

Fall Quarter 2013

“Reading is escape, and the opposite of escape; it’s a way to make contact with reality . . . and it’s a way of making contact with someone else’s imagination after a day that’s all too real.” –Nora Ephron

The CRSP Sun

...Bask in our news!



COLLEGE READING SKILLS PROGRAM

A TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM
LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER ~ CAL POLY POMONA

Director’s Message

As we near the end of the fall quarter, we prepare to enter the holiday season, which serves as a great time to reflect on the blessings in our lives. The College Reading Skills Program is fortunate to have several great partnerships on campus that allow us to deliver an outstanding program that strives to help low-income, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities succeed in college.

Some of our supporters and partners are the Academic Programs, Learning Resource Center, Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, ARCHES, Student Support and Equity Programs, University Library, English and Foreign Languages, Cal Poly Federal Credit Union, ASI Conference and Events, Foundation, Kellogg West, Student Affairs Information and Technology Services, Registrars, Bronco Copy N’ Mail, GAS, and Finance, Real Estate, and Law.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to Foundation for their generous donation of Starbucks coffee and snacks to our fall Crunch N’ Munch event!

We are extremely grateful to the individuals from these departments and other CPP departments not listed here who assist the CRSP staff in various ways. We would not be able to achieve our mission without the generous support and assistance from the Cal Poly community.

Happy Holidays and safe New Year to all!

Book Club Corner

Fall quarter Book Club read *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* by Haruki Murakami, a dream-like tale of characters and narratives connected by a series of bizarre coincidences and disturbing realities that

explore both the history of Japan’s involvement in World War II and Japanese society at the end of the twentieth century. Winter Book Club will read *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood and will meet Thursdays during U-Hour of weeks 3, 5, and 7. For more information about Book Club, or to get on the email list for updates about upcoming readings and meetings, please call (909) 869-4347 or email csgreco@csupomona.edu.

Professional Mentor Meeting

This quarter’s Mentor Meeting featured Dr. Keosha Partlow-Johnson. She shared her experiences in earning her doctorate degree at USC and working as a project manager at a national research network through Charles Drew University. Specifically, she focused on sharing a message about the importance of mentorship with attendees. Not only is it important to seek out and benefit from the care, attention, and wisdom of good mentors in both educational and professional settings, she emphasized, but also to serve as a mentor to others who can benefit from one’s own experiences.

She also shared challenges she faced and overcame arising from her background as a first-generation college student from a low-income family, a background similar to many participants in the College Reading Skills Program.

The purpose of the CRSP Professional Mentor Meeting is to allow participants to meet and interact with role models who have overcome challenges and obstacles to achieve success in academic and professional pursuits. One student remarked, “Hearing [Dr. Partlow-Johnson] speak about her life has inspired me. She explained how she started from the bottom and how gradually she rose...Her presentation made me realize that it takes hard work and dedication to surpass your goals.” CRSP is very appreciative of Dr. Partlow-Johnson’s willingness to set aside time to speak to program participants.

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College Reading Skills Program In the LRC Library Rm. 2919

STAFF

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

RACHEL DOMINGUEZ
869.4349
RPDOMINGUEZ

DIRECTOR

LAURA AYON
869.6897
LEMUNOZ

PROGRAM ADVISORS

CYNTHIA GRECO
869.4347
CSGRECO

ROBERT MATRANGA
869.4802
RMATRANGA

www.csupomona.edu/crsp

FALL 2013

PEER TUTOR-MENTORS

MOLLY DUONG

MAURICIO GONZALEZ

JOHNATHAN LOPEZ

JASMINE MARTINEZ

STEPHANIE MARTINEZ

AMANDA RIGGLE

LAUREN SUMABAT

CONNIE YEY

MICHAEL ZHOU

Financial Literacy Workshops

Fall quarter's series of financial literacy and financial aid workshops kicked off with a presentation entitled "Making Cents of Your Financial Aid Summary." Maria Ruiz from Student Support and Equity Programs helped attendees from ARCHES, EOP, and CRSP gain a clearer understanding of the information regarding their financial aid awards available through BroncoDirect. The workshop took place on October 15.

The second workshop featured a discussion about online budgeting tools led by Robert Matranga of CRSP. He shared some strategies for using websites and phone applications to track and analyze financial habits, allowing students to adjust their spending and saving behavior to meet financial goals and stay financially fit.

The third workshop featured Joy Tafarella of the Cal Poly Pomona Federal Credit Union. She presented a topic entitled "Building Credit." Attendees learned about credit scores and what factors are considered in their calculation. Tafarella also shared strategies for building credit and avoiding pitfalls that can harm scores.

The final financial workshop of the quarter centered on the FAFSA. Crystal Steele of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships shared important news and updates regarding financial aid and FAFSA for the upcoming year. She emphasized important dates and deadlines to encourage students to get started on their financial aid applications. She also fielded specific questions about applying for financial aid, remaining available after the presentation to make sure each attendee's questions were addressed.

