The following op-ed piece was published March 24, 2007 in the Daily Review and Fremont Argus. Terry Jones has been a professor of sociology and social work at California State University, East Bay, for more than 30 years.

**CSUEB extends lifeline to all**

By Terry Jones

THE DAILY REVIEW'S front page article March 15 reporting on the high percentage of California State University, East Bay, freshmen students in need of remediation was interesting. However, in focusing on the negative aspects of these numbers, the article missed an important point.

A complete report on the situation should also make reference to how Cal State East Bay is working to making quality education accessible to the entire community. We have our challenges, but we refuse to take the easy way out and cater only to the gifted.

I am proud to teach at a university that attempts to provide a quality education to a diverse community. Our faculty strives to reach out to those beyond the most conventionally talented.

Having students who score low on entrance examinations is a challenge. Many of us on the faculty see it as an honor to accept this challenge. The university's mission statement directs us to serve all who call upon us and express a desire and need for an education. It would be a great thing if all the residents in our service area were without need for remediation. I am proud that this administration and my colleagues in the rank and file have looked beyond arbitrary cut-off scores on questionable high stakes tests to include those in need of a second educational chance.

We have extended an educational lifeline to those who may have previously stumbled off the education track, but have come to realize that education is their ticket out of poverty, ignorance and racism.

The failure of local schools to properly educate all of their students should never be a barrier for these students to finally receive a quality education.

We need to see that these special students have proper resources and support to allow them to succeed and grow. As we ask these students to change and to trust us with an important part of their lives, we also must be willing to change and trust them too. This trust begins with believing they are valuable assets, that they bring treasures to the table, that they can learn and that we can teach them.

CSUEB can be an example to the nation on how to blend quality education and equal access. Keep the faith.