The Board of Trustees made it official at its Feb. 27 meeting when it named Dr. John S. Nixon the eighth President/CEO in Mt. SAC’s 61-year history. Nixon’s selection concluded a nationwide presidential search. He had been serving as Interim President for the previous eight months.

“We believe Dr. Nixon has the experience, vision, and leadership to advance Mt. SAC to the next level of excellence and distinction,” said Board President Dr. Manuel Baca. “He’s the right person for these challenging times when the institution must complete its campus master plan to accommodate future enrollment growth and expand academic and student support programs.”

Responding to the appointment, Nixon said, “I am deeply honored and humbled by the Board’s vote of confidence in my qualifications and my vision to lead Mt. SAC to the next level of greatness. I am proud to lead an institution that is nationally known for its distinction academically, athletically and artistically.”

During the Presidential Candidate Open Forum held earlier in February, Nixon answered audience questions and noted that while “we have a lot to be proud about at Mt. SAC, we also face a number of opportunities and challenges.” Key priorities outlined in his address included improving internal and external communications, preparing for the next accreditation, continuing enrollment growth, the possibility of running a second facilities bond measure, expanding the Foundation, and addressing looming budget challenges.

Nixon emphasized his priority to maintain open communication across the College, pointing to his open office hours available to anyone who wishes to meet with him, and his monthly presidential e-letter to employees.

He also emphasized his commitment to the College mission, grounded in learning and student success, but acknowledged that it requires a campuswide team effort to fulfill it.

“We cannot serve students without calling on the expertise and talents of the faculty, management, and classified staff,” he said. “Collectively, we can take this College to the next level.”

Nixon illustrated his teamwork theme through a musical analogy in which he compared the College to an orchestra and likened the role of the College President to that of an orchestra conductor.

“It is the role of the conductor to make sure every member of the orchestra is on the same page of music and playing harmoniously,” he said. “I plan to be a good conductor for this very fine orchestra.”

Dr. Nixon’s candidacy received widespread support among faculty, staff, student groups and community leaders.
Mt. SAC welcomed the spring semester with its annual Professional Development Day, “Flex-ability,” and the semester Opening Meeting. Issues discussed during the general Opening Meeting session, attended by faculty and staff, underscored the need for a second facilities bond, the current fiscal challenges facing local school districts and community colleges, and student and campus successes.

“There’s always a lot to celebrate at Mt. SAC,” said President John S. Nixon, as he and others cited a number of recent accomplishments. Among them were the Flying Team’s regional honors and advancement to national competition, the selection of six P.E. faculty for “Coach of the Year” honors, and the College’s Phi Theta Kappa All USA Academic Team winner. Faculty and staff were also treated to a student dance performance and a project presentation by four of Professor Ron Brown’s animation students with their rendition of Pinocchio, which had been pitched to Hollywood studios.

The state’s looming $16-billion budget deficit and its impact on education was also a topic of concern as several local school districts and some colleges are currently considering layoffs. The picture for Mt. SAC, however, is a bit brighter due to the College’s prudent fiscal planning.

“The state budget deficit is very real,” said Nixon. “But Mt. SAC is well positioned financially to weather the storm for a year or two.”

Already, he said, the College had weathered the first part of the storm, which included cuts to the 2007-08 budget. In a related fiscal matter, Administrative Services VP Mike Gregoryk discussed the need for a second facilities bond to complete the campus master plan.

“There’s no question we need a second bond,” said Gregoryk. “The question is what and how much the public will support.”

Director of Facilities Planning and Management Gary Nellesen provided an overview of projects that a second construction bond would fund, including a 217,000-square-foot Library-LRC-Student Center, a $20-million Early Childhood Education Center, and a $46-million Business and Computer Technology facility.

The opening meeting also showcased a “Mythbuster Panel” that answered audience questions on a variety of campus issues. The panel was composed of Student Services VP Audrey Yamagata-Noji, Interim Instruction VP Virginia Burley, Faculty Association President Terri Long, Academic Senate President Michelle Grimes-Hillman, Associated Students President Yesenia Leon, Nixon, and Gregoryk.