Tutor-Mentor Spotlight:

Lauren Sumabat

Lauren Sumabat joined CRSP as a tutor-mentor in winter 2013. She is an English major, English Education Option, in her 2nd year at Cal Poly Pomona after transferring from Mt. San Antonio College.

As one who has always loved to read, she took note of the College Reading Skills Program's services at her transfer orientation. After a brief chat with the staff member at the Learning Resource Center

table, Lauren took a CRSP business card and applied to work for the program. The opportunity to work as a tutor in a program like CRSP matched well with her goal of becoming a teacher because it would provide an opportunity to "gain knowledge and experience with learning strategies, learning styles, and ways to promote an ongoing interest in reading."

Lauren reports that after three quarters of working with CRSP participants, her favorite aspect of the job is "helping students." She is inspired by the "determination" and resilience she sees in students who seek help and "push themselves forward despite the difficulties they experience." Lauren also enjoys participating in the CRSP book club because "it's a great way to meet new people and discuss new and popular books."

In her spare time, Lauren enjoys "a stroll through the Japanese Garden . . . or [taking] a hike up the trail to Kellogg West or the [hillside] CPP letters to soak up the view." Lauren finds Cal Poly's natural beauty to be one of its best qualities. Although more and more she finds herself "rushing to get to class on time," she does take time to "stop and smell the roses."

After she earns a bachelor's degree, Lauren plans to enroll in a single-subject credential program and become a high school English teacher. She will also take some time to gain teaching experience as a substitute teacher.

Asked what she would do if she suddenly found herself sent 50 years back in time, Lauren replied, "I would find my grandmother, 23 years old at the time, and take her dancing. My grandmother died from breast cancer in 2001. I remember when I was younger, I would catch her cleaning on Sunday mornings, dancing with the vacuum. She was so lively and I remember her telling me that she never felt old. It's been 12 years since she passed and I think about her every day. I would use such a time-traveling opportunity to reunite with my grandmother as the lively young woman I always envisioned her as."

CRSP 25th 26th Anniversary: Irene Moreno Shares Memories of the Program's First Years

In an effort to commemorate the program's 25th Anniversary, program staff's research revealed that CRSP was already in its 26th year. Thus, we commemorate our 26th year of providing retention and graduation services to Cal Poly Pomona students. Irene Moreno was a member of the inaugural staff, and remained with the program until 1999.

The first CRSP office was "a very small room," so while "productivity was good, [we were] limited to small enrollment," Moreno recalls. Although the program always met its goals, she did not expect the grant-funded program to remain at Cal Poly for so long: "25 years is more than I expected for CRSP to continue at CPP." When the program moved to a new room, enrollment grew. The program also invested in "more materials and computers, [as well as] cubicles for each tutor to work in with their students ... We began getting recognized by some departments." Moreno found that one of the program's main challenges early on was gaining "recognition and support from more CPP departments."

Among the program's successes, she emphasizes the ability "to see and document a student's educational growth" and the growth of the staff, particularly when improved students became tutors for the program. (Which remains a common way for CRSP to build its tutoring team!). Further, she emphasizes that "program tutors became advisors, and an advisor became the director of CRSP."

When asked if particular tutors stand out in her memory as having made a significant contribution, she responds, "Many of the tutors stand out in my mind. They all contributed to the program in their individuality. We needed all disciplines and personalities to match up with our students. I could never pick out one tutor. They were all magnificent. Although I do remember our first tutor, Scott Turnbull, who had to run over to the computer lab (before we were able to get more computers) with his students and their folders to document their work."

As far as Moreno's favorite aspect of working with CRSP, she reports, "Being included in the operation of the program—a very cohesive staff that kept moving forward." It was "a great adventure working for the College Reading Skills Program." The program certainly owes its longevity to the excellent foundation created by Irene Moreno and her fellow founding staff members.

LRC Corner

Several members of the LRC continued the now-annual tradition of participating together in Matt's Run. In the wee early morn of October 19, Cindy Greco, Allison Douglas-Chicoye, Olga Johnson, and former LRC Graduate Assistant, Casey Thompson, gathered to run/walk the 5K benefitting the Matthew Myers Memorial Scholarship.

In other LRC news, the tutoring programs within the center switched to a new scheduling system—Accudemia. Since the summer quarter, the programs have been adjusting to the new software and working out the kinks. The program has many features and automated reports that will allow the LRC to collect valuable information about students' use of program services.

Finally, the LRC hosted a Student Open House on November 21 to raise awareness about the services and resources available to students through the center. There was food, fun, and Billy Bronco! More than 80 students attended the event and several participated in a contest to solicit ideas for a new name that combines two of the tutoring programs within the LRC: MaSH and General (formerly ASI) tutoring will be joining forces and needs a new name to reflect this merger. Stay tuned for the winning suggestion!

Tutor Spotlight



CRSP tutor, Lauren Sumabat

Professional Mentor Meeting



Professional Mentor, Dr. Keosha Partlow-Johnson

LRC Student Open House



CRSP staff with Billy Bronco



CRSP students Jesse and Elizabeth Herrera