



LOS ANGELES
SOUTHWEST COLLEGE

STRATEGIC
PUBLIC RELATIONS
PLAN

2008-2011

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PROLOGUE

Amid a climate of unrest and resolve, a dedicated group of residents saw a crusade become reality when the Los Angeles Board of Education approved plans for a new community college at Western Avenue and Imperial Highway. Los Angeles Southwest College (LASC) opened its doors on September 11, 1967. The two-year college quickly became an educational and cultural hub of South Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

That first year saw an enrollment of 600 students taking courses with 22 full-time faculty members. Today, LASC has more than 6,000 students, 70 full-time faculty members, and 125 adjunct instructors from all areas of expertise and industry.

Under the leadership of Dr. Jack E. Daniels III, who joined LASC as Interim President in August 2006, Los Angeles Southwest College is committed to its mission to provide an environment for quality learning to enrich the lives of its diverse population. The campus is on the cusp of becoming one of the most modern in the state of California.

I. SITUATION ANALYSIS

CAPABILITIES:

>EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

A two-year college, LASC awards associate degrees in 34 disciplines, as well as occupational certificates in 47 disciplines. LASC offers an array of programs to meet community needs – college transfer, occupational, general education, transitional, continuing, community services and joint programs. The campus is the site of Middle College High School, enabling high school students to take college courses for credit. Courses are delivered online or on campus.

>PHYSICAL CAMPUS

The physical campus has come a long way since being housed in World War II-era military bungalows. The passages of Proposition A (2001) and Proposition AA (2003) have funded renovations and a physical expansion that includes a new student services building completed in 2005 and a comprehensive child development center slated to open in June 2007. The campus build-out should be completed by August 2009. In addition, the entire campus will become wireless, enabling a new technology infrastructure for operations and instruction.

>STUDENT BODY

LASC's service area encompasses parts of the City of Los Angeles; unincorporated sections of the County of Los Angeles; the 2nd Supervisorial District; and portions of Gardena, Hawthorne and Inglewood. Roughly one-third of the student population is Latino, while two-thirds are African-American. This is the opposite of what residential demographic data indicate. Non-scientific data indicate Latino students who want to attend a community college will often choose East Los Angeles College or Harbor College over LASC, as they believe LASC is a "Black" and "remedial" college located in the "ghetto" of South Los Angeles. More than half of LASC students are first-generation college students. LASC also serves international students who are sponsored by their respective countries, such as England, Japan and Germany. The Associated Student Organization (ASO) is the governing body for all students and organizes social, cultural and political activities on campus.

>ATHLETICS

Students may participate in intercollegiate athletics, as well as competitive team sports (football, men's basketball, women's basketball). The Athletic Department is housed in the Thomas G. Lakin Physical Education Center, a 70,000-square-foot sports complex with a state-of-the-art, three-court basketball gym seating 3,000 fans. The Lakin Center also has an Olympic-sized outdoor pool, physical therapy pool, racquetball courts, fitness center and dance studio. LASC – home to the Cougars – also boasts the Dennis Gilbert Baseball Field and fields for softball and soccer. A massive design/build project for the campus also includes a football stadium.

>COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A new Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator has been hired to rekindle relationships with the community and recruit students. Local political support exists, but not without criticism of LASC. The institution is not a member of the local Chambers of Commerce. The surrounding

community uses LASC facilities as event venues. Facilities include the Little Theatre, Art Gallery and Lakin Center basketball gym. A group of local senior citizens use the baseball field for regular walking activities.

COMMUNICATION:

>EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

Other than the annual college catalog and three schedules of classes, no communication vehicles from Administration or any other department at LASC are regularly produced to communicate with the community.

>INTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

No regular communication vehicles from Administration to employees or students exists on the campus. Communication is carried out on an ad-hoc, as-needed basis regarding such issues as registration and special events. Thus far, departments have taken responsibility and action for communicating its programs, services and events. No centralized office has been established from which all or most LASC communications originate. The Associated Student Organization is the only on-campus entity that publishes a regular communiqué, which occurs monthly under the purview of the Student Services Office. Dr. Daniels has begun monthly e-mail communication with faculty and staff, and maintains a visible presence on the campus via weekly campus walks through offices and student gathering areas, as well as holding open office hours.

