

SBVC Student Trustee's Report to the Board

Dontae D. Calloway
Meeting of October 13, 2005

- **MEET YOUR STUDENT TRUSTEE DAY EVENT** – On Oct. 04, 2005, the official first “Meet Your Student Trustee Day” event kicked off as a success. The event was held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Quad Area outside the Campus Center. During the event, I had the opportunity to explain the role of the student trustee to many students and gave them a brief description of the purpose of the board of trustees. More than 80 students attended the event and received a drink and a donut as refreshments. Although I was so excited to meet so many students, most students overpowered me with questions and concerns pertaining to some very hot issues on campus such as: delays from the Financial Aid Office, campus parking concerns, and lack of on-campus student activities. I did, however, educate the students on the proper procedures in filing a complaint or grievance. Students appeared very pleased with this channel of information being provided to them. Overall, the meet your student trustee day event scheduled for Oct. 20, 2005 has been cancelled; however, the Nov. 7 event has been tentatively changed to Nov. 8 and is expected to proceed as planned. I will keep the board of trustees informed as to how the next event turns out.
- **STUDENTS EXPRESS CONCERNS ABOUT FINANCIAL AID** –The financial aid process this year has caused unexpected delays and unintended consequences for many students this semester. If one was to evaluate the financial aid process from a student's perspective, one would find that the results would be saddening. For example, there are students who filed for financial aid in accordance with the statewide financial aid campaign recommendations to file early (by March 2), and have still not received their financial aid award letters or checks. Also, some students who were awarded over the summer received awards, including Federal Work Study grants, but still had not received the first disbursement of financial aid until almost three weeks after the start of the fall 2005 term; still others, have experienced numerous delays and miscommunication concerning their financial aid file. Some students have also been displeased with being told that their file is complete; only to find out that there are more steps to complete in order to be funded. Currently, there are many students on campus planning to organize a campus-wide campaign to question students as to their overall experience to the financial aid process. Also, other students are planning to circulate petitions asking students to get involved in filing a massive student grievance to the student aid commission and media regarding the overall financial aid process, including inappropriate treatment they have received by the financial aid staff.

At a recent meeting with the associated student government, I conveyed these concerns to the ASB President and Student Senate. Some of the recommendations mentioned in order to improve the negative view of financial aid by students were:

1. ASB should host a forum on campus having the new Financial Aid Director, Nancy Davis, invited to give students background information on how the overall financial aid process works.
 2. ASB should recommend to the V.P. of Student Services and President Whittaker to investigate whether or not, a financial aid receipt process could be implemented to help keep track of documents turned in by students.
 3. ASB, with the help of the financial aid office, should develop flyers and post them across campus informing students as to all the steps required to receiving financial aid at SBVC.
 4. The Financial Aid Office should work more diligently to announce to students the fact that should the student not be satisfied with their overall financial aid visit or experience, there is a campus-wide grievance procedure already in place to investigate their concerns.
- **RED RIBBON WEEK and DISABILITY AWARENESS WEEK COMES AGAIN TO SBVC-** During the week of Oct. 24 to Oct. 27, 2005, SBVC will host its annual Red Ribbon Week and Disability Awareness Week. Some of the activities planned to raise awareness to the event include:
 - **The placing of a crash car display in the Quad Area throughout the week.**
 - **Students will have the opportunity to pledge to be drug free; with tables being placed in the Campus Center Quad throughout the week.**
 - **The placing of a Disability Awareness Poster display in the Campus Center Quad throughout the week.**
 - **Club activities to invite and promote more student participation in the Red Ribbon Week and Disability Awareness Week activities.**
 - **Open Forums; a barbeque, guest speakers, CSU Transfer workshops for individuals with disabling conditions, and blood bank donations are planned.**
 - **THANKS TO THE ASSOCIATED STUDENT LEADERS** – I'd like to thank the Student Senate Leaders who took part in reading and providing input to the Year-End Accreditation Report being submitted to the board. Executive Secretary Ramona Golec and Student Senator Sandra Whitten sacrificed many hours of their time to read the lengthy document and provide important feedback. These student leaders met and viewed the Accreditation Report from a very open-minded student perspective and helped to get more student participation and raised on-campus student awareness to the report. Thanks are in order to both these leaders for their devotion to the students they represent.