



# NEWS FROM THE CENTER

A publication of the Multicultural & Community Engagement Center  
at Glendale Community College

Spring/Summer 2022 - Issue 21

## It's Time to UPLIFT

by Arely Martinez, Dream Resource Center Intern &  
Anthony Garcia, Dream Resource Center Counselor

Throughout the pandemic, GCC has experienced a significant enrollment drop in an already vulnerable community: undocumented students. As many as half of our AB 540 students had to stop out in order to be able to support their families.

For years, undocumented students have shown their resiliency in pursuing higher education despite limited financial aid, social/political turmoil, and academic struggles. However, now more than ever, the undocumented student population at GCC is in need of extra support to navigate the GCC campus and services, to successfully transition to a transfer institution, and to complete a certificate or vocational goals.

The Undocu-Students and Professionals Learning Innovative Forms to Thrive (UPLIFT) mentoring program was created with the main goal of helping undocu students persist and continue their education in a holistic and welcoming space where they can experience a healthy and positive college environment. In turn, undocu-students will build community with each other, create meaningful connections with incoming, continuing, as well as alumni students and connect with GCC faculty and staff allies.

Another major component of the program is for all participants (mentors and mentees) to feel a sense of belonging that

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# Building Community with Rising Scholars

*by David Crawford, MCEC Student Services Technician*

Despite an uptick in attendance over the last two years in the MCEC programs and workshops, one thing has become apparent: the switch from in-person to synchronous and asynchronous instruction and services has been challenging for our students, especially those socially engaged students who long for human connection.

Our Rising Scholar students have shared with us how the switch impacted their daily lives, making it nearly impossible to concentrate at home in their varied roles: parent, student, childcare provider, and teacher. Like many of our students at GCC, Rising Scholars struggled to find a healthy balance between school and personal life.

But at the same time, Rising Scholars expressed a desire to build community and feel more connected to the campus. This got me thinking, how does one foster community, and what does it look like in a post-COVID-19, Zoom-fatigued world? The answer is by being persistent and not taking it personally when undoubtedly, you don't hear back from students.

The Rising Scholars program is focused on creating a caring, supportive and welcoming environment one email, phone call, and text message at a time because research shows college students are more likely to persist in and graduate from college when they feel a connection to the campus or an individual working on campus. We listened to their concerns, provided referrals to on-campus and off-campus resources, and re-introduced on-campus programs: Managing Holiday Stress, Rising Scholars Winter Mixer, and Pizza N Chat.

Pizza N Chat is an opportunity for our justice-involved students to meet or reconnect over a bite to eat. We want all of our Rising Scholars to have a chance to experience community, and we are actively working to remove any barriers that may prevent this from occurring. We encourage these students to bring their children to Pizza N Chat because finding childcare is a barrier for some. Thankfully several of our scholars have taken us up on this offer and brought their kids along to events and activities.

The Rising Scholars program also works with faculty, staff, and community members to address the academic and social needs of system impacted students. We regularly share our work with colleagues, presenting at professional development activities and faculty workshops.

Additionally, we invite faculty, staff, and administrators to participate in the Glendale Regional Community Action Partnership (CAP). Glendale CAP is one of five regional partnerships in Greater Los Angeles. It serves as a place where service providers can network, explore other programs, build partnerships and develop collaborations to assist formerly incarcerated students and community members. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the Rising Scholars program or Glendale CAP, email me at [dcrawford@glendale.edu](mailto:dcrawford@glendale.edu).



*The new GCC Rising Scholars Logo  
designed by Ann Simon*

# AB 2315 Update – Community Colleges Records: Affirmed Name and Gender Identification Bill

AB 2315 was introduced in April of 2022 in the California Assembly by Assemblymember Arambula (District 31) and Assemblymember Low (District 28) who co-authored the legislation. At the time of this writing, the legislation has made its way to the state Senate for a first reading on May 17. Once it passes the Senate, it will then go to the Governor for signature. It has been forwarded to the Appropriations Committee. The following description is taken from the Open States website (see their description below).

“The Donahoe Higher Education Act establishes the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state.

The Equity in Higher Education Act requires a public postsecondary educational institution, including a campus of the California Community Colleges, to update a former student's records to include an updated legal name or gender if the institution receives government-issued documentation from a former student demonstrating that the former student's legal name or gender has been changed.

This bill would require the governing board of each community college district to implement a process by which students, staff, and faculty can declare an affirmed name, gender, or both name and gender identification to be used in records where legal names are not required by law. This bill would, commencing with the 2023–24 academic year, require each community college campus to be capable of allowing students, staff, or faculty to declare an affirmed name, gender, or both name and gender identification. By imposing new duties on community college districts, the bill would constitute a state-mandated local program.”

About Open States: *Open States strives to improve civic engagement at the state level by providing data and tools regarding state legislatures. We aim to serve members of the public, activist groups, journalists, and researchers with better data on what is happening in their state capital, and to provide tools to reduce barriers to participation and increase engagement.*

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## Multicultural & Community Engagement Center Staff and Interns

This newsletter is created with the contributions of staff and students at the MCEC. It is our pleasure to be able to work with some amazing students in our program.