Professional Development Day activities for faculty included 10 different workshops in two separate sessions on topics as diverse as “Banner Web Self-Service,” “Clickers in the Classroom,” and “Yoga & Tai Chi Strategies for Stress Management.”

Flex Day is organized annually by the Academic Senate. Senate Vice President John Vitullo emceed the Opening Meeting.
First Campus Departments “Go Live” on Banner

In a phased implementation approach, HR and Fiscal Services are among first units to launch online processes.

Many employees have been busy with Banner training in recent months as the first departments on campus began implementing the College’s new management information system while several other departments are gearing up to “go live.”

Human Resources’ PeopleAdmin software, which facilitates employee recruitment and applications online, was implemented in the fall, while Purchasing, Accounts Payable, and Finance processes went live in January.

“It’s gone really well since we went live,” said Fiscal Services Director Linda Baldwin. “The staff has been terrific and remained very positive. And the new system has enhanced efficiency—definitely a very positive move for the College.”

Fiscal Services staff has been training on Banner for a year. During the short time the new system has been in operation, nearly 1,700 purchasing requisitions have been received and processed online, 1,500 purchase orders have been issued, and 2,100 payments have been processed. “The challenge is not only setting up and learning the new system, but also keeping up with the normal day-to-day workload,” Baldwin said.

Fiscal Services is currently working closely with Human Resources to implement the Banner Human Resources/Payroll Module. The goal is to go live with processing Mt. SAC’s own payroll checks by January 2009.

Banner is a management information system that will integrate the functions of various departments across campus while providing the flexibility to expand in the future so that users can get the information they need when they need it.

Elsewhere on campus, staff in Human Resources, Financial Aid, and Student Services are currently engaged in Banner training and are scheduled to go live next January. Student Services components and functions that will be available include student and faculty portals and online registration. According to Chief Technology Officer Vic Belinski, students should be able to register via Banner for the first time for ‘09 summer classes.

Accreditation Midterm Report Receives ACCJC Commendation

Mt. SAC’s Accreditation Midterm Report was not only accepted by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), but passed with flying colors. The ACCJC commendation for the report comes at a time when a record 19 California community colleges have had trouble with their accreditation.

“We are in good standing with the Commission,” said President John S. Nixon, who serves as the College’s Accreditation Liaison Officer. “We are one of only a few of colleges whose reports were accepted by the Commission.”

Along with Antelope Valley College and Evergreen Valley College, Mt. SAC was one of three community colleges to have its Midterm Report accepted while 19 other colleges received warnings or some level of probation. Authored by Research and Institutional Effectiveness Director Barbara McNeice-Stallard and Interim Associate Dean for Technology and Health Jemma Blake-Judd, the Midterm Report serves as a progress update on efforts Mt. SAC has made on the Commission’s recommendations relative to the last accreditation review in 2004. While Mt. SAC was praised then by the accreditation team, three areas of concern were identified: program review, institutional planning, and student learning outcomes.

“We still have a lot of work to do to meet the ultimate expectation of the ACCJC,” said Nixon, noting that the next full accreditation review is slated for October 2010.
Mt. SAC Welcomes New Staff and Management

Kryslye Bybee  
Transfer Specialist Counseling

David Dieckmeyer  
Computer Facilities Coordinator  
Information Technology

Gregory MacDonald  
Graphic Designer  
Marketing & Communication

Famm Douangchampa  
Welding Lab Technician

Ann Marie Ruelas  
EOPS Clerical Specialist

Dolores Mahan  
Program Specialist  
DSP&S

Steven Fangmeyer  
Farm Operations Specialist

Margaret Yau  
Math and Computer Science Lab Technician

Bill Ito  
Physical Education

Darwin Macatiag  
Network Administrator  
Information Technology

NOT PICTURED

Eva Figueroa  
Instructional Program Specialist

Kelly Takai  
Horticulture Production Assistant

Ann Marie Ruelas  
EOPS Clerical Specialist

Donna Ropp  
Art Laboratory Technician

English faculty members Michelle Dougherty and Kimberly Quintana-Mullane recently spent hours transcribing and captioning video tapes for Disabled Student Programs & Services, which in turn will be used by hearing impaired students. To date, the pair has transcribed three videos for the Child and Development 10 classes.

