

Sports Update



Softball's Trujillo Named Easton All-America

Pasadena City College women's softball player Traci Trujillo added one more accolade to her collection in being named to the 2005 Easton All-America Second Team. Trujillo, a sophomore centerfielder headed on scholarship to Syracuse University, was selected among the three teams of players from all college divisions, including Division I.

Earlier named Co-Player of the Year from the South Coast Conference and All-Southern California, Trujillo had also been tabbed as a National Fastpitch Coaches Association All-American before the Easton award.

Trujillo was PCC's Scholar-Athlete Award winner with a 3.92 GPA. She set a PCC record as a pitcher for lowest ERA in a season (0.68, 8-1 record) and won the conference batting title with a .548 SCC average. Overall, she batted .395 this past season with a team-high 45 hits. She stole 52 bases in her two seasons at PCC, leading the team in steals each year.

Trujillo was one of just seven community college players named to the 45-player Easton All-America teams.

PCC's Lisa Sugimoto Elected To ACCCA Presidency

Pasadena City College Vice President of Student and Learning Services, Lisa Sugimoto, has been elected president of the Association of California Community College Administrators.

"Administrators in California are fortunate to have an organization like ACCCA representing their interests," said Sugimoto. "ACCCA provides its members with services, benefits and programs that enhance their professional lives. I am honored to serve as this year's president."

The ACCCA Board is the foremost member-supported professional organization for administrators and managers of California's 108 community college campuses. Sugimoto serves as one of 20 elected members representing various levels of administration in California's diverse community college system. The committee provides recommendations to the governing body whose members are elected by the membership to three-year staggered terms.

"Over the past years, (Sugimoto) changed the way we do things on the Management Development Commission for the better," said Susan Bray, Executive Director ACCCA. "All of her work has prepared her for the presidency. She has been groomed for the position, and she is a blast to work with."

Sugimoto has 29 years of experience in the community college system. She started at PCC in 1976 as a part-time staff member and became a counselor in 1977. Before joining PCC in her present capacity, Sugimoto was at Long Beach Community College where she ran counseling, student development and student support services.



Sugimoto

PCC Lancer Radio Hits The Red Carpet At The BET Awards



*Top photo: Joanna working the red carpet
Below: Joanna with a celebrity*

Three students from PCC's Telecommunications Program worked the red carpet at the annual Black Entertainment Television (BET) Awards in June. The event offered telecom students and Lancer Radio staff the opportunity to gain hands-on experiencing covering a major media event from start to finish.

"I felt like I was a celebrity," said Joanna Mills, who interviewed BET stars on the red carpet. "The three-day adventure at the BET Awards was exciting, amusing and shocking."

PCC Student Hugo Cortez, who served as operations manager for the event, said he was proud to represent PCC at the BET Awards. "PCC Lancer Radio was in the middle of the action with the best in the industry."

PCC students worked with Lancer Radio advisor, professor Jeff Rudisill, to arrange for PCC to get a press pass to the awards show.

"I am astounded by the ability of the student station to make things happen," said Rudisill. "I am extremely proud."

Sheila Graham, a Lancer Radio staff member who acted as an escort for the stars, said she and her fellow students had the time of their lives. "Our staff had a blast," said Graham. "The event was truly off-the-hook."

Mills notes that she and her fellow students were recognized for their professionalism at the event. "I had people come up to me and ask who I worked for, and how long I've been in the business," said Mills. "Which is exciting, because I'm still a student just recently exposed to radio."



Community Education Center Offers Help For At-Risk High School Seniors

Sometimes lost in the shuffle of the public education system, late teen high school age students are a group that the Pasadena City College Community Education Center (CEC) is trying to address in a new program.

"Stepping Up" is a free nine-week development program now being offered by the CEC to help target at-risk young adults (ages 17 to 23) who have either failed to graduate from high school or quit trying due to personal problems.

The CEC is working in concert with several youth organizations and the Pasadena Unified School District to help locate these particular students and direct them to the new program.

Rick Hodge, CEC coordinator, explains that the program is designed to help these students find ways to "break through barriers" that have curtailed their previous education on their way to a newfound student success.

"What I've learned is high risk students have spread from not having success and support in the high school years," Hodge said. "You have kids from broken homes, single parents who are too busy, schools that are too busy, and then they don't get the attention needed from anyone. There is no net. But we are saying that it's not too late for high school seniors and beyond. This program is a good opportunity for them to succeed (in a school setting)."

Classes in personal growth and development training, life skills training, career planning and job preparation, and academic success training are available through the "Stepping Up" program.

An incentive stipend also could be available for students who complete the program as the CEC looks for ways to entice students to give their educations a second chance. Muir High School in Pasadena will be a logical source for potential new "Stepping Up" students, according to Hodge.

Parents of "Stepping Up" enrollees also are encouraged (but not required) to participate in once-a-week workshops to get more involved in their children's educational endeavors.

The CEC is an off-campus facility located at 3035 E. Foothill Boulevard in Pasadena. For more information, call (626) 585-3000.

