs; an overview of the hardworking faculty and students who represent the COD PSA – and, an open invitation to our current and future students to consider seasonal and even permanent careers in wildland firefighting, starting right here at COD --; community narratives of major wildfire events; academic and scientific theories and practices of wildfire prediction, prevention and suppression; and much more.

The material in this book – and adjacent lectures/presentations – is designed to be exciting, interesting, stimulating and educational, and my sabbatical year of book, online and other forms of research; interviews; training participation; field trips; etc. will, I hope, serve our community college and wider communities as an important reading resource. To date, I've published excerpts from the book manuscript in the Sierra Club Desert Report (Sept 2016) and the Desert Magazine/Desert Sun (Nov 2016), and given lectures at COD Flex (Jan 2017) and at the Coachella Valley Archaeological Society (March 2017,) with more lectures planned for the upcoming academic year at the Dorothy Ramon Learning Center; the Desert Institute at Joshua Tree National Park; the Inlandia Institute, and more. At every lecture, I have given/will give a thank you and acknowledgement to College of the Desert for its support of this project.

Finally, I would like to thank the board for its support of my sabbatical project.

Sincerely,

Ruth Nolan

Professor of English, College of the Desert

May 19, 2017

Ruth Nolan, M.F.A., M.A.  
Professor of English, College of the Desert  
Post Sabbatical Report, May 19, 2017

**Fire On the Mojave:  
Stories from the Deserts and Mountains of Inland Southern California**

**CHAPTER Outline**  
*...and excerpts from the book*

**CHAPTER 1 Introduction**

**CHAPTER 2 Firefighter Training. Public Safety Academies at College of the Desert and other CA Community Colleges. Interviews with COD PSA candidates.**

**CHAPTER 3 Esperanza Fire. Book. Lessons. Memorials.**

**CHAPTER 4 Who Fights Fire? Types of Crews, Agencies, Firefighter Interviews. Fire-Ready Plan. Living with Wildfire.**

**CHAPTER 5 Fire Ecology in our Region. Richard Halsey, Chaparral Institute.**

**CHAPTER 6 Fire Stories. From Major Fire Events, with Community Narratives.**

**CHAPTER 7 Native American Fires. Visit to Daniel McCarthy, Pinyon**

**CHAPTER 8 Hot, Clean Burn. Visit to Memorial Fire Burn**

**CHAPTER 9. More About Wildfire: Climate Change. Future of Wildfires, Wildfire Training Program/Community College PSA's. Local, Regional, Statewide & National.**

**CHAPTER 10 Conclusion. After the Fire. Blue Cut Fire. Wildflowers. Regrowth.**



## Excerpt from CHAPTER 1. Introduction

*"Fire up Thunder Creek and the mountain / troy's burning ! / The cloud mutters / The mountains are your mind..." -- Gary Snyder*

On a 110 degree June day in 1985, I was on a bus heading towards the San Jacinto Mountains, part of the Mojave Greens blue card wildfire crew. As we descended from Victorville, our home base, through the Cajon Pass and east along Interstate 10, the header of smoke on a massive – and rapidly growing – wildfire enticed everyone on the crew.

Whistles and shouts of excitement quickly gave way to silence as we neared our destination: a fire camp being hastily erected at a park in Cabazon, where we would disembark from the bus and wait for our firefighting assignment.

Just before we arrived, one of the guys on the crew made a loud and sarcastic comment: "I'll be it's those Morongo Indians again, setting fires. They do that all the time, so they can get work fighting the fires they set." Everyone laughed nervously, and I wondered if his statement was true or not. Maybe it was.

Our crew boss nodded in agreement, and nobody challenged what he'd said. At the time, all I knew for sure was that I was getting ready to hike up the imposing slopes of the northern face of Mt. San Jacinto – one of the steepest mountain escarpments in North America - and face heat, smoke, and other dangers I could only imagine, all as part of a day's work cutting fire line to help stop the spread of the wildfire.

More than thirty years later, as I embark on a year-long, sabbatical book project, "Fire on the Mojave: Stories from the Deserts and Inland Southern California Mountains," I haven't forgotten that comment, about Indians setting fires to our region's mountains and deserts.

For a long time, I'd brushed that remark off as an urban legend, a culturally insensitive comment, which indeed it turned out to be. However, I've learned that our Inland and Desert Indian people have a long, intimate relationship with wildland fire management, developed, through centuries of living in close relationship to the land, a thorough knowledge of the vital role that wildfires in our foothill, mountain and deserts play in helping sustain a healthy ecology here.

For example, research by noted Native anthropologists and scholars Thomas C. Blackburn, Kat Anderson, and Dr. Lowell Bean, in the book *Before the Wilderness: Environmental Management by Native Californians* (Malki Press-Ballena Press) reveals that our region's Native American people did, indeed, purposefully light wildfires right here in our mountains and deserts.

However, the deep and necessary truth is that they practiced sophisticated wildfire management skills as a means of negotiating their very survival and sustenance in our rugged geographic landscapes, truths and skills that are only now being turned to as imperative resources in our region's – indeed, in the entire Western U.S. – in the struggle to manage the threatening presence and of increasingly dangerous wildfires everyone who lives here faces, seemingly more and more thanks to threats such as climate change and increased development in areas known as the "wilderness-urban interface," or WUI, which more and more of us are calling home.

And the scars from the fire I worked on in 1985 can still be seen on the side of the mountain, and bear even deeper scars: it's the site of one of the worst fire tragedies of this region, in the state of California, and in wildland fire history: the deaths of five engine crew firefighters from the San Bernardino National Forest crew in Idyllwild early in the morning of in the Esperanza Fire of October, 2006, which ripped up a steep escarpment with unprecedented speed.

The Esperanza fire started at the hands of an arsonist at the bottom of the slope on the edge of the small town of Cabazon, in the same area where I'd worked on the 1985 fire and slept in a huge fire camp in a town park. I heard the news later in the day, as I drove west on I-10 through San Geronio Pass near the Morongo Casino to take my daughter Tarah supplies for her dorm room at Pitzer College in Claremont,



near Los Angeles; as I listened, I was actually driving right past the mountainside where the firefighters had perished; smoke and flames still raged higher upslope, fueled by the cinder dry winds and hot, crisp autumn day, blotting out the sun.

One of the many goals of *Fire on the Mojave: Stories from the Deserts and Inland Southern California Mountains* is to include representations such as these, from the many story-threads in our region's longstanding history and relationship with wildfires, both present and past. It's unlikely that wildfires will be leaving our region anytime soon, and in fact of such unprecedented influences such as climate change, it may well be the stories of wildfires, beginning with the people who have been present here the longest, that in the end allow us to continue to survive and even thrive in a place where wildfires have long scarred, shaped, and helped regenerate the land we call home.

It's been many years since I faced that wall of flame, with its impressive white header of smoke billowing high up into space, as a frightened but enervated young woman on one of our local wildfire crews, but the story of that fire in the San Jacinto Mountains near Cabazon, and the intriguing rumor I heard, stay with me to this day, as vivid and clear cut as a forest of trees after flames have scoured the land clean.

**Excerpt from  
CHAPTER 2 Firefighter Training. Public Safety Academies at College of the Desert  
and other CA Community Colleges. Interviews with COD PSA candidates.**

*"When they say, on the fireline, "Somebody do something!" that somebody they're talking about is you." – from Words of Wisdom for Firefighters*

Interview with Lauren Olvera – Student in the 2015-2016 Fire Academy Course at College of the Desert Public Safety Academy.

It's an unseasonably warm day, 90 degrees, on what has been the warmest February on record in the Coachella Valley. I'm at the College of the Desert Public Safety Academy's Fire Academy II class, at the end of a long Saturday of classroom study and hands-on training, to interview Lauren Olvera, the only female candidate in this year's Fire Academy class, which began this past September and is part of an eight-month long training offered by C.O.D. each academic year.

I met Lauren the previous weekend at the training session last weekend held in Banning on a cold, clear Santa Ana wind-driven day. She had been the only woman in the training session that day, and it took me while to find her – after finding from Captain Walt Holloway told me there was one woman out there that day -, because she blended in with everyone else, dressed in full fire gear: clothing, web gear, fire shelters and helmets, as if they were on a real fire assignment. I'd asked Lauren if I could interview her, and she agreed.

Today, as the sun begins to sink behind Mt. San Jacinto at the window behind her, Lauren sits down in front of me, as everyone else heads home.

"What would you like to know?" she asks. She's confident, assured and well-spoken.

Lauren is 24 years old, from Los Angeles - specifically, from El Sereno - where she grew up and lives now. I ask her why she's here in the training program, what's motivated her to sign up for the Fire Academy, and why she chose to come all the way out to COD for her program.

As it turns out, the programs closer to home in the L.A. basin and Inland Empire – including Riverside City College, Copper Mountain College and Rio Hondo Community College, which all have more well-established fire academy program – are more heavily impacted with students and there are waiting lists. Lauren is a graduate of the University of the Pacific, where she was a star athlete and played on the soccer



team on a scholarship. She graduated with her A.S. degree in Fire Technology there in 2015, just before entering the COD Fire Academy last September. She plans to make firefighting her career.

She admits that she's been inspired towards this choice by her father, who recently retired as a Fire Captain from his LA City Fire Career after many years of distinguished service; he now oversees a Cadet/Explorer program for teens in El Sereno. Lauren notes that her father wasn't thrilled when she first made her choice towards a career in firefighting; "I'm his baby," she says. "He knows the dangers, how hard the job can be. But he's getting on board with it now." Her mom, as it turns out, didn't mind.

Lauren didn't always want to be a firefighter. During her college years, she has held jobs in office work, event planning, and in restaurants, jobs that she enjoyed, but says, "I've tried everything, and as it turns out, I can't stand to be indoors." She credits a lifetime of athletics and the physical and mental discipline and stamina associated as giving her a solid foundation for her fire career plans. "You have to have perseverance, and know how to push yourself," she says. "I'm good at that."

But there's more to it than that. "I love to help others, and I like that this is a job where you don't have to be a different person when you're in uniform and off-duty. Firefighting is a mind set, and I'm drawn to it because I like to be of service," Lauren emphasizes. She's clearly driven by her enthusiastic, sincere love for the taste of firefighting she's already had, mixed with her athletic abilities and love of being outdoors.

She's excited by knowledge she's gained so far in the COD firefighting academy, and also in her current position as a reserve firefighter for the Town of Morongo Valley Fire Department, where she works on an engine crew, responding to both structure and wildland fire calls, as well as other emergencies such as traffic collisions.

"Firefighting is a job that takes flexibility, and you have to be a people person, because you are working with the public," Lauren says. "It also takes teamwork, and being able to work with others, and pull your own weight, and I'm used to that, from all of my experiences playing soccer."

Lauren has applied for a fulltime seasonal job for fire season 2016 with Cal Fire, and is willing to go anywhere in the state based on job offers she hopefully receives. She's also interested in further training in one of the newer community paramedic jobs, which would qualify her to work as a nurse within the scope of firefighting career, such as working on medevac flight crews.

It's gotten dark outside, and my hand is tired from scribbling notes, but I'm energized by Lauren's interview. I was 24 years old when I worked my last season as a wildland firefighter, and set my sights on entering the teaching profession, which would become my longtime career. Lauren, at the age I was then, is moving in the direction I left behind, and she's an inspiration. I can't help but think about how different my life may have been if I had chosen to make firefighting my career; I do know that I, like Lauren, have what she calls "a fire personality." It's a phrase borrowed from one of her COD Fire Academy instructors, Palm Springs Fire Chief veteran and professor Scott Ventura.

