

Outreach In Action

—*Tania Mendez*

In spring 2019, while doing outreach, I met a senior from one of the local high schools. I was thrilled to hear that the student was interested in attending LBCC in fall 2019. I was looking forward to seeing them in the summer for orientation, followed by their first official term as a Roadrunner. Unfortunately, due to certain circumstances, the student told me they could no longer attend LB in fall term. I was bummed to hear this, but I assured them I would be at LB to assist them when they were ready to begin taking classes. I followed up with the student throughout the year and kept them posted on registration deadlines.

During winter 2020, I received the email I was waiting for: "I'm going to start taking classes this spring term, and I just wanted to get back into touch with you!" From that point on, I helped the student register and prepare for the term by guiding them through the financial aid process and providing resources that could help them succeed. So far, the student is

managing their online classes, but they are looking forward to sitting in a classroom with their peers.

The student and I developed a great connection since the first day I met them, and it's stories like these that make the work I do enjoyable! I'm so thankful I was able to meet the student last year. I love being able to be there for students when they need someone to support them when they begin their postsecondary education.

There are many first-generation college students who don't know how to begin this journey and cannot turn to their parents for guidance. I am at the college specifically to support Latina/o/x students in pursuing their career goals. I have maintained communication with students by phone, email and Zoom. I'm looking forward to being back in the EDI (F-220) to meet new students and chat in person with those I currently work, growing the connections I have established even further.

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What have we been up to this term? Visit our [Online Programming web page](#) to find out!

White Competency

—Heather Morijah

Being stuck in virtual mode, I'm discovering, has its compensations. This term, via [Speakoutnow webinars](#) and reading, I've been learning a lot about being White. I mean, I've been White my whole life—but I've never really thought a lot about it till recently.

People of color tend to be very, **very** aware of their skin color, whereas White people are not. Why should we? We're the norm. Our entire society is based on us. The history we all learned as children, regardless of what color we are, is White history. All but one of our 45 U.S. presidents (and one hundred percent of their vice presidents) have been White. Even owners of professional sports teams—which could be construed as fairly racially diverse—are overwhelmingly White.

When did you first realize you were White? Or, conversely, when did you first realize you weren't White? I'll bet those questions have very different answers for White folks and people of color. Think about the neighborhood in which you grew up. Think about the K-12 teachers you had. Think about always being able to find "flesh tone" Band-Aids at the drug store. Whose

flesh tone? White people's, of course.

Racial and ethnic diversity **is** growing in our socio-political institutions—including the U.S. Congress, which currently has 22% racial and ethnic minorities. In fact, according to Pew Research Center, each of the four previous Congresses broke the record set by the Congress before it.

This is very good news indeed, because our lives are far richer when we interact and collaborate with people different than ourselves. There is immense strength in diversity. *Juntos somos más.*

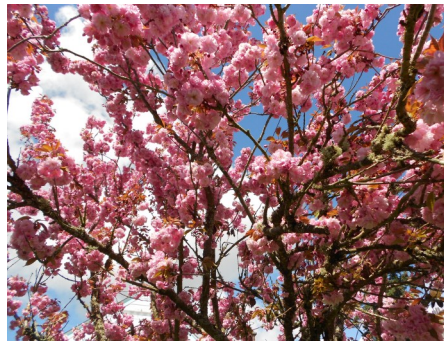
The more I learn about what it means to be a person of color in a society designed by and for White people, the more appreciative I am of where I work and the people with whom I work on a daily basis. I think I've learned more from them about being a White person than from webinars and reading.

If you'd like to learn more about White competency, [Robin DiAngelo's website](#) is a great place to start.

Did you know?

National Haiku Poetry Day was April 17.

Warm inviting sun
Laughter in the summer breeze
Please don't fade away
—Katie Bieker



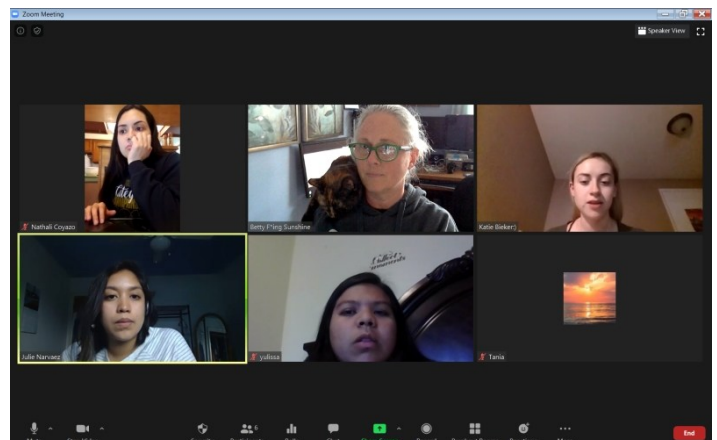
dirt is brown and warm
green shoots poke through the surface
sun makes food for us
—Heather Morijah

Imagine falling,
As I dangle on the chair
20 feet above.
—"Skiing" by Yanci Hernandez

Cherry blossoms bloom,
softly falling from the tree,
lay on the green grass.
—Tania Mendez

What's a "Virtual EDI"?