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# Estudiantes Unidos Ethnix Picnic

*by Nane Kakosian, Student Services Program Coordinator*

As many of our readers are aware, Estudiantes Unidos (E.U.) is MCEC's Latinx Leadership program designed to empower GCC's Latinx students to be advocates of change for all students at GCC. The program was established in the fall of 2015 with the support of Abriendos Caminos Title V Grant and continues to thrive today with the support of Student Equity & Achievement.

Over 100 Latinx students have participated in the program and contributed to the development of various projects, such as the Career Exploration Day, Estudiantes Unidos Mixers for students and staff, Family Welcome Event for new incoming Latinx students at GCC, and Legacy of LatinX Excellence which highlighted LatinX professionals in various fields (mental health, social work, entrepreneurship, and education).

After meeting and brainstorming ideas virtually, this year's students decided it was crucial to host an event in person. They wanted to bring people from diverse cultural backgrounds together in a casual setting to develop community and friendships.

On Tuesday, May 24, 2022, the Estudiantes Unidos class of 2022 hosted the Ethnix Picnic at the Student Center between 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm and welcomed over 120 participants. The E.U. students prepared giveaway bags for each guest and free tacos were served for lunch. The Student Center was decorated in vibrant colors as Latinx music played in the background. Students also prepared large posters of nine influential leaders in the Latinx community which were displayed throughout the Student Center.

The gathering allowed students, staff, and faculty to come together in person, after a long break and helped everyone reconnect with one another through this unique student-coordinated project. Many students who attended the event commented that they wished there were more such events on campus.



# Coming Soon: Learning Communities for LGBTQ+, Undocu, and Formerly Incarcerated Students

*By Hoover Zariani*

According to Harvard University's *Center on the Developing Child* website, "Learning communities provide a space and a structure for people to align around a shared goal. Effective communities are both aspirational and practical. They connect people, organizations, and systems that are eager to learn and work across boundaries, all the while holding members accountable to a common agenda, metrics, and outcomes. These communities enable participants to share results and learn from each other, thereby improving their ability to achieve rapid yet significant progress." Additionally, Learning Communities also help students develop a feeling of connection and of belonging to the campus, which research shows is an important success indicator. Traditionally, these student groups have faced increased barriers to success for a variety of reasons. The goal of the communities will be to address those barriers to success.

During summer of 2022, the MCEC staff will be working on creating learning communities for our Rising Scholars (formerly incarcerated students), Pride Center students (those who identify as LGBTQ+), and our Dream Resource Center (Undocu, DACAmented, and AB 540 students). While each program currently has some aspects of a learning community integrated into services, a more comprehensive program will be outlined for each of the mentioned groups.

There are certain components of learning communities that are integral to any program. However, some of these components require funding and resources beyond what is currently available (see separate brief article on page 7 on funding for these programs). Our intention is to do as much as possible with the available funding, including:

- developing community amongst students and program staff,
- helping participating students to develop useful life and career skills,
- assisting students in progressing toward their academic and career goal, and
- inspiring them to stay in school and excel
- providing valuable resources to help them in their success

There will be some additional benefits to students such as book vouchers, gas cards, grocery/food assistance, and other financial support. Look for announcement of these communities as we near the fall 2022 semester.

Source: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/collective-change/key-concepts/learning-communities/>

# ***Post-Conviction Legal Relief Clinics: A New Start for Students and Community Members***

***By Hoover Zariani***

*Please note: expungements are generally not available for many types of serious crimes. A lawyer must be consulted to make a determination. The information below should in no way be construed as legal advice.*

**A criminal record can have an adverse impact on individuals in many ways. Some of these consequences include long-term effects on an individual's livelihood and future. A record can impede someone from getting a job, can result in being fired from a job if the record is revealed, create challenges in obtaining and keeping housing, and various travel and immigration issues.**

**Recent legislation has had an impact on many California residents' criminal record. California's Proposition 47, passed by the voters, reduced penalties for some crimes. Additionally, Proposition 64 legalized marijuana in the state of California which has impacted many records as well. Also, some records can be expunged after a 5-year or 10-year period (depending on the offense). Again, many individuals are also unaware of these laws.**

**In order to help our students (and our community), the Rising Scholars program partners with Loyola Law School's *Collateral Consequences of Conviction Justice Project* to offer an orientation and an in-person legal relief clinic. Elie Miller is the lawyer representing the clinic along with third year law students at Loyola who assist her.**

**During an orientation, the following topics are covered: expungement of criminal convictions, eligibility for an expungement, initial steps to apply for an expungement, court fee waivers, reduction of a felony to a misdemeanor, Prop. 64 changes, and applying for Certificates of Rehabilitation.**

**All assistance is provided free and any information shared is confidential. Appointments are in person at GCC with some remote appointments available for those unable to come to campus.**

**Currently, we are able to offer one clinic per semester (spring and fall). This past year, approximately 20 individuals received help through our clinics.**

**Even though the MCEC staff are clearly not legal representatives and we offer no advice to those seeking help through the clinics, we interact with the students and community members to schedule their appointments and we learn of their stories. Some are heartbreaking experiences and others tragic.**

**However, what all these individuals have in common (and they often say this to us), is that they are not the same person as the one who committed the offense or crime; that person was a different lifetime. The other thing we find in common amongst clinic participants is that they are seeking help so that they can move forward and lead productive lives once again. Most of them tell us that they have accepted the consequences of their actions and are looking for a chance to succeed in school and life.**

**While the clinic may seem like a strictly legal transaction, it is having a meaningful and deep impact on the lives of our students and our community members.**

# It's Time to UPLIFT

*continued from page 1*

empowers them to meet their career goals at GCC and beyond.