Radio’s Golden at KSAK

KSAK Operations Manager Cason Smith took home four “Golden Mike” awards at the recent Radio and Television News Association’s annual ceremony in North Hollywood. The Mt. SAC radio station won for best reporting and use of sound, bringing the total awards earned to nine over the past three years.

Cordova Makes the Link

John Cordova, Program Coordinator for Mt. SAC’s Regional Health Occupations Resource Center, was featured in an article in the December issue of Link, a Victor Valley College publication. Cordova received kudos for his help to provide classes for 28 foreign nursing graduates at Victor Valley so that they could meet the requirements to take the state-licensing exam for registered nurses. The nursing students—who hailed from Russia, Latin America and Asian countries—had been waiting for up to two years to take classes so they could become licensed registered nurses in California.

Management

Jill Dolan  
Community & Media Relations Manager

Jeff Parker  
Interim Public Safety Director

Six Mountie coaches were named for “Coach of the Year” conference honors for 2007.

Kelly Ford (Softball) led the roster as "Women's All-Sports Coach of the Year," which recognizes the top men’s and women’s coaches in all South Coast Conference sports. Also honored were Melinda Bowen (Women’s Soccer), Mike Goff (Men’s Cross Country), Mike Green (Women’s Golf), Bob Jastrab (Football), and Juan Sanchez (Men’s Soccer), who was also named “West Region Coach of the Year” by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.
New Relays Director Races to Raise the Bar

Award-winning Track Program Director Doug Todd takes helm over 50th Mt. SAC Relays

The new director of the world-famous Mt. SAC Relays is a familiar face around the oval track at Hilmer Lodge Stadium. No one has to introduce Doug Todd to the protocols of putting on an international meet that regularly draws over 30,000 and showcases the world’s best athletes in track and field.

“I’ve been intimately involved with the Relays since I got to Mt. SAC over 13 years ago,” said Todd, who becomes the Relay’s fifth director as the meet celebrates its milestone 50th running in April.

Todd, who was hired full-time at Mt. SAC as a track and cross country coach in 1995, has been involved in virtually every aspect of the Relays since then. He has served as Clerk of the Course and, for the past three years, Special Events Director for the meet. And he is well acquainted with the importance of this year’s meet in the track world—as it will precede the XXIX Summer Olympic Games.

“Every April the world comes to Walnut, and we want to meet people’s expectations,” said Todd. “A lot of the athletes you will see in Beijing later this summer in the Olympics will be here.”

Over the years, the biggest names in track—athletes like Carl Lewis and Marion Jones—have competed at the Relays. Now, as Relays Director, Todd tempers respect for Relays tradition with a new sense of purpose.

“We know how to put on a meet, but now we want to build the atmosphere around the meet,” he said.

Adding new elements to the meet is first on his agenda, and one of the first is a series of Para Olympic races for amputees.

“The amputee athletes are some of the most talented,” he said. “But they often go unrecognized because of their disabilities.”

So at the 50th Relays, right in the middle of the Day of Champions, a women’s wheelchair 1,500-meter race and a men’s 100-meter heat for amputees have been scheduled.

As a state-recognized track and cross country coach, Todd knows how to coax the best performances out of people. And one way to do that is to give them opportunity and, of course, put the right person in the right place. So the idea to compartmentalize the different segments of the meet and delegate more of the responsibilities for running it was a natural for Coach Todd, whose overall philosophy for Relays can be boiled down to two main points.

“First, there’s always room for good people around the table, and second, no one can do this job by themselves and no one ever has,” he said. “Every decision is based on what’s best for the event.”

The final mission for the new director is to spread the word about the 50th Mt. SAC Relays (April 11, 18-20), which includes the Youths Days, the Community College Division, the High School Division, the International Distance Carnival, and Day of Champions.

But even though the event draws spectators, athletes, and media from around the world and while the Relays originally put Mt. SAC on the map, local public awareness is relatively—and surprisingly—low.