We both get excited and motivated by the sight and challenges presented by wildfire, and are compelled into action when the flames break out. A fire personality-type runs towards the fire, tools in hand, ready to save homes and lives, not questioning the risks to self, but of course, being qualified and prepared and exhilarated by the adrenalized challenge.

We are people who love to be outdoors. We are women, most importantly, who have taken the difficult steps of entering what has traditionally been a man's world, and made a place for ourselves. My journey into that world ended long ago, and Lauren's is just beginning. The sisterhood of women firefighters. I know we're not alone in the broader scope of things, in this, but for now, in the darkening February night, we are, and it feels good, knowing that against many odds, particularly those posed by many of our male peers, and even by other women, we have carved, and are carving, our own space in this tough firefighting world: not only to survive, but thrive, and revel in that.



In a small way, and in a way that matters a great deal to me, it feels like Lauren is picking up where I left off.

"Ready to go?" Lauren smiles. "You first, out the door. I need to lock up."

I nod, and smile back at her. She's still in uniform, but she's let her hair down.

*Excerpt from*

## **CHAPTER 8. Hot, Clean Burn. Visit to Memorial Fire Burn**

*previously published under the following titles:*

- "A Hot, Clean Burn," *Sierra Club Desert Report Magazine*, September, 2016
- "Memorial Burn," *Desert Magazine/Desert Sun*, November, 2016

March 22, 2016

It's a very windy March afternoon, and I've just driven into Joshua Tree Park at the entrance south of the tiny town of – aptly named – Joshua Tree. A sign by the road catches my eye: "Today's Fire Danger: Moderate." Perfect.

Located at the southernmost edge of the 25-million acre Mojave Desert, adjacent to the San Bernardino Mountains, Joshua Tree National Park is located just a two-hour drive from Los Angeles and other Southern California major population centers. It's an internationally-famed location, and every year, visitors from all over the world journey here to see for themselves an alien desert landscape filled with light, surreal white granite boulders, incredulous views that stretch for miles into nothingness, and of course, the treasured forests of Joshua Trees they've seen photos of and heard so much about.

As I drive into the Park along on a narrow, winding, two-lane road, I'm surrounded by craggy boulder-riddled vistas and, of course, the ubiquitous Joshua Trees. I'm stunned by the colors of spring wildflowers popping up everywhere along the roadside: fields of yellow desert dandelions; sultry pink sand verbena and iridescent purple lupine have turned the usually tan-colored desert expanses into a beautiful symphony of color and passing beauty. Even the Joshua Trees themselves are tipped with fat white blossoms at the outermost reaches of their thick-thorned crowns. It's hard to concentrate on driving, with all of this beauty surrounding me.

But, presumably unlike most other tourists here today, I'm not really here to see the wildflowers of this year's so-called "superbloom," spawned by last October's monsoon rains and a favorable early January rainfall. I'm not here to rock climb, or camp, or marvel at the Wonderland of Rocks. I'm here to look for evidence of desert wildfire. I'm here to look for evidence of some of the major fire events that have occurred here in recent years, and see up close the scars they've left behind on the Park's fabled topography.

Soon enough, I get lucky. I see a break in the thick groves of giant Joshua Trees that the road cuts through, an open expanse. Then, I see one of the rare pullouts along the road. I pull over, and park next to a big metal kiosk that says, "Memorial Fire, May 27-30, 1999." According to the kiosk, 14,000 acres burned here for three days, ignited by a passing afternoon thunderstorm, making this a major Mojave Desert wildfire event.

I've struck wildfire gold.

I'm the only car that's stopped here, and I don't blame others for racing by. This grotesquely transformed desert scene isn't what most visitors have come to the Park to see. As I survey the wide view of the many burnt acres stretching in front of me, a clear line of demarcation between the old burn zone and the healthy, thriving, blossoming Joshua Trees far off in the distance against one of the Park's small



mountainous ranges, I see only a few wildflowers, and what looks uncannily like large human or animal limbs strewn crookedly throughout this odd landscape. They're the trunks and limbs of Joshua Trees that burned and fell apart in the Memorial Fire, all those years ago.

I wander far into this desert graveyard, taking my time, and up close, I see that many of the downed Joshua Tree limbs are still intact; some still bear charred stains on their fibrous skin that rubs easily off onto my fingers when I touch them, even after all this time. It's as if the Memorial Fire burned just last season, that it hasn't been 17 years since these trees were torched with flames. But it has. And the region of this burn has clearly been making very slow progress in its ecologic recovery back to what it once was. I wonder what's been sacrificed here, by the Memorial Fire. Certainly, by the looks of it, the fire has taken a long-term toll on this patch of the Park's 1.2 million acres.

And indeed, it undoubtedly has. According to Matthew Brooks, a Research Ecologist for the USGS and author of many books on Mojave Desert fire ecology, even the desert wildfires spawned by natural causes can now cause irreparable damage to the desert's fragile botanic and biologic communities. Unprecedented factors such as periods of extended drought, climate change, and, possibly the worst of all, the proliferation of invasive grasses on the desert ecosystem can all combine to make desert fires burn much hotter and faster than in previous historic times. "The high abundance of invasive annual grasses," he writes, "may lead to excessively short fire return intervals that do not allow Mojave desert scrub species to reestablish."

After a wildfire event, burned Joshua Trees can survive, but often die within the first few years after fires, due to drought and other stresses on their re-sprouts. It's likely that the Memorial Fire has left behind permanent scars; these sacrificial Joshua Trees will not be replaced. I wonder what these facts mean for the Joshua Tree ecologic zones throughout the rest of the Mojave Desert; after all, Joshua Tree National Park is a microcosm of the Mojave's huge matrix.

I'm deep in the old burn zone now, and feeling a little sad at the overwhelming sense of loss I see all around me. A kit fox scurries past me, and disappears into a hole. Overhead, a lone raven makes its timeless and haunting "caw, caw," as if to wonder aloud what I'm doing out there. I look towards the road, and watch car after car, small from my perspective, continue to race on by for happier Park destinations. small from my perspective, race on by. Not one other car has stopped at the Memorial Zone lookout and kiosk pullout.

As I sift through this desert, I imagine the sequence of events that took place in the frantic efforts to subdue and control the Memorial Fire. I'm well-acquainted with these procedures, because for seven fire seasons, I worked for the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) California Desert District wildland fire crews on dozens of Mojave Desert wildfires, which were often linked inextricably into the chaparral and even evergreen zones in the desert's mountainous counterparts.

I know from my extensive wildland firefighting training and on-the-job experience that most wildfires in this part of the Western U.S. — our country's wildfire hot zone — flow seamlessly between desert and foothills and mountains, much like the areas here known as critical wildlife corridors, where animals from all ecologic zones travel through in search of vital resources and drastic changes in seasons from one area to the next.

That, or wildfires can rage uncontrollably and with reckless speed down from mountains through lower elevations of chaparral and into broad open areas of the Mojave Desert, in a sequence mandated only by the whims of weather — wind, temperature, and relative air humidity-; topography; fuel moisture levels; accessibility; and other factors that can be hard to predict.

I imagine how this fire may have played out. As a lightning strike, it probably started when a pinyon pine tree caught fire on the small mountain that rises to what I guess is around 5,000 feet. It then was possibly fueled by heavy winds from the passing late spring thunderstorm, and ripped through the chaparral at lower elevations: plants that include Manzanita and Juniper. Unfortunately, all of the pinyon pine and chaparral plants are all highly flammable and burn clean and hot.



The fire may have then made its way downhill until it reached the Joshua Trees in this high desert woodland-featured terrain, and torched through many acres of invasive grasses that were undoubtedly thick, calf-high, and tinder-brown, dried to easy flammability by the hot daily temperatures of a long spring season.

It could have burned the other way around. I'll need to read the kiosk to know if I'm correct. At any rate, someone would have made the fire call when flames were first spotted. Perhaps a tourist, or a Park Ranger on patrol. Dispatchers quickly sent out what are known as initial attack crews in the wildland fire world: The two engines from the BLM-Park joint fire agency over at Black Rock, just inside the Park boundaries twenty miles away, would be among the first on the scene, as well as the local Morongo Valley, Yucca Valley, and other city and Cal Fire engines.

BLM Helicopter 554 – the flight crew I worked on in the 1987 fire season – would have likely been among the first to arrive, and begin to cut fireline in efforts to contain the fire; I worked on several smaller fires in the Park while I was on the H554 flight crew, and it took about thirty minutes to fly there from our post at the BLM Apple Valley Fire Station.

As the fire raged into the night, and grew exponentially, helped along by forcefully influential fire conditions, the helicopter crew would have been grounded, or perhaps sent back to Apple Valley, while engine crews would have likely continued to use hose lays, water, and combat the fire directly along the front of the burn. Local USFS hotshot crews such as Del Rosa and Vista Grande would have probably arrived by then, and these elite, highly-trained line crews would have worked hard and fast with their Stihl chainsaws, specialized firefighting Pulaski axes, and extra-sharp-tipped shovels to cut fireline around the perimeter of the burn.

As the fire grew ever-larger, in spite of expert efforts, red card line crews such as the Mojave Greens – a crew run by the nearby USFS Big Bear Ranger District that I also spent several seasons working on – and convict crews such as Bautista and Rainbow, run out of Southern California prison work scamp and consisting of both male and female inmates, would arrive, and begin to help hotshot crews cut firelines far into the deepest reaches of the fire.

A fire camp with fire management trailers would be set up somewhere – a park or a football field, for example – in one of the towns bordering the Park, and hot truck crews, supply trucks, porta-potties and mobile shower units would be set up for firefighters. This is where firefighters would have eaten, showered, slept, and regenerated their basic work supplies in between 12-hour shifts on the fireline.

Finally, as the fire was contained – meaning a fireline surrounded its burn zone entirely – and then under control, initial attack and hotshot crews would be sent back to their stations, or perhaps continue on to work on other wildfires throughout the region, State of California, or even the broad Western U.S., depending on need.

The red card and convict crews, perhaps along with a few other engine crews, would remain behind for days, walking slowly through the hot charred, sometimes ankle-deep ashes deep inside the burn zone, performing a thankless task known as “mopping up,” in the wildland firefighting world, taking great care to use shovels and backpacks filled with water, known by firefighters as much-hated “piss pumps” to put out each and every lingering coal, hot spot, smoldering tree trunk, root cluster, or anything else that even felt hot to the touch.

After this was done, the all-clear order would be given by the fire incident commander – from either the USFS, BLM or National Park – and all fire personnel would pull out and go home. Paid for by taxpayers. And, thankfully, there have been no fatalities on this big fire. The park would then be returned to its status as a must-see tourist destination, and for those who live in the nearby small towns, all would be well, and the smoke-choked skies would be champagne clear once again. The fire was out! And it would be, for most people who fought it, saw it, and lived near it, forgotten.



For months, there would have been vivid reminders that a fire had shredded the area: bits of burned fire hoses; perhaps the odd backpack or even a shovel left behind. Yellow police tape would have clung to healthy Joshua Trees on the edge of the burn zone to keep the public out, and tourists zipping through the Park on their way to enjoy their recreational activities and take in the celebrated Mojave Desert views, and then winter rains would have come, and the sight would have become a bit more inviting, and the reminders of the Memorial Day Fire would have begun to fade into the comfort zone of smudged memories.

And in spring, 2000, shortly after the beginning of an entire new century, the burn area would have been beautifully, if very briefly, transformed with the appearance of some of the wildflowers I still see here today, and just like today, numerous species of invasive grasses would have made the burn zone, temporarily, just a little more green than it had been for so many months, before the massive burn.

