

## Mark your calendar for the April 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

### **“Protecting our Benefits at the Local and State Level”**

By Harry Culotta

The 28<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting of the VCCCD Retirees' Association will take place via Zoom on **Wednesday, April 27, 2022, beginning at 1:00 p.m.**, Pacific Daylight Time. Details on how to log in by computer or telephone can be found at the end of this article. A copy of the agenda, minutes of the last general meeting, and treasurer's report are available on the blog at <http://www.blog.vcccdra.org>.

Your Association has been protecting your benefits at the local level by working for over a year to mitigate the negative effects of the District's moving to CalPERS health insurance and forcing many retirees to enroll in Medicare. The Association has been helping retirees who have had problems because of the changes. The Ad Hoc Legal Committee, co-chaired by Lyn MacConnaire and Patricia Parham will report on the status of discussions with and litigation against VCCCD.

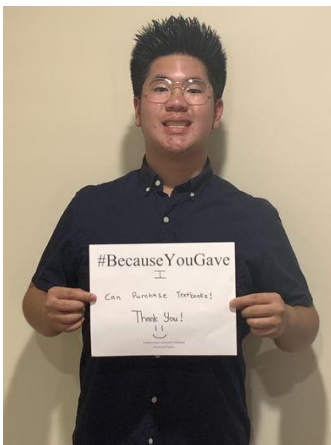
President Moore will introduce the keynote speaker for the annual meeting, Greg Barker, local educator and president of the California Retired Teachers Association, Division 28. His topic is “Protecting our Benefits at the State Level.” Greg will highlight CalRTA's important role in advocating for educators' pensions and other retirement benefits with the legislature and supporting public education in our communities.

President Moore will also introduce Nathan Venzon, the 2021 winner of the Don B. Medley Memorial Scholarship.  
[See **Culotta**, page2]

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## **2021 Don B. Medley Scholarship Recipient**

By Carolyn Dorrance



The second recipient of the Don B. Medley Scholarship offered by this Association is Nathan Venzon. Currently enrolled as a freshman at Moorpark College, Nathan intends to major in Computer Science so that he can help people use emerging technology safely and effectively. This scholarship has enabled Nathan to purchase a computer, an essential tool in contemporary education. He offers his deep thanks to supporters of this “meaningful award.”

His career focus will be on cybersecurity. Privacy, protection of identity and protection of business records are imperative needs that Nathan seeks to help citizens and companies achieve. He wants to be “part of the future.” For many years, Nathan has been an active participant in school, community, and religious organizations.

## April 27 Annual Meeting [Culotta from page 1]

Larry Manson, Nominations Chair, will conduct the election for president, secretary, and treasurer to serve two-year terms, commencing July 1, 2022. If you are interested or know someone who would be interested in serving in one of these offices, please contact Larry at [lmanson@west.net](mailto:lmanson@west.net).

Members of the Executive Board will present an overview of the Association's activities during the past year, as well as initiatives for the upcoming year. A question-and-answer period will follow the meeting, providing opportunities for members to get their questions about insurance and Medicare answered.

You can attend the April 27 annual meeting virtually through Zoom by one of two ways:

1. Members who use a computer can log in to the meeting by logging into the following website:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6892839231?pwd=Z3ZvK01WWVVVSc3VNVVVJMzZuYUxqdz09>  
Next, enter the meeting ID: 689 283 9231  
Finally, enter the meeting passcode: 5xNTby
2. Members who do not use a computer can phone in using any of the numbers below, depending on location.  
Those living in the Ventura area would use the San Jose number.  
1-669-900-6833 (San Jose)  
1-346-248-7799 (Houston)  
1-253-215-8782 (Tacoma)  
1-301-715-8592 (Washington DC)  
1-312-626-6799 (Chicago)  
1-929-205-6099 (New York)  
Next, enter the meeting ID: 689 283 9231  
Finally, enter the meeting passcode: 746330

Please join us for an informative and enlightening annual meeting on **Wednesday, April 27, 2022, beginning at 1:00 p.m.**, Pacific Daylight Time.

