



Lamar Community College President's September 2024 Report

President – Dr. Rosana Reyes



TRANSFORM THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE.

Student Life

Suicide Prevention Awareness Week

Lamar Community College (LCC) recently observed Suicide Prevention Awareness Week, a meaningful series of events aimed at raising awareness and promoting mental health support across the campus and community.

Throughout the week, students, staff, and community members contributed to the Wall of Hope, writing positive messages designed to inspire and uplift those facing challenges. This powerful display served as a reminder that no one is alone, and every voice matters in creating a supportive environment.

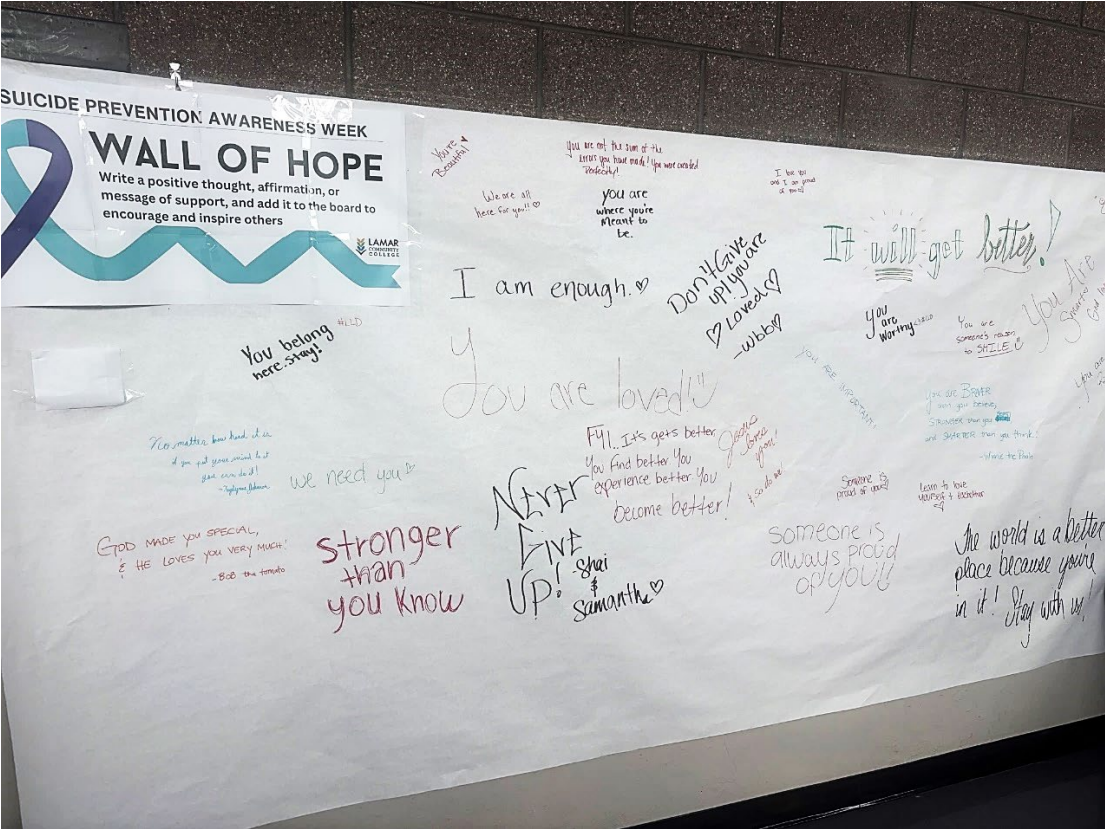
On Teal Tuesday, participants wore teal, the official color of suicide prevention, to show solidarity with those affected by mental health struggles and to help break the stigma surrounding these issues.

LCC also distributed gratitude journals, encouraging mindfulness and self-care through the daily practice of gratitude.

A highlight of the week was the Suicide Prevention Panel, where Anthony LaTour shared his deeply personal journey following the loss of his son to suicide. His moving story emphasized the importance of seeking help, supporting one another, and fostering open conversations about mental health.