>COLLATERALS

The LACCD Public Information office produces brochures and other collaterals, and also outsources design as needed. MWW Group is a public relations firm that produced an award-winning annual report of the LACCD/Proposition A/AA Bond Construction Program in December 2006. At LASC, the writing, design and printing of brochures and other collaterals have been handled by individual departments. No central editing or proofreading process is in place, but departments have a directive by Dr. Daniels to submit drafts to the Public Relations Specialists for approval. These departments have historically been allocated funds to produce them. President Daniels plans to centralize funding and production under the President's Office umbrella, appointing the Public Relations Specialist to carry out respective duties. Beginning in Spring 2007, responsibility for production of the college catalog and schedules of classes were transferred from Academic Affairs to Public Relations.

>PHOTOGRAPHY

The LACCD has no photographer on staff and holds, through the district Public Relations office, a small archive of photos. At LASC, photo release forms exist and are used by departments as necessary. There is no campus photographer, nor is there a central photo archive. Photographers are hired as needed or such duties are handled by volunteers or staff.

>MEDIA RELATIONS

In the absence of a Public Relations Specialist, individual departments have been accustomed to contacting the media with press releases and telephone calls themselves, with mediocre results. There is no LASC or LACCD-wide media relations policy to delineate responsibilities or establish proper procedures.

>ADVERTISING

The LACCD Public Information office hires out for advertising production and placement. Diversity marketing firm Aviso was hired to create an ad with a “brain food” hook that does not specifically identify LACCD, but has *www.LAcollages.net/brain* as the call to action. Ads ran in community newspapers in late December. This campaign was part of a branding effort. At LASC, an advertising budget exists at the general level. Some departments also have advertising funds within their own budgets and have, themselves, handled designing and placing advertisements in community newspapers. In addition, expenditures loosely defined as “marketing” have depleted the LASC advertising budget. LASC has run commercials on local cable television in the past.

>WEBSITE

The LACCD Public Information Office has hired diversity marketing firm Aviso to redesign its website, which will serve as a template for all nine LACCD colleges. Of particular interest is attracting the generation called Millennials, whom Aviso tapped as focus group subjects to test three template versions. Representatives from each college comprise the LACCD Internet Council, which decided on the specifics of LACCD’s home page and consistent district-wide navigation for individual college homepages. Aviso feels LACCD is a long way from a portal. At the same time, LASC has an unofficial webmaster who has designed a template for LASC’s website, which has launched before that of the district’s, and also makes way for an LASC portal in the near future.

>GRAPHIC STANDARDS

The LASC colors are blue and yellow. The mascot is a cougar. Various versions of the logo, logotype and mascot exist, and in varying combinations. No graphic standards policy exists to regulate how all are to be used.

>VENDORS

Graphic design, printing, banner and promotional item orders are not centralized. Individual departments use vendors that are not consistent with those other departments use. Business cards, for example, are ordered from at least three different companies. Longtime vendors presume continued contracts and are belligerent about becoming part of a bidding process.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

>EXTERNAL

To date, events open to the community have been organized by various departments (e.g., registration events handled by Admissions). Any Proposition A/AA related event such as

groundbreaking ceremonies or grand openings has been organized by MWW Group, a public relations firm not hired or overseen by LASC, but hired by LACCD. Some events with tremendous publicity potential have been handled by outside sources (e.g., Prayer Breakfast/Community Day). A liaison to the Chancellor has been tapped by LASC to develop events and relationships within a specific Latino community. The LACCD Public Information office has hired a separate marketing firm to hold information booths at sites throughout greater Los Angeles. It should be noted that not all malls and theatre complexes earmarked for LASC were in LASC's service area. LASC's Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator has begun to organize events to recruit students.

>INTERNAL

Booking campus venues for events is handled by Plant Facilities, which publishes a weekly update of upcoming events. However, no master calendar is maintained. Events are listed on the website and include internal meetings the community would not find of interest. To date, internal events are handled by individual departments. For example, International Education Day was a successful event involving students and faculty, and coordinated by the Dean of Academic Affairs. Other than meetings, there are no regular events for faculty or staff. An employee holiday event in December 2006 had positive response. It was the first such event in five years and sponsored by the President's Office. Retirement parties are organized on an ad-hoc basis by respective departments.

II. INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

INTERNAL MORALE:

Whispers of a longtime, low employee morale have been shared with the new Public Relations Specialist by personnel of all organizational levels. Much of this is reportedly due to an unstable succession of leaders. Where staff previously felt underappreciated and dispensable, there is now some renewal of hope with the leadership of Dr. Daniels. Where faculty previously felt disrespected and disregarded, there is now the promise of campus expansion. New construction adds to the increase in morale, as the internal LASC looks forward to what campus expansion will bring.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

A new Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator has been hired to rekindle relationships with the community and recruit students. Local political support exists as a rule, but not without criticism of LASC. The institution is not a member of the local Chambers of Commerce. The surrounding community uses LASC facilities as event venues, but no opportunity to provide information to attendees about LASC has been taken. Facilities include the Little Theatre, Art Gallery and Lakin Center basketball gym. A group of local senior citizens use the baseball field for regular walking activities. A group of some 200 parents of LAUSD Local District 7 students meet monthly in the Little Theater.

MEDIA RELATIONS:

LASC has as-of-yet unexplored media relations potential that should be tapped. In fairness, *LASC* has not had onsite public relations representation in some years. As such, LASC has neither been actively nor consistently engaged in efforts to secure publicity, other than the occasional event-driven publicity. There has been only a small degree of reliance on LACCD's Public Information Office, which has assisted with securing publicity for major announcements (e.g., new Interim President, construction groundbreaking). As such, it is not surprising that the community media, who are so integral to reaching the community, are not fully aware of *LASC*'s capabilities and plans. This should begin in earnest by capitalizing on the 40th anniversary, which occurs in September 2007. As great strides are made in the Proposition A/AA funded construction (e.g., Child Development Center opening in June 2007), LASC will have additional publicity opportunities on its hands.

SWOT ANALYSIS:

Analysis identifies far more depth in strengths and opportunities than in weaknesses and threats.

>STRENGTHS:

- *LASC* offers a broad range of programs that meet community needs. LASC intentionally does not offer programs and curricular designs identical to those of

Pierce College or East Los Angeles College, because the characteristics and demographics of the specific service area are taken into account and addressed. This is what makes LASC *the community's college*. This is a unique selling proposition that can potentially cut through the barriers many residents feel prevent them from furthering their education.

- *LASC* grew out of an empowering era for South Los Angeles and is a legacy of the community's determination to enable their children to have equal opportunities as children in neighboring communities. This is a pride still felt internally, particularly longtime employees, as well as externally by those who remember the achievements made by citizen activists in the 1960s.
- *LASC* has excellent faculty. Nearly 20 of full-time faculty have doctorates, which is not required to teach in community colleges.
- *LASC* is a champion of higher education – any way you can get started, we will help you.
- *LASC* is in a state of positive flux. This is evident by construction on and around the campus.

>WEAKNESSES:

- The citizen activists who lobbied for the founding of LASC are now in their later years or have passed on. The new generation is not familiar with LASC, but it's entirely possible that affinity for LASC still exists to some extent.
- Local politicians have been critical of LASC, particularly in regard to the quality of the nursing program in recent years. This could be a lingering associative opinion from negative publicity about the nearby King-Drew Medical Center.
- LACCD does not consider LASC as one of its better colleges.
- Internal processes are not smooth and, in some cases, backward.

>OPPORTUNITIES:

- A heavy recruitment push could result in a larger student population.
- LASC has been allocated an amount of Proposition A/AA funding that is larger than that of any community college in California.

>THREATS:

- LASC's overreporting of the number of non-credit full-time students resulted in a deficit, which translates into a potential loss of \$1 million if enrollment is not increased by summer term, 2007.
- Other community colleges are within a reasonable distance from LASC service areas (e.g., Harbor College) and some are heavily marketing themselves (e.g., Santa Monica College, East Los Angeles College).
- The fact that LASC had an illustrious beginning likely holds little meaning to those in the typical freshman and sophomore age groups.
- Los Angeles Southwest College lacks community awareness, respect and support to carry it through much longer without deficits.

