The Los Angeles Community College District is making history again. The very first transportation institute in the entire country based at a community college will be housed at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College with support from Los Angeles Valley College and Career Community Development, Inc., a non-profit organization.

LATTC will receive $750,000 while CCD, with LAVC serving as its training/education partner, will get $331,000. The money is part of $9.5 million in grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and distributed through the Federal Transit Administration’s Innovative Public Transportation Workforce Development Program. Nationwide, 19 projects in 13 states were selected to receive funding to help train a new generation of skilled workers and support long-term careers in the public transportation industry.

While LATTC will use its grant money to fund its Institute for Advanced Transportation Technology Training, CCD/LAVC will create and operate Moving Employees into Transit Related Opportunities (METRO), a program that will recruit and train low-income individuals, including women, veterans, minorities and many others from communities throughout Los Angeles.

“The Los Angeles Community College District’s top priority is to help our students go from colleges to their future, and this grant will help more students move to careers in transportation technology,” said LACCD Board of Trustees president Scott Svonkin. “We thank the Obama administration, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, the FTA and all of our partners, staff and faculty who supported this training. An effective transportation system moves people to their destination, and so it will be with this partnership. It will help us move students from high school into community college and then into high-demand, high-paying careers.”

The announcement of the grant was made by Foxx at a news conference at LATT. It was his third trip to the college.

“We want to welcome back Transportation Secretary Foxx to our campus and thank him for his leadership in bringing this support to our campus,” said Larry Frank, president of Trade-Tech. “This institute will help us train and place students in high-demand transportation sectors in this region. This college has been provided the kind of career-technical education that bolsters the workforce and gives industries right here in Los Angeles the ability to compete in a global economy.”

“Los Angeles Valley College is excited to partner with Community Career Development, Inc., for training the next generation of transit professionals,” said Dr. Erika Endrijonas, president of LAVC. “METRO program will give individuals throughout Los Angeles opportunities to move into supervisory positions in the thriving transportation sector. We are delighted that this new program will allow LAVC to continue its nine-year training partnership with Metro to help meet the growing demand in transit-related careers.”
Dear LACCD Colleagues,

Thanks for a great year, as I reflect on my first 12 months as Chancellor of the Los Angeles Community College District. LACCD has a proud history of serving the greater Los Angeles region and, as our graduates and current students can attest, LACCD’s faculty and staff are diligent in ensuring that students receive an outstanding educational experience and in making student success their top priority. It is this ‘can-do’ attitude and level of excellence that has helped propel tens of thousands of LACCD graduates in pursuit of their goals and dreams.

There’s more that we can and will do. I am confident that we can expand our reach and improve the District’s performance, placing us amongst the nation’s best urban community college districts.

LACCD had a productive 2014/15 year, as marked by:

• Obtaining a clean bill of health for accreditation for all nine LACCD colleges, as we prepare for the March, 2016 all-district accreditation visit.

• Advocating and communicating successfully on the District’s state and federal legislative priorities that resulted in increased revenue to our base allocation from funded growth. The District is also a major sponsor of concurrent enrollment legislation (AB 288) that is currently on the Governor’s desk.

• Being granted the opportunity to offer the District’s first baccalaureate degree through West LA College, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene, and

• Securing a $15M California Career Pathways Trust Grant from the California Department of Education.

These are just a handful of highlights that our collective efforts have produced. The District also exceeded its 2014/15 projected target growth rate of 4.75%, providing access to students who desire a higher education, while investing in our financial stability for the future.

Looking ahead to 2015/16, we welcome the over 150 full-time, tenure track faculty who have joined our teaching ranks in a host of disciplines and wish them the very best as they begin their tenure with LACCD.

The dates for the spring, 2016 accreditation visit are set: March 7 – 10. During that week, we expect over 100 community college colleagues from the state and other western regions to visit all nine colleges and the District office. Community colleges are held to high standards of student success and institutional performance, and being accredited is an integral part of assuring quality and public trust. The visits are intended to ensure that each college is adequately meeting educational standards.

At LACCD, we are fully committed to meeting these high standards and view the accreditation process as both an opportunity to affirm what is going well and a chance to improve. Our accreditation serves as a reflection of LACCD’s continued tradition of providing quality instruction and support services that allow students to pursue and achieve their educational goals. Being accredited also means that our students can receive federal financial aid and veterans’ benefits, and have the assurance that their course work will be accepted elsewhere when they transfer or enter the workforce.

As we prepare for the 2016 districtwide accreditation, let’s embrace the accreditation process and professional self-regulation as an opportunity to refine and improve our institutional processes, and ultimately the educational outcomes of our students. There is no more important goal than the success of our students.

