

Nominee: Marie Mestas, Dean of Library and Learning Support  
Award: Manager of the Year

Change has become an everyday activity in the 'Learning Resources' Division. The Division has morphed from "Library and Learning Resources" to "Learning Resources and Communication Media" to "Library and Learning Support". Over the past three years Marie Mestas has been Dean of the Library, Library Computer Lab, Auxiliary Lab, Tutoring, Library Technology Program, Audio-Visual, Honor's Program Academic Advancement, Paralegal, Student Health Services, DSPS, Student Life, and RTVF, while reporting to both the V.P. of Instruction and to V.P. Student Services. Throughout all these major changes, Ms. Mestas has endeavored to keep the Division's focus on how best to serve students. She understands that functions of the Division are more important than the form of the Division.

During a busy day in the library it is hard to find a place to study or an available computer. On the second floor of the building students line the walls, sitting on the floor in their attempt to find a quiet place to study. In these times of overcrowding, long lines, limited resources and hiring freezes Marie Mestas continues to protect the integrity of the library and services and consistently advocates for increases in library services to students. Even as library hours are reduced she continues to juggle the remaining staff to optimize the library and division resources and hours. She has developed plans to reallocate division resources in order to increase student seating, add computers and create a laptop commons.

Ms. Mestas is a vocal supporter of the textbook bank which allows students who can't afford to purchase or rent their textbooks the opportunity to use textbooks in the library and continue their education. She consistently, and successfully, lobbies for additional textbook funding so the library can support more classes and keep up with the rising cost of textbooks. Additionally, Ms. Mestas raised awareness and garnered support for continued funding of the online databases when categorical funding for library technology was reduced 100%. Online databases, which offer full-text access to over 6,000 newspapers, magazines and journals, support students in all disciplines. Because Marie Mestas was willing to take a stand, the library has maintained the online collection since 2009 instead of reducing the online collection.

Ms. Mestas is a fair and equitable supervisor who works in accordance with District personnel policies. She encourages faculty and staff to be independent, self-directed and innovative in the way they approach their responsibilities. She is supportive of new processes. Faculty and staff are included in long-range planning for the Division and she always solicits ideas for how to handle problems or enhance services. Although her managerial responsibilities often take her away from the Division office, when her door is open, she is always willing to break away from one of the myriad of reports she is working on to listen to staff and faculty concerns. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Education and is currently working on her dissertation that focuses on employee stress and burnout in an educational environment.

Marie Mestas has always been forward thinking. Under her leadership the Library Technology Program, which offers a certificate and an associate degree, has thrived. She has been instrumental in advertising the program, including an article in a professional periodical, *Library Journal*, which outlined her long-term plans to offer the degree and certificate in a fully online format. Seventy percent of the Library Technology courses are now being offered in a hybrid or online format. Instead of closing the program, as Citrus College did, San Bernardino Valley College's Library Technology Program is positioned for growth. The program draws students from neighboring counties including Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego.

Marie Mestas understands that being a Dean is not a popularity contest, but a serious responsibility that is often under appreciated. She is an active member of the Campus and District and serves them well. She adapts to change. She trusts the abilities of her faculty and staff. She has ability to think outside the box. Most importantly she continues to advocate for the staff and resources needed to serve the students of Valley College. For these reasons, and many others, she deserves to be recognized as manager of the year.

Dr. Celia Huston  
Library