A Message from President Lieberman

“The University of La Verne is ranked as one of the top 50 national institutions that give “the Best Bang for the Buck.” That was one of several college ranking assessments that came out this month. And, while we were gratified to be recognized for the value we give, any ranking by data only tells part of the story. Behind the data and rankings are the actual academic and co-curricular strategies and activities that tell more of the story about what is happening at La Verne.

September brought a whirl-wind of action and events that fill in those details of the valuable experience of the La Verne education. We hosted our second annual Latino Education Access and Development (LEAD) Conference, empowering more than 1,200 high school students and their families to believe that college is achievable for everyone. We heard from noted author Elizabeth Kolbert’s “Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature and Climate Change” as part of our One Book, One University program. We learned about Ethics in the Business World from our own local expert, former California Attorney General John Van de Kamp.

We continue to share our experience of ‘theory to practice’ learning. This month I traveled to our nation’s capital to attend President Obama’s Third Annual Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge. As president of a university that has community engagement and diversity grounded in its core values, it was important to hear perspectives from the nation’s leaders in higher education on how we can enhance these programs on our campuses.

On a terribly sad note, this month the university community lost our respected friend and colleague, Will Darity. Will was our Sports Information Director, dedicating 18 years of service to the University of La Verne. When I attended Will’s memorial service and listened to others talk about how he touched their lives deeply and daily, it was apparent that over Will’s lifetime, he made faculty, staff, students, friends, and family feel very, very special. Will was taken from us far too soon but his legacy will continue in our hearts.

Life is a gift and I encourage all of us to demonstrate this on a daily basis. Remember our own values, treat others with respect and civility, be patient and generous with our compassion and willingness to help those with whom we interact so that they can achieve more than they ever imagined.

Sincerely,

Devorah Lieberman, Ph.D.

University of La Verne named “Best Bang for the Buck” by Washington Monthly

University of La Verne was recently the only private institution in the country to make the top 50 of Washington Monthly’s National Universities “Best Bang for the Buck” listing. One of only 79 qualifying institutions to make the list, La Verne earned 48th place and is the highest of five California-based private universities so rated. This year was the first time the publication rated the economic value students receive per-dollar. Read More.
LEAD Conference Inspires Latino Families to Pursue Higher Education

The University of La Verne’s second annual Latino Education Access and Development (LEAD) Conference September 21, was all about empowering young Latinos. Mission accomplished.

With a high-impact lineup of speakers delivering powerful messages, the 1,200 or so in attendance received cutting insight from giants in science, entertainment, education, government and other industries during breakout and panel discussions.

Latino students and their parents were encouraged to seek out college as an option, not just a far-off dream. Presenters on several panels shared their stories and successes as well as their struggles. The goal was to show students that no matter what their circumstances, success is within their reach.

Such strong and focused exhortations made the LEAD Conference, La Verne’s Day of Community Empowerment, a success.

Read More.

Elizabeth Kolbert, journalist and author of Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change, spoke to more than 300 freshmen September 25, about the state of the planet and the effect mankind is having on it in the age of global warming. Her book is this year’s selection for the One Book, One University program series.

As part of the Freshman La Verne Experience, the One Book, One University program promotes reading and the discussion of diverse perspectives as a common intellectual experience for students.

Getting to the heart of the debate over global warming, Kolbert’s lecture to the Class of 2017 inspired critical thought about how each individual is responsible for the changes that occur on the planet - both the good and the bad.

La Verne Community Mourns Passing of Sports Information Director Will Darity

William E. Darity, Sports Information Director for the University of La Verne, passed away on September 18, after suffering a major heart attack. He was 43. Darity served as a staff member at La Verne for 18 years, during which time he also earned his master’s degree from the University. The unexpected news of his passing stunned the university community.

Darity was instrumental in helping La Verne’s track & field program win four Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC) championships and guiding some of the University’s top athletes to the NCAA Division III Championships. Read More.
This month in the online edition of

Parting With Their Hair, For Kids

Five members of the University of La Verne football team got major lengths of their hair cut off September 26 - all for the sake of children in need. The hair will be donated to Locks Of Love, an organization that creates prosthetic hairpieces for children suffering from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis.

The effort is part of the team’s “Beyond The Goalpost” program, which reaches out to help with such causes in the community.

