



The PACRA Pacer

Where Are They Now?

Melinda Finn - Public Affairs



I have been enjoying teaching photography part-time at Palomar. Since retiring in February 2018, and have continued working on my photography projects, including

Minding Hope, which was exhibited in Escondido in May 2020. Here is a link to the exhibition: https://www.thephotographerseyecollective.com/melinda_finn_mindinghope_transitions.

I have also been busy playing flute and piccolo in the Palomar Symphony Orchestra, as well as some other ensembles. While the pandemic presented huge challenges to every aspect of our lives, I am very grateful for the online technology that allowed us to continue teaching and learning remotely as well as staying in touch with friends and family during the past two years.

Patti Whitman - Counseling Services



Since retiring from Palomar College eight years ago, I have kept busy doing the things I love: visiting with family and friends, serving in my church as a Sunday School teacher, trying to keep fit with chair yoga and reading a lot! I love being retired and am so grateful for my

Palomar Pension which makes my life as a retiree possible! I paid off my mortgage last year and took three long distance trips despite COVID! My health is good and allows me to take advantage of the many wonderful opportunities to enjoy the beauties and cultural events so abundant in San Diego. Working at

FROM YOUR CO-PRESIDENTS



Bob Larson

This has been a year of reorganization for the Board and a re-affirmation of PACRA's mission. Your Board remains committed to attending to "...member benefits and health/welfare issues" as our primary mission. One

of the primary goals in the coming year will be to grow the Board membership as the two members lost to resignation last year have not yet been replaced. Serving on the Board can be a rewarding experience. The Board meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) at 1-2:30 PM. New Board members are provided ample time to familiarize themselves with Board policies and issues facing the Board and are not asked to fully participate in Board discussions until they are comfortable with doing so. If you are interested in becoming a Board member, contact any Board member and your name will be brought before the Board for consideration.

Bob Larson



June Rady

First and foremost, I echo Bob Larson's comments about the need for recruiting additional Board members. We encourage you to considering serving and if interested, please contact us. In the meantime, we thank you for renewing your PACRA membership and for your continued support of the efforts we are making on your behalf which includes monitoring and protecting your Governing Board approved/District paid health benefit package we received upon our retirement.

On April 21, 2022, PACRA held it Thirty-first

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at Palomar for 15 years was one of the best things I ever did.

Janet Hafner - ESL



The twenty four years after I retired from Palomar have been filled with many careers, moves, but only one new husband

Careers:

- Designing and marketing fancy-pants ballroom dresses
- Tackling the non English speaking language challenges of managers in industry.
- Writing and publishing middle school fantasy adventure novels.
- Offering workshops about the importance of Advanced Directives.
- And, a Memoir that is almost complete.

My late in life blessing: While ballroom dancing twenty years ago, I met a wonderful man that I married, traveled with, danced with, and am happily growing old with! Life is full!

Nona McClure - Education Center Manager



Eighteen years ago I decided to ask my women friends (mostly Palomar retiree ladies) to meet weekly for a Tuesday luncheon. The weekly luncheon is called TTTT. That stands for "Take Time To Talk

Tuesday's!" If you do the math we've had 936 lunches together. That's a lot of food, talking and laughter.

We've been through many stages and phases of life together. The group has turned out to be a great support for getting through life's many celebrations and challenges.

Along with our weekly Tuesday's, we had a couple of "traditions" which are an annual Christmas Party at Cynthia Poole's lovely home and the celebrations of our birthdays.

I've been very blessed by this group of ladies. Here's to eighteen more years!

YOUR CO-PRESIDENTS from page 1

Annual Luncheon Meeting at the Old Spaghetti Factory in San Marcos. As is noted, this was our first in-person meeting held in three years, due, of course, to the federal/state pandemic restrictions and regulations. This edition showcases that event. It is always a treat to gather and share moments of re-acquaintance with long-time colleagues. If you weren't able to attend this year, we hope you will plan to join us at next year's event.

On June 23, 2021, the Governing Board announced the appointment of Dr. Star Rivera-Lacey as the Superintendent/President of Palomar Community College District. PACRA was very pleased to have her as our guest speaker at the Annual Meeting. As someone who started her post-secondary education at a community college (Mira Costa College), Dr. Rivera-Lacey's life has come full circle. She previously served as Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Students Services at Palomar and, at the time of her appointment, she was serving as the Vice President of Student Services at the San Diego Community College District.

Your PACRA Board of Directors also held an informal follow-up meeting with Dr. Rivera-Lacey on April 25th. It was a particularly productive meeting. Not only did Dr. Rivera-Lacey share her plans for the future of Palomar College, but we were also very pleased to hear her articulate the important contributions made by Palomar College retirees, as well as her understanding, enthusiasm, and support of PACRA's mission and advocacy for its members.

Future meetings are planned throughout the coming year.

June Rady

*Stay close to anything that makes
you are glad that you're alive -
Hafiz*

*Act as if what you do makes a
difference. IT DOES - William James*

PACRA held its thirty-first Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 21, 2022 at the Old Spaghetti Factory in San Marcos. It was PACRA's first in-person annual meeting since 2019 and those attending were enthusiastic about renewing their association with former friends and colleagues. After enjoying lunch, Palomar's new president, Dr. Star Rivera-Lacey, addressed the group recounting her life's journey leading her to Palomar College and her vision for the college. She was followed by the Executive Director of the Foundation, Stacy Rungatis, who gave an update on the activities of the Foundation in funding programs to ensure the success of Palomar students. A short meeting to conduct the association's business concluded the program.