III. TARGET AUDIENCES

Depending on the strategy at hand, audiences may be prioritized into three categories – primary (critical and priority), secondary (important) and marginal (of value). *LASC* audiences appear to be:

<u>AUDIENCE</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>RATIONALE/PURPOSE</u>
• Potential students	Primary	~To grow the FTES enrollment and increase resulting State funding
• Current students	Primary	~To increase retention ~To support the growth and funding resulting from increased FTES ~To maintain a relationship that should extend post-graduation
• Past students	Secondary	~To build a base for support ~To build an alumni network
• Employees	Primary	~To increase morale ~To increase quality of performance
• Faculty	Primary	~To increase morale ~To increase quality of classroom performance
• Adjunct faculty	Primary	~To maintain a positive working relationship ~To attract top experts in their fields
• Labor unions	Primary	~To maintain a positive working relationship
• Founders	Secondary	~To maintain a link to <i>LASC</i> 's roots
• <i>LASC</i> Foundation	Primary	~To increase fundraising activities and meet designated goals

<u>AUDIENCE</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>RATIONALE/PURPOSE</u>
• Community	Primary	~To strengthen ties
• Local employers	Primary	~To encourage use of LASC as workforce development partner
• Religious Institutions	Primary	~To strengthen ties with institutions serving as communication lines
• Middle College High School	Primary	~To nurture potential LASC students and community supporters
• The media	Primary	~To reach audiences through community and general media outlets
• Los Angeles Community College District	Secondary	~To elevate standing among the other eight colleges
• California Community College District	Secondary	~To position LASC as a model institution
• Education “industry”	Secondary	~To gain peer recognition
• Accrediting agencies	Secondary	~To maintain positive relationship and demonstrate progress
• Proposition A/AA office and construction company	Secondary	~To maintain positive relationship during construction
• Industry associations	Marginal	~To create networking and service opportunities for faculty, administration
• Coordinators of industry conferences, conventions	Marginal	~To consider panel, lecture, exhibit opportunities

<u>AUDIENCE</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>RATIONALE/PURPOSE</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertising agencies	Marginal	~To encourage quality subcontract work at reasonable rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vendors	Marginal	~To encourage quality service (e.g., printers) at reasonable rates

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although a product of the community, Los Angeles Southwest College has lost touch with its service area to the point that when the community thinks of higher education, LASC does not come to mind. This lack of faith in LASC as a quality provider of education has resulted in declining enrollment and a diminishing reputation. By fall 2008, LASC will have one of the most modern community college campuses in California.

V. PROGRAMMING AND PLANNING OPTIONS

Public relations is *the process of cultivating and managing strategic communication relationships with targeted audiences*. These audiences can include the media, the community, the industry and employees. Publicity is a subset of public relations and relies on the media to reach audiences.

Typically, a public relations analysis results in a selection of program and planning options the potential client may consider. Three options have been identified for *Los Angeles Southwest College*.

OPTION #1: To Do NOTHING

Doing nothing means continuing to engage in current communication methods [or maintaining the status quo].

Consequences may include lost opportunities, little-to-no name recognition development, and declining enrollment.

OPTION #2: To CONDUCT A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

Publicity is a one-way communication model in which *LASC's* Public Relations Specialist provides media contacts with information that hopefully results in a story in those media outlets. Because the media literally act as intermediaries, there is no direct communication between *LASC* and its ultimate audiences (e.g., potential students).

Consequences may include a short-term gain of media and community attention, as well as the beginning of positive name recognition. Narrowed focus to mainly announcements and interviews will not achieve broader goals.

OPTION #3: To IMPLEMENT A STRATEGIC PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

Public relations is a comprehensive process that *includes* publicity. It can also include community relations, reputation management, image advertising and, to some extent, direct marketing.

Consequences for LASC may include short-term gains of publicity as a first step in the full public relations program, as well as the achievement of broader goals.

VI. RECOMMENDED PLAN OF ACTION

A strategic public relations program can play a key role in achieving the broad scope of goals expressed by *LASC*.

RATIONALE:

The use of public relations strategies can help to push *LASC* over the threshold of visibility and credibility – a threshold that can mean the difference between growing the enrollment (and State revenue) or seeing continuing declines.

LASC has reached a critical threshold with the campus build-out funded by Proposition A and AA. This tipping point can be leveraged to lead to a heightened level of enrollment growth and name recognition.

KEY MESSAGES:

It is important to imbed uniform and consistent key messages in all *LASC* communications, including the website. When all is said and done, what does *LASC* want potential students, the media and other audiences to remember? The following are suggested key messages to convey (literally or indirectly, depending on the situation):

Primary:

- *LASC* is your community college.
- *LASC* is committed to enriching the lives of our diverse population.
- *LASC* works to meet learner and community needs in a mutually supportive “partnership.”
- *LASC* is in the fabric of Los Angeles history.
- *LASC* will be one of the most modern community colleges in California.

