GUEST SPEAKERS
Great Teachers Retreat
Columbia College & Modesto Junior College
John is an educator, university professor and administrator, non-profit organization chief executive officer, author, editor, public speaker, consultant, change agent, student retention specialist, first-year and transfer students’ advocate, and initiator and scholar of the American first-year and senior-year reform movements. He serves as President of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. JNGI was founded by John and his wife, Dr. Betsy O. Barefoot, in October 1999 as the Policy Center on the First Year of College. The Policy Center was launched by an initial grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, and has been subsequently funded by additional grants from Pew, The Atlantic Philanthropies, Lumina Foundation for Education, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and USA Funds. In 2007 the Policy Center underwent a legal and name change to the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education and an expansion of its mission to focus more broadly on excellence in undergraduate education, as a fully autonomous 501c3 non-profit entity. Since its inception in 1999, the Institute has received approximately $7,500,000 in support from its philanthropic partners.

JNGI works with colleges and universities to strengthen their resolve and processes to undertake assessment and other improvement actions to increase student learning and retention. JNGI focuses its work on the use of a previously non-existent set of aspirational standards for improvement of the first-year and the transfer student experience.

http://www.jngi.org/staff/institute-staff/

Deanna went on to develop new programs for the UCLA Center for the Study of Urban Poverty. Deanna worked at Coro Southern California as a fundraiser and trainer, and for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health as a lead on establishing new equity projects.

In 2010, consulting took her to Tanzania, Africa, to conduct organizational development meetings between U.S. non-profit, Kujali International and African NGO, Hananasif Orphanage Center (HOCET), seeking to develop a new model for more equitable cross-cultural partnerships.

She is a member of the ADAMMA Foundation Board of Directors.
SATURDAY: GUIDED PATHWAYS AND CURRICULUM INNOVATIONS

Dr. Rob Johnstone works to help 2-year and 4-year colleges create structures and processes that increase student completion, learning and labor market outcomes. His unique & engaging approach to inquiry & improvement fuses the world of foundations, initiatives, and system-level policy changes with the ground-level work of college practitioners & college senior leaders. He has worked on the ground with over 150 colleges around the country both directly and on initiatives such as the AACC Pathways Institutes, Lumina's Beyond Financial Aid, The Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, Gates' Completion by Design, Lumina's Guided Pathways for Success, Kresge's and Gates' Pathways projects in Arkansas, Michigan and the Seattle area colleges, Texas CompleteS, and Carnegie's Statway / Quantway. He served as a Director, Dean and Provost in the California community college system for over a decade, and worked as a strategic consultant in industry prior to shifting to higher education. He brings a unique dual perspective with over 20 years of consulting experience in industry and higher education, and brings an energy and passion for authentic change to improve outcomes. (National Center for Inquiry & Improvement.)

Deanna Cherry has been called one of the most talented group facilitators in the country for her ability to listen deeply and help groups move toward more authentic dialogue and deeper relationships, both of which she believes are crucial to identifying and sustaining solutions. She established Deanna Cherry Consulting in 2005. Her clients range from small community based organizations to government departments, each seeking ways to leverage their unique resources to support the public good.

A graduate of UCLA with degrees in International Development and Intergroup Relations, Deanna has 20 years supporting organizations. She has

THURSDAY: MATT COOMBS, COO, eLUMEN

Matthew currently acts as the COO of eLumen, overseeing all strategic partnerships and customer success activities. Matthew has recently been involved with a personalized learning environment initiative, a high school to college bridge project using adaptive virtual desktops and a statewide Educational Planning Initiative representing the California Community College Chief Information and Security Officers. He continues his clear passion for student success and achievement with eLumen and its next-generation, integrated eLumen institutional performance management platform.

He has been active in multiple open source projects, such as Kuali, Drupal and Sakai. Prior to eLumen, Matthew was CTO of Hartnell College, Director of IS at San Joaquin Delta College, a Kuali Founding Partner, serving 25,000 students and before that a Product Manager and Solutions Architect for SunGard Higher Education based in Philadelphia, PA.

