



City College
Mesa College
Miramar College
Continuing Education

THEY DID IT!
Meet Our Very First Baccalaureate Graduates.



Story on page 06

CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE



A HISTORIC STEP FORWARD

It's all about workforce development and building the future.

When the California Legislature passed and Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 850 into law in 2014, it marked the culmination of a decade-long effort to further enhance the role of California's community colleges in providing the education and skills needed by an increasingly complex and demanding economy. SB 850 authorized a pilot program for 15 community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in workforce fields in which professional

Mesa College and the San Diego Community College District established this program only after close consultation with health care industry leaders and professional organizations. New legislation, Senate Bill 1406, authored by state Senator Jerry Hill, would extend the pilot project by three years, allowing students to commence their degree program by the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year, thereby extending the pilot project until July 1, 2026.

In addition to the obvious benefit of allowing more students to embark on a more convenient and affordable route in securing a workforce-oriented bachelor's degree, the bill also would ensure the state Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) would have more data and a much larger pool of participants from which to evaluate the program's effectiveness – a point that was made in a preliminary LAO report. That report also noted that local employers and students strongly favor the baccalaureate program in their area, saying it was more accessible than other options and fostered close working relationships with industry.

With more data available, it is hoped, that in future years the Legislature will have received sufficient information about the Mesa College program and the other pilot programs to consider expanding this opportunity to more community colleges in the state. The need is profound. If current trends continue, by 2030 California will have a shortage of 1.1 million workers holding a bachelor's degree for jobs that require one. The community college baccalaureate can play a major role in closing that gap.

I congratulate our first cohort of graduates from the Mesa College baccalaureate program, and I urge everyone to support Senate Bill 1406.

Chancellor Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D.

HIM graduates celebrate being the first cohort to receive their bachelor's degree at Mesa College.



associations and employers now require or prefer bachelor's degree preparation for job entry and which public universities do not and are not planning to provide. It also called for an evaluation of the program's effectiveness, with a final report due in 2022.

San Diego Mesa College is one of the 15 pilot programs, and its first cohort of graduates secured their bachelor's degrees in the growing field of Health Information Management (HIM) at their commencement on May 19 (see related story on page 6). These proud graduates are now qualified to sit for the national certification exam needed before becoming a registered health information administrator and to work in an industry that is projected to grow briskly over the next decade. HIM jobs in San Diego County offer direct entry into the middle class, with positions paying in the \$115,000 range.

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ON SOLID FISCAL GROUND

The San Diego Community College District's careful fiscal management and solid financial position have led Standard & Poor's to raise the District's bond rating from AA+ to AAA, the highest level possible and a level that potentially could lead to millions of dollars in savings for local taxpayers.



The SDCCD is now California's only community college district whose funding is based on student attendance that has secured the highest possible ratings from both S&P and Moody's Investors Service. In fall 2016, Moody's upgraded the District's rating from Aa1 to Aaa.

Ratings measure the credit worthiness of a corporate or government institution, and they are used by investment professionals to assess the likelihood a debt will be repaid. Ratings are assessed on a variety of factors, including the health of an organization's balance sheet, its debt, and its cash position.

S&P noted the SDCCD's strong reserves and responsible funding of its pension obligations.

"The rating action reflects our view of the District's consistently stable-to-positive operational performance and its addressing pension and other postemployment benefits liabilities by setting aside designated reserves and trust," said S&P Global Ratings credit analyst Brian Phuvan.

DONATIONS HELP MIRAMAR PROGRAM SOAR

San Diego Gas & Electric Co. (SDG&E) gave Miramar College's drone program a big lift this spring by donating six top-of-the-line models of the remotely operated aircraft.

Miramar offers a Remote Pilot Ground School and a Remote Pilot Flight Lab for students interested in becoming Federal Aviation Administration-licensed drone

operators. The six donated DJI drones – three DJI Inspire Pros with camera and remote, two DJI Inspires with camera and remote, and one S-1000 drone – are being used in the Remote Pilot Flight Lab class sections.

"This donation of commercial-quality drones from SDG&E will enhance the level of instruction we can



offer our students," said Max Moore, assistant professor for Aviation Operations. "We can't thank SDG&E enough for supporting our college and the community with this donation."

GETTING COLLEGE-READY



The number of high school students enrolling in San Diego Community College District courses continues to rise, with concurrent enrollment rates up almost 74 percent this spring compared to last.

More than 3,400 high school students were enrolled in college courses during the spring semester, up from the 1,957 high school students taking college courses in spring 2017. In

spring 2016, the number of concurrently enrolled students was 1,284.