Secondary:

- *LASC* will be a wireless campus with a new technology infrastructure.
- *LASC*'s expansion of athletic facilities will benefit the community.

DEFINING FRAMEWORK LEVELS:

Ideally, public relations programs are carried out with this understanding: each effort taken should ultimately support the organization's overall aims and be in line with its mission. Looking at the framework on the following pages from the top-down, one can trace the broadest aim down to the most specific supporting tactic. Or, looking at the framework from the bottom-up, one can trace how the most specific action (tactic) supports an aim, with movement upward becoming increasingly broad.

The *vision* is the lofty, ultimate, pie-in-the-sky statement that answers the question, "What do we, as an organization, want to be when we grow up?" [Note: An assumptive vision is stated below for the sake of demonstrating how public relations supports accomplishment.] The vision is in the back of the public relations mind at all times, as is the *mission*, which is a statement of who *LASC* is right now and why it exists.

An *objective* is typically measurable, with both a numerical target and a timeframe. The objective below can be adjusted to be more applicable to the agreed-upon program (e.g., to achieve publicity worth \$10,000 in advertising equivalency dollars).

A *goal* is a forward-thinking aim that is or is not communication-focused, and which supports the objective and mission. It is accomplished by strategies. The goal below is just one example of how public relations can play an integral part. Non-communication goals (e.g., business development, academic affairs) should be developed by *LASC* administration.

A *strategy* is a forward-moving, specific approach to accomplishing a goal, and ultimately supports the mission. A *tactic* is even more specific, but usually something tangible (e.g., brochure, event, speaking engagement) to support or accomplish the strategies above them, accomplish applicable goals and ultimately support the mission.

FRAMEWORK:

Vision: To be the premiere choice for community college education and workforce development in the South Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

Mission: *LASC* is a community college that is committed to providing an environment for quality learning to enrich the lives of our diverse population.

The Public Relations department exists to position *LASC* as top-of-mind for community college education in its service area and as a model example of community college education in California.

Objectives: To implement a comprehensive public relations program by July 1, 2007.

To increase media coverage by 30% in 2007.

>***Goal #1*** To achieve brand recognition for *LASC* as a quality provider of higher education.

>***Goal #2:*** To introduce *LASC* to the media.

>***Goal #3:*** To reposition *LASC*'s image within the Los Angeles Community College District.

>***Goal #4:*** To solidify the public relations function within the *LASC* infrastructure.

>***Goal #5:*** To improve communication with *LASC* employees.

>***Goal #6:*** To improve communication with special *LASC* audiences.

Please see the following pages for a restatement of goals, as well as supporting strategies and tactics.

>Goal #1: *To achieve brand recognition for LASC as a quality provider of higher education.*

>Strategy: *Work to advance public understanding of community college education as a valued form of education from which one can start, and then progress “anywhere.”*

>Tactic: Develop a portable presentation that educates youths about the symbiotic relationship between them and LASC.

>Tactic: Consider offering a modest annual scholarship to high school juniors who wish to pursue college studies during their summer breaks. For example, granting one scholarship per high school in the service area, with personal presentation to the student, can be a publicity opportunity and help defray student expenses (e.g., textbooks).

>Tactic: Offer *LASC* representatives as guest speakers in service-area schools (e.g., career days).

>Tactic: In response to the next major story about community college education, write and submit an opinion piece to a targeted newspaper.

>Tactic: Write a white paper about the value of community college education and post on the website.

>Strategy: *Improve and streamline LASC collateral pieces for distribution to the community.*

>Tactic: Produce a capabilities brochure to be mailed to selected zip codes to update the community about construction progress. This will be in lieu of a college catalog mailing.

>Tactic: Produce a series of brochures to highlight particular departments and programs.

>Tactic: Make the college catalog more visually appealing and add beneficial information on student success.

>Tactic: Develop Spanish-language materials in consultation with Bridges to Success.

>Tactic: Produce and mail a postcard to selected zip codes whenever a new building is completed.

>**Tactic:** Seek basic data about individual faculty members and their areas of expertise for fact sheets about each major.

>**Tactic:** Seek basic data about individual faculty members and their areas of expertise for a listing on the website.