FRIDAY: HOW TO IMPROVE STUDENT EQUITY

Darla M. Cooper, director of research and evaluation for the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group), has worked in the California community college system for more than 15 years. She previously held institutional research director positions at Santa Barbara City College, Oxnard College and Ohlone College. She has extensive experience serving as an external evaluator for several federal and private foundation grants and leading Student Support (Re)defined, a research project that examined what supports student success. In addition, she has worked on projects including
the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, Bridging Research Information and Culture (BRIC), Student Transfer in Professional Pathways Project, and the Accreditation Study. Cooper also has direct experience helping students achieve their education goals in her previous work at the University of Southern California, where she served as director of research and information, student services counselor, and ombudsperson. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from the University of California, San Diego and an M.S.Ed. and Ed.D. from the University of Southern California. (RP Group: The Research & Planning Group for California Community Colleges)

Mike Smedshammer has been teaching with technology since 1999, when he first put his course materials on his webpage. Mike’s Ph.D. is in English, with a focus on Modern British and American literature. He taught composition and literature classes for 20 years before becoming Instructional Design Coordinator at in 2012, where he supports faculty who are learning to teach online. Mike is a Certified Blackboard Trainer, 2012 Blackboard Catalyst Exemplary Course award winner, @One Certified Online Instructor, @One Peer Mentor, and OEI Lead Course Reviewer. When he is not at his computer, Mike enjoys spending time with his wife and two kids, cooking, playing golf, fly fishing, and following Bay Area sports.

Dr. Frank Harris III is an associate professor of postsecondary education and co-director of the Minority Male Community College Collaborative (M2C3) at San Diego State University. His research is broadly focused on student development and student success in postsecondary education and explores questions related to the social construction of gender and race on college campuses, college men and masculinities, and racial/ethnic disparities in college student outcomes. He is currently engaged in a national study of productive masculinities and positive behaviors among college men. In his role as co-director of M2C3, he partners with community colleges across the United States to conduct research and design interventions to facilitate student achievement among men who have been historically marginalized in postsecondary education. Harris’ scholarship has been published in leading journals for higher education and student affairs research and practice. He is the recipient of several scholarly awards from national higher education and student affairs professional associations. Before joining the faculty at San Diego State, Harris worked as a student affairs educator and college administrator in the areas of student affairs administration, student crisis support and advocacy, new student orientation programs, multicultural student affairs, academic advising, and enrollment services. His most recent administrative appointment was at the University of Southern California as Associate Director of the Center for Urban Education. Harris earned a bachelor’s degree in Communication Studies from Loyola Marymount University, a master’s degree in Speech Communication from California State University Northridge, and an Ed.D. in Higher Education from the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education. (Minority Male Community College Collaborative M2C3)

J. Luke Wood, PhD, is Associate Professor of Community College Leadership and the Director of the Doctoral Program in Community College Leadership at San Diego State University (SDSU). Dr. Wood is also Co-Director of the Minority Male Community College Collaborative (M2C3), a national research and practice center that partners with community colleges to support their capacity in advancing outcomes for men of color. M2C3 houses the National Consortium on College Men of Color (NCCMC) which host trainings, information sharing sessions, and provides resources to colleges with initiatives and programs supporting college men of color. He is also Chair for the Council on Ethnic Participation (CEP) for the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) and Co-Editor of the Journal of Applied Research in the Community College. Wood’s research focuses on factors affecting the success of men of color in the community college. In particular, his research examines contributors (e.g., social, psychological, academic, environmental, institutional) to positive outcomes (e.g., persistence, achievement, attainment, transfer, labor market outcomes) for these men. His research has been featured by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans, New York Times, Chronicle of Higher Education, Huffington Post, C-SPAN, and National Press Club. Dr. Wood has authored over 100 publications, including six co-authored books, six edited books, and more than 60 peer-reviewed journal articles. (Minority Male Community College Collaborative M2C3)