"The SDCCD and the San Diego Unified School District see concurrent enrollment as an effective means to achieve college-readiness, accelerate time to degree, and create a seamless pathway from high school to community college," said Lynn Neault, SDCCD's vice chancellor of Student Services. "We are pleased to see that more and more students are

Lincoln High students Monea Martin and Alexia Gonzalez work on a writing exercise in their English 47A course.

taking advantage of the opportunities we offer."

In many instances, high school students don't even have to set foot on a college campus or be of traditional college age to earn college credits. Some 75 percent of the 3,402 high school students concurrently enrolled in City, Mesa, and Miramar College classes this spring were taking the courses at their high school campuses.



Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D.
@CarrollSDCCD
Chancellor, San Diego Community College District



Today, Mesa College celebrated the 20th anniversary of its signature building, the 100,000+ square foot Learning Resource Center, which opened in April 1998 when I was president of the college.

STAR POWER IN CAREER EDUCATION



Four San Diego Community College District career education programs have earned a Gold Star – the top award possible – in the California Community Colleges' Strong Workforce Stars program for exceptional performance in boosting earnings and putting people to work.

Strong Workforce Stars is an outgrowth of the Strong Workforce Program, an annual \$200 million investment launched in 2016 to create 1 million additional middle-skilled workers. Programs recognized as Strong Workforce Stars must increase student earnings by 50 percent or more, result in at least 70 percent of students securing the regional living wage, and land 90 percent or more of students in a job similar to their field of study. Programs meeting one benchmark earn a Bronze Star. Programs meeting two benchmarks earn a Silver Star. Programs meeting all three metrics earn a Gold Star.

Earning a Gold Star were the Electricity Lineman Apprenticeship Program at City College, the Radiologic Technology Program and the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Mesa College, and the Diesel Technology Program at Miramar College.

In all, more than 50 programs at City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges, and San Diego Continuing Education earned a Strong Workforce Star.

Pathway to the Humanities

Thirty students from San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges will spend five weeks at UC San Diego in the PATH Summer Academy as they prepare to transfer to the La Jolla university this fall through a joint San Diego Community College District-UC San Diego initiative aimed at expanding pathways to the humanities.

The PATH Summer Academy—Preparing Accomplished Transfers to the Humanities—is among the programs funded through a \$2.59 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In addition to the Summer Academy, other elements of the initiative include student outreach and recruitment, building connections and collaborations among faculty at the two institutions, and a peer mentoring program to support humanities students once they arrive at UC San Diego.



This year's academy begins with an orientation July 1; classes begin the next day and end August 3.

PATH Summer Academy courses generally cover culture in the United States, and students this summer will be enrolled in Jazz and the Music of the African Diaspora and The History of Race in the United States. Last year, 22 students took part in the inaugural PATH Summer Academy.



WITH MORE EXCELLENCE

It's said that excellence is a journey, not a destination. Certainly this is true of the San Diego Community College District, which is constantly evolving to better serve our students

and the San Diego region. From the awarding of bachelor's degrees, to making college tuition-free, to the construction of facilities that rival those at any public university, the District is transforming itself and in doing so redefining the way people look at community colleges.

Similarly, *With Excellence* – the District's signature publication – is evolving. Starting with this issue, the WE has a new, cleaner design that better reflects the District's stature as one of the top community college districts in the United States. Already an award-winning magazine, the WE will continue to evolve with coming issues to ensure we are telling the District's story in powerful, compelling ways. Thank you for joining us on this journey!

FIGHTING HUNGER

by Providing Our Students Healthy Food Sources.



The San Diego Community College District is ramping up its efforts to feed students who otherwise would go hungry, thanks to nearly \$100,000 in state grant funding to bolster emergency food pantry services at City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges.



The colleges will use the money to augment food pantries on campus, including a partnership with Feeding San Diego that provides fresh produce to students in need. City College is earmarking its entire amount of nearly \$33,000 to buy non-perishable food. Mesa College will use its nearly \$41,000 to bolster its partnership with Feeding San Diego. Miramar College will spend its more than \$20,000 to expand the size of its pantry as well as purchase food to stock it.

The allocations come from \$2.5 million in state funds that the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office is allotting to more than 60 campuses to fight student hunger.



Making

History...