>**Strategy:** *Develop a quarterly publication to be mailed to service area residences as a way to update the community about LASC's progress.*

>**Tactic:** Community newsletter as a “report to the community.”

>**Strategy:** *Leverage newsworthiness potential of 40th anniversary with a yearlong campaign celebrating LASC's history and look forward.*

>**Tactic:** Grand re-opening in September 2007.

>**Tactic:** Establish an advisory committee comprised of representatives from each union and others.

>**Tactic:** Request proclamations and congratulatory letters.

>**Tactic:** Produce a history booklet telling LASC's story.

>**Tactic:** Support the LASC Foundation in establishing a signature fundraising event.

>**Tactic:** Hold a community-wide event on the LASC campus.

>**Strategy:** *Bring the business community to LASC.*

>**Tactic:** Host a Chamber of Commerce mixer on campus [once LASC membership is verified].

>**Tactic:** Engage business leaders in a “tell a friend” campaign as part of an invitation to tour the modernized campus.

>**Tactic:** Invite businesses to participate in the anniversary event.

>**Strategy:** *Enhance website presence.*

>**Tactic:** Research key education industry websites and arrange for links to **LASC** website; update existing information.

>**Tactic:** Submit key words to search engine companies (e.g., Yahoo, Google) to assure **LASC** shows up in more search results.

>**Tactic:** Establish an LASC page on the top social networking websites most frequented by teenagers and young adults (e.g., www.myspace.com, www.facebook.com and www.friendster.com).

>**Tactic:** Obtain rights to www.LASC.com and www.LASC.net, and link directly to www.LASC.edu.

>**Tactic:** Work with LASC webmaster to improve current content and add new content:

- Our Mission -- Mission statement
- History of LASC -- Narrative about LASC's history
- Administration
 - Biography and photo of Dr. Jack E. Daniels III
 - Biographies and photos of vice presidents
- What People are Saying About LASC
 - Testimonial 1 (name, photo, quote)
 - Testimonial 2 ((name, photo, quote)
 - Etc.
- Top 10 Reasons to Choose LASC
- Press kit
 - Fact sheet
 - Backgrounder
 - Timeline
 - Biographies (the same info. as under Administration)
- Press release archive
 - Title, date
 - Title, date
 - Title, date
 - Etc.
- Photo gallery
 - Photo with caption
 - Photo with caption
 - Photo with caption
 - Etc.
- Contact
 - Louella Benson, Public Relations Specialist, etc.

>**Tactic:** Work with LACCD-hired photographer to develop an archive of still photography and LASC testimonials.

>**Tactic:** Hire a student worker to research blogs by and for college students.

>**Tactic:** Consider launching a blog or actively contributing to education-related blogs.

>**Strategy:** *Develop a “welcome protocol” for invited visits to the campus.*

>**Tactic:** Seek recommendations of staff and students to comprise an ambassadors group that will lead tours.

>**Tactic:** Develop a tour route.

>**Tactic:** Develop a tour narrative that integrates LASC history, contemporary facts and physical landmarks.

>**Strategy:** *Launch an image advertising campaign.*

>**Tactic:** Determine advertising priorities per LASC demographics and media outlet’s audience reach.

>**Tactic:** Obtain data regarding optimal locations for non-traditional advertising (e.g., bus shelters).

>**Tactic:** Obtain quotes from current and past students to use in a testimonials piece.

>**Tactic:** Submit public service announcements in live copy form to select radio stations. [no cost]

>**Tactic:** Advertise in local high school football programs [fall].

>**Tactic:** Advertise in local high school yearbooks [spring].

>**Tactic:** Work with graphic design firm to create one print ad or a small series. Include copy of ad in press kit. [Note: Although contact information would be included, this is not intended to be a direct-response ad.]

>**Strategy:** *Promote faculty achievements in scholarship and research*

>**Tactic:** Seek basic data about individual faculty members and their areas of expertise.

>**Tactic:** Request that faculty members contribute news of their achievements and publicize, accordingly.

>**Tactic:** Research trade publications specific to faculty member expertise.

>**Strategy:** *Promote administration achievements in professional and community service.*

>**Tactic:** Biographical sketches on the president and each vice president.

>**Tactic:** Head shots by professional photographer of the president and each vice president.

