

Farewell Letter to Peralta Colleges Faculty and Staff
Jeffrey Heyman, Executive Director, Public Information,
Communications & Media
Peralta Community College District
March 16, 2018

Folks,

This morning I sent Chancellor Laguerre my letter of resignation. I have accepted a position with the City of Lafayette. My last day in the office will be Friday, March 30, 2018.

For over 18 years, it has been a privilege for me to serve our students, faculty, staff and the community as Executive Director for Public Information, Communications & Media. I have seen a lot of good people come and go at Peralta. I was surprised several years ago when I found myself the most senior manager in District Administration and the longest-serving member of the Chancellor's Cabinet.

Through these years we have shared much together, and I am indebted to my team, both staff and contractors, who work diligently to reach our students everyday. They are committed professionals. So, too, are faculty and staff throughout the District solidly committed to our students' success. I am honored to have worked alongside such dedicated individuals for so many years.

Over these nearly two decades, we have shared many successes at Peralta. Our early marketing efforts resulted in an enrollment rise of 25% over previous semesters, as featured in a February 24, 2002, Oakland Tribune article with this enviable headline: RECORD NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLL AT THE PERALTA COLLEGES.

We built Berkeley City College together, and the Marketing Department staff came up with a new name for the college formerly known as Vista. We were able to negotiate an agreement for the lease of our unused TV spectrum that, in total, will bring \$11.7 million in revenue to the District. This, along with a separately negotiated agreement with the City of Oakland that annually funds the Department's equipment, has allowed us to do a significant portion of our work without using monies from Peralta's General Fund.

The name of the department changed to Public Information and we started a Peralta-specific newspaper column, a revolutionary idea at the time, but one that is now emulated statewide. The team received dozens of awards for its work over the years. And, after a decade of attempts, we establish an educational/community FM radio station, KGPC, securing one of only two frequencies available in the media-saturated Bay Area.

The Department pioneered the use of social media at community colleges. We manage nine platforms and Peralta's website daily. Very few college systems anywhere can rival our YouTube channel's 1,339 videos and 1,029,765 views. We produced the first live broadcasts of Laney Eagles football games, and viewers can now watch accessible live streams of events, spotlights on our students and faculty, our Board meetings, and our graduation ceremonies anytime they wish. And, of course, there is Peralta TV's award-winning documentary on the origins of the Black Panther Party at Peralta. This film, narrated by Congresswoman Barbara Lee and shown at the United Nations in New York, is used in classrooms across the county. Peralta's legacy is truly nationwide.

Our job in Public Information is to capture the vibrant story and the history of our institution, share it with our community, and demonstrate to our students the richness of the diverse courses, programs and opportunities that Peralta offers them. The Public Information team will carry on this vital task long after I am gone.

Over the years, I have always kept one thing forefront in my mind: our students. As long as we continue to put students first, Peralta will live up to its promise and the community's expectations.

I am excited to be going on to new and interesting challenges with the City of Lafayette, but I will miss my Peralta Family.

Thank you all.

Jeffrey Heyman
16 March 2018