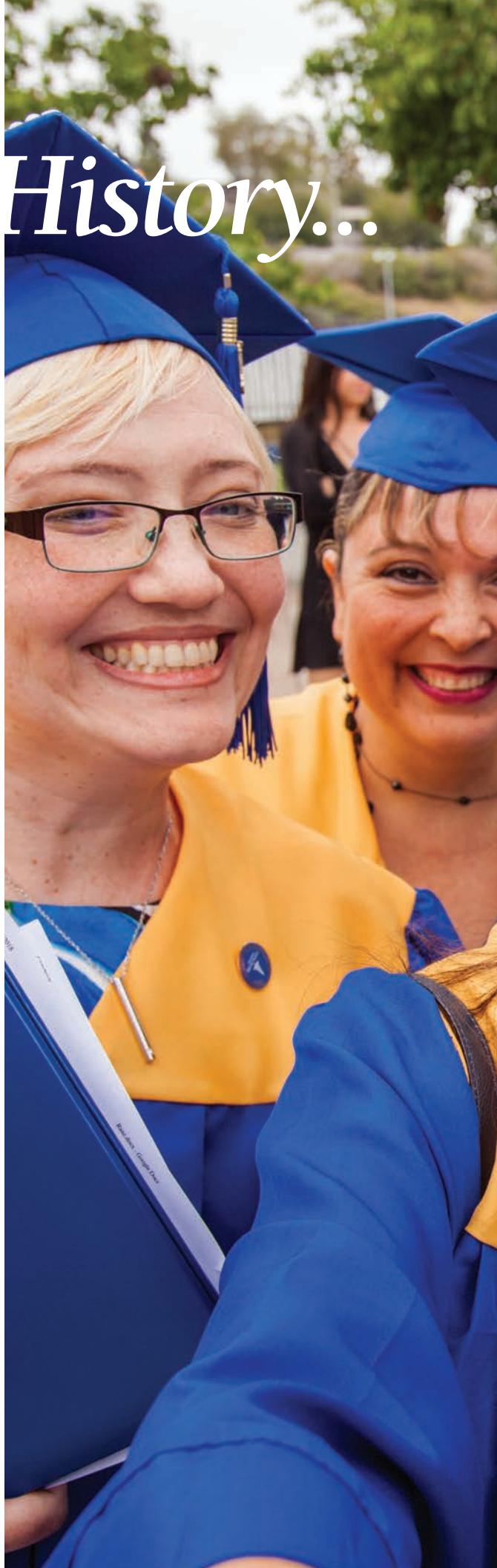
The way medical coding specialist **Victoria Bradbury** sees it, her career options are now almost without limit. San Diego Mesa College classmate and Scripps Healthcare Quality Control Analyst **Michelle Gurrola** sees a similar array of opportunities; she is set to embark on a lucrative journey toward consulting in the growing field of healthcare informatics. Classmate **Henry Cunningham**, who works at UC San Diego Health, says he now has the tools needed to pursue a future as a health information data analyst.

Bradbury, Gurrola, and Cunningham are making history this spring: They are members of the first 16-student cohort at San Diego Mesa College earning a Bachelor of Science degree in the booming field of health information management thanks to the state's Baccalaureate Pilot Program. They are among the first students to complete a baccalaureate program at a California community college.

"A bachelor's degree goes a long way in the health information management field, especially on the information technology and systems analysis side of things," said Cunningham, 28. "This being a community college where the cost is next to nothing compared to some of the online programs that are out there, I'm saving a lot of money and I'm not going into debt, all while having a lot of doors opening for my career."

Once they accepted their diplomas at Mesa's May 19 commencement ceremony, they became qualified to sit for the national certification exam – sponsored by the American Health Information Management Association – that marks the last step needed before becoming a registered health information administrator (RHIA).

Job opportunities abound, thanks to a growing health care industry and increased sophistication in managing and protecting computerized medical records. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics is projecting employment of medical and health services managers – which includes health information managers – to grow by 20 percent in the 10-year period through 2026. Wages vary according to the position and the employer, but can reach six figures annually.





at
MESA COLLEGE

From left to right: HIM grads
Brandee Raaz, Elvia Esquer,
Linda Bredeson, Naoko
Schmidt, Adelina Arebalo,
and Blair Watson pose for a
selfie before the Mesa College
commencement ceremony.



"All of San Diego County should be proud of the job Mesa College has done in building its baccalaureate program in Health Information Management," said San Diego Community College District Chancellor Constance M. Carroll. "Our first class of graduates is a diverse one in both gender and ethnicity, and most of our students have job offers or, for those who are already employed, have promises for advancement."

Top: Assistant Professor Holly Jagielinski leading a discussion with HIM students. **Right:** Naoko Schmidt and Brandee Raaz share congratulatory hugs and laughter as they become the District's first graduates with a 4-year degree.