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## Legal Update for VCCCDRA

Submitted By Lyn MacConnaire

The VCCCDRA hired Erica Deutsch from Bush Gottlieb in July 2020 to represent the Ventura County Community College District Retirees' Association. Settlement negotiations continue with the District. We are currently waiting for a response to our last proposal. We have offered mediation as a possibility if we are unable to come to a resolution. We will also need to continue our litigation efforts if we are unable to settle.

## What Is the Ventura County Community College District Retirees' Association and Why Should I Support It?

By Diane Moore

The Ventura County Community College District Retirees' Association (VCCCDRA) is an association of all retired members of the college district who, according to its bylaws, "share concerns for the VCCCD and the success of its goals. The Association provides a voice to the District in regard to Board actions that may affect retirees." For the past year we have been attempting to help the District understand the unanticipated problems created for retirees as a result of the movement to PERS health insurance and the requirement that many retirees must sign up for Medicare. We have also worked with over two hundred retirees who have been caught up in a bureaucratic maze as they attempt to comply with the resulting complexities, through one-on-one problem-solving sessions, workshops, and Q&A sessions.

According to the bylaws, another important purpose of the Association is "To provide educational, recreational, and social activities for its members." Although COVID curtailed our getting together in person for the past two years, the Social Committee is excited about once again planning social events in the near future as it becomes safe to gather together.

If our Association is going to continue to meet your needs and those of your colleagues, we ask you to pay your annual membership of \$20 or become a lifetime member for \$200 (see page 7 for the process) and to respond generously when you receive a letter from Dr. Diane Moore, President, in the next several weeks asking for your contribution to the legal defense fund.



### LEND A HAND!

Do you have a few hours a week to help your retired colleagues by serving as the President, Treasurer or Secretary on the Executive Board of the VCCCD Retirees' Association? We are looking for nominees to run for these positions at the General Meeting on April 27.

The Executive Board meets for two hours once a month working to provide a voice to the district regarding Board actions that may affect retirees and to keep an eye on issues retirees may face regarding benefits.

The following offices are open: **President, Secretary and Treasurer. Run for Office Now!** Send an email to Larry Manson, our nomination chair, ([lmanson@west.net](mailto:lmanson@west.net)) and let him know you are interested in running. The term of office is for two years.

Do not hesitate. Join your retiree board. You will be serving along-side some of the best in our ranks.

## Don't Miss Out on Benefit Opportunities!!!

By Diane Moore and Marta Freixas

If you answer "NO" to any of the following questions, you might be missing out on benefits to which you are entitled:

1. If you or your spouse or partner is eligible for Medicare, are you signed up?
2. If you, your spouse or partner, or disabled child are signed up for Medicare, are you receiving monthly reimbursement from the District for all Medicare premiums?
3. Have you obtained District-provided health insurance coverage? Is it on-going?
4. If you have PERS Platinum Medicare Supplement insurance and have purchased hearing aids within the past 90 days, have you applied for the \$2,000 reimbursement available from PERS Platinum?
5. If you are the spouse of a deceased retiree, have you been contacted by the District regarding possible eligibility for health insurance benefits?

To get more information and resolve any issues, contact VCCCD Human Resources: Janice Endo, 805-652-5531, [Janice\\_endo1@vcccd.edu](mailto:Janice_endo1@vcccd.edu) or Katy Lyon, 805-652-5535, [klyon@vcccd.edu](mailto:klyon@vcccd.edu) or VCCCD Human Resources, 761 E Daily Dr., Camarillo, CA 93010.

**Please also contact Diane Moore**, VCCCD Retirees' Association President, [vcccdra@gmail.com](mailto:vcccdra@gmail.com) or VCCCD Retirees' Association, PO Box 6216, Ventura, CA 93006, as we are trying to identify problems that members are having so we can be of help.

