Admissions & Records Area Update:
Graduation applications continue to come in. Melissa Raby working part-time in the A&R office reviewing transcripts and confirming graduation requirements are met until the new recruits are on board: Lesley Michtavy, Registrar, will begin at end of May, and Torri Keever, A&R Specialist, will begin on May 1. Elizabeth has been of great assistance in this endeavor as well. Debbie York and Gabbie Petersen have temporarily taken on additional responsibilities, and they simultaneously continue to do a great job of serving students. A big thanks to the A&R ladies!

Articulation Area Update:
The Region 5 Articulation Officers met in Fresno on March 11th. Elizabeth Pfleging’s 2-year term as Region 5 Co-Chair will end at the end of this spring semester. All Articulation Officers in Northern California met in Sacramento on March 18th. The statewide implementation of ASSIST Next Generation continues to be a hot topic at these meetings. Other topics discussed: roll-out of C-ID 2.0, new majors being added to the UC Transfer Pathways program, and the update of CSU Mentor during the 2016-17 school year. Here on campus, articulation efforts are focused on catalog review and preparing courses for summer review by the UC.

CalWORKS/Job Placement/GED:
CalWORKs:

- 31 students enrolled (added 4 more students this month)
- Plans are being made for Special Programs Advisory Committee Meeting, scheduled for 3/30/16 at 3:30 in the Manzanita Multi-Purpose Room. Representation from the following community agencies will be invited:
  - ATCAA (Head Start and Family Learning Center)
  - Calaveras County Adult Literacy
  - Calaveras Works: Health and Human Services (CalWORKs and Foster Youth)
  - CA Department of Rehabilitation
  - Center for a Non-Violent Community
  - DRAIL
  - Mariposa County Department of Human Services
  - Mind Matters
  - Mother Lode Job Training (Tuolumne and Calaveras)
  - Sonora High School
  - Tuolumne County Behavioral Health
  - Tuolumne County Library/Adult Literacy
  - Tuolumne County Department of Social Services
  - Tuolumne We-Wuk Tribal TANF program
  - Tuolumne County Probation (including Day Reporting Center)
  - Tuolumne County Transit
  - The Resource Connection
GED:

- 4 classes are now being offered (another class was added since last report)
  - Campus evening class with approximately 15 students and growing
  - Angels Camp daytime class with approximately 6 students and growing
    - Many students in the class are ESL, as the GED class follows the ESL class offer by Columbia College.
  - Sonora daytime classes
    - In partnership with ATCAA, came online 2/29
    - In partnership with Tuolumne County Office of Education, came online 3/8.
- Awaiting Spanish preparation materials which have been ordered to serve ESL population.
- Research continues to be done into giving additional support in the subject of Math.
- Union Democrat has approached staff with an interest in writing an article about the program.

Counseling Area Update:

New forms for comprehensive educational plans have been developed. They are now implemented to match our new general education pattern and to be more student, user, and paper friendly. We are also waiting to hear back on our application to be part of the online educational planning pilot through the CCCCO’s office.

Major Advising Guides are in the works! The goal is to provide a useful tool to students in navigating their educational goals—the program offerings, the related careers at various degree levels and a suggested two year schedule to complete the program. The template has been approved and collaboration with faculty has started.

Counselors, staff, and Student Ambassadors are visiting area high schools to help Columbia-bound students complete the application, assessment, and orientation process. These visits will continue throughout the spring, as well as the Counseling office offering online orientation, assessment testing by individual appointment, and advising sessions here on campus.

DSPS Area Update:

- **Mini-grant awarded**: DSPS is a categorically funded, voluntary program that assists the college. Our funding is very restrictive and specific. DSPS was awarded a mini-grant by the Sonora Foundation to increase outreach efforts to community entities. Our intent is to inform surrounding institutions and agencies and to help students access our services more fully toward additional goals of improving retention rates.
  - Supporting surrounding area schools streamlines a smoother transition by building a liaison with the community to ensure that students who attend Columbia College will then return back to the community as enriched adults with vocational, academic, and leadership qualities.
  - Specifically, students who access categorical funding often face additional barriers in education. Access to educational support mechanisms provides opportunities to succeed in college and in community endeavors. Our mission would be to guide students to resources while in college and how to access them in the community.
• **Special Programs Student Success Workshops**: Candice Hann and Karin Rodts took part in offering two sessions in our Special Programs Student Success Workshops. The first session, “Facilitating the Note Taking Process” was well attended and offered the following tips: **Notes** should be to the point and capture main ideas. Use short sentences, symbols, and phrases.; **Listen** for clues from the instructor...EX: “First...”, “there are theories....”, “in conclusion”, etc.; **Listen** for information that ties together past material, readings, or themes of the course; **Write** in your own words, but be careful not to change the meaning; **Review** your notes from the last lecture....my personal favorite; **Learning** by Listening; **Facts** support points; **Look** for patterns, repetitions, and themes; **and physically** locate yourself to where you can stay focused. An additional session offered was “**Learning and the Brain**” with an introduction about “The Woman Who Changed Her Brain” by Barbara Arrowsmith Young and a TED talk given by the author which illustrates the phenomenal feats of shaping her own brain to help with learning challenges.