>**Tactic:** Make announcements to the community, hometown, university alumni and trade publications whenever an achievement has been made.

>Goal #2: *To reintroduce LASC to the local media.*

>Strategy: *Conduct a publicity campaign.*

>Tactic: Develop a media contact list.

>Tactic: Research media outlet editorial calendars to identify special theme issues particularly relevant to **LASC** for publicity and advertising opportunities.

>Tactic: Develop an LASC editorial calendar.

>Tactic: Send two to three press releases per month to community media.

>Tactic: Send four articles per year to Chamber of Commerce and service organization newsletter editors [after LASC membership is verified].

>Tactic: Create an assortment of written pieces that can be assembled into a press kit (contents varying, depending on media outlet and specific angle):

- LASC backgrounder, including history
- LASC fact sheet
- Biography of Dr. Jack E. Daniels III
- Photo of Dr. Jack E. Daniels III and other administrators
- Photo of artist's rendering of future campus
- Student and alumni testimonials
- Capabilities brochure (to be produced)
- News releases, as appropriate
- Copies of resulting media stories, as appropriate
- Tailored pitch letter
- DVD or CD of **LASC**, using the "fly by," website testimonials and transitional footage.

>Tactic: On a continual basis, research current themes and issues being discussed in the industry, then pitch trade media with an angle highlighting **LASC** as a key information source.

>Strategy: *Establish LASC principals as industry experts, particularly Dr. Jack E. Daniels III.*

>Tactic: Submit opinion pieces to newspaper editorial sections.

>**Tactic:** Be responsive to higher education issues in the news and actively and immediately pitch Dr. Daniels as an expert for commentary.

>**Tactic:** Make *LASC* administration visible at industry and community.

>**Tactic:** Appoint an *LASC* administrator to serve as Chamber of Commerce representative.

>**Tactic:** Place *LASC* administrators on panels of industry-related conferences and seminars, as well as educational seminars.

>**Tactic:** On a continual basis, research current themes and issues being discussed in the industry, then write an opinion piece for trade journals to add to the professional conversation.

>**Strategy:** *Update community newspaper editors about Los Angeles Southwest College and its plans.*

>**Tactic:** Hold an on-campus breakfast and tour for community newspaper editors, with Dr. Daniels presiding.

>**Tactic:** Hold an on-campus breakfast and tour for Spanish-language media, with Vice President Jose Robledo presiding.

>**Strategy:** *Use demonstrated buy-in of community media to pursue broader media exposure.*

>**Tactic:** Send local clippings with pitch letter to large-circulation newspapers.

<p>>Goal #3: <i>To reposition LASC's reputation within the Los Angeles Community College District.</i></p>

>Strategy: *Establish regular communication between the Public Relations Department and select LACCD audiences.*

>Tactic: Actively share efforts and achievements at quarterly LACCD Marketing Council meetings [comprised of public relations and marketing representatives from the nine colleges] with handouts packets.

>Tactic: Develop a politically smart distribution list of select LACCD departments and individuals, and distribute LASC materials as they are produced with a cover letter by Dr. Jack E. Daniels III.

>Tactic: Distribute copies of select media stories about LASC to select LACCD departments and individuals.

>Tactic: Pitch select news releases to the LACCD Public Information Office for inclusion on LACCD website.

>Tactic: Submit special event information to the LACCD website calendar listing (LACCD Public Information Office).

>Tactic: Regularly prepare public relations reports for Dr. Daniels to share at board meetings, as appropriate.

>Goal #4: *To solidify the public relations function within the LASC infrastructure for maximum efficiency.*

>Strategy: Develop a series of policies, present to the LASC President's Cabinet, and file with the LACCD Public Information Office.

>Tactic: Write a media relations policy that clearly delineates Public Relations function responsibility for all contact with the media.

>Tactic: Write a publications policy that clearly delineates Public Relations function responsibility for all printed pieces for/about LASC and its programs.

>Tactic: Write a master calendar policy that clearly delineates responsibilities of the Public Relations department and Plant Facilities in the maintenance of a master calendar.

>Tactic: Write a special events policy that clearly outlines protocol for proposing a special event to the President's Office.

>Strategy: Streamline responsibilities with existing staff.

>Tactic: Return responsibility for production and distribution of the college catalog back to Academic Affairs, but maintain advisory role.