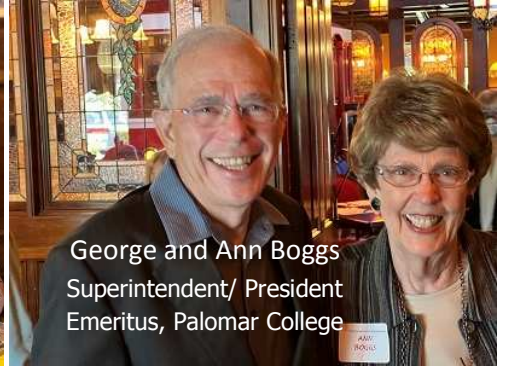
Steven Crouthamel



LaVern Brack



Ruth Tait-Brown

George and Ann Boggs
Superintendent/ President
Emeritus, Palomar College

GUEST SPEAKERS

Star Rivera-Lacy
Supt./President, Palomar College

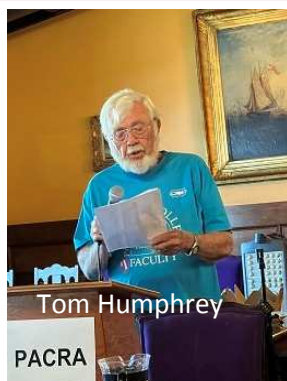
President Star Rivera-Lacy speaks about her life journey that led her to Palomar College and her vision for the college.



Stacy Rungatis, Executive Director of the Palomar Foundation, speaks about the programs the Foundation funds to ensure the success of Palomar students.

Stacy Rungatis
Executive Director,
Palomar College Foundation

Cynthia Poole



Tom Humphrey



June Rady



Bob Larson



Judy Dolan

PRESENTERS



PACRA Board with Guest Speakers



Katherine Gannett



Ann Reiss

Joe Reiss



Will Gullette



Nicole Moreau-Moshtaghi



Cheryl Huettl

Lois Myer

Nona McClure

Joestanford



Pat Worret



M. Jayne Conway



June Rady

Becky McCluskey



Glenna Long

Ava Davis



Faculty Making a Difference in Students' Lives

MARIE WOOD - Superior Court Judge, Riverside County



SAN MARCOS
When Marie Wood was finishing high school, she took an aptitude test that determined she would make a good dentist. But it

wasn't until she walked by the Paralegal Studies office at Palomar College and decided to knock on the door that her career as a lawyer—and now one of Riverside County's newest judges—took its first turn.

The professor who answered, Angelo Corpora, was then the Director of Paralegal Studies, and by the end of their conversation, Wood had decided to switch her major. It set her on a trajectory that would lead, ultimately, to the bench. "It takes a good starting place, to set that foundation, and then it takes good support to encourage everyone to pursue a higher education," said Wood during a recent interview. "We need to know it's doable. That's what I received at Palomar."

Born in Mexico, Wood came to California with her family when she was 12 and lived for several years in Ramona. As a teenager, she was offered a job as a receptionist at the office of her family's immigration attorney in Rancho Bernardo. After graduating from Palomar in 2001 with an associate degree in Paralegal Studies, Wood earned her bachelor degree taking night classes, then went to work for a civil litigation law firm in Temecula. There she learned the finer points of business, real estate contracts and other civil cases—and was exposed to the state's judicial system.

And she kept climbing. "I wanted to do more than

become an attorney." Two years later she received her Juris Doctor degree, took the bar exam, earned her license in 2010 and became an attorney. In 2016, she was recruited by a prestigious law firm in Riverside, Reid & Hellyer, and she became a "shareholder" or partner at the firm in 2021—the first Hispanic woman to achieve that status in the firm, she said. While pursuing her legal career, she returned to Palomar—this time at the other end of the classroom, as a member of the adjunct faculty, Wood recalled: "One of the best parts of teaching was being able to hear back from students telling me, 'Thank you for the encouragement.' That reassured me that the encouragement I received was put to good use and I was able to give it back to my students who went on to receive university degrees."

But her journey was not yet complete. When she became a partner at Reid & Hellyer, Wood had already submitted her application to become a judge on the Riverside County Superior Court.

On September 7, 2021, she was sworn in and took her place in the court, giving up her ability to practice law: "That was a bit weird, at first—I've been an attorney for so long and now I can't practice law, I just decide cases," she explained.

Wood now presides in the Limited Civil department at the Southwest Justice Center in Murrieta.

"Every step of my education helped me gain confidence and want more," Wood said, remembering her journey from college to the courthouse. "I went to Palomar with the idea, I'm just going to earn my associate degree, that's all I need. Once I achieved it, then it became, I could earn a bachelor degree, and why not? 'I've always said I am a product of my community, and that's why I worked so hard as a lawyer to give back to my community,' she went on. "Now I want to continue that as a judge." ♦

PACRA PACER

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June Rady, Bob Larson

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PACRA MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to maintain communication between retirees and the College; to attend to member benefits and health/welfare issues; and to administer the PACRA scholarship for students of PACRA members.



The **PACRA Pacer**

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

Participating in elections is one of the key freedoms of American life. Many people in countries around the world do not have the same freedom, nor did many Americans in centuries past. No matter what you believe or whom you support, it is important to exercise your rights

How You Can Make Your Voice Heard

If you are not yet 18, or are not a U.S. citizen, you can still participate in the election process. You may not be able to walk into a voting booth, but there are things you can do to get involved:

Be informed! Read up on political issues (both local and national) and figure out where you stand.
Get out and talk to people.

Even if you cannot vote, you can still voice opinions on social media, in your school or local newspaper, or other public forums. You never know who might be listening.

Volunteer. If you support a particular candidate, you can work on their campaign by participating in phone banks, doing door-to-door outreach, writing postcards, or volunteering at campaign headquarters. Your work can help get candidates elected, even if you are not able to vote yourself.

VOTE on
Tuesday, November 8, 2022