Career options include working as a health information department manager or director, a health care systems manager, a data analyst, a quality or compliance coordinator, or a coding manager. Students are trained to design databases, analyze health care data, understand the laws of patient record confidentiality and privacy, understand and master the principles of personnel management, and be able to develop a financial plan for a health information management department.

"The first week we started the baccalaureate program, Sharp Healthcare called me to collaborate in creating an employment pipeline straight from our college," said Associate Professor Connie Renda, director of the Health Information Management program. "The demand for employees is here in the San Diego health care community."

The Health Information Management baccalaureate program resulted from a years-long process led by Chancellor Carroll, former state Senator (and former SDCCD Trustee) Marty Block, and others who pointed out that community colleges were vital in helping California meet industry demands for more workers with a bachelor's degree. What's more, Block's Senate Bill 850 set the enrollment fees and tuition for a four-year community college degree at a little more than \$10,000, a fraction of the cost of earning a bachelor's degree at any other college or university.

The 15 community colleges chosen as part of the pilot program were selected based on local workforce needs.

"San Diego County is home to several major hospital systems, including military hospitals, and the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency," said Mesa College President Pamela T. Luster. "We have worked side by side with our industry partners in developing our program, which has the potential to become a statewide leader."

Luster noted that Mesa was supported in its effort to offer a bachelor's degree by an advisory board comprising 19 health information technology industry leaders, including Cassi Birnbaum, the president-elect at that time of the national organization representing 75,000 health information management professionals.

Fueling demand was 2009 federal legislation mandating health care institutions to convert to electronic health records by 2014. All in all, changes in industry standards have created a need for highly-skilled health information management administrators to oversee information technology and patient records systems at hospitals, clinics, and other health care facilities—and a bachelor's degree has become the entry point for these high-skilled management positions. Yet the only other California institution offering a bachelor's degree in health information management is a private institution that is a two-hour drive from San Diego on a good day. The cost to attend as a full-time undergraduate student at the school is nearly \$34,000 annually in fees and tuition.

The first cohort of freshmen in Mesa College's Health Information Management program enrolled in fall 2015; a second cohort of students who already had an associate degree in health information technology were accepted the following fall. It is the latter group that is graduating with bachelor's degrees this May.

"A bachelor's program is a natural progression for those with an associate degree in health information management, but none of the colleges or universities around here offer a baccalaureate," said Bradbury, who was hired as a Sharp Healthcare clinical coding specialist almost immediately after earning her associate degree in health information technology in 2015 and passing the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) exam the same month. "There are so many opportunities out there – risk management, human resources, project management, legal and



compliance, data analytics, coding management, and having a bachelor's degree as well as the RHIA certification opens a lot of doors. It's an exciting time to be a part of history and I am proud to

have had this opportunity to represent Mesa College and the health information management industry."

Gurrola agreed. "Even the internships at the companies I want to work for require a bachelor's degree," said 28-year-old Gurrola, who also earned an associate degree in health information technology from Mesa College. "Having the baccalaureate program at Mesa is going to have a huge impact on students and the community. It feels wonderful to be a part of history." **WE**

“It’s an exciting time to be a part of history and I am proud to have had this opportunity to represent Mesa College and the health information management industry.”

— Mesa Baccalaureate Graduate Victoria Bradbury



Top: Mesa College President Pamela Luster addressing commencement attendees.

Center left: Associate Professor Connie Renda, center, with students Brandee Raaz and Henry Cunningham.

Bottom: Chancellor Constance Carroll and then-State Senator Marty Block being recognized by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office in 2015 for their efforts to establish the state's Baccalaureate Pilot Program through Senate Bill 850.

DISCOVERING A MORE WORLDLY VIEW

*How the District is broadening its vision
of global learning outcomes.*



because many businesses and organizations in areas with a large Spanish-speaking population like San Diego need people who are bilingual," said Toribio, who aspires to become a sports nutritionist. "We studied the proper way to write and speak Spanish at Universidad Complutense. We also learned to translate English and Spanish. But beyond that, just being with a host family was amazing. They treated me like their son and cared about me since Day One. It was an unbelievable experience that gave me a new perspective on life."

It is because of reviews like Toribio's that the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) is moving to broaden its global reach.

In addition to expanding study-abroad programs that enable students from San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges to study culture in Costa Rica, Spanish in Spain, and fashion in France, the District wants to boost international education events on campus, explore international partnerships across the globe, and internationalize the curriculum by sending instructors to educational conferences overseas.

