

GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ALUMNI NEWS

FALL 2020

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Glendale College Foundation **STEPS UP FOR STUDENTS**

Stable. Charitable. Adaptable. Founded in 1983, Glendale College Foundation has a strong history of adapting to changes within the community and world with support of charitable community members and alumni.



**alumni
association**

Message from Dr. David Viar

GCC SUPERINTENDENT/ PRESIDENT



Dr. David Viar
GCC Superintendent/President

Usually, when a new semester begins, the Verdugo Campus bridges from the upper parking structure and from the west side of Verdugo Road to the lower campus and the Garfield Campus bridge connecting that campus's two buildings are filled with students. They are literally on their way to class and metaphorically crossing a bridge to their future. These bridges unfortunately are empty these days as GCC enters another semester of remote instruction due to the Coronavirus pandemic. However, the metaphoric bridge remains stronger than ever.

In March 2020, shifting to remote instruction was not a choice. We had to follow state and county health officials' directives. Initially we were focused on surviving the situation and helping keep our students, staff, and community healthy and safe. When it became obvious that this was going to be a long-term situation, we recognized that we did have a choice in how we responded. We chose to shift from surviving to thriving.

Our teachers embraced technology to deliver quality instruction. Our counselors, librarians and staff created approaches to provide student services remotely. Socially our students found ways to stay connected

through club gatherings and events offered on Zoom. Through it all, GCC proved "Ready and Able" to serve our students.

Our success has not gone unnoticed. Financial website "WalletHub" recently ranked GCC among the top twenty best community colleges in America for quality and cost. While that is a nice honor, we are more concerned with what our students think. In May, we conducted a student survey. It revealed that nearly two-thirds of our students believed remote instruction was working well or very well for them. Unfortunately, five percent said it was working badly for them. That is not acceptable. As the GCC vision statement says, we aspire to be "the Greater Los Angeles Region's premier learning community where all students achieve their educational goals." The GCC board, faculty, and staff are focused on providing the necessary resources for that success.

"When it became obvious that this was going to be a long-term situation, we recognized that we did have a choice in how we responded. We chose to shift from surviving to thriving."

The Glendale College Foundation is our strong partner in helping us provide those resources for success -- funds for student emergency needs, new technology necessary in the remote learning environment, expanded professional development for our faculty, facilities improvements to prepare the college for the day we return to the physical classroom. It is a new semester and GCC again is proving it is Ready and Able. As you, our alumni and friends know so well, GCC is reliable, adaptable and affordable. With your support we will make this school year remarkable.

Building Heroes and Leaders

STUDENT FEATURES

TOM DORMER - ONE OF A KIND!



Tom Dormer

The 27-year-old communications major is the first of his kind at Glendale Community College (GCC) in many ways, but it may not be immediately apparent just by looking at him.

He is not the first captain of the school's soccer team. He is not the first member of the Associated Students of Glendale Community College (ASGCC) board. But he might be the first to be both of those things while also being a person who was previously incarcerated.

His journey from lock-up to the classroom has not been without bumps in the road. The Milwaukee, Wis. native served four years behind bars for an armed robbery with a fake gun. When he got out of prison at age 25, he tried to go back to school in his home state but his school counselors did not believe he was a good fit for college.

Then he met former GCC Dean of Student Services Robert Hill, and his life changed.

"(Hill) said, 'Listen, I think you're somebody special,'" said Dormer. "What can I do to get you to come to our school?"

Suddenly Dormer's life changed. Someone believed in him and that belief helped him to believe in himself

too. Dormer enrolled in the Re-entry program at GCC, a program designed to help previously incarcerated individuals get on the pathway to higher education or career training. His dreams of playing collegiate-level soccer started to become real again, in spite of a torn ACL, an injury sustained while in prison.

He joined GCC's soccer team and within one week was captain. He started to feel empowered to talk about his story once he realized that there were others around that were like him.

"I finally had a platform," he said. "At the end of the day, you can talk all you want but you have to be able to back it up. And now I could back it up."