The Board of Trustees and I thank and recognize each of you for your continued dedication to providing students with an excellent education in a friendly, caring and high-expectations environment. The success of our students is a direct testament to the dedication of the staff, faculty and administration of our colleges and the District office.

Your uncommon commitment to our students is inspiring, and I am deeply appreciative of your continued guidance and support. It continues to be an honor and joy to serve as Chancellor of LACCD.

Un abrazo (A warm embrace),

Francisco C. Rodriguez Ph.D.
Chancellor, Los Angeles Community College District
The Pierce College football team beat College of the Desert Roadrunners 30-10 in its season opener to celebrate the reopening of Pierce’s Shepard Stadium on its Woodland Hills campus.

“Shepard Stadium is probably the finest community college playing facility in the state of California,” said Pierce Athletic Director Bob Lofrano.

The stadium was named for the college’s second president, John B. Shepard, under whose tenure (1955-1965) Pierce’s core buildings were constructed.

Unlike most community college sports facilities, Shepard Stadium is a raised amphitheater-style bowl that has hosted a U.S. president and a professional football game. Ronald Reagan gave a speech there on his last campaign day, Nov. 5, 1984, before the presidential election against Walter Mondale that Reagan won by a landslide. The crowd, around 20,000 according to the Los Angeles Times, overflowed the playing field to hear him. The Los Angeles Express, led by future NFL Hall of Famer Steve Young, hosted the Arizona Outlaws in a United States Football League game played in front of an estimated 8,200 onlookers at the Pierce stadium in 1985. The Express lost 21-10, played one more game on the road in Orlando and then, its funds exhausted, its debt in the millions, folded. A year later, the USFL itself disbanded.

Set on a hill, Pierce’s open-air coliseum realistically accommodates 5,500 fans, its tiered seating affording elevated views of not only the field, but the expanse of the San Fernando Valley to the east. The renovated stadium features new aluminum bleachers, with wheelchair lifts on both the home and visitors’ sides, plus a new restroom on the visitors’ side. The field has a playing surface of artificial turf that resembles blades of grass and is lined for both football and soccer use.

The popular running track has an all-weather rubberized surface. The athletes’ field house has been upgraded with new signage, lighting, and drought-tolerant native plants. Eventually, a “Victory Walk of Fame” along the rim on the home side will showcase images of the history of Pierce athletics along with notable sports alumni, and current athletes and teams.
Los Angeles Southwest College’s athletic trainer, Willda Jarrett, has helped some of this country’s elite athletes during a career of nearly 30 years, but the high point may have taken place this past summer at the World Deaf Championships in Taoyuan, Taiwan where she worked on the staff of the gold-medal winning United States women’s basketball team.

“I twice worked the Olympics but the World Deaf Championships was better than that because I was able to communicate with these athletes using sign language,” Jarrett says. “I learned so much about deaf culture and who they are. It was an amazing experience.”

The 52-year-old Jarrett, who served as an athletic trainer during the Summer Olympics in 1984 in Los Angeles and in 1996 in Atlanta, is about to start her ninth year with the Cougars football team as well as the college’s men’s and women’s basketball teams. She is proficient in the assessment and evaluation of orthopedic injuries along with her success designing prevention and rehabilitation programs.

For about a month this past summer, Jarrett was totally immersed in the deaf culture as Team USA trained in Northern California and then went on to Taoyuan where the squad defeated Greece in the semifinals and Lithuania in the finals.

Jarrett, who is not deaf but has a sister who is, says that while body parts and injuries are the same for all athletes, her experience working with deaf competitors was special because there are so few certified trainers who can communicate with them through sign language.

During her time with the team, Jarrett learned that many deaf players have not received proper care because of the language barrier. One athlete complained about having anterior compartment syndrome, commonly mistaken for shin splints, but it took Jarrett to explain to her through sign language the necessary surgical procedure that she required. Previous medical experts had lacked the necessary communication skills to transmit that information.

Jarrett did not learn sign language until she was in her mid-30s when she took a few classes in American sign language, and joined the sign language ministry at her former church. But it took an additional 20 years before she began putting that skill to work, joining the sign language team at her current church only recently.

This led to a chance meeting last spring with Vic’Toria Crockett, an assistant coach on the United States Deaf women’s basketball team, who mentioned that the squad was looking for an athletic trainer who could interact with the players through sign language. Jarrett jumped at the opportunity because helping deaf athletes had been a goal of hers for many years.

“I never wanted to travel internationally and I don’t like long plane rides or time changes,” Jarrett says, “but I would definitely go out of the country to travel with this team because the athletes just don’t get proper care because of language barrier. That’s what drives me to help them.”

As the official athletic trainer for the USA Deaf women’s basketball team, she will be working with the squad at the Summer Deaflympics next July in Turkey.