The districtwide International Education Committee is leading the effort. Members of the committee – which is expanding its vision to align, coordinate, and advance global learning outcomes – say it is important for any student who so desires to have a



San Diego City College student Joe Toribio found far more than he expected when taking part in a study-abroad program in Madrid in January.

"I went with the goal of bettering my Spanish

strong international flavor in their curriculum. It is doing that by developing a multi-year International Education Plan, and recently secured a small grant from the California Colleges for International Education to promote a unified look, voice, and feel to current study-abroad promotions and efforts.

"For many students, their community college experience will be their only opportunity for international learning, which is why we are working together to increase the options that are available," said Dora Schoenbrun-Fernandez, a professor of Spanish at Mesa College who sits on the International Education Committee as its faculty coordinator.

Districtwide, much has been done already. More than 200 students have participated in study-abroad programs over the past three years. In addition, students are expanding their world view through foreign language courses, including Spanish, French, Italian, Arabic, and Tagalog. All three colleges offer an Honors Global Competencies Certificate enabling students to gain a global perspective in multiple areas in order to enhance their critical thinking and intercultural understandings needed to compete

“San Diego is a diverse and complex border community where international perspectives, experiences, and global learning are vital in preparing students to meet the needs of employers and have fulfilling careers.”

— Chancellor Constance M. Carroll



in today's global economy. Courses such as Asian Philosophy at City, Middle Eastern Dance at Mesa, Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas at Miramar, and Ethnic/Regional Foods at Continuing Education underscore the District's commitment in focusing on cultural awareness.

"Each institution does an excellent job with approaching internationalization efforts in unique ways and has pursued successful study-abroad programming, international and multi-cultural activities, or outreach efforts," said Stephanie Bulger, vice chancellor, Instructional Services Division. "Diverse and international perspectives can be found throughout the campuses and within the classrooms."

Among the areas of focus in the International Education Plan:

- Developing partnerships with international organizations or institutions that could cover areas such as career education, transfer opportunities, or college preparation courses.
- Internationalizing the curriculum by developing global learning awareness, competency, and outcomes.
- Capitalizing on opportunities to advocate on behalf of SDCCD in countries interested in the community college model.
- Enhancing access to external funding that would support international education.

The study-abroad program would remain at the center of international education efforts. The Mesa College Vocal Ensemble embodies the impact that global travel can have on a student's life. It has toured Australia, Canada, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Japan, and performed in the Czech Republic and Poland this past June.

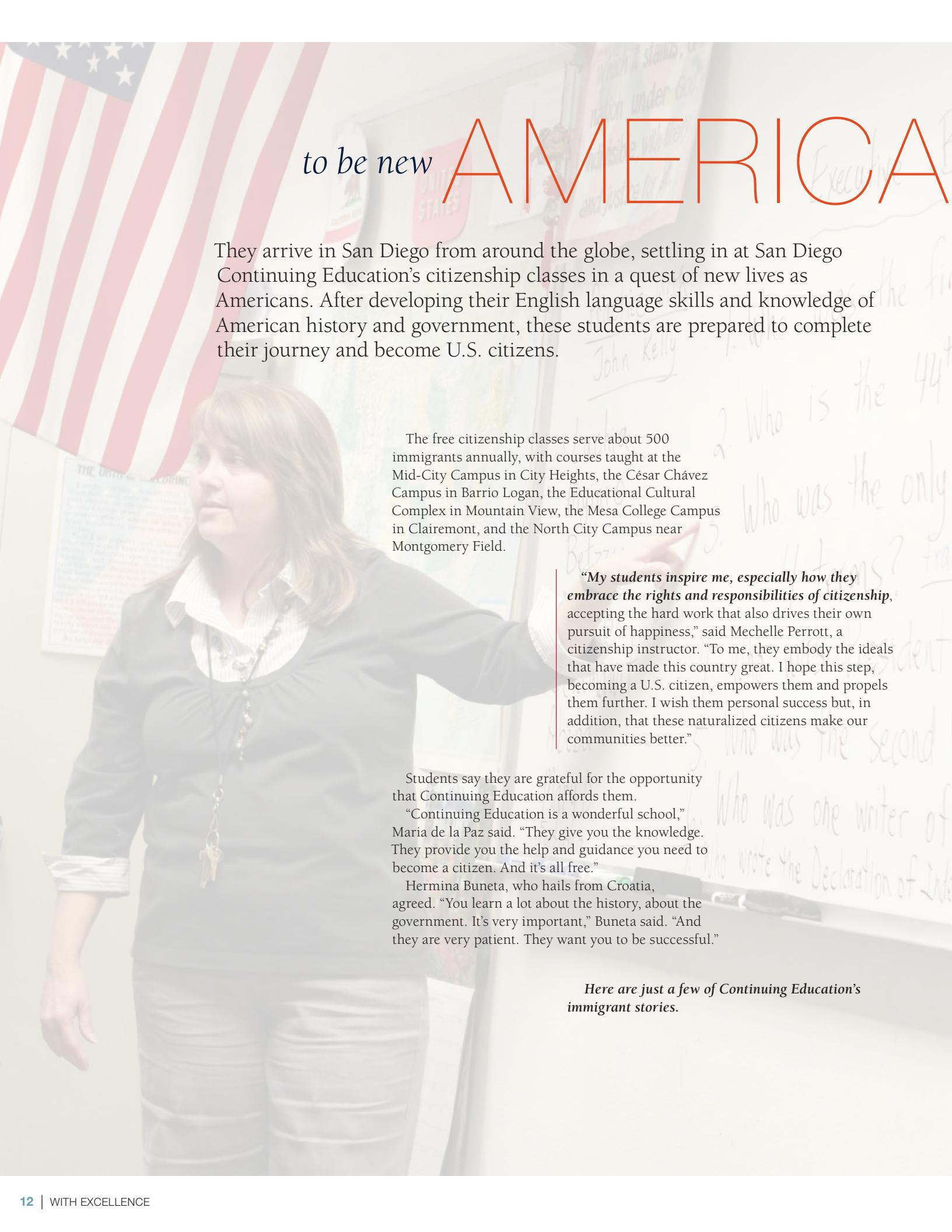
"It truly is unbelievable what our students are getting out of these trips," said Dr. Richard Chagnon, who has headed the Vocal Ensemble for more than three decades.