The week concluded with the 6th Annual Anthony W. LaTour Memorial Fund 5K Run and Walk, honoring Anthony’s son and raising awareness for suicide prevention. Participants gathered to celebrate life, remember those lost to suicide, and strengthen the community's commitment to mental health awareness.

Lamar Community College was proud to host these events, promoting connection, hope, and support for all those impacted by mental health challenges.



International Students Organization

Lamar Community College (LCC) is excited to announce the formation of a new International Students Organization on campus. This club aims to create a supportive space for international students to connect, share experiences, and navigate the unique challenges they face when studying in the U.S.

Currently, the group is focusing on addressing issues such as cultural adjustment, language barriers, academic expectations, and the complexities of student visas. Through open discussions, peer support, and resources, the organization is dedicated to helping international students thrive both academically and personally.

This new initiative reflects LCC's commitment to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for students from all over the world.

Movie Night

Lamar Community College (LCC) recently held a successful student movie night, bringing together students for a relaxed evening of entertainment and socializing. The event, organized by Student Life, provided a much-needed break from classes and a chance for students to unwind. Held in the campus commons, the movie night featured a popular blockbuster film chosen through a student poll, ensuring the selection resonated with attendees.

Popcorn, snacks, and drinks were provided, giving the evening a traditional cinema feel. The event fostered a strong sense of community, with students from different programs coming together to enjoy the experience. LCC's commitment to enhancing student life and building camaraderie on campus was clear through the success of this event. Many students expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to connect with their peers in a fun and informal setting.



Splash n' Sizzle

Lamar Community College recently hosted its exciting "Splash 'n Sizzle" Student Life event, offering students a fun-filled afternoon of water games and delicious BBQ. The event featured water gun battles, water balloon fights, and plenty of opportunities for students to cool off and unwind after a busy week of classes.

With the sizzling barbeque, provided by Lucky's BBQ, attendees enjoyed great food and camaraderie, making the event a perfect way to beat the heat while connecting with friends. "Splash 'n Sizzle" highlighted LCC's commitment to providing engaging, community-building events that bring students together for fun and relaxation.

9/11 Parade

On September 11, Lamar Community College (LCC) staff, faculty, and students came together to participate in a heartfelt 9/11 Memorial Parade, honoring the lives lost and the bravery of first responders during the tragic events of 2001. The parade, held in downtown Lamar, was a powerful display of unity and reflection for the entire community.

LCC representatives proudly marched alongside local organizations, waving American flags and paying tribute to the heroes of that day. The presence of LCC students was especially meaningful, as their participation deeply resonated with the local community. Many residents expressed their appreciation for the students' involvement, recognizing it as a powerful reminder of the importance of intergenerational support and remembrance.

This parade not only fostered a spirit of remembrance and patriotism but also strengthened the bond between LCC and the community. LCC's dedication to honoring those who serve, as well as its commitment to community involvement, was on full display.



Basketball – Confidence Require No Shortcuts

The Lamar Community College (LCC) men’s basketball team is not just working hard on the court but is also growing off it through weekly motivational events. With 16 dedicated athletes on the roster, the team has been participating in a series of activities aimed at building character, discipline, and teamwork. These include guest speakers, intense team workouts, and valuable life lessons.

During week two, the players learned about the "rule of compound"—the idea that small, consistent efforts lead to significant results. The week ended with a rigorous weight room challenge known as "the gauntlet," followed by a fun treat of rolled ice cream, celebrating their hard work.

In week three, the focus was on gratitude, with the players learning to appreciate everything while understanding that entitlement leads nowhere. The energy within the team has been electric, with coaches emphasizing the importance of hard work and commitment.

By week five, the team’s confidence was growing, fueled by a powerful speech from former LCC athlete Anthony LaTour on the concept of "multiply"—the word of the week. They were also blessed with a visit from Lane Gooden, along with support from the coach’s parents.