Park visitors may have wondered how long it would take for this area to regenerate into what it had been before the fire, and most probably would not have guessed that in the spring of 2016, I'd be wandering here through this desert wasteland, my fingers smudged with coal stains from that fire so long ago.

If other Park visitors took the time today to get up close to the beautiful-ugly remains of the Memorial Fire, they'd be shocked, like me, to see how little of the permanent desert woodland has regrown, with the exception of several lone cholla cactus – their twisted, needled fists on the verge of breaking into their spring blooms – and a few Joshua Trees that remain defiantly upright, burned on their upper arms but healthily alive on their trunks and lower limbs, some even with flowers bursting from their crowns, just like their neighbors outside the burn zone.

It's time for me to get back to the car and drive onward. The afternoon is deepening, the wind is picking up momentum, and the temperature is dropping as clouds from a predicted spring rainstorm begin to move in and cast long shadows across the Wonderland of Rocks.

I'm headed to the Park visitor center at 29 Palms, an hour away, where I plan to visit the Oasis of Mara, filled with a centuries-old grove of native Washingtonian Filifera Palm Trees, and see the evidence of old burn scars on their trunks, from centuries past, when the Serrano and Chemehuevi people who cared for and lived there routinely set deliberate burns in the grove in order to maintain the health of that precious resource area.

It's not a little astonishing that different ecologic zones in the same Mojave Desert can be so devastated, or regenerated, by wildfire. This is another one of the desert's great mysteries and intrigues, and another demonstration that the role of wildfire here isn't something so easily forgotten or dismissed.

But before I drive away from the Memorial Fire burn site, something catches my eye across the road. At first, I think it's a red balloon, snagged on a creosote bush. I cross the road and head over to inspect. As I get closer, I see that it's a huge, multi-piped Hedgehog Cactus, the biggest one I've ever seen, and it's covered with giant red blossoms, waxy and thick. The red flowers flame up against the subdued earth tones of the Joshua Tree and granite boulders rising behind it.

They're red. The color of fire.



Ruth Nolan, M.F.A., M.A.  
Professor of English, College of the Desert  
Post Sabbatical Report, May 19, 2017

**Fire On the Mojave:  
Stories from the Deserts and Mountains of Inland Southern California**

**Bibliography & Project Timeline**

August 2015-May 2016

Books, Papers, Video, Online Resources, Interviews, Archives

“Agua Caliente-Cahuilla Indian Canyons Flooding,” Sept 2013, from *Indian Country Today*. <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2013/09/08/agua-caliente-band-closes-indian-canyons-indefinitely-after-flash-flooding-151194>

“Ancient Drought and Fire Management.” <http://kvpr.org/post/ancient-native-american-drought-solution-parched-california#.VW4DDRDuE9I.twitter>. Visited May 1, 2016

*Before the Wilderness: Environmental Management by Native Californians*. Compiled and edited by Thomas C. Blackburn and Kat Anderson. Malki-Ballena Press, 1993.

*The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America*. Timothy Egan. Mariner Books – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Boston, New York. 2009.

*The Cahuilla Landscape: The Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains*. Lowell John Bean, Sylvia Brakke-Vane, and Jackson Young. Malki-Ballena Press, 1991.

*The California Deserts: An Ecological Rediscovery*. Bruce M. Pavlik. University of California Press. 2008.

*California's Fading Wildflowers: Lost Legacy and Biological Invasions*. Richard A. Minnich. University of California Press, 2008

“Combining academic learning with practical career training, providing an excellent career preparation for younger community college students.”  
<http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/ProgramstoWatch/MoreProgramstoWatch/>

“Control Burn.” Ron Good. *News from Native California*, Summer 2014.

*The Day of the Locust*. Nathanael West. 1939.

*Desert Palm Oasis*. James W. Cornett. Palm Springs Desert Museum, 1989.

*The Esperanza Fire: Arson, Murder and the Agony of Engine 57*. John N. MacLean. Counterpoint, 2013.



“Southeastern Deserts Bioregion” (Chapter 16.) Matthew L. Brooks and Richard A. Minnich. From *Fire In California's Ecosystems*. Editors Neil G. Sugihara, Jan van Wagendonk, Kevin E. Shaffer, JoAnn Fites-Kaufman, and Andrea E. Thode with foreword by James K. Agee. University of California Press, 2006.

“Fire and succession in Pinyon-Juniper woodlands of the San Bernardino Mountains.” California Wangler, M. and R. A. Minnich. 1996, *Madroño*, v. 43 p. 493-514.

“Fighting Fires in the I.E.” Ruth Nolan. *Riverside Press Enterprise/Inlandia Literary Journeys*. July 18, 2013.

*Fire, Chaparral, and Survival in Southern California*. Richard W. Halsey. Sunbelt Publications. 2005.

“Firefighter Academies Help Rescue State's Economy” California Community College Chancellor's Office website, <http://www.cccco.edu/> visited April, 2016

“Combining academic learning with practical career training, providing an excellent career preparation for younger community college students.” California Community College Chancellor's Office website <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu> visited April, 2016

*Fire Crew: Stories from the Fireline*. Ben Walters, self-published, 2014.

“Fire Mitigation and Education.” Bureau of Land Management/California Desert District South Zone, print educational materials from Palm Springs CA Office, October 2015.  
*Fire Monks: Zen Mind Meets Wildfire*. Colleen Morton Busch, Penguin Books, 2011.

“Fire On the Mojave.” Ruth Nolan. *Riverside Press Enterprise/Inlandia Literary Journeys*. August 31, 2015.

“Female inmate firefighter dies following injury in Malibu blaze,” Los Angeles Times. <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-female-inmate-firefighter-death-20160226-story.html> Visited Feb 8, 2016

*Fire Season: Field Notes from a Wilderness Lookout*. Philip Connors. Harper Coll, 2011.

*Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills*, Third Edition. International Association of Fire Chiefs and National Fire protection Association. Jones and Bartlett Learning, 2014.

*History of CA Conservation Camps*. Philip Goodman, UC Irvine 2010  
[http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation\\_Camps/docs/History\\_of\\_firecamps.pdf](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation_Camps/docs/History_of_firecamps.pdf)

*'Isill Heqwas Waxish: A Dried Coyote's Tail (Books 1 & 2)*. Katherine Siva Sauvel and Eric Elliott. Malki Museum Press, 2004.

*Inlandia: A Literary Journey through Southern California's Inland Empire*. Edited by Gayle Wattawa. Heyday Books, 2006.

"Meet the Women Prisoners Fighting San Diego County's Fires" by Joel Hoffman, from *Voice of San Diego* Sept 23, 2013 <http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/all-narratives/wildfires/meet-the-women-prisoners-fighting-san-diego-countys-fires/>

"Mojave Desert Scrub Ecosystem" taken from p. 88-89 in Chapter 5 from the forthcoming book *Fire History, Effects, and Management in Southern Nevada* ed. Matthew Brooks, Jeanne Chambers and Randy McKinley. (2016.)

"The Mountain Fire and California's Incendiary Literary Past." David Ulin. Los Angeles Times, July 18, 2013. <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/18/entertainment/la-et-jc-mountain-fire-literary-past-20130718>

"Native American Land-Use Practices and Ecological Impacts." M. Kat Anderson, Michael J. Moratto. Sierra Nevada Ecosystems Project. 1996.

*No Place for a Puritan: the Literature of California's Deserts*. Edited by Ruth Nolan. Heyday Books, 2009.

"Report on the History of Agriculture and Irrigation La Jolla, Pauma and Pala," Florence Shippek. Exhibit, Docket 80 A, before the Indian Claims Commission., 8,11., National Archives, Washington, D.C. Also see Shippek, "A Strategy for Change, the Luiseno of Southern California. PhD dissertation University of Hawaii 1977.

*The San Jacintos: The Mountain Country from Banning to Borrego Valley*. John W. Robinson and Bruce D. Risher; Natural History by Elna Bakker. Big Santa Anita Historical Society, 1996.

*The Sawtooth Complex*. Susan Lang. Oak Tree Press, 2015.

*Sovereignty, Land and Water: Building Tribal Environmental and Cultural Programs on the Cahuilla and Twenty-nine Palms Reservations*. Anthony Madrigal. 2008, California Center for Native Nations, University of CA Riverside.

*Tempalpakh: Cahuilla Indian Knowledge and Usage of Plants*. Lowell J. Bean and Katherine Siva Sauvel. Malki Museum Press, 1972.

*Tending the Wild*, KCET Los Angeles video series. March 2017.

*Turtle Island*. Gary Snyder. New Directions Books, 1969.

*Wayta' Yawa', "Always Believe."* Dorothy Ramon and Eric Elliott. Malki Museum Press, 2000.



*Wildfire*. Scott Thybony. Western National Parks Association, Tucson, Arizona, 2002.

*Young Men and Fire*, John MacLean. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1993.

#### Websites Visited

Bautista Fire Camp [http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation\\_Camps/Camps/Bautista/index.html](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation_Camps/Camps/Bautista/index.html)

Bureau of Land Management.

California Department of Corrections & Rehab California Conservation Corps, Conservation (Fire) Camps [http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation\\_Camps/](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation_Camps/)

Cal Fire

California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Program <http://www.cffjac.org/go/jac/cpat/>

College of the Desert Course Catalog & COD Website

Fire Safe Council Mountain Communities <http://www.mcfsc.org/AboutUs.htm>

Hackberry Fires East Mojave National Preserve 2005 resources  
<https://www.nps.gov/moja/learn/management/upload/hackberry%20fire.pdf>

Joshua Tree National Park

Old Fire 2003 resources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old\\_Fire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Fire)

Mountain Fire 2013 resources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mountain\\_Fire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mountain_Fire)

Pinyon Fire 1994 resources [http://articles.latimes.com/1994-07-04/news/mn-11798\\_1\\_forest-fire](http://articles.latimes.com/1994-07-04/news/mn-11798_1_forest-fire)

Rainbow Fire Camp (all women since 1983)  
[http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation\\_Camps/Camps/Rainbow/](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Conservation_Camps/Camps/Rainbow/)

Standard Firefighting Orders and 18 Watch Out Situations from USFS, Fire & Aviation Management resources [www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/10\\_18/10.18.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/10_18/10.18.html)

United States Forest Service

Victor Valley College Course Catalog & VVC Website

Wildland Fire: Home of the Wildland Firefighter <http://www.wildlandfire.com>



## **INTERVIEWS and FIELD TRIPS**

September 25, 2016 Field Trip to Coachella Valley Preserve and Interview with Ginny Short, Preserve Director.

March 22, 2016 Interview with Serrano/Cahuilla Indian Elder, Singer and Cultural Historian Ernest Siva at Dorothy Ramon Learning Center, Banning, CA.

Sept 2016 Interview with Patty Delgado, former engine crew member Cal Fire, Coachella in 1980's, Indio, CA.

Sept 2015 Interview with Gordon Johnson, Cahuilla-Cupeno, former Indian Crew wildland firefighter, early 1970's, Temecula, CA.

March 22, 2016 Interview with Fire Captain Efrain Vargas at Morongo Reservation Fire Station.

March 15, 2016 Interview with Fire Captain Kim Williams at Cal Fire / Bureau of Land Management Joint Usage Fire Station, Pinyon.

October 10, 2015 Field trip to Apple Valley Office, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Fire Station and Interview with James Aragon, Fire Prevention Officer, North Zone October 10, 2015.