The UPLIFT program centers around the undocumented identity providing support and information regarding undocu-friendly resources, professional development, UndocuHustle, and overcoming barriers. Students in the program will gain the tools and will be empowered to thrive as the most authentic version of themselves.

Staff and Student Ambassadors from the Dream Resource Center will be recruiting mentors and mentees during the summer months for a planned start date of fall 2022. If you know new students at GCC who identify as AB 540/DREAMers/undocumented, please share the flyer and the QR code with them. You can also direct them to this link: [UPLIFT Interest Form](#)

**GLENDALE**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# UPLIFT

Undocu-Students and Professionals Learning Innovative Forms to Thrive Mentorship Program

**DREAM RESOURCE CENTER**  
GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## What MENTORING can do for you:

- Build community with fellow students, staff, faculty, and Undocu-Ally's
- Earn transferable skills you can put on your job applications, resumes, and university applications.
- Develop a sense of belonging through fun socials.
- Academic, professional, and personal support
- Access to opportunities specifically for undocumented students.
- Guidance regarding GCC GE requirements, transfer requirements, financial aid, and much more.

Mentees	Mentors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fall Semester commitment</li><li>• Receive an iPad or \$400 GCC Bookstore credit</li><li>• Program commitment: 33 hrs total</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fall Semester commitment</li><li>• Total of \$600 awarded in scholarships<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ \$300 Summer</li><li>◦ \$300 Fall</li></ul></li><li>• Program commitment: 40 hrs total</li></ul>

**INTERESTED?**  
Fill out our mentee/mentor interest form:

Contact us at [DREAMresourcecenter@glendale.edu](mailto:DREAMresourcecenter@glendale.edu)

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## GCC Receives One-Time Funding from the Chancellor's Office

During this past academic and fiscal year, the folks at the Foundation for California Community Colleges and the CCC Chancellor's Office have done some amazing things. As a result of their hard work and coordination with state legislators, one-time funds have been secured for various programs. GCC will benefit from this funding since many of our programs had no permanent funding. All programs have thus far been supported through student equity funds. While these are one-time funds, with performance measures, success data and other outcomes, it is hoped that these funds can become regular categorical programs in the future.

The funding includes: Rising Scholars program for \$148,000 per year for 3 years; Pride Center \$84,879 one time for 5 years; and Dream Resource Liaison \$122,613. These funds will be used mainly for direct student assistance such as books and supplies vouchers, gas cards, and grocery cards. Additionally, student workers and other student development opportunities will be made available to students as we develop our mini-communities.

# Farewell...for now

*by Nane Kakosian, Student Services Program Coordinator*

*June is a bittersweet month. Our students who transfer, graduate, or earn a certificate leave us so they can continue their path toward furthering their education, joining the workforce, or simply taking a short break. It is always a time for reflection about the steps taken so far and what is yet to come. We congratulate our amazing student workers and peer educators on this milestone.*

Jenevieve is graduating this semester with two degrees: an AA in Psychology and an AA in Social Justice: Gender Studies. She is transferring to UCSB to pursue a BA in Feminist Studies with a minor in LGBTQ+ Studies. During her years at GCC, Jenevieve worked at GCC's Pride Center where she planned and hosted many events.

Jenevieve played a significant role in recreating GCC's LGBTQIA+ student club SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance). She is passionate about continuing the journey of cultivating safe places for underrepresented identities, with the career goal of being an LGBTQ+ affirming Sex Therapist and Social Worker. We are sad to see you go, but excited because we know you will make an impact in this world with pride.

"I want to thank the amazing instructors, faculty and friends who have supported this journey, with acknowledgement of Hoover, Nane, Arakel, and David always being there to provide guidance, encouragement, and constant laughs and smiles."



*Jenevieve with Rugby*



*Keren with Lola*

Keren is one of MCEC's talented student ambassadors, graduating Glendale Community College with an Associate's degree in Psychology. She is transferring to Cal State University, Northridge to continue her education as a Psychology Major.

Keren is not only a Student Ambassador at the MCEC, but she was also a SPARK Mentor for GCC's Summer Bridge program. She has been a wonderful asset to our program and we will miss her deeply.

If you came to our center while Keren was working, you would 100% and always be greeted with a sincere and joyful smile. Her calm and peaceful demeanor is infectious.

We are incredibly happy and proud of Keren and wish her success on her next adventure. We have no doubt that she will be as successful there as she was here. Congratulations and best wishes on your next steps. We will be in touch!