



For Immediate Release

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**Ventura County Community College District
First to Meet Emergency Preparedness Requirement**

SACRAMENTO – The Ventura County Community College District, including Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura Colleges, became the first of the state’s 72 community college districts to be fully compliant with the established federal and state training requirements for emergency preparedness, announced Chancellor Diane Woodruff.

“Ventura County Community College District has done an outstanding job in setting a model practice on the importance of emergency preparedness,” said Chancellor Woodruff. “I congratulate Chancellor [James] Meznek and his entire district on an important milestone in securing the safety of their faculty, staff and students.”

As part of the Disaster Resistant California Community Colleges (DRCCC) program, the California Community Colleges System Office in coordination with the Governor’s Office of Emergency Service created a training matrix outlining required emergency preparedness instruction for every college employee. Mandated by FEMA, this training along with preparedness planning and drills/exercises ensure compliance with state and federal preparedness laws for public institutions.

“In the shadow of the tragedy at Virginia Tech and with the strong leadership of the DRCCC program, everyone from our Board of Trustees to faculty, staff, and students recognized that emergency preparedness and safety really needed to be top priorities,” stated Chancellor Meznek. “With this initiative and through Board direction, we are achieving our goal to fully prepare our campuses under FEMA recommendations.”

Vice Chancellor Tod Burnett, who leads emergency planning and preparedness efforts for the community colleges on a state-wide level, echoed these congratulations, “there are thousands of hours of training involved in fully preparing a college. For an entire district to reach compliance with federal and state requirements well ahead of the 2009 targeted deadline, requires extensive efforts across the full spectrum of personnel and facilities and they should be congratulated.”

The DRCCC project, began in early 2007 under the direction of a state-wide task force partnered with regional and local emergency preparedness organization, has worked diligently to improve readiness across the colleges. To date, DRCCC conducted a system wide survey, nine regional training workshops, organized a hazards/risk assessment nearly all 109 colleges, secured \$900,000 in grant funding, created public/private partnerships, prepared for a range of hazards including pandemic outbreaks, manmade and natural disasters and worked to raise the California community colleges system to national prominence in their emergency planning and preparedness efforts. The state Legislature echoed the importance of emergency management with a mandate, directing the System Office, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the Office of Homeland Security is responsible for developing emergency preparedness standards and guidelines to assist community college districts and campuses in the event of a natural disaster, hazardous condition, or terrorist activity on or around a community college campus.

More information on the progress being made across the System is available at the [System Office Emergency Planning and Preparedness website](#).

Attachment 1- California Community Colleges Required Training Matrix

The California Community Colleges is the largest higher educational system in the nation comprised of 72 districts and 110 colleges with more than 2.6 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training and basic skills education, prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions and offer opportunities for personal enrichment and lifelong learning. The System Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges system, please visit <http://www.cccco.edu/>.

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