

## Welcome from our Presidential Sponsor, Dr. Soraya M. Coley

Greetings ACE Women's Network of Southern California.

We are in an extraordinary time for higher education. The national reckoning over systemic racism combined with the massive social and economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic are bringing into stark relief the impact of inequality and injustice in our nation and around the world. This moment not only underscores the importance of our work as educators and scholars, but also the significance of the Network and our shared goals and experiences. More than ever, thank you for building and strengthening the bonds that support women across our institutions.



I am pleased to let you know that after a very successful tenure under the leadership of my friend and colleague Dr. Karen Haynes, presidential sponsorship of the ACE Women's Network of Southern California has moved to California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona). I have appointed Dr. Shanthi Srinivas, presidential fellow for leadership excellence and institutional development at Cal Poly Pomona, as the chair for the Southern California region. Dr. Haynes recently retired as president of California State University, San Marcos (CSUSM), and we hope to build on the wonderful programming offered by our partners at CSUSM.

We were excited to offer our first Annual Conference scheduled for March 27, 2020. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the event due to the ongoing pandemic and our goal of ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone involved. We greatly appreciate the strong interest in the conference and are pleased to let you know that we are determined to continue offering professional development opportunities, albeit in a virtual way. Please stay connected with ACE Women's Network of Southern California and join our mailing list to learn details of our next event: <https://www.cpp.edu/acesocal/mailling-list.shtml>

### Lunch and Learn September 2019

*Empowered Leadership: A Call for Your Action*

The first ACE Women's Network Lunch and Learn event hosted at Cal Poly Pomona was memorable and inspiring! As our keynote speaker, President Soraya Coley offered an insightful call to action for



empowered leadership. You could feel the energy and excitement in the room as women came together to support and encourage each other. President Coley encouraged us to find a mentor and ask deliberate questions that would help us on our higher education journey. One participant indicated that the most memorable piece of advice for her was when Dr. Coley spoke about our “box of jewels.” She mentioned that we all carry one whether they are large or small boxes and that rather than picking and choosing which jewels to show, we should be proud to show off each and every one.

President Coley’s keynote address was followed by a discussion on creating an action plan that exemplified empowered leadership that participants would wish to execute in the following two to three months. We were overwhelmed with the survey responses from the participants. Here are some takeaways that the participants shared with us:

- Empowerment is living beyond what might emotionally seem possible
- Opportunities to teach others rather than just writing them off
- To stop letting my self-doubt stop me from moving forward
- Failure is just on the way to success; Don't miss an opportunity to create an ally because of your ego
- Women at all levels are faced with the same issues; the times have not changed; we have to be that change for ourselves
- How to manage being a high-level leader without losing yourself, identity and values; how even at a high level of leadership, self-doubt is there
- Be a catalyst, visionary, or monitor to disrupt the status quo; release self-doubt or see what others see in me
- Importance of continuing to move forward, and making room for others

Participants also identified an “accountability buddy,” someone they could trust and with whom they could share their action plan. The intent was that this “buddy” would help them be accountable for their action plan. If you attended this interactive session and have not had a chance to share your action plan on social media, do visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/acewomensocal> and post a comment! We would love to hear from you!

## Lunch and Learn October 2019

### *Advocacy, Leadership & Our Personal Responsibility*

State Senator Connie M. Leyva joined us for our second ACE Women’s Network Lunch and Learn event hosted at Cal Poly Pomona. The senator spoke about her leadership journey starting as a retail clerk at a local grocery store, then serving as a union representative, followed by her appointment as

the president of the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1428. In 2004, she was elected as the first woman president of the California Labor Federation and is now serving her second term in the California State Senate. The focus of her address was on the importance of emphasizing your purpose and persevering in the face of adversity. A member of the audience commented that she found Senator Connie Leyva to be “a dynamic and inspirational presenter who clearly spoke from her heart. Her stories made her ‘relatable’ as a woman, mother, wife, and professional. I appreciated how she has turned her hardships along the way into strengths and contributed, and, persevered in the face of adversity in the workplace.”



The presentation was followed by a discussion on steps to create personal empowerment. Here are some of the thoughts shared by the group on ways to empower oneself:

- Be self-reflective about areas of growth and seek opportunities to work on that – don't wait for others to provide feedback. Have the agency to self-start and grow
- Pitch ideas based on your gifting – know what I bring to the table
- I sometimes wait for approval to move finding to support student success efforts I know are valuable. I should/will act
- Take an opportunity without waiting to be asked. Don't apologize. Remember that your decisions belong to you, wrong or right, it's better to make our own decision. Be resistant. Embrace leaning. Create safe space to let people follow their own journey
- Take advantage to learning of leadership opportunities to strengthen my skills. Continue to network like today's event to grow my campus/community connections as Senator Leyva states, “someone is always watching”



## Calling all IRs

At our October 2019 Lunch and Learn event, we had a special meeting for Institutional Representatives (IR). IRs are members of various educational institutions in the Southern California region whose role is to represent their institution. The IR is a key person in the development and implementation of the strategic plans of the ACE Women's Network – Southern California. The IR works in close collaboration with the state chair and the members of the state network governing body and serves as a liaison between the women at her institution and the members of the state network governing body.



At the meeting, it was clear from the discussion, that more needed to be done in terms of identifying IRs from our surrounding public and private 4-year institutions and community colleges. If you know the IR for your institution, please contact us so that we may include them in our mailing list and invite them to future meetings. Alternately, if you have an interest in serving as an IR, please let us know so we may contact your university to formalize the process. We look forward to partnering with our surrounding educational institutions so we may offer more impactful programming.

## Editor's Note



*Shanthi Srinivas, PhD,  
State Chair, ACE Women's  
Network SoCal Region*

We are pleased to share the first edition of our newsletter with highlights from our programming this past year. We had great plans and lots of enthusiasm for our annual conference that had to, unfortunately, be cancelled due to the COVID 19 outbreak.

As we continue to cope with the tragic events that led to the protests across our nation and around the globe, we are once again reminded of how important it is to stay connected as a community and to support each other through our professional and personal journeys. This past year, at our two Lunch and Learn events, we were pleased to see the level of engagement and the significant takeaways identified by the participants. Kudos to our planning committee members for their dedication and hard work that resulted in these successful workshops.

We are enthusiastic about continuing to offer more workshops albeit, in a virtual form. Our first virtual workshop to be offered in Fall 2020, under the new title, *Connect and Learn*, will focus on wellbeing and ways in which we are coping, thriving and planning to sustain the effective practices we have learned during these challenging times! I hope you will join us, learn from experts and share your experiences with colleagues at our next *Connect and Learn*. Until then stay well, stay healthy!

**ACE Women's Network, Southern California**

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