“This is one way we try to live the mission of the university, service in the community,” Quarterbacks Coach Brent Baier said. “The Beyond The Goalpost program is something Coach (Chris) Krich started a couple of years ago as a way to give our players the opportunity to give back and be active helping in the community.”

Read More.

Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge

In an effort to broaden the scope of the University of La Verne’s focus on fostering diverse communities and civic engagement, President Devorah Lieberman traveled to Washington D.C. September 23 – 24 to participate in President Obama’s Third Annual Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge.

Accepting an invitation extended to select university presidents across the nation, President Lieberman was asked to contribute to the planning of the 2013-2014 Interfaith and Community Service Challenge, hosted by Executive Director of White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, Melissa Rogers.

Accompanied by La Verne students Jackie Perez, Yelsse Bahena, University Chaplain Zandra Wagoner and Director of Civic and Community Engagement Marisol Morales, President Lieberman spent two days at the White House and Georgetown University with colleagues in higher education from around the country - all focusing on ways to enhance community and student engagement programs on college campuses.

President Lieberman participated as a panelist during a discussion on ways to strengthen community service programs on college campuses. She was joined by George Washington University community engagement officers, Amy Cohen and Timothy Kane. Representatives from the U.S. Department of Education and the Corporation for National and Community Service also provided insight during the discussion.

While visiting the nation’s capital, President Lieberman also connected with Undersecretary of Education Martha Kantor about President Obama’s higher education plan.

John Van de Kamp Makes the Case for Ethics in the Business World

University of La Verne students were given a unique opportunity September 12 when they received a lesson on business ethics from Former California Attorney General John Van de Kamp. The first in a series of lectures hosted by the College of Business & Public Management, the presentation was organized by Special Assistant to the President and Assistant Professor of Public Administration Phil Hawkey and President of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership Cynthia Kurtz.

“I can tell you personally he is a master at what he does,” Kurtz said. “He has the ability to cut through all the rhetoric that surrounds the issue and he deals directly with the ethical questions involved.” Kurtz, who has worked for Van de Kamp, said that he is able to help others understand the true heart of the matter. Read More.
Looking Ahead: La Verne’s 2020 Strategic Vision

For generations, the University of La Verne has provided a quality education to a diverse student population, a fact attested to by more than 60,000 alumni worldwide.

More than two years in the making, the University’s 2020 Strategic Vision: Achieve More than You Ever Imagined, unites the purpose articulated by the University’s mission statement with the institution’s desire to evolve as it meets the future needs of its students as well as the local and global communities it serves.

Just as the mission statement has been the foundation for the University’s continuing success, this visionary plan is designed to build the institution’s identity, support its goals and help it provide academic and experiential learning to its students. The project is one of the most comprehensive strategic plans ever undertaken by La Verne.

Read More.

Building the Sukkah in Celebration of Jewish Festival

In celebration of the week-long Jewish festival of Sukkot, members of the Hillel Jewish culture club at the University of La Verne constructed and decorated a sukkah on campus September 18 in Sneaky Park.

A sukkah, a Jewish traditional hut, is reminiscent of the days when early Jewish travelers built temporary shelters in which to live, sleep and eat on their journey after being freed from slavery. Building on the university’s mission to promote cultural and religious tolerance and diversity on campus, the goal of the sukkah is to generate an appreciation of Jewish traditions.

“The goal is to build community and raise awareness,” said Carissa Miranda, vice president of the La Verne Hillel club.

Following the construction, Cantor Paul Buch from Temple Beth Israel in Pomona offered a community blessing of the sukkah through song and praise.

Read More.

Republican Club Hosts Book Drive for Claremont Prison Library Project

Though the United States makes up less than five percent of the world’s population, the U.S. has more than 25 percent of the world’s prisoners. In response to the needs of these prisoners, the University of La Verne Republican Club is partnering with Claremont Forum’s Prison Library Project to get much-needed books to prisoners.

The ongoing book drive the club has organized is currently collecting donations for the Claremont Forum. The Republican Club has set up a collection site in the Wilson Library near the exit and will make weekly deliveries to the Forum bookstore in Claremont. Claremont Forum’s Prison Library Project is a nonprofit community service. Its mission is “sending quality books to inmates nationwide to help address issues of literacy, personal responsibility, and growth.” Read More.