>Tactic: Return responsibility for production and distribution of schedules of classes back to Academic Affairs, but maintain advisory role.

>Tactic: Delegate the process of requesting purchase orders through assuring payment to vendors to the Assistant to the President.

>Tactic: Reassign responsibility for bulk postal account to the Reprographics Department.

>Goal #5: *To improve communication with LASC employees.*

>Strategy: *Implement an employee relations program.*

>Tactic: Determine the extent to which, and the vehicles by which, top-down communication occurs at LASC (communications audit).

>Tactic: Based on results of communication audit, create a regular communication vehicle to be distributed to faculty and staff (e.g., hard-copy or online newsletter).

>Tactic: Seek Personnel Office input to said communication vehicle.

>Strategy: *Seek ways to acknowledge departments for professionalism.*

>Tactic: Promote departments during days, weeks or months already being recognized nationwide.

>Tactic: Assemble an internal advisory group comprised of union representatives and one appointee per classification. Charge advisory group with responsibility for planning employee events designed to improve morale and unity.

- Holiday party
- Teacher Appreciation Day
- Administrative Professionals Day

>Strategy: *Increase President's accessibility to employees working nontraditional hours.*

>Tactic: Hold employee forums four times per year.

Goal #6: To improve communication with special LASC audiences.

>**Strategy:** *Create communication vehicles for Spanish-speaking community members.*

>**Tactic:** Add a “Frequently Asked Questions” page in Spanish to the LASC website.

>**Tactic:** Add a “Why Choose LASC” page to the LASC website.

>**Tactic:** Produce a condensed capabilities brochure in Spanish in consultation with the Chancellor’s liaison.

>**Tactic:** Support the Chancellor’s liaison in events planned for the Spanish-speaking community within the LASC service area.

>**Tactic:** Add an instructions page to the Schedules of Classes in Spanish.

>**Tactic:** Create an LASC page on an appropriate Spanish-language, social networking website frequented by the 16-35 age group.

>**Tactic:** Expand media distribution list to include Spanish-language, community activist newsletters.

>**Tactic:** Create 30-second spots for Spanish-language radio.

>**Strategy:** *Continue open communication relationship with the Associated Students Organization.*

>**Tactic:** Continue to submit articles and photographs to the ASO newsletter editor.

>**Tactic:** Continue to proofread newsletter.

>**Tactic:** Consider publicizing select ASO events to community media.

>**Tactic:** Assemble a focus group of ASO members to be on hand for testing advertising campaigns, radio spots and other external communication efforts.

>**Strategy:** *Establish a supportive relationship with the LASC Foundation.*

>**Tactic:** Offer communication support to the LASC Foundation.

>**Tactic:** Produce a Foundation brochure and/or fact sheet.

>**Tactic:** Produce a “10 Compelling Reasons to Give” piece.

>**Tactic:** Develop a case for support.

>**Strategy:** *Establish an LASC Alumni Association.*

>**Tactic:** Work with past and present ASO Presidents as an advisory group to determine what graduating students need from an Alumni Association.

>**Tactic:** Produce a “How to Join the LASC Alumni Association” brochure with giving panel.

>**Tactic:** Begin Alumni Association with an information booth at graduation .

>**Tactic:** Establish an LASC page on the top social networking websites most frequented by teenagers and young adults (e.g., www.myspace.com, www.facebook.com and www.friendster.com).

>**Tactic:** Add an “LASC Alumni” page to the LASC website.

VII. EVALUATION

Public relations need not be a cost center, but an integral part of achieving overall organizational goals. Any public relations effort should have a built-in mechanism for measuring success. A number of methods exist to quantify results and can be integrated into this public relations program once tactics have been confirmed.

VIII. TIMELINE

A public relations timeline creates a sense of order. Practically speaking, a timeline helps public relations staff to plan for the best use of time and other resources, thereby saving time and effort in the long run. In addition, it can help to set up an evaluation plan.

The strategic release of information can maximize media coverage and keep tabs on media with long lead times. However, a timeline is not limited to publicity efforts. It includes as many public relations efforts as can be planned, within a realistic timeframe.

A timeline will be developed per quarter year after strategies and tactics have been narrowed, and a budget allocated, for the 2007-2009 academic years.

IX. BUDGET

A budget will be determined as soon as the decision is made on the scope of how to proceed with the public relations plan for academic years 2007-2009.