“There are people from all over the world who come here for this meet, yet there are others right in our own backyard in Walnut and elsewhere locally who don’t know what the Relays are all about,” he said. “I’m on a mission to change that!”
The ESL and CARE programs sponsored their annual turkey giveaway just in time for Thanksgiving.

One of Mt. SAC’s most popular holiday traditions, the 10th Annual Wassail offered a combination of great food and seasonal choral music.

Thanksgiving wouldn’t be complete without the Child Development Center’s annual Thanksgiving Feast, which included traditional fare and a Native American presentation.
Bookstore staff showed their holiday spirit at the SacBookRac’s annual holiday tea.

Associated Students kicked off the yuletide season with their holiday tea that always includes a visit from Santa.

Retirees and current employees had an opportunity to catch up at the Administration Building’s annual holiday fete at Founders Hall.

The College formally dedicated Founders Hall in December, which houses the President’s Office, Board of Trustees meeting room, and various meeting and conference rooms.
Mt. SAC and Southern California Edison partnered in an effort to give away 10,000 energy-efficient CFL bulbs as a way for employees to save energy, money and the environment.

High School Outreach sponsored the annual High School Counselor’s Luncheon to build bridges between Mt. SAC and its area high schools.

The College hosted the annual Community Volunteer Fair, which provided students the opportunity to engage in public service, obtain hands-on learning experiences and make a difference in the community.

Associated Students staged a Prop. 92 rally to urge support of the measure, which would have improved funding for community colleges and reduced student fees. It was defeated by voters in the February elections.

Stations from throughout the southland participated in the campus Radio Broadcasting Fair, which exposed students to broadcasting careers.
Mt. SAC’s Fire Academy recently graduated 39 cadets and is the first class in the Academy’s history to achieve a 100% pass rate. The graduates earned the Fire Technology certificate and are now certified state firefighters.

Mt. SAC hosted a 2-day Medical Simulation Conference, sponsored by the RHORC, Nursing Skills Lab, and Medical Education Technologies Inc. (METI). The event provided hands-on simulated clinical experiences and accommodated 95 nursing professionals from 32 institutions, including 11 hospitals.

Alumni, faculty, staff, and friends tried their luck at the gaming tables during the Mt. SAC Alumni Association’s fourth annual Mountie Carlo Night. The fund-raising event included gaming, dinner, music, and a silent auction.
The singing is the only thing fake about this popular tradition. The rest is all real!

There are a lot of ways to measure success, but there's something about a program that brings together faculty, students, classified staff, administration, and Elvis!

This year, the Faculty Association's musical lip synching show, Puttin' on the Hits, celebrates 10 years of raising funds for student scholarships and a decade of bringing the campus community together in a way that few programs can match.

In commemoration of this notable milestone, this year's production will bring back many of the acts from the first year, including Elvis, Frank Sinatra, Elton John, the Village People, Garth Brooks and perhaps a diva or two. The production will be staged at the Clarke Theater on Friday and Saturday, March 14 and 15, 7:30 p.m. with a special Saturday matinee at 3 p.m. Tickets are $20 general admission.

For Math Professor and the show's producer, Joan Sholars, “Puttin' on the Hits is one of the things that truly makes Mt. SAC unique.”

The lively production features trustees, faculty, employees and students lip synching the hits of today’s and yesterday’s biggest stars and bands—all in the name of raising funds for student scholarships. But along its altruistic fundraising way, the program yielded some pleasant byproducts—chief among them is the camaraderie and a sense of family that brings together segments of the campus that ordinarily would never meet.

“You're not ever going to find an event that takes this much effort and time to organize and, in the process, create such lasting friendships,” said Faculty Association President Terri Long, the show's assistant to the director. “How unique is it that you have students performing along side faculty? It really brings people together.”

Puttin’ on the Hits was the dream of now-retired Communications Professor Ron Reel, who modeled the fundraiser after the mid-80s television show of the same name. The Mt. SAC fundraiser debuted in 1999 with a cast of 17 and sold 150 tickets for the two-show format. This year, there are more than 75 participants and tickets sales are expected to break 1,200 for a three-show series.

The production is open to everyone in the college community, and everyone has a job to do. No one is ever turned away, and while there have been changes over the past 10 years, the mission of the show remains the same.

