

## FACULTY BIOGRAPHY



### **Fran Leonard**

***Chair of the Language Arts Division  
Professor of English***

Born in Hawaii and raised in San Francisco, I've known from my earliest years that education would be central to my life's work. From my parents – my mom is from Hawaii, my dad from the Philippines – I inherited a legacy of hard work, intellectual inquiry and continuous personal growth to contribute in some way to others' advancement and transformation through teaching and learning.

After graduating with a B.A. in English from U.C. Berkeley, I worked in a small, rural town in northwestern Costa Rica for the Peace Corps. After traveling through Latin America, I returned to advance my commitment to education by earning teaching credentials from U.C. Davis and an M.A. in English with a minor in Spanish at California State University, Sacramento. My extensive and diverse teaching/learning experiences range from Migrant Education students in Dixon, CA., to scholarship students from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia as well as teachers of English from Japan.

At West Los Angeles College, I continue my work with our students, early on in a partnership with Hamilton High School through a Met Life grant and currently, in the Puente Project, a learning community that aims to increase the number of underrepresented students who become transfer-eligible. Another memorable year, I traveled to central China with a group from West to lecture on American culture at Zhengzhou University, Henan province, to receptive and inquisitive university students, eager to practice their English.

Education has been and continues to be my lodestone and Northstar, especially as evidenced by the many students I've seen overcome daunting challenges to succeed – and then turn around to help others realize their potential.

Beyond the classroom, I chair the College Council and the Leadership Retreat Planning Committee, serve as a Senator-at-Large, a member of the Budget Committee, the Dental Hygiene Advisory Committee, and the District's Project Match Steering Committee. I've also served on 5 accreditation visiting teams.

Finally, I enjoy reading, watching films and plays, caring for our grandchildren and my mom, laughing with friends and taking long walks. I'm always on the look-out for fascinating, yummy food experiences. Oh – and dancing!

I am grateful each day for my family, folks in my personal and professional lives, including former students – who have encouraged, cheered me on and promoted my enduring passion for collaborating with me on innovative, effective teaching and learning.

Awards: NISOD (National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development) Excellence Award, FACCC Faculty of the Year Award, K.W. Lee Spirit Award, 2010 Teachers Making a Difference Award, Alpha Gamma Sigma Teacher's Excellence Awards.