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## **News Release**

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### **LACC Works to Save College's Newspaper Program Imperiled by Massive State Budget Cuts, Administrators Call Critics of College's Deficit Reduction Efforts 'Misinformed'**

**LOS ANGELES – October 8, 2009** – Administrators and faculty members of Los Angeles City College (LACC) today announced they have fully addressed all of the criticisms leveled at the college regarding its plans to save the college's campus newspaper, *The Collegian*, from suffering dramatic cutbacks in the wake of massive education budget cuts enacted by the State of California and a \$7.5 million LACC budget deficit created by the state's substantial community college funding shortfall.

LACC representatives – led by Dr. Tammy Robinson, LACC English Department Chair and LACC Dean of Students Eric Peters – briefed members of the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) on LACC's funding plans for *The Collegian*. LACC students and staff joined Dr. Robinson and Dean Peters in their meeting with the LACCD Board.

LACC's representatives said *The Collegian* campus student newspaper program would survive and would likely sustain one of the smallest reductions in college funds of any program on campus.

Dr. Robinson said, "The LACC annual budget for *The Collegian* is \$25,000. *The Collegian* is projected to lose \$4,000 in the current fiscal year as part of our campus-wide series of cuts to close a \$7.5 million college budget deficit. Losing \$4,000 out of a \$25,000 line item in a \$55 million annual college budget is not a dire situation for our college student newspaper program.

"Yes, every cut hurts, but *The Collegian* is sustaining a modest 16-percent reduction in college general fund support. Budget support for *The Collegian* will decrease to \$21,000 from \$25,000. *The Collegian* has additional funds available to it. The college newspaper program has funds held in a college foundation account that is administered separately from LACC and fully independent of the college," Dr. Robinson said.

Dr. Robinson said recent claims that *The Collegian* would be sustaining a 40-percent cut in college general fund support are erroneous, misinformed, misguided and willfully damaging to the college's reputation for fiscal responsibility.

She called on recent critics to become better informed before questioning the campus' fiscal plans. "It is time to end to the misinformation campaign against our college regarding the painful budget deficit reductions on our campus; cuts that would not be occurring if education cuts at the state level had not been so severe," she said.

“Recent criticisms of LACC’s college administration and fiscal management are without foundation. Simply put, our critics have been misinformed. We have provided the accurate facts with respect to program funding on our campus, including those decisions affecting *The Collegian* and the fact is, *The Collegian* is not in any danger, nor has it ever been,” Dr. Robinson said.

Dr. Robinson said LACC’s budget deficit problems couldn’t be understated. She said LACC has cut educational instruction by \$5 million dollars because of severe education cuts imposed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

“State funding cuts to community colleges have been so massive, LACC has been forced to cancel an entire Winter Session, leaving our students literally out in the cold when it comes to completing their college course requirements for job-ready career education certificates and short of units needed for transfer to the University of California, California State Universities and private post-secondary schools,” Dr. Robinson said.

“Student fees have been increased to \$26 per unit. Cuts to categorical programs have risen as high as 42-percent and more. We are cleaning up a mess left on our doorstep by the State of California. Now is not the time to be distracted by misguided charges and misinformed criticisms,” Dr. Robinson said.

“There is no First Amendment issue. There is no attempt to silence or censor our students or staff. The Collegian will continue to exist as it has for decades unless the State of California imposes further education cuts during the course of the current fiscal year,” she added.

Dean Peters said, “We are putting together a plan to provide self-sufficiency and sustainability of our budget, while doing our best to leave our academic programs intact. This is exactly what community colleges statewide are doing, as they struggle with their own state funding shortfalls.”

“What is lost in the noisy misinformation campaign that has been conducted by our critics is the fact that LACC – through its Shared Governance Process – has developed a consolidation budget plan designed to save the college’s award-winning Math Team, Forensics Team and college newspaper at a time when these valued programs are being eliminated at college campuses across the country,” Dr. Robinson said.

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