“If we have the money and have deserving students, then we're going to give out scholarships,” said Sholars.

Puttin’ on the Hits has raised approximately $100,000 for student scholarships during its run, and beginning this year, the fundraiser will expand its reach to include the local business community. Through the Faculty Association, a nonprofit charitable organization has been established for the show as organizers have plans to canvas local businesses for donations.

The scholarships, also coordinated through the Faculty Association, are awarded to students in two different categories—for extra curricular activities and for academic achievement. The number of scholarships varies year to year, depending on the amount raised by the show. Last year, 15 scholarships were given along with three $500 awards to the top Students of Distinction recipients.
MARCH

14 & 15, 7:30 p.m.—**Puttin’ on the Hits 10th Anniversary**, Clarke Theater. Special Saturday matinee at 3 p.m.

16, 4 p.m.—**The Songs of Samuel Barber**, faculty artist concert, Free, Music Recital Hall

19, 6:30 p.m.—**Board of Trustees Meeting**, Founders Hall

20, 4-6 p.m.—**Art of the Rainforest** Opening Reception, Art Gallery exhibit runs March 25–May 8

28, 8 p.m.—**7th Annual Spring Thing**, choral concert featuring Fermata Nowhere and the Concert Choir, Clarke Theater

31—**Cesar Chavez Day**, campus closed

APRIL

4, 7:30 p.m.—**An Evening of Modern and Ancient Music for Guitar Ensemble**, faculty guitar performance, Music Recital Hall

4 & 5, 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.—**Mt. SAC Relays Youth Days**, Hilmer Lodge Stadium

11-12 & 18-19, 8 p.m.—**Camino Real**, Mt. SAC Theater production, Clarke Theater

12 & 17-20—**50th Mt. SAC Relays**, Hilmer Lodge Stadium

23, 6:30 p.m.—**Board of Trustees Meeting**, Founders Hall

For additional performing arts event information, visit [http://performingarts.mtsac.edu](http://performingarts.mtsac.edu) or order tickets directly at [www.4tix.org](http://www.4tix.org).
Mt. SAC Awarded $900,000 NSF Grant for Computer Security

Mt. SAC has been awarded a two-year $900,000 National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Education grant to bolster its computer security program.

In partnership with Cal Poly Pomona, Cal State Northridge, Cal State Los Angeles and Long Beach City College, Mt. SAC’s Regional Information Systems Security Center will use the grant for workforce development, curriculum development, outreach and dissemination throughout the region’s computer security field.

“This new grant gives us an opportunity to build on the success of the previous grant, and the relationships are in place to do some exciting things in computer security and feasibly impact the whole Southern California region,” said Jaishri Mehta, Computer Information Systems Professor and the grant’s principal investigator.

The College received the initial NSF grant in 2003 to establish the computer security center together with Cal Poly Pomona. The program was created to train information security professionals to guard against computer crime while responding to the need for information security at businesses and agencies.

The project also resulted in the creation of the first local degree program of its kind. Students are now able to earn an associate’s degree in Network Security and Systems Management.

Today, the computer security center offers an array of classes and certificate programs while continuing to focus on enhancing security content for other degree programs and professional training.

Celebrating the grant presentation are (l-r) Mt. SAC President Dr. John Nixon, Computer Information Systems Professor Jaishri Mehta, Mt. SAC Business Division Dean John Heneise, and Regional Information Systems Security Center Director Robert Loya.

Lil’ Joe Mountie Makes Debut

Lil’ Joe Mountie, Mt. SAC’s official sports mascot has undergone yet another extreme makeover and has been making his cameo appearances all over campus. The larger-than-life mascot takes on the classic look of an old mountaineer, sporting a racoon-skin hat, and fake musket. This makeover was inspired by the artistry of Swim Coach Mark Ruh, and the mascot costume was commissioned and paid for by the Mt. SAC Associated Students.

Over the years, Lil’ Joe has undergone a number of makeovers, and once even had a companion mascot, Josephine, who accompanied him at Mountie sports events to fire up the crowd. Take a look at these historical photos to see the evolution of our popular mascot.