

## **Van DeKamps: URGENT! Send a letter to LACCD to Halt Illegal Lease of Van de Kamps**

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*LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ACTIVIST ACTION ALERT!*

*PLEASE HELP PREVENT AN UNCONSCIONABLE ACTION BY PASSING THIS EMAIL ON TO YOUR COMMUNITY ACTION ALERT LISTS:*

*THE VAN DE KAMPS COALITION RESPECTFULLY ASKS FOR A MINUTE OF YOUR TIME TO CUT, PASTE, AND SEND A LETTER OF PROTEST TO THE OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES AND LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT. THE PROPOSED LETTER BELOW IS SELF-EXPLANATORY.*

Details about the controversial conversion of the historic Van de Kamps Northeast Satellite Campus of LA City College into a “commercial leased-tenant facility are found at [www.vandekamps.org](http://www.vandekamps.org)

At a Wednesday, April 14, 2010 meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District (“LACCD”), the Board will consider handing a still-under -construction community college building at the historic Van de Kamps bakery site to an unemployment program funded by the Los Angeles Mayor’s office. The Van de Kamps Coalition, for almost a decade, worked to save the historic Van de Kamps bakery building and helped former State Senator Richard Polanco and LACCD officials to bring a Northeast Campus of Los Angeles City College to an area of the City that studies showed needed an access point to the community college system.

LACCD Board of Trustees Mona Field, Sylvia Scott-Hayes, Kelly Candaele and others are being asked to hand our community college campus over to pet programs of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. According to sources, both \$240,000 of federal unemployment monies and this five-year lease are being handed over to a corporation without any competitive bidding. This is being done in unison by City of Los Angeles funding officials and LACCD leasing officials. Even more offensive: The lease of our brand new community college building was arranged by a LACCD Vice-Chancellor who sits on the Board of Directors of the corporation getting this sweet heart deal!

IF YOU ARE AVAILABLE ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2010 at 3:30 p.m., your voice and/or appearance is requested:

Los Angeles Community College Board Room  
770 Wilshire Blvd. (intersection with Flower St.)  
(One block north of the Red Line Metro/7th Street station)

IF YOU ARE NOT AVAILABLE ON WEDNESDAY:

The Van de Kamps Coalition is asking Los Angeles residents from all over the region to cut and paste the draft letter below to the list of recipients to help stop this outrageous, indeed, illegal action of our public elected officials.

If you are unhappy with the way Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is running the City, here is a small way for you to send a message to him about the questionable practices of his office.

CUT AND PASTE THE FOLLOWING E-MAIL ADDRESSES INTO YOUR "TO" ADDRESS:

mayor@lacity.org, councilmember.garcetti@lacity.org, councilmember.reyes@lacity.org, senator.cedillo@sen.ca.gov, assemblymember.deleon@assembly.ca.gov, larry.frank@lacity.org, georgia@gmercernet.net, sscotth@laccd.edu, kcandaele@laccd.edu, mfield@laccd.edu, mfield@glendale.edu, tpark@email.laccd.edu, nancysuepearlman@aol.com, msantiago@email.laccd.edu, justincl@laccd.edu, webmail@da.lacounty.gov, vdkcoalition@gmail.com

CUT AND PASTE THIS LETTER INTO THE BODY OF YOUR E-MAIL (EDIT AS NEEDED FOR YOUR COMFORT WITH THIS ISSUE) AND ADD YOUR NAME AT THE END:

April 13, 2010

RE: Proposed Community Career Development, Inc. Lease of Van de Kamps Campus

Dear LACCD Trustees:

As construction crews work to finish the construction of what was supposed to be the Northeast Campus of Los Angeles City College at Van de Kamps, I am informed that an offensive "bait-and-switch" is about to take place. Even former State Senator Richard Polanco has de-cried the "shenanigans" of Los Angeles Community College District officials in engineering a diversion of the \$72 million Van de Kamps campus away from its community college purposes.

I am writing in support of the research and work of the Van de Kamps Coalition that has revealed the proposed lease of the historic Van de Kamps Bakery building by the above-referenced workforce center corporation is the product of collusion of Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) officials and the Office of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. The grant of this five-year renewable lease of a brand new, under construction community college campus building to a private unemployment program politically linked to the Mayor's office is a highly offensive use of a school district facility and funds.

This is not what voters approved LACCD to spend bond funds to build. The historic Van de Kamps Northeast Campus of Los Angeles City College must be opened for adult, for-credit educational opportunity as YOU promised the voters. The Mayor needs to keep his hands off our community college buildings instead of conducting photo-op press conferences in front of them.

It is my understanding that this contract was planned and arranged by LACCD Vice Chancellor Marvin Martinez who happens to also serve as the Secretary to the Board of Directors to Community Career Development, Inc., the corporation to whom LACCD is proposing to give our community college building in this five-year lease. It is also my understanding that the City of Los Angeles, through the Mayor's office, may have violated Federal procurement policies by handing at least \$240,000 of Workforce Investment Board monies to Community Career Development, Inc. without the required competitive bidding for the set up of a new workforce center at Van de Kamps.

It is also my understanding that Community Career Development, Inc. is being given a lease of this Van de Kamps building without any competitive bidding by LACCD officials as would normally be required under state contracting laws. It is also my understanding that LACCD officials refuse to comply with environmental laws to assess the impacts of the more intense land use proposed under the lease.

Even more outrageous, the Van de Kamps Coalition reports that up to \$7.1 million of constitutionally-restricted bond funds approved by voters have been spent by LACCD staff on destroying the original plans for the classrooms at Van de Kamps, converting them to mostly office space and a few small training rooms for workforce unemployment programs that should be housed in private office space elsewhere. About \$1 million of short-lived assets such as computers, monitors, audio-visual equipment and other items have been purchased by LACCD staff for this lease tenant illegally using bond funds to do it. These short-lived assets will be exhausted by Community Career Development, Inc. before our community college students will ever use them under the current five-year lease. I understand that even LACCD's bond counsel has informed YOU that these expenditures are illegal and YOU are continuing to spend bond funds to finish the building for this lease arrangement. This is malfeasance in office if you spend this money knowing it is unlawful to do so.

While workforce centers are an important component to addressing job losses in the current economic downturn, these programs have sufficient federal funding to pay rent in more appropriate office space. Investment of these federal dollars in private sector office space ought to be a priority, instead of handing millions of dollars of subsidized community college facility space to a corporate Board of Directors on which your own Vice-Chancellor sits. This entire transaction is illegal under state law and you must reject the misguided efforts of some of LACCD staff to steer this lease to the Mayor's politically-favored corporation.

I join the Van de Kamps Coalition in calling for an investigation of this serious conflict of interest by your Vice Chancellor in this transaction because any contract in which he played a role is null and void under the State's Conflict of Interest Law, Government Code Section 1090.

When the voters previously supported the LACCD in three bond measure elections to pay for capital improvements and expansion of community college facilities, they certainly never contemplated such unlawful use of our tax funds. I will be watching the outcome of your meeting even though I am unable to attend your Board meeting scheduled this Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. when I am working.

Most sincerely