



Hi-Desert Star

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College adds to faculty

By Stacy Moore / Hi-Desert Star

JOSHUA TREE — Seven full-time instructors will join the Copper Mountain College faculty this month, helping the school follow recommendations from a state committee.

College trustees approved the appointments in a Thursday meeting, bringing on board:

- Nursing instructors Christi Blauwkamp, Katie Bull, Eleanor Smith and Kathleen Wahl;
- Communications instructor Joseph DeSantis;
- Early childhood education instructor Marla Gallagher;
- Science instructor Steven Parkin.

The salaries of two of the nursing instructors will be paid by a grant, according to the human resources department.

"These appointments follow the recommendation of our accreditation committee to increase faculty," college Superintendent/President Roger Wagner told the trustees.

The board also learned the nursing program may be expanding to teach students of Barstow Community College, which doesn't have a registered nursing program of its own.

Program administrator Leslie Moody said the Barstow college wants to develop its own registered nursing program eventually, but in the interim has asked to partner with Copper Mountain College.

The students would take weekly classes at the Joshua Tree campus, while the Barstow college would provide some instruction and would pay Copper Mountain College for the cost of the extra students.

While it would not profit Copper Mountain College, Moody said the partnership was an opportunity to help a neighboring school and to contribute to solving California's nursing shortage.

61 kids get jump start on college

One program that could profit Copper Mountain College and community members is the Bridge program.

Coordinator Sheri Holbrook told the trustees 61 incoming freshman students went through a summer Bridge session and are now enrolled at Copper Mountain College.

The Bridge program readies high school students for college, Holbrook explained. The students do career exploration, take personality assessments, learn time-management skills and get help filling out forms for college entrance and financial aid.

"It really helps them understand what being a college student is like," Holbrook said.

It also helps recruit students for the local college.

The summer session included 22 graduates of Yucca Valley High School, four students from Sky High School, 20

from Twentynine Palms High and one from Monument High.

Beginning in the fall semester, Holbrook will be giving presentations to 11th grade English classes to get them ready to enter community college after graduation or even to enroll while they're seniors.

She told the trustees she hopes to expand the program, offering it to the 6,000 spouses and dependents of Marines and sailors on the Twentynine Palms Marine base.

While many of the students start out thinking the sessions are corny, Holbrook added, by the end of the program, "They really appreciate it."

"It's really a jump start on college," she said.

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