"Not only lifelong memories, but by getting together with people from other countries to sing with them, to perform with them, to break bread with them, you're providing an opportunity to discover what being a human is all about."

Melody Ebner agrees. Ebner was with the Vocal Ensemble during a series of performances in Puebla, Mexico, in summer 2016.

"It turned to be an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience," said Ebner, who has since transferred to San Diego State University, where she is majoring in music education. "We met people who were performing there from Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, the Czech Republic. It was eye-opening. We learned about different cultures, about the different ways people from other countries viewed the world. And we learned a lot of different musical styles. I can't say enough about the impact that trip has had on my life." **WE**





to be new AMERICA

They arrive in San Diego from around the globe, settling in at San Diego Continuing Education's citizenship classes in a quest of new lives as Americans. After developing their English language skills and knowledge of American history and government, these students are prepared to complete their journey and become U.S. citizens.

The free citizenship classes serve about 500 immigrants annually, with courses taught at the Mid-City Campus in City Heights, the César Chávez Campus in Barrio Logan, the Educational Cultural Complex in Mountain View, the Mesa College Campus in Clairemont, and the North City Campus near Montgomery Field.

"My students inspire me, especially how they embrace the rights and responsibilities of citizenship," accepting the hard work that also drives their own pursuit of happiness," said Mechelle Perrott, a citizenship instructor. "To me, they embody the ideals that have made this country great. I hope this step, becoming a U.S. citizen, empowers them and propels them further. I wish them personal success but, in addition, that these naturalized citizens make our communities better."

Students say they are grateful for the opportunity that Continuing Education affords them.

"Continuing Education is a wonderful school," Maria de la Paz said. "They give you the knowledge. They provide you the help and guidance you need to become a citizen. And it's all free."

Hermina Buneta, who hails from Croatia, agreed. "You learn a lot about the history, about the government. It's very important," Buneta said. "And they are very patient. They want you to be successful."

Here are just a few of Continuing Education's immigrant stories.

NS



SOVANNA YUON and SA CHAU
Married 35 Years. Sa Chau — Former Teacher and Educational Planner

originally from
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

After surviving forced marches and Cambodia's deadly Khmer Rouge regime, Sa Chau and his wife, Sovanna Yuon, have been living in San Diego for nearly six years. Thanks to San Diego Continuing Education's English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes, they became naturalized Americans on April 18 at the downtown federal courthouse.

"I wanted to live in a free country with a democratic government," said Chau, 69, who was able to secure a special immigrant visa by virtue of his work with the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh. Chau and his wife arrived in Los Angeles aboard an EVA Air flight in November 2012 before making their way to San Diego to live with a niece in Emerald Hills.