October, 2015 Field trip and Observations, Victor Valley College Public Safety Academy Wildland Fire Training class; Interviews with several students and participation in training.

October 10, 2015 Interview with Helicopter 554 crew member Kyle Beinschroth at Apple Valley Bureau of Land Management California Desert District Fire Station.

October 15, 2015 phone interview with Clay Howe, Fire Prevention Officer, South Zone Palm Springs Office, Bureau of Land Management California Desert District.

October 18, 2015 phone interview with Jacob Gear, Fire Prevention Officer North Zone, Apple Valley Office, Bureau of Land Management California Desert District.

October 21, 2015 Interview with United States Forest Service, /Idyllwild firefighter Bryan Scott in Palm Desert.

October 22, 2015 Interview at College of the Desert Public Safety Academy with Professor and Retired City of Palm Springs Fire Captain Scott Ventura.

October 3, 2015 Interview at College of the Desert with Adjunct Professor/Cal Fire Captain Bonifacio de la Cruz.

October 18, 2015 Interview and Tour at College of the Desert Public Safety Academy Roy Wilson Training Center with Adjunct Professor/Retired Cal Fire Captain Walt Holloway.

November 1, 2015 Email interview with Old Fire, San Bernardino 2003 resident fire survivor Cindy Rinne.

November 1, 2015 Email interview with Mountain Fire 2013, Idyllwild resident survivor Jean Waggoner.

December 26-30, 2015 Field trip to Inyo County Tecopa/Shoshone Volunteer Fire Department in Tecopa, CA Interviews with Inyo County Tecopa/Shoshone Volunteer Fire Department members Judy Palmer, Amy Noel, Susan Sorrells, Larry Levy and Patrick Donnelly.

December 30, 2015. Interview with Pahrump Paiute elder and former desert miner George Ross in Shoshone, CA.

April 2016 email and phone interviews with Matthew Brooks, Supervisory Research Ecologist and author, U.S. Geological Survey Western Ecological Research Center Yosemite Field Station.

April 2016 email interview with Caryn Davidson, Educational Ranger, Joshua Tree National Park.

February 2015 class observations of Fire 001 "Principles of Emergency Services" class at College of the Desert.

February 2016 email and phone interview with Susan Lang, longtime Mojave Desert resident and author of *Sawtooth Complex* (2015).

February 2016 field trip to Rattlesnake Mountain Volunteer Fire Department in San Bernardino Mountains/Juniper Flats area, and interview with Jason Schmidt, Volunteer Firefighter at Rattlesnake Mountain Volunteer Fire Department.

March, 2016 Field trip and visit to Tahquitz Canyon visitor center and canyon hike/Cahuilla-Agua Caliente Reservation. Review of visitor center archives/Desert Sun news articles on Tahquitz Canyon fires, 1930-present.

March 2016 interview with Ian Greene, College of the Desert student Fire 001/Principles of Emergency Service class.

February 2016 field trip and observation College of the Desert Public Safety Academy Fire 063B Basic Firefighter Academy Part II Class wildland fire training – line cutting and hose lays/water operations in Banning CA.

March 2016 Interview with College of the Desert Public Safety Academy Fire 063B Basic Firefighter Academy Part II Class student Lauren Olvera at Roy Wilson Training Center, Thousand Palms CA.

March 2016 Interview with City of Palm Springs Fire Department firefighter and College of the Desert Public Safety Academy Basic Firefighter Academy graduate Wayne Seacrist at Palm Springs Fire Station 1-Palm Springs Airport.

March 2016 Visit to Family Night at Fire 063B Basic Firefighter Academy Part II Class: live fire demonstrations, Roy Wilson Training Center, Thousand Palms, CA.

March 2015 Field Trip to Joshua Tree National Park, site of Memorial Fire Burn, 1999.  
April 2015 Field trip and Interview with Archaeologist Daniel McCarthy in Pinyon, CA at Cahuilla Tewanet overlook and adjacent areas, site of 1994 burn.

April 8 2016 Field trip/interview with Richard Halsey, Director of Chaparral Institute, Escondido, CA.

April 2016 email interview with Rose Ann Hamilton, Anza Cahuilla.

April 2016 email interview with Lindsie Bear, former Inyo County wildland firefighter.

May 11, 2016 phone interview with Royal Ramey / former California Department of Corrections Bautista Fire Crew, and current member of Mojave Greens Type II Wildland Fire Crew.

May, 2016 field trip to UC Granite Mountains Preserve adjacent to East Mojave National Park. Interview with preserve director Jim Andre and visit to Bureau of Land Management California Desert District Hole In the Wall fire station. Visit to site of Hackberry Fire in Mid-Hills, 2005.

May 2016 Phone Interview with Matthew Leivas, Cultural Consultant and Bird Singer, Chemehuevi Tribe, Havasu, CA.

May 2016 Phone Interview with Julia Bogany, Gabrieleno-Tongva Cultural Consultant.

May 2016 Phone Interview with Wellman Family, Garner Valley, San Jacinto Forest.

May 21, 2016 Interview with Jim Andre, Granite Mountain Reserve  
Field trip to site of Hackberry Fire, East Mojave National Preserve

May 30, 2016 Visit to Heap's Peak Arboretum, San Bernardino National Forest to view evidence of Old Fire, 2003



## ARCHIVES VISITED

Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council

Idyllwild Historical Society

Palm Springs Historical Society

Amargosa River Conservancy

Shoshone Museum

Palm Desert Historical Society

Morongo Basin Historical Society

Malki Museum

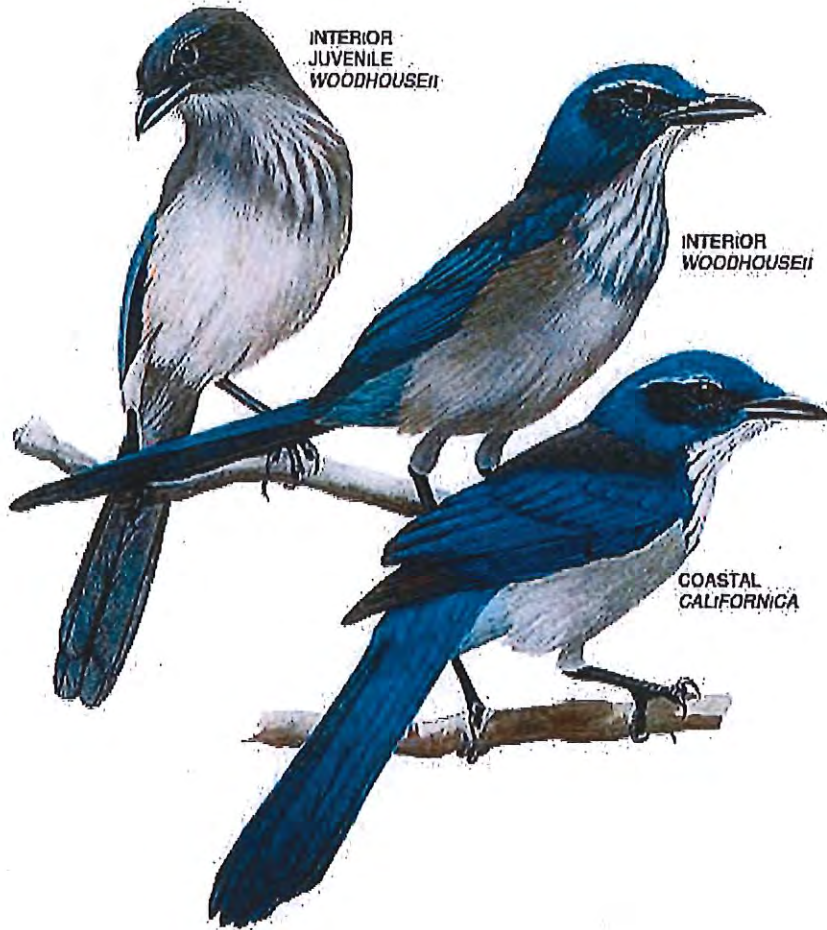
Dorothy Ramon Learning Center

Joshua Tree National Park Historical Archives

Palm Desert Library

College of the Desert Library

POST-SABBATICAL LEAVE REPORT  
KURT LEUSCHNER  
FEBRUARY 1, 2017



**Post-Sabbatical Leave Report**  
**Kurt Leuschner**  
**February 1, 2017**

**INTRODUCTION**

During the fall semesters of 2015 and 2016 I was granted the opportunity to set my teaching aside and take part in a number of worthy projects that will benefit the College of the Desert Natural Resources Program, the local community, and my own professional and personal growth. My thanks goes to the Board of Trustees, the Sabbatical Committee, my Division Dean, President Joel Kinnamon, and the COD Administration for giving me the time needed to travel, study, read, conduct research, attend conferences, visit museums, visit important natural areas around the country, make recordings, take photographs, and participate in other activities outlined below. Everything that I learned during this time will be useful in the lab and classroom and will make me a better teacher. My students will also benefit from my newly-acquired knowledge and fresh perspective, and that is ultimately why I teach: to help students succeed.

As I am the only full-time instructor in the Natural Resources area it would have been difficult for me to leave the program for two consecutive semesters. This is why I chose to split my sabbatical into two fall semesters. Combined with the summer break, I would have the time needed to complete the projects outlined in my initial proposal with minimal disruption to our program. Now that the sabbatical is complete, I feel that I have achieved my initial goals and even accomplished some extra things along the way. I am back in the classroom using what I have learned and our Natural Resources program is still going strong with minimal disruptions during my absence.

**OVERVIEW**

There were many different aspects to my sabbatical – The main focus of my sabbatical centered on the sound recording of the different subspecies of Scrub-Jay across the country. However, I worked on a variety of projects at once during both semesters. A few projects that were successfully initiated during my sabbatical are ongoing in nature and even though the sabbatical is over, they will continue to develop and to enhance our program. All of these projects involve natural resources and relate directly to the courses I teach regularly: Conservation of Natural Resources, Entomology, GPS and Map Use, Migrant Birds Spring, Migrant Birds Fall, Winter Birds, Advanced Birding, and a new course: Backyard Birds. A summary of each aspect of my sabbatical is given below.



## **FORMAL COURSEWORK**

### **Sound Recording Workshop**

In preparation for my upcoming sabbatical, the summer prior to my sabbatical I enrolled in Cornell University's Sound Recording Workshop – taught at the Sierra Nevada Field Campus in California which is run by San Francisco State University. After completing this week-long course I was awarded a "Sound Recordist" certificate. I was able to learn to use the sound recording equipment acquired through the College of the Desert's Perkins Grant. This very same equipment was used throughout my sabbatical to record birds all over the country including Scrub-Jays. I will continue to use this equipment in the various bird classes I teach here on campus at College of the Desert, in particular "Backyard Birds", "Migrant Birds – Fall", and "Advanced Birding".

### **Sound Analysis Workshop at Cornell**

In late September/early October 2016 I took another course – the Sound Analysis Workshop. The weeklong course was held on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York in the Laboratory of Ornithology. During the class we had daily access to the Adelson Library and the world famous Macauley Library of Sound. This sound library contains more recordings of natural sounds than any other in the world. I completed the class and received my Natural Sounds Analyst certificate. During this class I learned how "Raven Pro" software, which can be used to analyze sounds – bird sounds in particular. The College of the Desert now has a lifetime subscription to the Raven Pro software that is housed on my office computer and available to any colleagues or local researchers who might need access to it. I will continue to use this software and to submit bird recordings to Cornell to be archived.

