



CAL MARITIME

Contact:

Doug Webster
Director of Public Relations
California Maritime Academy
200 Maritime Academy Dr.
Vallejo, CA 94590-8181

W: (707) 654-1720
C: (707) 328-1887
E: dwebster@sum.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALIFORNIA MARITIME PHYSICAL EDUCATION/WATER SURVIVAL TRAINING CENTER WINS STATE BUDGET SUPPORT

(Vallejo, CA – Sept. 26, 2008)...Although the new state budget package just approved by the Legislature is a very tight one for all of the 23 campuses of the California State University (CSU) system, it included some very good news for the California Maritime Academy – \$34.7 million for a new physical education and water survival training center.



“Originally,” explains Cal Maritime President William B. Eisenhardt, “this long overdue project, so vital to our campus, appeared to be sidelined again. Plans to include it as part of a state-wide education bond initiative on this fall’s ballot were dropped. However, with the help of the Chancellor’s office, a very limited number of critical higher education capital projects were made part of the final budget agreement. We are now back on track with a completion timetable of fall, 2011.”

Eisenhardt said a new physical education and water survival training facility has been awaiting approval for over a decade. “Our present athletic center and pool were constructed in 1943 when Cal Maritime first moved to this campus. Between the post-war years and today, enrollment at Cal Maritime has grown over eight-fold....eighty percent in just the last eight years alone. The 65-year old facility we now have is simply incapable of serving the needs of an expanding and vital university such as ours, and is in dire need of costly major repairs. In addition, the gymnasium does not meet minimum size standards and limits our ability to provide a suitable range of athletic resources and sports to our students. Many competing colleges and universities cannot or will not compete here because of system shortcomings.”

“A modern water survival training facility is critical for our maritime-track cadets. To earn required industry licensure, they need training in such skills as jumping from heights into water, swimming and floating for long periods, deploying and entering life rafts from the water and experiencing real-life emergency conditions such as darkness, waves, spray and wind. Our present pool is too small and lacks the specialized resources needed to deliver this mandated training.” Eisenhardt said it is also hoped that Cal Maritime and the city of Vallejo can work together to make the facility available for community athletic and recreation programs – especially during summer months when demand from faculty and students is lower.

One stumbling block for the new facility had been acquisition of land on which to locate it. That hurdle was overcome last year with the purchase of approximately 7 acres between the campus main gate on Maritime Academy Drive and private motel property adjacent to Sonoma Boulevard, moving the project up the CSU capital project priority list.

However, Eisenhardt noted, as with most state-funded capital projects, the dollars allocated pay just for basic bricks and mortar. “From past experience we know that additional dollars will help make this facility truly functional and outstanding. We’ll be reaching out to our alumni, friends and supporters to supply the critical ‘margin of excellence’ needed through private support.

“These are exciting times for us in terms of growth and expansion. This project follows on the heels of our new \$13 million Simulation Training and Research Center, opening this fall, and a new \$9 million residence hall, now under construction and scheduled to open next fall. Equally exciting is the fact that this newest project, when completed, will be the first of a series of ‘dominos’, allowing us to further expand and modernize this campus for the 21st century. Plans call for a configuration of the old athletic facility into a consolidated student center, bringing together a variety of student services currently spread across campus. Our long-term plans also call for expansions of our library, classrooms and dining facilities. It’s all designed to assure that

we can continue to provide top-quality education, training and research facilities to prepare future leaders in global trade and transportation in the decades ahead.”

##