"I am very happy to be American," Yuon said. "I am very happy."

A former junior high school teacher, Chau had worked for the Cambodian government since 1970 making sure internal refugee camps were adequately supplied with food and medicine. That changed when Pol Pot led the Khmer Rouge to power in 1975, emptying cities and forcing the population off to toil in rural work projects.

Many family members died from starvation and disease, or at the hands of the Khmer Rouge. After the Khmer Rouge was overthrown in 1978, Chau again found a government job in educational planning. In April 1993, he began working for the U.S. Embassy, focusing on educational exchange programs between the United States and Cambodia. He retired in 2011, and with their four children grown and doing well on their own, the couple decided it was time to leave for America. A few years after settling in, they enrolled at Continuing Education.

"We are so proud to be U.S. citizens and happy to live in this country, the land of freedom and the land of opportunity," Chau said. "We would like to express our gratitude to the U.S. government which granted us special immigrant visas to live in the U.S. and approved citizenship to both of us. We would also like to thank Continuing Education that allow us to attend the citizenship class for seniors and a special thanks to our teacher, Dr. Rosaelena Lopez, who taught us the basic background of American culture and values, American history and government, and the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens."

MARIA DE LA PAZ
Artist, Teacher, and Wife

*originally from
Guadalajara, Mexico*



Maria de la Paz's path to American citizenship is a true love story.

Paz, as she likes to be called, was happy with her life as a school teacher in the Mexican city of Guadalajara, where she was close to her family and had a comfortable home to return to following her travels to Europe and South America.

That all changed when Paz met her future husband – a physics teacher at Patrick Henry High School in San Diego – while visiting a cousin living in Southern California. Before long, he flew to Mexico to meet Paz's family. Soon, they were engaged. After obtaining a K-1 nonimmigrant visa, also known as a fiancée visa, Paz was living in San Diego and securing lawful permanent resident status – also known as a Green Card – in the United States.

Becoming a United States citizen was the logical next step. After taking several ESL courses at

Continuing Education's Mid-City Campus in City Heights, she enrolled in citizenship classes to help her through the naturalization process.

She's aiming to become an American later this year or in early 2019.

"It's important to me for a lot of reasons," Paz said. "I am with my husband and this is my home. I want to vote. I want to be able to travel without any kind of a problem. I want to be able to get a job because I would like to work again as a teacher. It will feel good to be a citizen of this country. It makes you proud. I can't really describe the feeling, but there is a lot of pride in being an American citizen."

Zahra Khalaj provides a study in contrasts when asked to reflect on life in Iran. The country, Khalaj said, is beautiful. The people, she adds, are as hospitable as they come. But economic sanctions had taken their toll, and societal constraints could sometimes be too much.

In 2012, more than 30 years after the Iranian Revolution overthrew the Pahlavi dynasty and replaced it with an Islamic Republic, Khalaj felt it was time for a change.

"Freedom," Khalaj said. "I wanted more freedom."

Although her mother and several family members had long ago settled in the United States, moving here was not easy. Because the United States does not have diplomatic relations with Iran, Khalaj had to travel to an embassy branch office in Dubai to get her paperwork in order. An arduous FBI background

check was followed by Department of State certification.

After landing in San Diego and becoming more comfortable in her new home, Khalaj enrolled at Continuing Education. "The first day, I don't know anything," Khalaj said. "But Mechelle is a very good teacher. I learned a lot. I'm very happy."

She completed her citizenship classes this spring and is now in the process of applying to become a citizen. **WE**