### **Bird Identification by Song Class**

In the second half of my sabbatical I enrolled in a class entitled "Bird Identification by Song". This class was offered by San Francisco State University and held at their Sierra Nevada Field Campus in the Sierra Mountains of California during the summer of 2016. I received an "A" in the course and was able to brush up and improve my bird identification by song skills. It turns out the birds that occur in the Sierra are mostly the same as the bird species that occur in the mountains surrounding the Coachella Valley, so it was a very appropriate course to take. One of the classes I teach at COD is "Migrant Birds – Fall". This class focuses on mountain birds with field trips to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains.

## **SCRUB-JAY RESEARCH AND TRAVEL**

Researching and recording the different species and subspecies of Scrub-Jay was the main purpose of my sabbatical. Due to previous work I have done with birds in the past, I possess a federal bird marking permit from the United States Geological Survey's Bird Banding Laboratory. I also possess a federal salvage permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allowing me to collect certain bird (and other wildlife) specimens for educational use at the College. So I have experience banding and mist-netting birds and

making bird study skins for the college collection. But I had never looked at actually recording bird sound – another major area of field ornithology (a subject that I teach). So with the Marantz sound recording equipment acquired with Perkins Grant funds I set out to do just this - and chose the Scrub-Jay as the target species since they are accessible and relatively easy to find (or so I thought). It turns out that it was much harder than I thought it would be to find and to record each Scrub-Jay subspecies. But in the end, with lots of travel, patience and persistence, I succeeded in recording every single major subspecies. All of the 300+ bird recordings are stored on a memory card in my Marantz recorder and also backed up on the hard drive of my office computer. Notable recordings are also housed in the Macauley Library of Sounds at Cornell University or will be in the near future as I continue to process them.

A number of years ago the Scrub-Jay was split into three species based partly on range and morphology but mostly on new findings in their DNA makeup. The three new species are: Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), Island Scrub-Jay (*A. insularis*), and Florida Scrub-Jay (*A. coerulescens*). The Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay (*A. woodhouseii*), ranging in the interior west from eastern California to central Texas, is a fourth species that was being proposed as a full species at the time my sabbatical began in 2015. Interestingly and somewhat coincidentally, the Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay was officially split into a fourth Scrub-Jay species and the Western Scrub-Jay was renamed the "California Scrub-Jay" during my sabbatical. This was announced at the American Ornithologists' Union meeting that I attended in August 2016 in Washington D.C. Historically, voice data has not been a major determining factor when new species are proposed. Perhaps in the near future as the data bank of sound recordings increases and the analysis of these recordings using advanced software like RAVEN PRO becomes more precise (like a fingerprint or a DNA profile), these sound recordings will become just as important as DNA or morphology when determining species or subspecies. Cornell University and websites like [www.xeno-canto.org](http://www.xeno-canto.org) will safely archive these sounds in the meantime.

In the western United States there are about ten recognized subspecies of Scrub-Jay – including four in the "Pacific group" and five in the "Interior group". During my sabbatical I was able to obtain field recordings of all four species of Scrub-Jay as well as the pertinent western subspecies, both in the center of their ranges and on the edge of their ranges (see map of Scrub-Jay subspecies in the appendix). In the West I specifically targeted the following three Interior subspecies of Scrub-Jay: *Aphelocoma californica nevadae*, *A. c. woodhouseii*, and *A. c. texana*. As one might expect the subspecies that live relatively close to each other sound very similar to one another. The species that are widely separated have more noticeable differences in the sounds they make. Sound analysis software that produces spectrograms, or sonograms, can sometimes reveal differences in sound that the human ear cannot detect. Research trips to record Scrub-Jays during my sabbatical are summarized below:

## RESEARCH SITES VISITED

As outlined below, I visited a number of places during my sabbatical with the goal of finding and recording the Scrub-Jays that occur there. In some cases I was only able to observe the birds and was not able to record them for various reasons including weather, wind, ambient noise, and lack of cooperation from the jays. Repeat trips and overnight trips to many of the sites were necessary. In the end, however, I obtained all of the recordings I was hoping to get.

*Santa Cruz Island*, Channel Islands National Park, California – May 30, 2015

*Pinyon Crest Research Center* – June 1, 2015 to December 18, 2016 – One of the places I was able to obtain multiple Scrub-Jay recordings and to practice my recording technique in a variety of weather conditions was my nearby Pinyon Crest site. I have banded Scrub-Jays at this site in the past so it is very reliable. A total of at least 45 visits were made to this site during my sabbatical. Another similar site in Idyllwild (with more Steller's Jays than Scrub-Jays) was also visited over 18 times.

*Yosemite National Park*, California – June 24-25, 2015 – successful recording of northern California subspecies *supercilliosa*

*Mammoth Lakes*, California – June 27, 2015

*Big Morongo Canyon Preserve*, Morongo Valley, California – August 3 and 25, September 18-19, 2015, April 16, May 14, August 3 and 30, and September 17, 2016

*Mojave National Preserve* – August 5, 2015, September 12 and November 30, 2016

*Zion National Park*, Utah – August 6, 2015

*Colorado National Monument*, Colorado – August 7, 2015 – successful recording of subspecies *woodhouseii*

*Buena Vista*, Colorado – August 11-12, 2015

*Great Basin National Park*, Nevada – August 20, 2015

*Eaton Canyon Nature Center*, Pasadena – August 29-30, 2015

*Piute Ponds, Edwards Air Force Base*, Ridgecrest, California – August 30, 2015

*Hassayampa River Preserve*, Arizona – September 13, 2015

*Joshua Tree National Park*, California – September 9, 2015  
Also March 13, April 23, September 16-18, and November 21, 2016



*Whitewater Preserve*, Whitewater, California – October 13, 2015

*Anza-Borrego Desert State Park*, California – November 4, 2015 and January 23, 2016

*Sacramento*, California – December 2-6, 2015 – successful recording of the northern California Scrub-Jay subspecies *supercilliosa* in the Sacramento suburbs.

*South Coast Botanical Gardens*, Palos Verdes, California – March 11, 2016

*Pine Nut Mountains*, Douglas County, Nevada – June 11-12 and October 16-17, 2016  
Visiting the “contact zone” of the Pine Nut Mountains (near Topaz Lake) in this remote corner of Nevada was a real highlight. I had heard about this place from a number of researchers and museum collection managers. This is one of the only areas where two of the former Western Scrub-Jay subspecies come into contact and may interbreed. So it was important to obtain a recording of this possible “hybrid” type. And I was successful on the first day after locating a suitable piece of pinyon-juniper habitat behind the Farias Wheel airport. The recording is being submitted to Cornell via ebird.

*North Florida*: September 25-30, 2016 – recorded Florida Scrub-Jays at a number of sites along the Great Florida Birding Trail including Ocala National Forest, Cedar Key State Reserve, Marion Oaks Preserve, Sweetwaters Wetlands, and Halpata Tustanaki Preserve. In the Ocala National Forest I also obtained (serendipitously) a recording of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*).

*Texas Hill Country* near San Antonio, Texas – December 7-10, 2016. In order to achieve my goal of recording all of the Scrub-Jay subspecies, the last subspecies of Western Scrub-Jay that I needed to record was the Texas subspecies known as *texana*. It only occurs in the scrub habitats of central and western Texas. I flew to Texas and rented a car and drove hundreds of miles in search of the jays in freezing weather. I drove along the Heart of Texas Wildlife Trail and visited Garner State Park, Lost Maples State Natural Area, Concan, and Kerrville-Schreiner Park. I was fortunate to find the *texana* jays in three locations and despite the wind was able to record them. Even without creating a spectrogram it is obvious how different they sound from the other subspecies. It was a great way to end the travel/research portion.

## MUSEUM AND ZOO VISITS

In order to learn as much as I could about the differences between the various species and sub-species of Scrub-Jay, I needed to visit as many museums (and some zoos) as I could during the sabbatical in order to speak with the different collections managers and ornithologists and learn all I could from them, and to examine study skins. Below is a summary / timeline of the museums and zoos visited for this project:

*San Bernardino County Museum* in Redlands, California – with Gene Cardiff, retired Curator of Birds – 4 visits in 2015 and 2016 including May 20, July 7 and November 5, 2015, and May 18, 2016. On November 5 we were joined by Phil Unitt and his staff from the San Diego Museum of Natural History.

*Los Angeles Zoo* – Los Angeles, California – May 23, 2015. I received a behind-the-scenes tour of the zoo from zookeeper Gema Moreno, formerly of the Living Desert. Scrub-Jays were present on the grounds.

*Los Angeles Museum of Natural History*, Los Angeles, California – June 4, 2015. I reviewed the entire Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*) and other species/subspecies with Kimball Garrett, Collections Manager.

*San Diego Museum of Natural History* – San Diego, California - June 18, 2015. I visited the bird collection of study skins under the management of Phil Unitt, Curator of Vertebrates. We examined all of the Scrub-Jay study skins and I received copies of pertinent Scrub-Jay articles.

*Cornell University/Macauley Library of Sounds* – Ithaca New York – September 27 - October 3, 2015. I recorded jays here and took a course on bird sound analysis.

*Occidental College* (with James Maley, Bird Collections Manager) – Los Angeles, California – December 9, 2015. I toured the bird collection and saw the type specimens for the upcoming Scrub-Jay species split (the research is being done here at Occidental).

*Riverside Metropolitan Museum*, Riverside, CA – May 15, 2016. I toured the museum and the natural history collection (behind-the-scenes).

*Philadelphia Academy of Sciences* – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – August 11, 2016. I toured this famous facility where many previous bird discoveries were originally documented beginning in the 1800's.

*American Museum of Natural History*, New York – August 14, 2016. I visited the bird exhibits in particular.

*U.S.G.S. Bird Banding Lab at Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge* – Washington, D.C. – August 17, 2016. I toured the refuge, the lab, and the bird collection – including the endangered Whooping Crane breeding facility.

*Smithsonian Institution*, Washington, D.C. – August 19, 2016. I visited the bird collection (one of the world's largest) and the insect zoo.

*The National Zoo* – Washington, D.C. I received a behind-the-scenes tour of the rare bird breeding facility – “the Birdhouse” – August 18, 2016.



*University of Florida Museum, Gainesville, Florida* – September 24, 2016. I visited this museum on the campus, focusing on Florida's natural history and in particular the Florida Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*).

*Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History* – Santa Barbara, California  
November 16-17, 2016. I spoke to the local Santa Barbara and Ventura Audubon Societies on the Salton Sea and my Scrub-Jay project after a tour of the museum and the bird collection.

As a result of my ongoing connections with museums and museum people all over the country, I am able to renew my **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service federal salvage permit** that allows me to legally possess birds and bird skins to be deposited in the College of the Desert collection. I have created and added to our collection of study skins during this sabbatical, including a set of various water birds and passerine ("perching") birds that represent many of the most common bird families discussed in our bird classes at COD. These specimens are available for students, other researchers or the general public to examine under my supervision. I was also able to see first-hand all of the subspecies of Scrub-Jay including those from Mexico. Valuable information on where to find these subspecies in the field was obtained from these museum visits.

## RESEARCH STATIONS

During my sabbatical I was fortunate to visit and stay at a number of famous biological research stations all across the state and the country. I chose those research stations that had easy access to Scrub-Jays. These trips took a lot of time and planning that my sabbatical afforded me. A list of these research stations follows:

*Southwestern Research Station, Portal, Arizona* – July 10-11, 2015 and July 29-30, 2016. I was able to visit Arizona two times and record interior Scrub-Jays near this research station that is run by the American Museum of Natural History in one of the most biodiverse areas of the United States.

*Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx, California* – October 23-25, 2015, and September 9-12 and December 4, 2016. This famous desert research center in the middle of the Mojave Desert makes an ideal place to find Scrub-Jays on the border of their range. In this case, the nearby Mid-Hills Campground area marks the westernmost boundary of the Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay. Despite the wind that frequents this area, I was able to successfully record Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay here. I was also able to meet with members of the Western Field Ornithologists' at the Desert Studies Center during an October 9-11, 2015 retreat. A small museum has a limited selection of bird study skins.

*Santa Cruz Island Reserve Research Center* – October 25-30, 2015 – stayed 5 nights at this research center run by the University of California. Santa Cruz Island is the only place in the world where the endemic Island Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma insularis*) occurs and during my 4 days in the field I was able to obtain good recordings of this species with the help of local researchers.



*San Francisco State University Sierra Nevada Field Campus* – June 4-10, 2016. I stayed at this research station in the high Sierra of California twice – once just before my sabbatical to attend a week-long Sound Recording Workshop and also in June 2016 to take a course on Bird Identification by Sound. I was able to locate and record the northern California subspecies of Scrub-Jay in the pinyon pines of the nearby Sierra Valley.

*Sweeney Granite Mountains Desert Research Center, Mojave National Preserve, California* – September 11-12, 2016. Staying overnight at this research center allowed me to record the Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay both at the Center (walking distance from camp) and in the very early morning in the adjacent Mojave National Preserve at Mid-Hills Campground. The early morning is almost always the best time to record bird song.

*Archbold Biological Station, Highlands County, Florida* – October 1-2, 2016 – toured the bird collection with Mark Deyrup, collections manager. I successfully made recordings of the Florida Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma insularis*) and Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes chrythrocephalus*) in the nearby Florida Scrub habitat. A long term study of the Florida Scrub-Jay was initiated here in 1967. Archbold Biological Station was the favorite place of Cornell chemical ecologist Thomas Eisner and is still visited by Harvard's E.O. Wilson, author of numerous books on Ecology and Biodiversity

## CONFERENCES AND SPECIAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

During a normal semester with a full teaching load I am lucky to be able to attend one conference or weekend course. During my sabbatical, however, the gift of time enabled me to **attend a number of conferences** that allowed me to learn new teaching techniques, hear about research being conducted in the field of Natural Resources, network with colleagues across the country (and the world), record local bird sounds, and receive specific training for the sabbatical projects outlined in this report. A list of the conferences attended during the sabbatical period follows.

**Western Field Ornithologists' Conference** – Billings, Montana, June 10-14, 2015 (including bird-banding, sound recording, and digiscoping)

**California Agriculture Teachers Association Conference** – Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, June 25-29, 2015 (annual meeting of teachers of agriculture-related classes including Entomology and Natural Resources)

**Sound Analysis Workshop** – Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, September 28-October 3, 2015. Received my Natural Sounds Analyst Certificate.

**CTE (Career Technical Education) Conference** – Sacramento, California – October 2015. (Because I was not teaching at the time, I was able to attend this important conference to learn how to become a more effective instructor in the CTE areas that I teach in at COD).

**Bird Identification by Song class** – week long class offered by San Francisco State University and held at the Sierra Nevada Field Campus, California, June 4-10, 2016. I scored a 100% on the final exam and an “A” in the class.

**North American Ornithological Congress and meeting of the American Ornithologists’ Union** – Washington, D.C., August 16-20, 2016.

This 5-day conference was a gathering of ornithologists from around the world and was held near the Smithsonian Institution - including visits to their bird collection and to the National Zoo for a behind-the-scenes tour of the aviary. Also visited the Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge bird rearing facility. One exciting thing that happened during the meeting of the A.O.U. was the official announcement of the new species of Scrub-Jay: the Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*) was split into the California Scrub-Jay (*A. californica*) and the Woodhouse’s Scrub-Jay (*A. woodhouseii*).

**International Congress of Entomology / Entomological Society of America**

**Conference** – Orlando, Florida, September 28 – October 1, 2016. The largest gathering of entomologists in the history of the world with 6,683 registered. A behind-the-scenes tour of the EPCOT Integrated Pest Management Center was included.

**ACTE Conference (Association for Career and Technical Education)** – Las Vegas, Nevada, November 2016. A national gathering of CTE Educators from all over the country. I have never had the time to attend this conference prior to this sabbatical. The number and variety of workshops and lectures was amazing. The tradeshow was another highlight.

**LOCAL LECTURES**

To help spread the word about birds, the Salton Sea, and other conservation topics, I frequently lecture to the local community (and sometimes outside the Valley) on a variety of topics all relating to Natural Resources. In each case the College of the Desert and all that we are doing for students of the Coachella Valley is showcased. During my sabbatical I was fortunate to be able to give more lectures than I normally do since I had more open time in my schedule. Some of these lectures are mentioned below. In the near future I will also be lecturing on Scrub-Jays as a direct result of my recent sabbatical.

September 9, 2015 – Gave a presentation on *Turkey Vultures* at the Hi Desert Nature Museum, Yucca Valley, CA

September 16, 2015 – Gave a presentation on the *Endemic Birds of New Zealand* to the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society, Redlands, CA

November 10, 2015 – Gave a presentation on the *Amazing Birds of the Salton Sea* at the Rancho Mirage Library attended by over 200 people.

January 10, 2016 – Gave a presentation on *Birding Along the Palms to Pines Birding and Nature Trail* at the Idyllwild Library, Idyllwild, CA

January 15, 24, 30, 2016 – Led all day trips to the *Salton Sea* for the Living Desert

February 16, 2016 – Gave a presentation on *Burrowing Owls* at the Thousand Palms Library, Thousand Palms, CA

February 23, 2016 – Gave a presentation on the *Amazing Insects of the Southwest* at the Rancho Mirage Library, Rancho Mirage, CA

May 15, 2016 – Gave a presentation on *Amazing Insects of the Southwest* to docents and the general public at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Riverside, CA.

November 15, 2016 – Gave a presentation on *Hummingbirds of the Southwest* at the Rancho Mirage Library attended by over 200 people.

November 16, 2016 – Gave a presentation on the *Salton Sea* to the Santa Barbara and Ventura Audubon Societies at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

January 6, 2017 – Led the Sun City and Coachella Valley Camera Clubs on an all day tour of the Salton Sea. Over 37 people and 10 cars were in the caravan.

January 7, 15, 28, 2017 – Led all day trips to the *Salton Sea* for the Living Desert

January 12, 2017 – Gave a presentation on the *Amazing Birds of the Salton Sea* at the El Dorado Country Club in Indian Wells, CA

January 12, 2017 – Gave a presentation on *Pollinators of the Southwest* at Sun City Shadow Hills in Indio, CA

January 19, 2017 – Gave a presentation on Backyard Wildlife Habitats to the Coachella Valley Horticultural Society at the Living Desert, Palm Desert, CA

## **OTHER PROJECTS**

### **New COD class on birds**

My visit to Cornell inspired me to write up and add a new bird class to the existing ones at College of the Desert. In the fall of 2016, with the approval of my Natural Resources Advisory Committee, I completed the necessary paperwork for a new class entitled: *Backyard Birds*. This class will focus on birds found in a typical Coachella Valley Backyard, something that everyone in the valley can appreciate and benefit from. The class is currently “in the cue” and will show up in the Fall 2017 COD catalog. Eventually we may be able to offer a 3 unit “Field Ornithology” course. “Advanced Birding”, another course that I developed at COD, has been offered in the past as a seminar but with the recent elimination of seminar courses at COD I will have to write it up as a regular course in order to offer it in the future. This will be a topic at our next (March) Natural Resources Advisory Committee Meeting.



### **Local Field Guides**

Years ago I created two field guides: Field Guide to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument and Field Guide to Golf Course Wildlife – Southern California Desert Region. During the fall of 2016 it was time to update these guides with new information. One of the many changes made was the renaming of the Western Scrub-Jay to the California Scrub-Jay. Some text was rewritten, taxonomy changes were made, and some artwork was redone. The updated version of the Monument guide is now at the printer and will be available March 1, 2017. The Golf Course guide will be available later in the Spring of 2017.

### **Natural Resources Program Review**

Our Natural Resources 5 year Program Review occurred in the middle of my sabbatical and was completed on time in collaboration with the Agriculture Program as a whole. I also worked on updating courses, hiring new instructors, and all the things necessary to keep our Natural Resources Program running smoothly from afar.

### **Western Field Ornithologists**

During the second half of my sabbatical I was elected Vice-President of the Western Field Ornithologists. The WFO serves most of the states west of the Mississippi River. I had just completed a 6-year term on their Board of Directors and now will serve two years as Vice-President before becoming President in the Fall of 2018. I am chair of the Field Trip Committee and play an active role in the Youth Scholarship Committee, giving young field ornithologists the chance to learn the skills necessary to pursue a career in ornithology or biological fieldwork. A number of my former and some current COD students have become members of WFO.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Education, research, and travel – these were the three areas I wanted to focus on when I first proposed this sabbatical project. I covered thousands of miles in at least eleven different states, completed two week-long courses with Cornell, visited 24 field sites, 14 different museums, had extended stays at 6 research stations, attended 5 conferences, gave over 17 lectures and completed 2 week-long courses. I have learned so much. When I reflect on all of the places I was able to visit and all of the things I was able to accomplish during my sabbatical I cannot help but feel grateful for the opportunity. Now I get to use what I have learned on sabbatical to make a difference in both the classroom and the community - it will be a pleasure to share these new ideas and hopefully make positive influences on my students, the local community, and the environment in general. Even though the sabbatical is technically over, the many projects I have started will keep me engaged for years to come – the learning never ends.

**BIRD SOUND RESOURCES READ OR REFERENCED DURING MY  
SABBATICAL**

(Just having the time to read was one of the most valuable aspects of my sabbatical)

Ackerman, Jennifer, *The Genius of Birds*, Penguin Press, 2016.

Armstrong, Edward A., *A Study of Birdsong*, Dover Publications, New York, 1973.

Attwood, Jonathan L., *A High Elevation Occurrence of Scrub Jays in the San Bernardino Mountains*, in *Western Birds*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1984. pg. 32.

Dunn, Jonathan, *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 2011.

Elphick, Jonathan, *Birds: A Complete Guide to their Biology and Behavior*, Firefly Books, 2016

Emery, Nathan, *Bird Brain: An Exploration of Avian Intelligence*, Princeton University Press, 2016.

Garrett, Kimball & Dunn, Jon, *Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution*, Los Angeles Audubon Society, 1981. No ISBN out of print

Hinde, R.A., Editor, *Bird Vocalizations: Their Relations to Current Problems in Biology and Psychology*, Cambridge University Press, 1969.

Jardine, Ernie, *Bird Song: Defined, Decoded, Described*, Giant Beaver Publications, 2011.

Jellis, Rosemary, *Bird Sounds and Their Meanings*, Cornell University Press, 1977

Kroodsma, Donald E., and Miller, Edward H., *Ecology and Evolution of Acoustic Communication in Birds*, Comstock Books, New York, 1996.

Kroodsma, Donald E., *The Singing Life of Birds: The Art and Science of Listening to Birdsong*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 2005.

Lovitt, Irby and John Fitzpatrick, *The Cornell Lab of Ornithology Handbook of Bird Biology 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*, Cornell University, 2016.

Marler, Peter, *Nature's Music – The Science of Birdsong*, Elsevier Academic Press, San Diego, 2004.

Marzluff, John and Angell, Tony, *In the Company of Crows and Ravens*, Yale University Press, 2005.

