

Strong turnout for VVC meeting

Community works on college's accreditation issues

April 30, 2013 9:17 AM

[ShareThis](#) | [Print Story](#) | [E-Mail Story](#)

David Siwisa James, For the Daily Press

VICTORVILLE • Close to 100 people gathered in a room with a capacity of 41 on Monday night for a "Call to Action Meeting" concerning Victor Valley College's ongoing accreditation problems.

Holly Noel and Diana Carloni conducted the meeting; they both asserted that they are simply concerned citizens with no official ties to the college and that this was a "grassroots effort" to help solve the accreditation problems.

"We hope to get the community motivated to tell the board of trustees that five years of academic sanctions are too many," Carloni said. "This call to action is to inform the public on the issues that remain outstanding in the accreditation process and to try to organize a systematic and cogent approach to send a message to the board that everyone needs to work together and get this done."

A few minutes into the gathering at Spring Valley Lake Association Community Center, the standing-roomonly crowd had already spilled out into the hallway. Officials almost shut down the meeting because of a potential fire hazard, so people picked up their chairs and reconvened on the patio.

Carloni and Noel distributed a packet of information that they encouraged those in attendance to use as the basis of an action plan. They want the community to write letters to the newspaper, make organized appearances to speak at board meetings, write letters to the board and the college's administration and to use social media and other community networks to encourage the board of trustees to solve the accreditation issues.

Hesperia Mayor Pro Tem Thurston "Smitty" Smith and Don Holland, special assistant to First District Supervisor Robert A. Lovingood, were in attendance.

"I've been concerned for a while now and I am glad someone has brought it to light that this has to be addressed," Smith said.

Noel expressed how happy she was for the large turnout and said she wants her six grandchildren to have an opportunity to go to a fully-accredited VVC.

Edward Burg, who teaches in the Computer Information Systems Department at VVC, was one of a large contingent of VVC faculty in attendance. Burg said the students are still being given a great education.

"Part of the sanctions is about paperwork," Burg said. "We have to assess everything that we do and then we assess the assessments and then document that assessment and then document that we documented the assessment. That's the paper chain that it has come down to."

VVC Dean of Humanities and Arts Dr. E. Paul Williams was in attendance and said the college is well on its way to clearing up some of the accreditation issues.

"We've made a lot of progress in terms of completing the student learning outcomes for the courses that we offer," Williams said.

Williams said the college is working on the complex budget problems and structural deficit, which is also part of the accreditation sanctions.

Carloni said more than 55 percent of California community colleges have some type of accreditation problem.