We've tried to recreate our comfy, welcoming department space (Forum 220) with a dedicated Zoom, Monday-Friday from 2-4 PM. Please let your students know they're welcome to "stop in" and have a cuppa Joe or tea with us. Use password 9174292.



New! Artist of the Emergent Mainstream Award



LBCC's Art Galleries Co-Curricular Program is proud to announce the **Artist of the Emergent Mainstream Award**. This year, almost 80 artworks were entered, with 41 chosen by the jury. A few of them are shown here.

The celebration and award reception is on Thursday, May 21 from 5-6 PM [via Zoom](#).

Thank you for supporting our student artists!



Reflections On Mindfulness

—Mark Weiss

All my grandparents were immigrants. My father's parents immigrated from Poland, my mother's from Russia. They all arrived between 1906 and 1910. My mother's parents met picking fruit in California. Somehow they saved a few hundred dollars and bought a piece of land in Arcadia, near Pasadena, where there were lots of immigrant families at that time (the 1920s).

My grandfather became a gardener, my grandmother a seamstress in a sweat shop in L.A. My parents built a small house on their property, which is where I grew up. Their version of "dialing it down" was to hide out. My grandfather planted bushy trees all across the front of the property so no one could see in. This, as the town changed.

Japanese immigrants were interned during the war, and not given their property back. By the

1960s, Arcadia had become exclusively white. It wasn't OK to be different in any way, so my version of "dialing it down" was to never tell anyone that I had Jewish heritage. (We weren't religious, but three of my four grandparents were from Jewish families, in the old country). You could get beat up for being Jewish in Arcadia. Hell, you could get beat up for not being conservative . . .

Once an African foreign exchange student came to the high school, and there were so many death threats on the first day that she never came back for the second. It was that kind of place. And we hid out behind our wall of trees and pretended we were just like everyone else.

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Ironically, Arcadia is now mostly Asian. Years after I left, a martial

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arts movie star bought a piece of property in Arcadia and built a pagoda-style house. There were death threats, but he wasn't afraid. He'd dealt with bullies before. "Bring it" was his attitude. And the racists left him alone.

Then, slowly, Asian families from a lot of different countries began moving in. These were folks with money who could buy homes through realtors, from a distance. So it's not mostly Japanese, the way it was when my grandparents bought in, but it is mostly Asian.

There's probably some Karma in that.

Javier Cervantes, Director
Tania Mendez,
Latino Outreach &
Retention Specialist
Heather Morijah,
Program Assistant

Student Staff:
Katie Bieker
Nathali Coyazo
Yulissa Gonzalez
Yanci Hernandez
Julie Narvaez

Institutional Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



Katie Bieker

Reflections on Mindfulness

I read each mindfulness day message with anticipation. I just wanted you to know that, at least to me, these messages are a powerful reminder of the connection we all still have to our LBCC family. It can be hard to remember this connection and support when "everything" is remote.

. . . I have been struggling with feelings of productivity pressure and it really feels good to, just for a moment, let that slip away and "lean into the slowness that this time has created."

Carlena Weeks, Learning Center program assistant

Message From the Director

—*Javier Cervantes*

I am the product of immigrants. You could say I was "MADE IN THE USA" with Mexican parts. My folks dealt with and overcame their own immigration challenges in the early 1970s. Back then, they told me, the immigration process was much less complex to navigate. Today that is not the case.

The current sentiment is different than when my folks came to this country. Although there was some hostility, the tenor of the immigration debate was less about scapegoating people and more about labor rights in agricultural fields.

Fast forward to today, and examine the tenor of the immigration debate: it is much more polarizing. Caught in the middle of the immigration debate are the children brought to the U.S. by their parents from their home countries. These children have a name now: they are called Dreamers. They arrived in the U.S. not of their own volition, but because their parents could not leave them behind. For all intents and purposes, Dreamers are American children raised in the U.S. their entire lives but lack the immigration documentation to fully live out the American Dream.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is temporary relief that allows Dreamers to work legally in the U.S. It is not a path to citizenship. It is not amnesty. It really only allows a person access to come out of the shadows and be a productive contributor to our society. DACA students cannot access federal financial aid. They cannot buy a firearm. They can go to school and find a job, and that's it.

Let me share a little secret with you: Dreamers attend Linn-Benton Community College. I don't know how many, but I know they exist. Some choose to disclose their immigration status, and some do not. All I know is that I am here to help them succeed. All of us are. Our mission states that very clearly: "To engage in an education that enables all of us to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the cultural richness and economic vitality of our communities."

On May 14 at 1 PM, Latina/o/x Outreach and Retention Specialist Tania Mendez and I will present via Zoom information about how to best work with and advise DACA/Dreamer students. You are invited to check it out. Rest assured, you will learn some of the concerns Dreamers and DACA students face, as well as how to engage with them productively and how to advise them for success at LBCC and beyond.

As I reflect on what is to come, I begin to think about my parents and how they came to this country with nothing in order to give me everything. So did the parents of Dreamers and DACA students. We are fortunate to be working at a place where we can prepare students--ALL students--for a brighter future where that is possible.