PCC Leads Nation In Asian American Associate's Degrees Awarded And In Top 20 In Hispanic Awards

Pasadena City College is number one in the nation in awarding Associate's degree's to Asian Americans, according to Community College Week magazine.

In its June edition, the periodical used data from the U.S. Department of Education to determine that PCC awarded 563 degrees for the 2003-04 academic year—120 more than second place finisher Kapiolani College of Hawaii.

PCC also earned high marks in total Associate's degrees awarded to Hispanics, ranking 13th in the nation with 494 and ranked 27th in the nation for total degrees awarded with 1,827.

Pasadena City College had enrollment of just less than 30,000 credit and noncredit students for the fall 2003 semester. More than 28 percent of those students identified themselves as Asian/Pacific Islander, while 31 percent were Hispanic.

Mercado Applies Experiences From Iraq To Her PCC Education



Mercado and General Myers, Kosovo

For most students, college prepares them for the proverbial "real world" with classes that increase knowledge and create lifelong learning skills.

Experience usually comes later but for PCC student Sandra Mercado, her college quest to become a broadcaster has been amplified with trips to Kosovo and Iraq.

Mercado, 23, joined the Army during her senior year at Rosemead High School, seeking experience in the field of broadcasting to augment her future college education. Since enlisting in 1999, she has served as a peacekeeper for half a year in Kosovo, a province of Serbia, and was deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom I and II. In all, Sergeant Mercado has been deployed two times to various hot spots

around the world to inform and entertain troops with her radio and television programs.

"My parents were ticked-off after I joined because they were afraid something was going to happen to me, but now they are very proud of me," said Mercado. "I wanted experience and I wasn't afraid of basic training."

That quest landed her in the middle of the Iraqi conflict in 2003.

"I can vividly remember the first attack I experienced when insurgents fired rockets off the back of a donkey into the Palestine hotel," said Mercado. "I was brushing my teeth at the time and after hearing the explosions, my heart was just racing."

As a broadcaster for Freedom Radio in Iraq, Mercado provided news reports, safety reminders, and played music requests for the troops stationed throughout the country.

"A typical day for me in Iraq would be getting up way earlier than anyone else to prep for my four-hour show," said Mercado. "After that, I would produce radio spots and liners."

"When I was moved to the television team, things became really fast-paced," she added. "They would say 'We need you to get to Tikrit for a story,' but it was up to me to get there. You can't use a bus so I would get on a Black Hawk helicopter and hope no one would shoot at us."

The patrolled and monitored Green Zone, the area where most U.S. personnel and civilians are housed in Baghdad, provided some comfort against

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Mercado behind the camera, Kosovo

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attacks from insurgents. But stepped-up attacks made the area less secure and a trip to Basra to cover a story on Army Corps of Engineers restoring an electrical power plant and water purification site was a welcome change for Mercado.

"Being in the Green Zone made me feel safe but after a while things were getting so bad with mortar attacks that leaving to do a story in Basra was relieving," Mercado said. "We had mortars fired at us in Basra as well, but they weren't as accurate as in Baghdad."

Her job often brought her face-to-face with the harsh realities of war and the dangers in Iraq. She recalls an insurgent attack that occurred down the street from her area while she was meeting with broadcast staff. A homicide bomber had detonated a car bomb in the middle of a busy intersection as cars were trying to enter The Green Zone to go to work.

"I saw the result of the explosion—the dead bodies," said Mercado. "The car bomb went off down the street from where I worked. It sounded like parts of the car were going to come right through the wall."

The conflict did bring something special to Mercado—her husband Xavier Altamirano, who she married over the weekend on June 18. Altamirano, a Sergeant for the Marine's 1st Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST) Company in Baghdad and now a Marine recruiter, met Mercado while providing security to the Coalition Provisional Authority Headquarters, often referred to as the Presidential Palace.

"He would always check my identification when I went in and I had no idea he was interested in me," Mercado said. "It wasn't until I received a (care package) from home for my birthday and I gave him and his unit some of the candy sent to me did we begin to talk."

Mercado is currently taking eight units in summer school at PCC before transferring to the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Journalism. She will also be a member of the ROTC program at USC, a position that carries a six year commitment in the Army reserve, and propels her from the rank of sergeant to second lieutenant after graduating from college. The chance of deploying again to a combat zone is a reality she accepts and is prepared for.

"I love the Army, it has helped me get an education and grow as a person. If there is war, there is a chance you will be going," said Mercado. "When you raise your right hand (to take the oath) you know for the most part what you're getting yourself into. It's the Army. I try to follow the politics, but my job is to follow orders, not make political decisions. More so, my job is to make sure the person to my right and to my left make it home safe. We have to look out for each other."



Mercado and Ambassador Negroponte



Mercado and General Myers, Kosovo

Got a story idea or an event to publicize?

Contact Public Relations at extension 7315
or email Juan Gutierrez at jfgutierrez@pasadena.edu

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