These weekly events have not only strengthened the team physically but have also fostered a sense of unity and mental toughness, preparing the Lopes for success both on and off the court.



Yahweh Today Christian Club Hosts Spaghetti Dinner

Lamar Community College’s Yahweh Today Christian Club recently hosted a warm and welcoming spaghetti dinner, inviting students from the dorms to enjoy a meal and fellowship.

Sponsored by alternating community churches, this event was backed by the Lamar Missionary Baptist Church, with Pastor Travis Horn leading the sponsorship for the evening.

The dinner provided students with an opportunity to connect with one another, while also engaging with members of the local church community. Pastor Horn and his congregation ensured the students felt at home, sharing not only a delicious meal but also words of encouragement and faith.

These dinners, organized by the Yahweh Today Christian Club, are part of an ongoing effort to build relationships between LCC students and local churches, fostering a supportive and uplifting environment on campus. Both students and community members expressed their appreciation for the event, which helped strengthen ties between the college and the wider community.



TRANSFORM OUR OWN WORKFORCE EXPERIENCE

New Employees

Welcome Student Life Coordinator – Anthony Letteer

With over 18 years of experience in youth development, Anthony specializes in mentoring, leadership training, and personal growth programs. His work is centered on helping young people reach their full potential through counseling, team-building, and active community involvement. Anthony is deeply passionate about creating inclusive environments where youth can thrive, ensuring they are prepared for success in both academic and social settings. His dedication to empowering the next generation has made a lasting impact on countless young lives.



Welcome Recruitment and Re-Engagement Program Manager – Gabe Benabides

Gabriel Benabides is a resolute leader with over five years of experience across Customer service, Healthcare, Higher Education, and Child Welfare. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the Metropolitan State University of Denver and an Associate of Science from Lamar Community College. His career includes roles such as Child Welfare Caseworker at the Department of Human Services, Clinic Office Supervisor at UC Health, and Assistant Resident Director at Regency Student Housing.

Faith plays a vital role in Gabriel's life, guiding him both personally and professionally. His values of compassion, integrity, and service are deeply rooted in his spiritual beliefs, and he approaches each role with a keen sense of purpose and commitment to helping others. Family is also of immense importance to Gabriel, as he draws inspiration from his loved ones to continuously foster supportive and nurturing environments in his work.

In addition to his professional experience, Gabriel's passion for basketball has kept him connected to sports throughout his life. As a former student-athlete who played basketball at Lamar Community College, he is especially excited to return to LCC, where he will be part of the college's vibrant sports culture once again, now as a proud supporter of its Athletic programs.

Welcome Cosmetology Faculty – Natalie Mills

Natalie Mills, a proud graduate of Lamar Community College's 1996 Cosmetology program, has built an impressive career in the beauty industry. With years of experience, she has managed and helped open numerous successful salons both across Colorado and internationally. Currently, Natalie runs her own thriving business in La Junta, where she now resides, just a few miles from her alma mater. In addition to her hands-on experience, she has pursued extensive continuing education in hair, nails, and skincare, enhancing her expertise through studies at Rocky Mountain Laser College and Xenon International Beauty School. Passionate about education, Natalie now shares her wealth of knowledge with her students, finding great joy in mentoring them and watching their skills grow day by day.



Volleyball Officials Hall of Fame

Lamar Community College (LCC) proudly celebrates the induction of longtime employee Ava Bair into the Colorado Volleyball Officials Hall of Fame. Ava has been recognized for her exceptional contributions to volleyball officiating in Colorado, honoring her 42 years of service and dedication to upholding the highest standards of the profession.

Ava's journey with the Colorado Volleyball Officials Association (CVOA) spans over four decades, during which she has served as the Area 17 Director for 36 years and the Area 17 Assignor for 38 years. Her invaluable expertise has made her a pivotal figure in the volleyball community, where she has officiated the state tournament for over 30 years, including four Finals as a referee and many more as a line judge. In recognition of her outstanding performance, she was named the 1996 IBM Official of the Week and the 2001 NFHS Outstanding Official for Colorado.