In addition, you could help by contacting us if you've answered "YES" to any of the following questions:

1. Is there any District retiree you know, especially someone who may have become disabled or entered a nursing home after retirement, who has no health insurance coverage – even if the loss was temporary? We want to get them covered.
2. Do you or anyone in your family receive a yearly rather than quarterly or monthly bill from Social Security for part of your Medicare Part B payment? We are trying to get legislation passed to protect your insurance in the event of a missed payment.
3. Has anyone in your family or any District retiree you know had difficulties getting reimbursed for prescription drugs or faced financial difficulty due to a costly drug?

For up-to-date notifications on important benefit information, continue to regularly check the blog [www.blog.vcccdra.org](http://www.blog.vcccdra.org).



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**Do not hesitate. Join your VCCCD retiree board.**

## Membership Report

BY JOY KOBAYASHI

**Please join me in welcoming our valued colleagues to the VCCCD Retirees Association and in wishing them a long and satisfying retirement.**

Barbara Arriaga	VC	Thomas Arellano	MC	Tricia Bergman	VC
Larry Buckley	DO	Octavio Garcia	VC	Constance Grizzard	MC
Michyn Hines	MC	Roy Howell	MC	Peggy Kinney	VC
Janice Kisch	DO	David Kramer	VC	Kerry Mehle	MC
Johanna Miller	DO	Maiya Rodriguez	VC	Kim Slane	DO
Linda Vickers	MC				

Dear VCCCD Retirees,

The Executive Board of the VCCCD Retirees Association consists exclusively of volunteers who donate their time and energy to keep you informed on matters affecting your retirement. Printing and mailing these newsletters are our biggest expense—over \$2,000 in the last year. Your Association depends on your membership dues to cover these and other necessary expenses. PLEASE consider joining as a Lifetime Member for \$200 or at the yearly rate of \$20. Send your check to:

VCCCD Retirees Association  
P.O. Box 6216  
Ventura, CA 93006-6216

I am still trying to collect email address for all Members of the Association. If you have not been receiving our email updates on our legal situation, or know of someone who isn't, please send the appropriate address to me at: [tandemstocker@roadrunner.com](mailto:tandemstocker@roadrunner.com). Joy

## In Memoriam

*We honor the memory of our departed colleagues and extend our sincerest condolences to their families, friends, and associates.*

Sidney Adler

Robert Gonzales

Robert Long

Tom Roe

Sexton Stewart

## 2022 – 2023 VCCCDRA Directory

It is time to publish a new name and contact directory for the Retirees' Association and to update our confidential data base with current contact information. To that end, please fill out the form below and return it to Joy Kobayashi by email or US postal mail postmarked by Friday, 29 April 2022.

a) mail to:

Joy Kobayashi  
7960 Pearl Street  
Ventura, CA 93004

or

b) scan or photograph it and email as an attachment to:

[tandemstoker@roadrunner.com](mailto:tandemstoker@roadrunner.com)

Please note that you will have to submit this form even if you have requested that we not print your information in the past.

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To ensure that we print only what you want, please **underline, or circle the information you do NOT want** published in the directory that goes to members.

Name:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

Email:

Joy will be taking pre-orders for the Directory until April 29, 2022. If you would like to purchase a Directory, please be sure to fill in the form above and mail a check for **\$10** made out to VCCCDRA to Joy Kobayashi at the address above.

**If you do not respond by Friday, 29 April 2022, we will publish**

**all**

**the contact information we have for you in our database.**

**You will also not be able to buy a Directory**

## Confessions of a Retiree

By Diane Moore, VCCCDRA President

Over the past twelve years I have been grateful that my thirty years of work in the VCCCD provided me with lifetime health benefits that required a minimal amount of my attention.

