LANEY COLLEGE

President's Report to the PCCD Board of Trustees

November 10, 2026

Dr. Rebecca Opsata, President

ROC Celebrates 10 Years of Transforming Lives Through Education



Laney College celebrated the 10th anniversary of Restoring Our Communities (ROC), recognizing a decade of supporting formerly incarcerated and system impacted students as they pursue their educational and career goals. The celebration brought together students, alumni, classified professionals, and community supporters to reflect on the program's impact.

Students and alumni shared personal stories of perseverance, academic achievement, and the sense of belonging they found through ROC. Through mentorship, academic support, and a strong community network, ROC continues to empower students on their journeys from reentry to graduation and transfer.

Congratulations and special thanks to the dedicated ROC team who made this program a vital part of the Laney community for the past decade.

The Peralta Citizen Wins 10 Journalism Awards



Student journalists from The Peralta Citizen earned an impressive 10 awards, including four first-place honors, at the Journalism Association of Community Colleges conference. The awards recognized excellence in sports reporting, investigative journalism, opinion writing, photography, multimedia storytelling, and overall publication quality.

Congratulations to student journalists Ana Laura Rodriguez, Nathaniel Delgado, Nelzy Gonzalez Zaragoza, Rachel Venable, Ivan Saravia, Ariunzayat Yunren, and Tamara Copes for their outstanding work. The Citizen also received a prestigious General Excellence award, recognizing the publication among the state's top community college news organizations.

Special thanks to faculty adviser Eleni Economides Gastis for her dedication to mentoring student journalists and preparing them for careers in journalism.

Laney College Hosts First Stop of CCC to HBCU Fall Caravan



Laney College welcomed the 2026 CCC to HBCU Fall Caravan on November 9, proudly serving as the first stop of the statewide event connecting students with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The event brought together high school students, community college students, HBCU representatives, alumni, and community organizations to explore educational opportunities and pathways to four-year degrees.

Students connected directly with HBCU admissions representatives to learn about academic programs, scholarships, campus life, and the CCC to HBCU Transfer Guarantee. Some students also had opportunities for on-the-spot admission and scholarship consideration.

The event featured an HBCU alumni panel, college enrollment and transfer workshops, community resource tables, food, music, and activities designed to make the college exploration experience engaging and welcoming.

Free shuttle transportation from Berkeley City College, College of Alameda, and Merritt College helped make the event accessible to students throughout PCCD.

Special thanks to Dr. Raniyah Johnson, Dean of Counseling & Student Equity at Berkeley City College, for her leadership in planning and coordinating this districtwide event, along with the many campus and community partners who helped bring this important opportunity to students.

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Día de Muertos Celebration Honors Culture & Community







Laney College's Puente Program, in collaboration with the Latinx and Puente Clubs, hosted a Día de Muertos celebration that brought students, faculty, and classified professionals together to honor the cultural traditions and significance of the holiday. The event provided an opportunity for the campus community to celebrate heritage and connect through a shared cultural experience.

Special thanks to Puente Counselor/Coordinator Laura Contreras and the Puente team, Rosa Parra for organizing and setting up the exhibition, Reginald Constant and the Library employees for their support, and Dean Albury's team for co-sponsoring the event.

Engineering Students Showcase Innovation in Robot Competitions



Laney College's Introduction to Engineering students put their creativity, coding, and problem-solving skills to the test during robot competitions held November 4 outside the new Engineering Lab (B-260).

Students designed, built, and programmed robots to compete in two challenges: a LEGO SumoBot wrestling competition and a VEX Robot Soccer tournament.

The event highlighted hands-on learning and teamwork while giving the campus community an opportunity to see students apply engineering concepts in a fun, competitive environment.

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From Passion to Profit: Inspiring Student Entrepreneurship



Laney College's African American Studies Department and Umoja-UBAKA welcomed Oakland entrepreneur Novi Mitchell for a special presentation on November 5.

Mitchell shared her journey from a 12-year career in technology to building a successful lifestyle brand centered on food, culture, and community.

Students learned strategies for building a social media presence, growing an audience, and turning their creative talents and passions into business opportunities.

Special thanks to Professor Dana Grisby and the African American Studies Department for bringing this entrepreneurial learning opportunity to the Laney community.

Laney Theatre Arts Brings Live Theatre to Oakland Elementary Schools







Laney College Theatre Arts students brought the magic of live theatre to local elementary schools with The Dancing Shoes, a short production written by students Denisse Vargas and Bea Sandri and directed by Theatre Arts Instructor Michael Torres.

The production toured seven Oakland elementary schools, introducing young audiences to live performance while providing Laney students with valuable hands-on experience. The campus community also enjoyed a performance on November 3 in Eagle Village 7.

As Laney awaits completion of its $33.2 million Theatre Rehabilitation Project, anticipated in Fall 2027, Eagle Village 7 continues to serve as a temporary performance space. The renovated theatre will feature expanded seating, improved teaching and rehearsal spaces, and enhanced accessibility, creating exciting new opportunities for future generations of Laney performers.

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Fall Fest & OUSD Day Connect Students with Campus Opportunities



Laney College hosted two major student engagement events on November 5, bringing together current students and future Eagles for a day of exploration, connection and college readiness.

Fall Fest, themed "Harvest Your Potential," welcomed students to the Laney Quad to explore academic programs, connect with counseling and financial aid services, and discover learning communities and campus resources. Special thanks to Karen Tellegen and Judy Mei for organizing the event and coordinating participation across campus departments.

In conjunction with Fall Fest, Laney welcomed approximately 200 Oakland Unified School District high school students for OUSD Day 2026, themed "OUSD Soars with the Laney Eagles." Students participated in interactive tours of the FabLab, Engineering, Culinary Arts, Wood Technology, Architecture, Artificial Intelligence, and other academic and Career Education programs. The day also featured presentations on dual and concurrent enrollment, college success, financial aid, and Puente, along with a resource fair, scavenger hunt and performances by Fremont High School's Ballet Folclórico.

Special thanks to Outreach Coordinator Abigail "Abi" Salazar for leading the planning and coordination of OUSD Day, and to the many faculty, staff, and student services teams who helped introduce local high school students to the opportunities awaiting them at Laney College.



