

## Los Medanos College and the Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation

The Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation (RSF) has been helping aspiring college students reach their educational goals for nearly sixty years. The Foundation currently focuses on students at six local high school and two community colleges who have demonstrated academic prowess and significant financial need.

Los Medanos College (LMC), added just last year, is one of the two community colleges. Like most California community colleges, LMC offers an abundance of academic programs as well as numerous vocational education training programs, including public safety and health professions, welding, automotive technology and early childhood development to name just a few. This wide range of academic progression and career job opportunities offers the residents of the surrounding communities a wide range of options.

East Contra Costa County communities are ethnically diverse, and LMC reflects that diversity. Of the more than 8,000 students attending the college, 42% are Hispanic/Latino, 20% are White, 11% are Asian, 11% are African American, and 7% represent two or more races. LMC has an open enrollment admission policy, which provides educational opportunities for high academic level performing students as well as students of all learning levels and skills. LMC fully articulates classes and programs with DVC and CCC, permitting students from within and outside Contra Costa County to attend any or all of the district's locations individually or concurrently to complete their classes and training.

At LMC the Foundation works with Financial Aid Scholarship program specialist Beverly Bui. "We are excited for our partnership with the Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation, and greatly appreciate your generosity and support," she reports. "The opportunities created with the support of RSF help open the doors for students who may have thought that higher education was out of reach." Bui is a local East Bay resident, and was raised in the local community.

Eight LMC students received RSF scholarships last year. Among them was Amye Elbert, who faced difficult circumstances throughout her life, including disabilities, four spinal surgeries, divorce, single mother responsibility for her children, caring for her grandson while attending school, participating in non-profit work, working full time when she wasn't attending school. But she persisted. She is currently studying Art Education, at UC Berkeley.

Loyrisha Aucoin-Burroughs is another. "A motivating factor for my return to school was my mother's untimely death from Lung Cancer," she said. "Her death was a depressing and painful set back in my education, but I used the sadness and memory of my mother to strengthen my courage and resolve." Aucoin-Burroughs has been working towards her degree for over twenty years. Returning to school while working full time, as a single mother of four children has been a tough balance. There is the never-ending juggling of childcare and children's activities while trying to attend class and prepare homework." Aucoin-Burroughs now attends San Francisco State University, working toward a degree in business administration.

Uriel Cardoza is one of four children whose parents work full time to support the family. While an LMC student he worked at a restaurant part time, as well as serving as a Mentor Ambassador for LMC's Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement Program. Cardoza is currently a UC-Berkeley student in the Health Care Studies program. He is planning to become a Physician's Assistant serving his Hispanic community.

Submitted by: Al Webster, RSF Trustee