Welcome to the first edition of the President’s Update! This monthly electronic message will provide you with campus news and highlights to keep you involved with the University of La Verne. Our campus is definitely on the move, with many exciting and momentous events taking place during the month of March alone.

Co-Founder of the United Farm Workers and activist, Dolores Huerta, was a guest on our campus for International Women’s Day - inspiring our students to take a stand for social justice. We also hosted our President’s Dinner Gala, which honored The East Los Angeles Community Union’s dynamic couple Dr. David and Priscilla Lizárraga for their contributions to higher education. The evening had a record turn-out and raised nearly $500,000 dollars for student scholarships. March also focused largely on community engagement, with members of our Enactus club teaming up with Lowe’s Companies, Inc. to plant gardens at a local children’s development center, and our own students and faculty welcoming 300 middle school students to campus to give them a glimpse of the college experience through our Promise Scholars Program.

The coming months promise to bring even more excitement and energy. In April, we will be cheering on our Debate Team as they compete against 164 other collegiate teams from around the country to become the U.S. Universities National Debate Champion - all taking place on our beautiful campus. We will also be honoring Biology Professor Dr. Robert Neher at his retirement celebration, thanking him for more than 50 years of dedicated service to the University of La Verne. There is much to reflect upon and even more to look forward to in the months ahead for La Verne.

Sincerely,
Devorah Lieberman, Ph.D.
University of La Verne students Blanca Gonzalez and Fernando Campos join President Devorah Lieberman on stage to honor Dr. David and Mrs. Priscilla Lizárraga.

2013 President’s Dinner Gala

The University of La Verne and nearly 1,000 guests honored Dr. David and Mrs. Priscilla Lizárraga at the 2013 President’s Dinner Gala Saturday, March 16. Dr. and Mrs. Lizárraga are the CEO and Senior Vice President of The East Los Angeles Community Union (TELACU), and have dedicated their lives to community and economic development in Southern California.

The evening highlighted and honored the generous support the Lizárragas have provided, through scholarships, for countless students in the Los Angeles area, including La Verne. The event helped raise nearly $500,000 for La Verne student scholarships, allowing many to achieve their dreams of completing a college education with less financial strain.

Government officials, community dignitaries, and new and longtime La Verne faithful friends alike turned out for the elegant evening at Sheraton Fairplex Hotel’s Conference Center. KABC-TV reporter Sid Garcia served as the evening’s master of ceremonies.

View Photos Here.

Weeklong Piano Festival Unites University Jazz and Classical Artists

The University of La Verne Department of Music hosted Pianofest, its inaugural weeklong Piano festival, March 11 - 17 in Morgan Auditorium.

The wide-ranging repertoire, from beloved classics to adventuresome avant-garde world premieres, was performed in a series of concerts by university musicians from around Southern California and Nevada, including University of La Verne’s own Professor of Music Reed Gratz, Assistant Professor of Music Grace Zhao, Senior Adjunct Professor Gayle Serdan and Senior Adjunct Professor Marge Chen.

Pianofest’s closing concert featured a dueling piano session titled, “A Celebration: the Brilliance of Two-Piano Music.”
Activist Dolores Huerta encouraged students, faculty and staff at the University of La Verne to take a stand for diversity and inclusivity during Diversity Week’s community presentation on International Women’s Day on Friday, March 8.

“Today, we are here to celebrate Women’s Day,” Huerta said. “Women are a very important part of the struggle for justice.”

Speaking on the topics of gender inequality and immigration, Huerta shared that creating job opportunities for all people and empowering them to be self-sufficient is the key to success.

She co-founded the United States’ largest farm workers’ union, United Farm Workers, with Cesar Chavez in 1962. She also helped secure the passage of California’s Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975. Her dedication to helping fight social injustices through the years has made her one of the most influential civil rights leaders in America today, and at 82, she’s still working.

Read More.
Promise Scholars

The University of La Verne hosted its third annual Promise Scholars Day on Friday, March 15. Faculty and students welcomed nearly 300 students and their parents from De Anza Middle School in the Ontario-Montclair School District for a day dedicated to giving kids a head start on college preparation.

Activities for the students and their parents included a campus tour, a first generation college student panel and workshops designed to provide a true glimpse of what to expect in college. Community Relations and Outreach Director Sharon Cruz-McKinney worked with parents to help them help their children realize their dreams of attending college.

Students and parents learned everything that they need to know about tuition, financial aid, emotional concerns and practical considerations.

Ready For Takeoff

Three years into his collegiate career, Paul Turner has already established himself as one of the best athletes in Leopard track & field history. His impressive resume includes an NCAA individual national title, four All-America performances, six conference event championships and a school record.

Last season, Turner leaped 50-9½ feet in the triple jump at the first SCIAC Quad-rangular meet in March, becoming the first Leopard to reach the 50-foot mark in that event. His effort established a new La Verne record and was the second-best triple jump performance in Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference history. That achievement, along with being undefeated in conference meets in both the long and triple jumps, propelled him to the 2012 SCIAC Men’s Field Athlete of the Year award.

Partnering for Success

Partnering for Success III: Moving Education Forward, a conference hosted by the Consortium of Southern California Colleges and Universities, took place on La Verne’s main campus on Tuesday, March 19.

Keynote speaker Patrick Perry of the California Community College Chancellor’s Office presented information about transfer trends and statistics for California community colleges, including Cal State universities, UC schools and private institutions. The conference connected more than 200 Southern California community college transfer center directors, deans and counselors from CSCCU institutions.

Save the Dates:

Don Dunn Memorial Golf Tournament (4/6)

A fun day of recreation and networking is planned as the University of La Verne College of Law and the Society of Legal Studies & Business host the fifth annual Don Dunn Memorial Golf Tournament on April 6, 2013.

Read More.

British Parliamentary, National Debate Tournament in America (4/12 - 14)

Kicking off its 101st year, University of La Verne Debate Team will compete with 164 teams to be crowned U.S. Universities National Debate Champion. The debate championship will be hosted on La Verne’s main campus.

Read More.

Track & field standout Paul Turner heads into senior season with lofty expectations.

Middle School student Michael Diaz joins his peers for a session of artistic expression through paint.

Dr. Steven Gold from Trident University addresses audience.