However, suddenly in the midst of the COVID lockdown, my peace of mind was shattered by the District's mandated changes in health benefit providers. I found myself floundering as I tried to keep up with the mandated deadlines for taking various actions as I tried to navigate the bureaucratic maze of Social Security, Medicare and its Medicare Easy Pay plan, CalPERS, Benefits Coordinators Corporation (BCC) and its digital Smart Care Portal, Anthem Blue Cross, Optum RX, MES Vision Care and Delta Dental.

I was now faced with making many decisions and meeting deadlines about things with important consequences to my health and that of my family, with little information and not much help. I understood that the District had a company called BCC that was supposed to reimburse me and my spouse for our Medicare costs; however, despite attempts to set up the Smart Care Portal and calls to BCC, I could not seem to get reimbursements and finally gave up.

It was then that I was asked to join our VCCCD Retirees' Association as Interim President, and I agreed. I am embarrassed to confess that I had not previously thought much about our Retirement Association. I assumed its primary purpose was to provide opportunities for retirees to meet and socialize with colleagues.

After attending my first meeting of the Executive Board in May, I was amazed to learn that, beyond planning social activities, these fifteen volunteer board member retirees have been spending hundreds of hours over the past two years, not only helping members deal with the same problems that I had been experiencing, but also trying to get the District to proactively help retirees with these issues, and eventually filing a lawsuit to force the District to provide health benefits to retirees commensurate with active employees (which was mandated in 2008 by a previous court judgement). We are now in the midst of that time consuming and expensive battle. In the near future I will be writing you a letter to share our progress and ask you once again to help with legal costs.

In the past six months of working with the Board members, I have been amazed at their dedication to helping others, their generosity in donating so many hours that could be spent doing fun things in retirement, and their caring concern for each other as team members.

Most recently the Web and Blog Committee has updated the [blog.vcccdra.org](http://blog.vcccdra.org) and created a new page called TOPICS ON HEALTHCARE COVERAGE FOR RETIREES (found in the PAGES section of the blog on the right-hand side in alphabetical order.) There you will find the most current information on hearing aid reimbursements, Delta Dental benefits, and MES Vision Care. The Board has also written letters to our congresspeople on your behalf asking for legislation that would allow annual Medicare payments to be automated. In addition, the Legal Committee has spent many hours working on proposals to the District to right the wrongs of the current insurance situation. I hope you will take advantage of the help provided you by the VCCCD Retirees' Association and join me in thanking the Executive Board members (listed elsewhere in this newsletter) for all their excellent work! Thank you for your support! **Diane**

**VCCCD Retirees' Association**  
**P.O. Box 6216**  
**Ventura, CA 93006-6216**

Place  
Postage  
Here

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

# The Monitor

Spring 2022

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Ventura County Community College District Retirees' Association  
2021-2011 Executive Board

**Diane Moore, President**  
**Rene` G. Rodriguez, Immediate Past President**  
**Carmen Guerrero, Vice President**  
**Marie Soo Hoo, Secretary**  
**Patricia Gage, Treasurer**  
**Harry R. Culotta, Benefits Committee Chair**  
**Joy Kobayashi, Membership Committee Chair**  
**Larry Manson Educational Issues Committee Chair**  
**Carolyn Dorrance, Scholarship Committee Chair**  
**Marta Freixas, At-Large Representative**  
**Sandy Hajas, Newsletter**  
**Ruth Hemming, At-Large Representative**  
**Joan Smith, At Large Representative**

[vcccdra@gmail.com](mailto:vcccdra@gmail.com)  
[vcccdra2@gmail.com](mailto:vcccdra2@gmail.com)  
[cguerr49@gmail.com](mailto:cguerr49@gmail.com)  
[masoohoo@twc.com](mailto:masoohoo@twc.com)  
[pgage5545@roadrunner.com](mailto:pgage5545@roadrunner.com)  
[hculotta@fastmail.com](mailto:hculotta@fastmail.com)  
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[shajas@gmail.com](mailto:shajas@gmail.com)  
[vcccdra@gmail.com](mailto:vcccdra@gmail.com)  
[ccpresident@hotmail.com](mailto:ccpresident@hotmail.com)