Not long after he joined the team, he joined ASGCC board where he helps with the allocation of funding for clubs and groups. He is active in the Re-entry Program social group, where he interacts with other previously incarcerated people. He currently is employed by the college and helps to manage the social media accounts for the program.

Because of his incarceration history and leadership roles, Dormer said he feels compelled to speak out on behalf of minority students and others in the Re-entry Program to ensure equal treatment for all students.

"At the end of the day, you can talk all you want but you have to be able to back it up. And now I could back it up."

"I want students to know that this is 50/50," Dormer said. "I just took a step back and said we need the college but you need a good student base as well for a college to flourish."

Dormer said he hopes to continue to play soccer and is currently eyeing four-year college programs now. If it had not been for the support that GCC has provided, Dormer said he is not sure where he would be now.

"GCC has changed my life for the good," he said. "This school has made a good impact on my life overall. I'm blessed."

VERJINE KYABABCHIAN - FINDING HER PLACE!



Verjine Kyababchian

Verjine Kyababchian, 19, felt like an outsider for much of her life.

Kyababchian was born and raised as a first-generation Armenian-American in Riverside, Calif. Kyababchian said while she had some family in her hometown, she felt largely disconnected from her heritage.

In her late teens, her family decided to make a change. They moved to Glendale, Calif., which boasts a large Armenian population. Suddenly, Kyababchian was among other people like her, that had the same cultural perceptions as she did, and the same shared values without ever having to speak a word about the underpinnings of what it means to be part of the Armenian diaspora.

"I didn't know what it meant when people said it's different to be around the Armenian community," Kyababchian said, of her time growing up in Riverside. "Now it feels like I'm always around family."

Shortly after moving to Glendale, she began attending Glendale Community College (GCC), and, even though she didn't know anyone -- for the first time ever, Kyababchian said she felt at home.

"When you go to GCC, you leave it fulfilled," Kyababchian said. "I've never felt unwelcomed."

The political science major dove in head first. She got

involved with the Associated Students of Glendale Community College (ASGCC) and became a Senator of Administration. In that role, she worked alongside fellow senators to revise the student government constitution and bylaws to make a better and more fair system of government for her fellow students at GCC.

"Some students have that mindset of 'I'm going to my classes and then I'm going home,'" she said. "I'm not like that."

She has not stopped. She has continued her advocacy with ASGCC, currently serving as a Senator of Relations, helping to market and represent the school in social media and other communications about student government. She is also currently serving as President of the Scholars Program, the group representing all Honors students at the college. In order to participate, students must have at least a 3.0 grade point average; take at least one honors course per semester; maintain exemplary character in and out of school; and participate actively in the Scholars Program.

COVID-19, however, has touched her life and caused some hiccups in her busy life. When quarantine initially began in March, she said she struggled with her schoolwork and the lack of face-to-face engagement. As regulations relaxed some, she was able to return to her extracurriculars on campus and regained a sense of community, even in an online format. Online learning has forced her to learn to manage her time much more efficiently and time management skills.

Her extracurricular activities, even during the era of COVID-19, add up to at least 20 hours per week on top of her regular school schedule and homework. Kyababchian said she hopes all of her hard work will get the attention of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where she is planning to apply to continue her undergraduate studies and earn her bachelor's degree in Political Science.

She said she hopes her story will encourage other students who may feel unwelcome in other spaces to consider GCC for their educational pursuits.

"I've never met anyone that's left GCC and said they didn't like it," Kyababchian said. "People hang out here, even on the weekends, they like it so much."

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

MICHAEL DULAY - PAYING IT FORWARD FOR 23 YEARS



Michael Dulay
Social Sciences Division Chair

A 30-year relationship with Glendale Community College (GCC) as both a student and a member of the faculty has provided Social Sciences Division Chair Michael Dulay with enough evidence to know one thing for certain: GCC changes lives. When he enrolled at GCC as a delinquent youth with a tenth grade education, he knew he was ready to build a better life. Though the first few years proved rocky, he was always encouraged to keep going.