Beyond her official duties, Ava has made significant contributions to the development of future officials. She helped outline a college curriculum for officiating at the local community college, served as a trainer in Area 17 and at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) Officials Camps, and actively worked scrimmages to help new and veteran officials improve. Ava's leadership extended beyond her local community, as she assisted at regional tournaments across the state, preparing herself and others for the demands of the State tournament.

Ava's induction into the Hall of Fame is a testament to her skill, integrity, and years of unwavering commitment to volleyball officiating. Her dedication aligns perfectly with CVOA's mission to promote excellence, fair play, and sportsmanship in the sport. The LCC community is

proud to celebrate Ava's well-deserved recognition, which not only honors her individual accomplishments but also inspires the next generation of volleyball officials across Colorado.



CREATE EDUCATION WITHOUT BARRIERS THROUGH TRANSFORMATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Horse Judging Clinic

Lamar Community College (LCC) invites local FFA student horse enthusiasts and aspiring judges to its upcoming Horse Judging Clinic on September 25th from 1:00 to 5:00 PM. This hands-on event offers participants the opportunity to enhance their horse judging skills under the guidance of LCC alumna, Abigail Schmidt. Abigail, a seasoned expert in the field, will share her insights and knowledge to help attendees better understand the nuances of horse judging.

In addition to expert instruction, the LCC Ranch Horse Team will provide live demonstrations, featuring reining, ranch riding, and ranch trail patterns. These demonstrations will give participants a real-world view of the judging process in action, offering a unique educational experience.

National Western Stock Show Horseman's Challenge

Lamar Community College is proud to introduce Ty, a freshman from Corona, New Mexico, who recently earned recognition as the Reserve Champion at the Collegiate Horseman's Challenge during the National Western Stock Show. Alongside this impressive achievement, Ty was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship for his exceptional performance.

Ty is a member of LCC's Ranch Horse Team and has shown remarkable skill and dedication in his horsemanship. The entire LCC community congratulates Ty on his success, both in competition and in securing this prestigious scholarship. We look forward to seeing what he accomplishes next!



REDEFINE OUR VALUE PROPOSITION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY, AFFORDABILITY, QUALITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE.

Title V Grant – HSI

Lamar Community College (LCC) has been awarded a \$3 million Title V grant as part of the Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Program. This significant funding will support Project Aspira – To Aspire, a transformative initiative aimed at expanding access and enhancing support for low-income and Hispanic students.

Project Aspira will focus on creating pathways for student success by providing academic resources, financial assistance, and personal development opportunities. The project aims to inspire and empower students to overcome challenges, pursue higher education, and achieve their academic and career goals.

This grant reflects LCC's commitment to fostering an inclusive learning environment and ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have the tools and support needed to thrive. With Project Aspira, LCC is dedicated to uplifting and inspiring the next generation of leaders in the Hispanic community.

Morgan Community College Visit – Construction Trades Program Tour

Lamar Community College (LCC) recently welcomed representatives from Morgan Community College (MCC) to discuss the Construction Trades program and tour the homes remodeled and built by LCC students. The visiting MCC team included Deb Coates, VP of Instruction; Erik Richter, Dean of Workforce Development; Holly Haman-Marcum, Director of Regional

Community Outreach for Burlington and Wray; Curt Freed, President; and Robbin Schincke, Director of Regional and Community Outreach for Limon and Bennett.

During their visit, the MCC representatives had the opportunity to see firsthand the impressive work being done by LCC's Construction Trades students, who are gaining valuable hands-on experience by building and remodeling homes. The tour underscored the importance of practical learning in workforce development and highlighted the success of LCC's program in preparing students for careers in the construction industry.

LCC and MCC are working collaboratively to support each other's efforts and advance the "Power of 13" initiative, a Colorado Community Colleges System program aimed at enhancing educational opportunities and workforce development across the state. This partnership between the two colleges demonstrates a shared commitment to strengthening Colorado's community college system and empowering students through innovative programs and joint initiatives.