Miller, Alden H., and Stebbins, Robert C., *The Lives of Desert Animals in Joshua Tree National Monument*, Univ. of Calif. Press, Berkeley, CA. 1973.

Patten, Michael, McCaskie, Guy and Philip Unitt, *Birds of the Salton Sea: Status, Biogeography, and Ecology*, University of California Press, 1997

Pitelka, Frank A., *Speciation and Ecologic Distribution in American Jays of the Genus *Aphelocoma**, University of California Press, 1951. (Note: this is considered to be the "bible" of Scrub-Jay taxonomy).

Rothenberg, David, *Why Birds Sing: A Journey into the Mystery of Bird Song*, Basic Books, New York, 2005.

Saunders, Aretas, *A Guide to Bird Songs*, Doubleday Press, New York, 1951.

Skutch, Alexander, *Helpers at Birds Nests: A Worldwide Survey of Cooperative Breeding and Related Behavior*, University of Iowa Press, 1999.

Stap, Donald, *Birdsong: A Natural History*, Simon and Schuster, 2005.

Thielcke, Gerhard A., *Bird Sounds*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1976.

Unitt, Phil, *The Birds of San Diego County*, San Diego County Museum of Natural History, 1984.

Wilmore, Sylvia Bruce, *Crows, Jays, Ravens and their Relatives*, T.F.H. Publications Inc., 1979.

Woolfenden, Glen, and Fitzpatrick, John, *The Florida Scrub Jay: Demography of a Cooperative Breeding Bird*, Princeton University Press, 1984.

[www.xeno-canto.org](http://www.xeno-canto.org) (database of bird songs from around the world)





\_\_\_\_\_

# Western Scrub-Jay Range Map

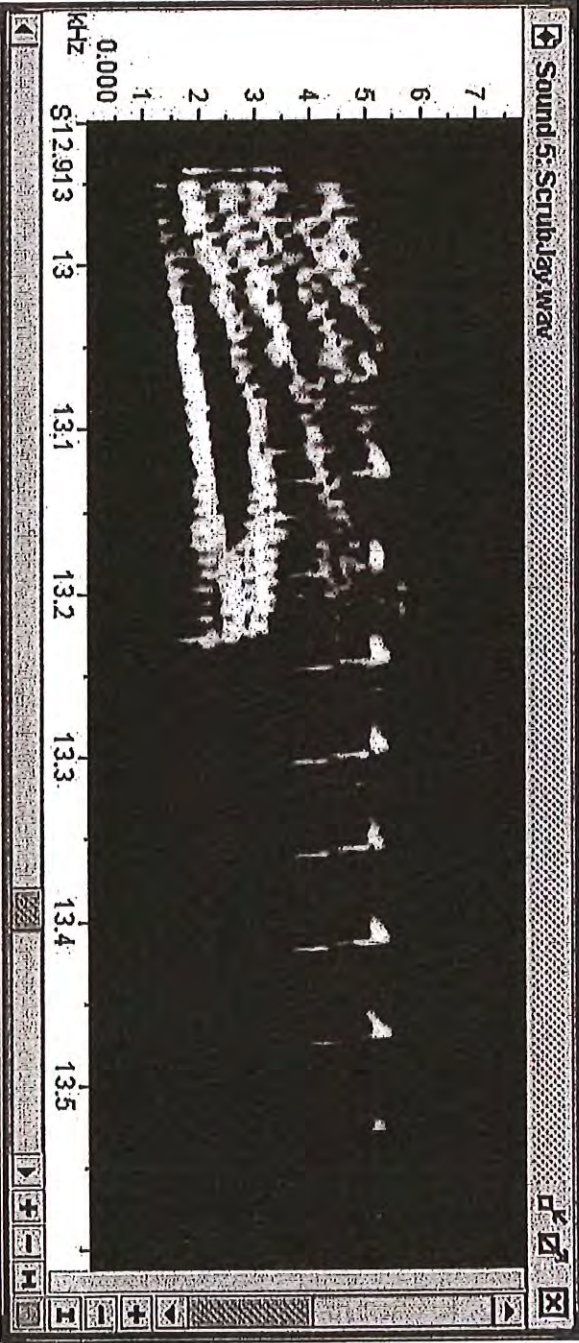


3.1

0

0

# Scrub-Jay Spectrogram or Sonogram



13.3

13.3

13.3



The Cornell Lab  of Ornithology

# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This is to certify that

**Kurt Leuschner**

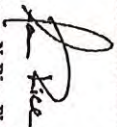
has attended and successfully participated in the

## Sound Analysis Workshop

offered by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology Bioacoustics Research Program.

Your participation has been greatly appreciated, and we look forward to expanding our professional relationship in the future.

Sep. 28th to Oct. 2nd, 2015



Aaron N. Rice, Ph.D.  
Science Director, Bioacoustics Research  
Program

159 Sateuxen Woods Road • Ithaca, NY 14850 • [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)  
Bioacoustics Research Program • (607) 255-2408 • [www.lbrdc.cornell.edu/bp](http://www.lbrdc.cornell.edu/bp)

## **Sabbatical Highlights – Kurt Leuschner**

**-Completion of Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Sound Analysis Workshop** held on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

**-Completion of two other week-long classes** at the Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University: *Sound Recording Workshop* and *Bird Identification by Sound*.

**-Sound recording, fieldwork, and research of Scrub Jays** (*Aphelocoma sp.*) in 11 different states. Thousands of miles traveled, and over 24 different field sites visited, some on a regular basis. Two visits to a Scrub-Jay contact zone in the Pine Nut Mountains of Nevada were notable. Over 300 recordings were made and the best ones are being archived at Cornell.

**-Visited 14 museums** (including the bird collections) all across the country, from San Bernardino and San Diego to Gainesville, Florida and the Smithsonian Institution.

**-Five conferences attended** in four different states. Topics: field ornithology, entomology, and CTE (career technical education). Two of these conference were international in scope.

**-Stayed at 6 different world famous research stations:** 4 in California, one in Florida and one in Arizona.

**-New curriculum created** at COD: Backyard Birds will appear in the Fall 2017 catalog. Advanced Birding is in the works.

-**Over 17 lectures given** on bird and other natural history topics to our local communities.

**Sabbatical Highlights, page two.**

-**Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*) was split** into two species during my sabbatical by the American Ornithologists Union.

-Completed **updates of two field guides**: Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument and Golf Course Wildlife-Southern California Desert Region.

-**Elected Vice-President** of Western Field Ornithologists for a two year term.

-**Lots of reading accomplished** (a partial bibliography is included in this report).





Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges



# *Update on Accreditation Progress*

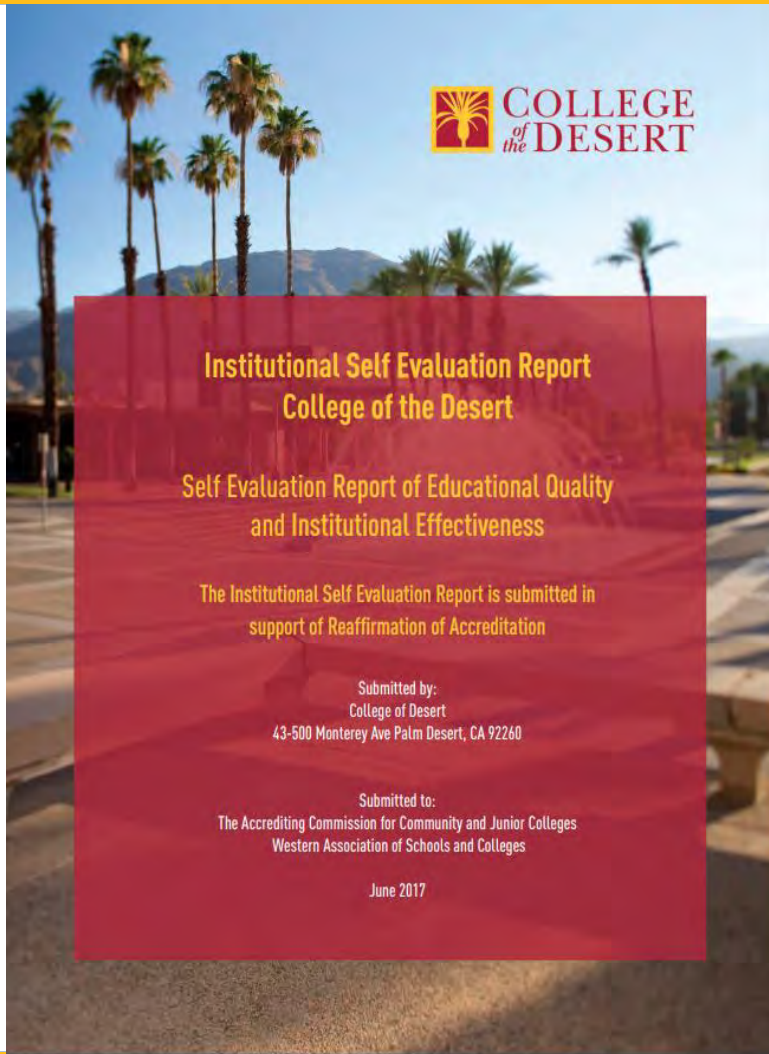
Co-chairs : Dr. Annebelle Nery and Bert Bitanga

Presented at the Palm Desert Campus

Board of Trustees Meeting—September 15, 2017

Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Educational Services & Planning  
College of the Desert Academic Senate

# Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER)



COLLEGE  
of the  
DESERT

Mission / Vision / Values

**MISSION:**

College of the Desert provides excellent educational programs in basic skills, career and technical education, certificate, transfer preparation, associate degrees, noncredit and distance education, which are continuously evaluated and improved. Our programs and services contribute to the success, learning and achievement of our diverse students and the vitality of the Desert Community College District, surrounding areas and beyond.

**VISION:**

College of the Desert will be a center of collaborations and innovations for educational enrichment, economic development and quality of life in the Coachella Valley and surrounding communities.

**VALUES:**

College of the Desert is a learning-centered institution that values:

**Student Success:**

Student learning and growth are central to all we do.

**Diversity & Inclusion:**

We embrace the diversity of our community and uphold the dignity and worth of the individual.

**Integrity:**

We are open, honest and reliable.

**Respect:**

We value the thoughts, words, and actions of our students, colleagues, and community.

**Dedication:**

Our faculty, staff and administrators are responsible leaders who effectively implement programs in support of student learning and efficient college operations.

**Professionalism:**

We are current in our areas of expertise and embody high standards of conduct.

**Communication:**

We communicate with authenticity in pursuit of broad understanding, effective dialog, and inclusive decision-making.

**Lifelong Learning:**

Learning is essential to living, for our students, faculty and staff.

# Accreditation Webpage

The screenshot shows the College of the Desert website in a browser window. The URL is <http://collegeofthedesert.edu/Pages/default.aspx>. The page features a navigation menu with links for [About COD](#), [Campus Map](#), [Directory](#), [Academic Programs](#), [Admissions](#), [Catalogs & Schedules](#), [Financial Aid](#), [Library](#), and [Student Services](#). A search bar is located in the top right corner.

The main banner area displays the text "YOU CAN Get Started Here!" with a photo of a smiling woman. Below the banner is a secondary navigation bar with links for [Prospective Students](#), [International Students](#), [Faculty & Staff](#), [Community](#), [Athletics](#), [Alumni](#), and [Foundation](#).