Once after earning a 'D' on a philosophy exam, Dulay pondered giving up when a deep voice and a hand on his shoulder startled him.

"This kind man in a pressed shirt and tie stopped to ask how I was doing," he recalled. "He offered some advice that seemed like an abbreviated sermon, then walked into the administration building now named for him."

John Davitt's words helped him to collect himself and keep going. Dulay went on to earn two master's degrees and returned to GCC in a professional capacity.

For 23 years as a faculty member, Dulay has found countless ways to pay forward the kind encouragement Davitt demonstrated that day. That gentleness continues to influence his work amid a pandemic as he interacts with both students and faculty alike as the division chair for Social Sciences. He understands the human response to this global tragedy is best summed up as grief, so he keeps the stages of grief (acceptance, denial, depression, anger and bargaining) in mind as he engages with a grieving campus community.

"In the classroom or in faculty meetings, it is important to use this model to provide support for everyone at the college affected by the pandemic," he said.

"We came together in response to a shared crisis. It brings me pure joy to be a part of this effort, and to be one of the people who make up our college. There are few things better in life."

Utilizing distance learning and collaborative platforms like Pronto, Padlet and Perusall, Dulay advocates connection with students as the primary navigation through grief.

"Connection helps with resilience," he insisted. In spite of this difficult year, he says that he feels surrounded by hope at GCC.

"The people who make up our college have long been willing to share their time and effort to help shepherd our college through anything," he explained. "We came together in response to a shared crisis. It brings me pure joy to be a part of this effort, and to be one of the people who make up our college. There are few things better in life."

ALUM INVESTS AS A THANK YOU



William and Debra Gohlke
 GCC Alumnus (William)

William Gohlke earned his Associate in Arts degree at Glendale Community College (GCC) in the 1960s. While at GCC, inspired by his accounting teacher, Mr. Spivey, he ran for and was elected student body treasurer.

The 60's were an interesting and turbulent time to be in college with the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, and the music revolution. One of Mr. Gohlke's goals as treasurer was to budget funds for current event speakers and a popular rock band to stimulate student body cards sales, which the school depended on for sports and the arts. It was a special time to be part of student government. "Dean Smith was a father figure to all of us serving in student government."

For his work with student government he received an award from the college as one of "Ten Outstanding Students" graduating in 1966. "That award and my A.A. degree helped me a great deal when I was looking for my first job after graduating from California State University, Northridge," he said.

Mr. Gohlke felt that he owed a great deal to GCC and his professors for helping him mature and find himself before transferring to a four-year college. "My time at GCC was challenging and Dr. Horton, the philosophy professor, was one of the best instructors I ever had," said Mr. Gohlke. "Some of us need some time to find ourselves after leaving high school and GCC was that place for me."

Mr. Gohlke decided to give back to GCC and started donating to Glendale College Foundation in the 70s to support students who were like him.

"I hope my gift to GCF will allow students who have been negatively affected by this pandemic to continue their education. Additionally, I hope that the Ole W. Gohlke Endowment for Speakers in the mathematics and science disciplines will encourage students to consider these areas as majors when transferring to a four-year university," he said. "When you see the look of gratitude from the people who benefit from your donation it hits you hard in the heart."

"Gift giving is a personal choice and certainly depends on where you are financially and socially in your life. A lot of young people go directly from high school to a four-year college because they have the funds and guidance on how to get there. Others, not so much and they need help to get themselves together to achieve their goals. GCC provides that help and funding those students is important and rewarding."

"When you see the look of gratitude from the people who benefit from your donation it hits you hard in the heart."

By making this generous endowed gift to the Glendale College Foundation, Mr. Gohlke not only establishes a legacy of his passion for education, but he plants the seeds for future philanthropists by inspiring generations of students – alumni donors. Establishing a legacy through a will or trust is a great way to ensure that future students have the opportunity to give back.



SECURING YOUR FUTURE: FAMILY, FINANCE AND PHILANTHROPY

HOST: Lisa H. Brooks, Executive Director, Glendale College Foundation

FACILITATOR: Joseph April, VP. of Advancement, 25th Hour Communications, Inc.