• **Veterans**: Brian Jensen reported that the Veteran’s Center Open House went very well with over 200 meals served. Brian is currently available for drop-in appointments at the Veteran’s Center Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10-11:30 am. The Veteran’s Center in located in the Toyon Building. Starting in April, Brian will be extending those hours to 8:30-11:30 am on those days.

• **A website** often utilized by DSPS is noted here [http://dspssolutions.org/resources/section-five-dsps-services-and-accommodations/veterans/community-provider-toolkit-working-together-to-serve-veterans.aspx](http://dspssolutions.org/resources/section-five-dsps-services-and-accommodations/veterans/community-provider-toolkit-working-together-to-serve-veterans.aspx)
  This site features key tools to support the mental health services you may provide to Veterans. Information can be found on connecting with VA, understanding military culture and experience, as well as tools for working with a variety of mental health conditions (found under Mental Health and Wellness).

**EOPS Area Update:**

We are very pleased to welcome Stephanie Beaver Alder to the Special Programs group! She is an excellent addition to our group and will be working with EOPS/CARE, TRiO and Foster Youth. Stephanie has already begun connecting with our community partners, and we are very excited about the energy and experience she brings to the group! Additionally, Matthew Wohl, a graduate student at CSU Stanislaus has joined our team as a graduate intern. Matthew is completing his Master’s degree in Education with an emphasis in counseling and has goals of working with adolescents in juvenile detention centers and opening his own practice.

EOPS and CARE have a combined enrollment of 250 students this spring semester; this is the largest enrollment in several years! Our counselors and staff have been presenting outreach presentations in the Math, English and Guidance classes and we look to grow our numbers even larger in the fall semester!

On March 30th, the Special Programs team will host our Advisory Board meeting. This meeting is made up on both campus and community members and continues to be an excellent way to network, collaborate and keep all parties well-informed.
EOPS, TRiO, DSPS and CalWORKs are again combining our efforts to coordinate an End-of-Year celebration on Wednesday, April 27th, at the Student Activity Center. This event is a great celebration and this year will include the presentation of a $1,000 EOPS scholarship!

Financial Aid Area Update:

- We are encouraging students that want to apply for a 2016-17 BOG Fee Waiver to complete their FAFSA. We are hoping that by the students completing the FAFSA they will receive their BOG Fee Waiver but also see that they may be eligible for grant funding.

- Our office is currently being audited by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). This is the first time our office has been audited by CSAC in over fifteen years. We have submitted all documents requested by the auditor and are awaiting our exit interview.

- Marnie Shively attended a National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Leadership Conference in Washington DC late last month and was one of only two Financial Aid Directors from a California Community College. While there, Marnie participated in multiple training sessions but the highlight of the trip was when she was able to speak directly Education Policy Advisor Kathleen Smith. Our voice was heard on the Federal level!

- Marnie Shively and Kelsie Bonavia will be attending the CCCSFAAA conference from April 4-8 in San Diego where they will attend multiple classes including some to prepare our office for the upcoming changes with our verification regulations and big changes with FAFSA dates and deadlines for the 2017-18 academic year.

Veterans Benefits:

- Currently Kelsie is working on making sure all Veterans who are supposed to receive priority registration for summer are on the priority registration list. She is also working on monitoring the enrollment status of all veterans who are enrolled this semester to make sure they are paid properly by the VA.

Health Services Area Update:

No report submitted.

Library Area Update:

No report submitted.

Outreach/Student Life Area Update:

No report submitted.

TRiO Student Support Services

Staff Updates- Ramona Harris and Anneka Rogers Whitmer are happy to welcome Stephanie Beaver Alder, the new Special Programs Counselor (EOPS/TRiO) and designated Foster Youth Counselor! Stephanie has already jumped into implementing new trio tools and bonding with our students.
Field Trips- UC Santa Cruz is scheduled for March 22 and promises to be a great tour and even some cultural experiences at the beach! 😊

Peer Mentoring- Our peer mentors (PMs) have seen an increase in utilization of this service even with less students enrolled in the program this term than normal. They are excited that fellow students are bonding, networking, and learning more college success skills than ever!

Events- Our “2-hour, Spring-Break-themed, mid-semester mixer event is scheduled for March 24 from 4-6 PM and students are VERY excited about the opportunity to party! At least half a dozen TRiO Alumni will be in attendance as well. We will also play games, eat great food, and learn from our TRiO Alumni the secrets to thriving through the transfer process. This is a reward for trio-enrolled students only.

Collaborations- We will submit another TRiO funded grant to create a Motherlode Educational Opportunity Center consortium at the end of March. We will hear back by August if we get this grant.

Special Programs Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for March 30 from 3:30-5 PM. Our community and campus partners are invited to help us continuously improve services to our students and learn more about possible collaborations in the community.

Misc.-

- Scholarships are starting to be awarded and TRiO students are being rewarded for their extra scholarly efforts. Looking forward to the Awards ceremony on April 22!
- Fall Transfer Fair and Fall Welcome Week activities are coming along nicely; both will be more robust this year! It is so great to have additional help on both of those committees too.
- Enrollments for TRiO are still needed; we had a larger number of graduates last year and we still have about 20 slots open for students. Plus we are anticipating a large number of graduates this spring as well so we want to ramp up for next year’s enrollment as well. So send any transfer students our way please!