The content area is divided into several sections:

- GETTING STARTED**: A green box with a power icon.
- Classes Still Available**: A red box with a magnifying glass icon and a link to [View Open Class List](#).
- I WANT TO TAKE THE PL EDGE**: A yellow box with a book icon.
- Accreditation**: An orange box with a checkmark icon, highlighted by a large blue arrow pointing from the right.
- Educational Master Plan 2017-2022**: A blue box with a book icon.

On the right side, there is a "News" section with a sub-header "Campus Events Academic Calendar" and a "COD ARTS" article titled "DTL Nominations" with the text: "Desert Theatre League has announced the nominations for the 2016-2017 Desert Stars Awards. COD has been nominated for 16 awards." Below the news is a "My COD" section with links for [Mail](#), [Canvas](#), [WebAdvisor](#), and [Library Databases](#). At the bottom right, there are social media icons for [Emergency Notification](#), [YouTube](#), and [Facebook](#), along with a link to [Step Up For COD.com](#) and a "STUDENT SUCCESS SCORECARD" section.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Windows Start button, Internet Explorer, Outlook, File Explorer, Chrome, PowerPoint, and Word. The system tray in the bottom right corner displays the time as 1:32 PM and the date as 8/21/2017.



# Accreditation Webpage

http://collegeofthedesert.edu/aboutus/Accreditation/Pages/default.aspx

Accreditation

Sign In

About COD Campus Map Directory

Select Language

Search

Academic Programs Admissions Catalogs & Schedules Financial Aid Library Student Services

## ACCREDITATION

You are here: [Home](#) > [About COD](#) > Accreditation

### Accreditation Status

College of the Desert is a fully accredited institution by the **Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)** of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), 10 Commercial Blvd., Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949, (415) 506-0234, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education.

Accreditation is granted for an unlimited period of time, with a standard provision for an institutional self-study every six years, along with review and visitation by the Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is granted on the basis of demonstrated evidence that the institution is fulfilling its stated goals and objectives through qualified personnel, sound planning, appropriate programs and services, and adequate resources.

In addition to being accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, College of the Desert is approved by the California Community College Board of Governors, California State Department of Education, for veteran benefits, Immigration & Naturalization Service of the U.S. Dept. of Justice and U.S. Dept. of Education. Transfer courses taken at College of the Desert are accepted at the University of California, the California State University and College System, and private four-year colleges and universities.

Next External Evaluation Visit: October 2-5, 2017  
**Work on Next Self Study**

The accreditation review process includes opportunity for submission of third-party comments. Such comments must be submitted in writing and include contact information (name, address, phone number, email address) of the correspondent. The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) accepts comments related to an institution's compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at any time. Third-party comments associated with the self-evaluation review cycle must be received by the ACCJC no later than five weeks before

2017-2024 Accreditation

2010-2016 Accreditation

Resources

ACCJC Certificates of Completion

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning

Archive

1:33 PM 8/21/2017

# Accreditation Webpage

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the College of the Desert's accreditation page. The URL is <http://collegeofthedesert.edu/aboutus/Accreditation/Pages/2017-2024-Accreditation.aspx>. The page has a red header with the college logo and navigation links: [About COD](#), [Campus Map](#), [Directory](#), and a [Select Language](#) dropdown. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for [Academic Programs](#), [Admissions](#), [Catalogs & Schedules](#), [Financial Aid](#), [Library](#), and [Student Services](#). A search bar is located on the right side of the header.

The main content area is titled "2017-2024 Accreditation" and includes a breadcrumb trail: [Home](#) > [About COD](#) > [Accreditation](#) > 2017-2024 Accreditation. A blue arrow points to the "2017 Institutional Self Evaluation Report" section, which contains the following list of links:

- [2017-2024 Accreditation](#)
- [2010-2016 Accreditation](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [ACCJC Certificates of Completion](#)
- [Institutional Effectiveness and Planning](#)
- [Archive](#)

**2017 Institutional Self Evaluation Report**

- [Institutional Self Evaluation Report \(June 2017\)](#)
- [Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)
- [Evidence Lists](#)
  - [Organization of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report](#)
  - [Compliance with Federal Regulations and Commission Policies](#)
  - [Eligibility Requirements](#)
  - [Standard I.A](#)
  - [Standard I.B](#)
  - [Standard I.C](#)
  - [Standard II.A](#)
  - [Standard II.B](#)
  - [Standard II.C](#)
  - [Standard III.A](#)
  - [Standard III.B](#)
  - [Standard III.C](#)
  - [Standard III.D](#)
  - [Standard IV.A](#)
  - [Standard IV.B](#)
  - [Standard IV.C](#)
  - [Quality Focus Essay](#)

**Accreditation Work Group**

- [Accreditation Liaison Officer Co-Chair](#)
  - Dr. Annebelle Nery**  
[Faculty Co-Chair](#)
  - Bert Bitanga**  
[Classified Staff Representative](#)
  - Jennifer Baker**  
[Student Representative](#)
  - Luis Castellanos**  
[STANDARD I](#)
    - Dr. Daniel Martinez**
    - Dr. Courtney Doussett**
  - [STANDARD II](#)
    - A. Dr. Leslie Young**  
**Dr. Wendy Sanders**
    - B. Dr. Pamela Ralston**  
**Gary Ginther**  
**Donna Greene**
    - C. Amanda Philips**  
**Sandra Hauf**
  - [STANDARD III](#)
    - A. Dr. Mary Anne Gularte**

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the date and time as 1:34 PM on 8/21/2017.



# Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER)

- BOT approved ISER  
June 2017
- Final ISER sent to  
ACCJC July 2017
- Final ISER sent to  
External Evaluation  
Team July 2017
- Preparations for the  
External Evaluation  
Site Visit  
Aug-Sept 2017
- External Evaluation  
Site Visit Date  
October 2-5, 2017





# External Evaluation Visiting Team

## Chair



**Dr. Lori Bennett**  
President  
Clovis Community College

## Assistant



**Ms. Emilie Gerety**  
Assistant to the President  
Clovis Community College



## Administrative Representatives



**Mr. Michael Tuitasi**  
Vice President of Student Affairs  
Santa Monica College



**Ms. Cheryl Sullivan**  
Vice President of Administrative Services  
Fresno City College



**Dr. Michele Bresso**  
Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Gavilan College



**Ms. Roberta (Robbie) Kunkel**  
Dean of Instruction for Career Technical  
Education and Dual Enrollment  
Clovis Community College

# External Evaluation Visiting Team

## Administrative Representatives



**Ms. Denice Inciong**  
District Director of Research,  
Planning, and Data Management  
South Orange County CCD



**Ms. Elizabeth Bowman**  
Library Director  
Santa Barbara City College



## Academic Representatives



**Ms. Shawn Abbott**  
Faculty, Business and Computers  
College of Siskiyous

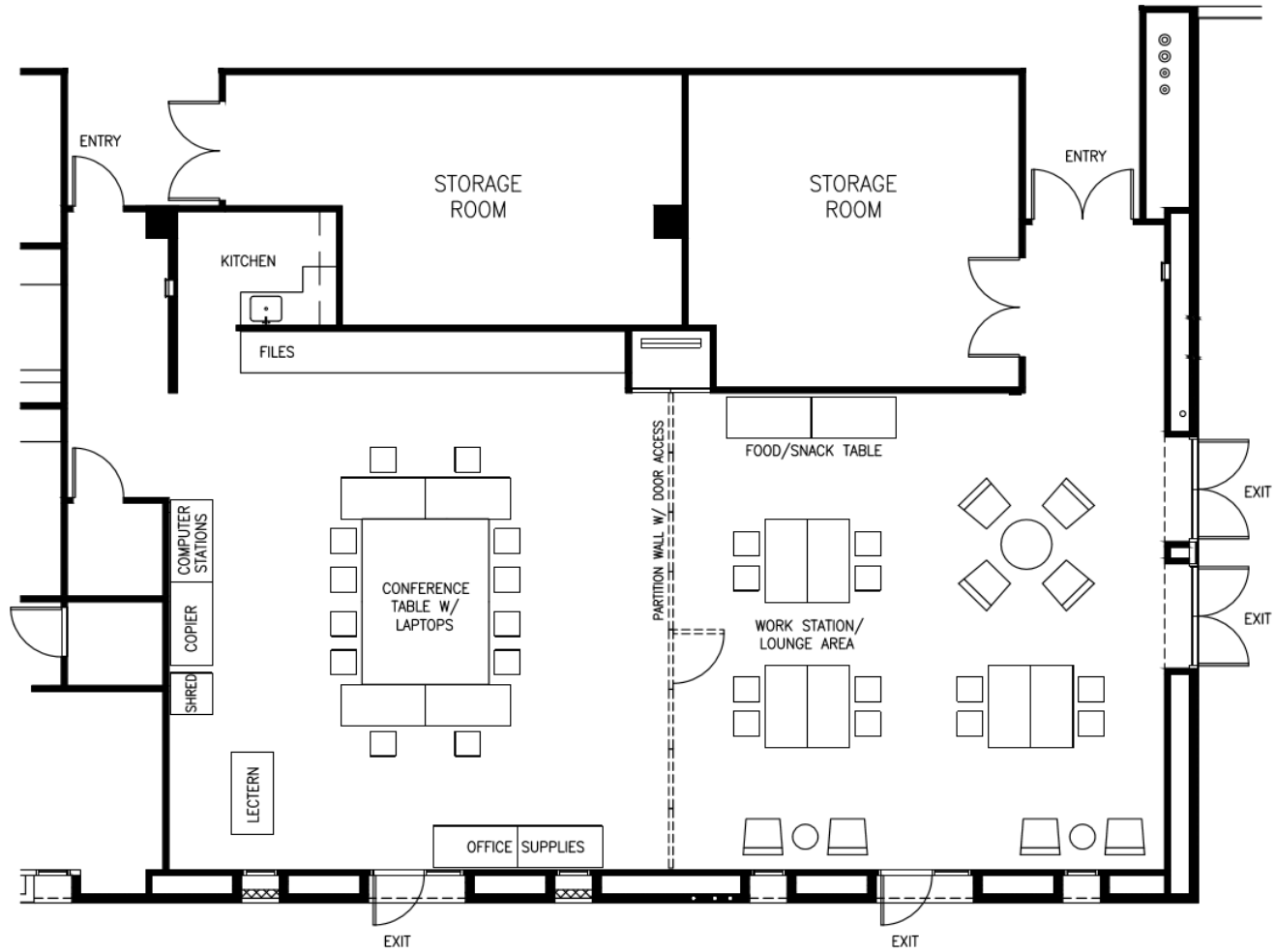


**Dr. John Ruys**  
Instructor of Psychology  
Las Positas College



**Dr. Alan Buckley**  
Faculty, Professor of Political Science  
Santa Monica College

# Cravens Multipurpose Room





# Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER)

- BOT approved ISER June 2017
- Final ISER sent to ACCJC July 2017
- Final ISER sent to External Evaluation Team July 2017
- Preparations for the External Evaluation Site Visit Aug-Sept 2017
- External Evaluation Site Visit Date October 2-5, 2017



- Draft Evaluation Team Report sent to College CEO November 2017
- Commission meeting and decision on accreditation December 2017 – January 2018
- Commission action letter received by College posted to the college website February 2018



COLLEGE  
*of the* DESERT

Gracias

- Accreditation Workgroups
- Standard Teams
- Departments who assisted in providing input and evidence
- Document Editor
- Student Input
- Community Leadership Input
- Board of Trustee Members

*Merçi*

Obrigado!

ขอบคุณ

**Salamat !**

THANK YOU!!!



COLLEGE  
*of the* DESERT

QUESTIONS??