Please register by contacting Lisa Brooks at lbrooks@glendale.edu

Your link to the webinar will be emailed to you 24 hours before the webinar begins.

Webinar #1 IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO CREATE A WILL OR TRUST



Featuring: Sona Tatiyants
Founder, Lynk Law Inc.
Certified Legal Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law.
Thursday, October 22, 2020
3 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

- Do it now before something happens and the state does it for you
- Wills and trusts are not complicated and not just for the wealthy
- Think you don't have any assets? Think again.
- Protect your home and your family

Lynk Law Inc. founder Sona Tatiyants earned her Bachelors of Arts (B.A.) from UC Santa Barbara with honors, and received her Juris Doctor (J.D.) cum laude from Southwestern University School of Law. Sona went on to earn a degree of Masters of Law in taxation (LL.M.) from Loyola Law school of Los Angeles with a focus on estate planning and taxation. Sona sought to create the firm she personally would want to work with. As a wife, mother and business owner she understands how overwhelming an estate plan can feel. As an attorney she knows just how important it is to have that plan in place. Supported by a strong team of attorneys and staff, she guides clients through every step of the planning process and building lasting relationships to ensure their needs as their families grow and change.

Webinar #2 HOW TO AVOID PAINFUL FAMILY SITUATIONS IN YOUR LEGACY PLANNING



Featuring: Harry Hull
Award-winning California real estate broker
and Toni Beck Espinoza
Certified Financial Planner and Senior Vice President
Morgan Stanley Wealth Management
Thursday, November 12, 2020
3 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

- Create your legacy so you protect your family
- Learn how to avoid painful family situations in estate planning
- Learn how to identify your philanthropic intent in your will or trust

Harry is an award-winning California real estate broker for over 25 years. He was recognized as "Glendale's Realtor of the Year" in 1985 and voted by readers of the Glendale News Press to be "Best Glendale Realtor" in 2015. He has served as a director of the California Association of Realtors, involved in his community, he has served as president of the Glendale College Foundation, president of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce, chairman of Glendale Arts (managers of the historic Alex Theatre), and founding board member of the Glendale Fire Foundation. He has served on the board of the Glendale Educational Foundation, and as President of the Kiwanis Club of Glendale and the board of the Kiwanis International California-Nevada-Hawaii District Foundation.



Toni Beck Espinoza is a Certified Financial Planner® and Senior Vice President with Morgan Stanley Wealth Management in Pasadena where she has developed her career since 1991. One of the principal advisors of the Jewel City Group, she brings her financial planning expertise in the areas of investments, estate planning, retirement planning, lending and charitable giving strategies. She works with individuals, multi-generational families, corporations, pension plans, endowments and foundations. Working with the disadvantaged and the homeless before moving to California in 1986 gives Toni a unique lens to better understand the behavioral and psychological aspects of families and finances that she believes makes her a better wealth advisor.

Webinar #3 HOW TO REDUCE YOUR TAX LIABILITY THROUGH PHILANTHROPY



Featuring: Eric Ashton, Jr.
Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law
Thursday, December 10, 2020
3 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

- How basic estate planning during your lifetime can help tax issues for your heirs
- Learn which assets will be most beneficial in reducing your tax liability
- You don't have to be wealthy to be a philanthropist
- Learn how you can be a philanthropist in unexpected ways

Eric was born and raised in Glendale, California. He graduated from UC Berkeley in 1986 with a degree in applied mathematics, the University of Southern California in 1990 with law degree and the University of Southern California in 1990 with an MBA. He is a partner with the law firm of Edwards, Ashton & Gin in Glendale, and has practiced law since 1990. He is a Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law by the State Bar of California, Board of Legal Specialization. His primary area of practice involves lifetime estate planning (revocable and irrevocable trusts, Wills, powers of attorney, gifting programs, family limited partnerships, etc.) and planning and administration after death (probate, estate tax returns, disclaimers, trust administration, sub-trust funding, etc.).

