

HEWLETT

Leaders in Student Success

2008

For release October 2, 2008

*For more information contact Linda Umbdenstock,
Executive Director of Hewlett Leaders in Student Success:
info@hewlettleadersinstudentsuccess.org*

Southwestern College Named “Hewlett Leader in Student Success”

Anaheim, CA, October 2, 2008.

Southwestern received state-wide recognition today for its innovative efforts to increase the success of students in basic skills. Southwestern and three other colleges were named “Hewlett Leaders in Student Success” at an educators’ conference in Anaheim, and received a stipend to support efforts to share their strategies with other schools.

Hewlett Leaders in Student Success selected the four schools from among 109 California community colleges. The program seeks out schools that have made significant progress in basic skills education, offering inspiring models of institutional commitment to this issue in mission, planning and practice.

“These innovative teaching strategies and systemic overhauls in basic education are model programs that are proven to help students build the needed foundation in core subjects. They enable students to gain valuable study skills, as well as connect them with orientation programs, tutoring, counseling, and other student support services that will help them to stay in school and succeed,” said Dr. Linda Umbdenstock, the program’s executive director.

Southwestern College’s proximity to the border has focused school on the need for a skilled and bilingual workforce in California. Central to the college’s work is a growing integration of academic support and student services, and a transformation of English-as-a-Second-Language education. The approach to ESL embeds reinforcement of language skills into every course on campus and aligns vocational training and basic skills education. Southwestern’s Spanish-to-English Child Development program, for example, is taught initially in Spanish then progresses to English as language skills develop. Bilingual instructors also teach sequences in medical and legal office skills, and in electronics.

Dr. Sandra Corona, director of Southwestern's Spanish-to-English Child Development Program, said students in her program get more than job skills. "They come afraid they will fail, then after two semesters they say they want an AA – they want to transfer – they want everything! They take this confidence out into the rest of college and into the world."

Basic skills, or "pre-collegiate," education is designed to help underprepared students master the skills required for success in transfer-level courses. The need is vast. Every year roughly half a million students arrive at a California community college with the goal of transferring to a four-year college. But at least 70 percent are not prepared.

Experts from across the country contributed to the selection of the 2008 Hewlett Leaders. Data analyses identified strong programs, and visiting teams made site visits to interview faculty and administrators. The program developed criteria for measuring successful progress.

- Curriculum aligned and organized for effectiveness
- Learner-centered classroom practices
- Integration of academic support and student services
- Equity, pursued by assessing learning and progress rates by cohort
- Institutional leadership and support, reflected in mission, planning, evaluation and investment

Hewlett Leaders in Student Success is administered by the Research and Planning Group of the California Community Colleges and funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The program also honored De Anza College, Santa Barbara City College, and Columbia College.

For more information, visit www.HewlettLeadersinStudentSuccess.org and www.swccd.edu