ZAHRA KHALAJ
Mother and Writer

*originally from
Tehran, Iran*

HOW **MIRAMAR COLLEGE** HAS COME of **AGE**

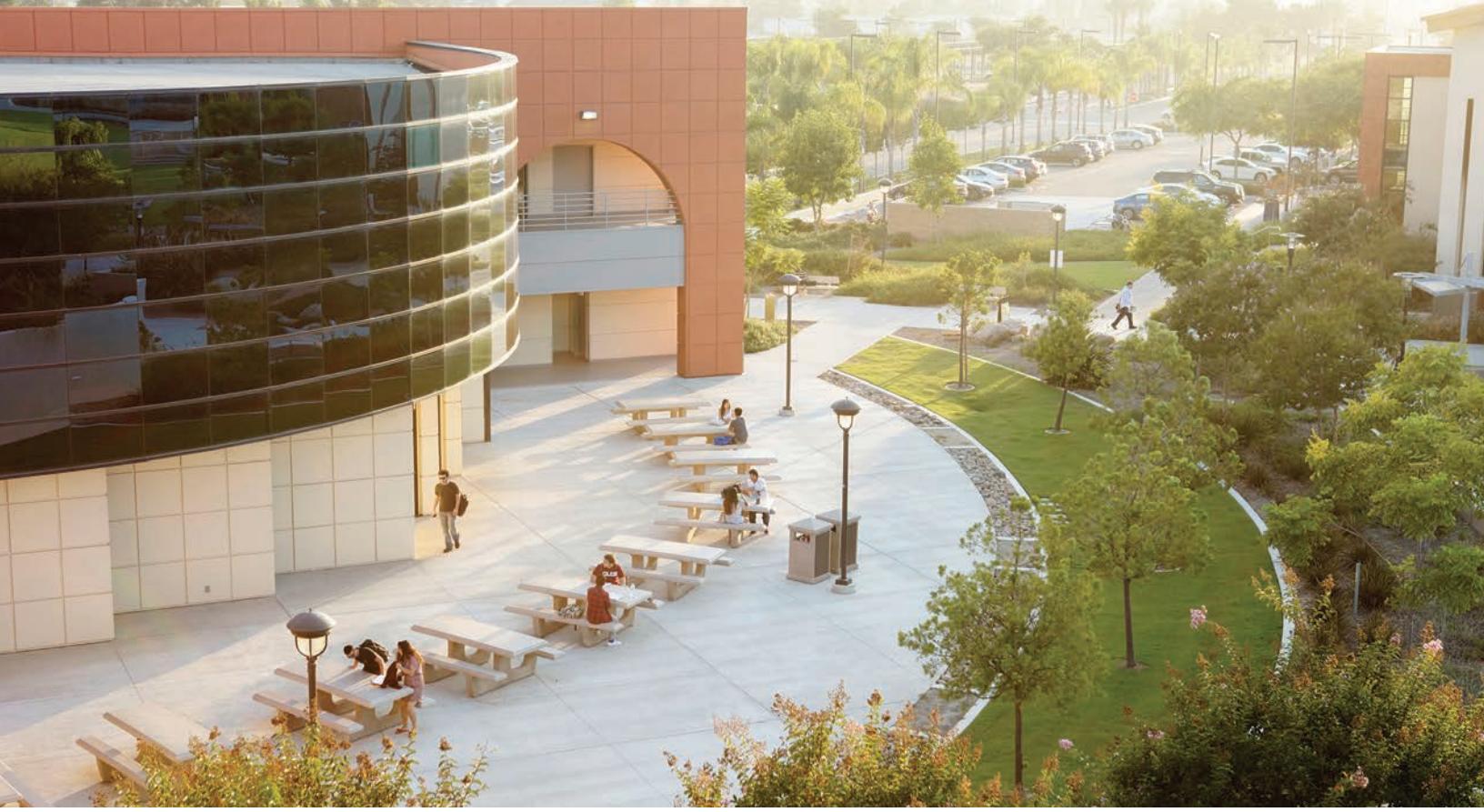
A HALF-CENTURY OF
PREPARING OUR LEADERS
FOR TOMORROW



Opened in 1969 as a police and firefighter training facility, Miramar College has been transformed into a comprehensive and thriving college.

Over nearly five decades, Miramar has grown to offer an extensive selection of more than 160 degrees and certificates, and it is home to cutting-edge programs such as the Southern California Biotechnology Center, which supports the local life sciences industry with an economic impact of nearly \$32 billion annually.





Miramar is one of the fastest-growing colleges in the nation, and this year it reached a major milestone when the number of full-time equivalent students attending the school topped 10,000 – a plateau officially marking it a mid-size community college. The designation means that Miramar – which has a total enrollment of more than 16,000 students – and the San Diego Community College District will be in line to earn a larger slice of higher-education funding from Sacramento to further build its programming.

"Miramar is a comprehensive college that is playing an important and vital role in the community and in the local economy," said President Patricia Hsieh. "Students are choosing Miramar College because they

Miramar College: Then and Now

Top left: English Building.
Left center: Fire Protection Technology program. **Center:** Foyer of the Student Services, Bookstore, Cafeteria building. **Bottom left:** Miramar College, circa 1970. **Top right:** Alumnus Jeremy Mazur. **Right center:** Aviation Maintenance Technology students Genevieve Cindrich and Derrick Caceres restoring a P51D Mustang. **Bottom right:** Student Kamille Carpizo observing the sun through a solar telescope.



know when they come here they will get a quality education with plenty of support services that will help them reach whatever educational or career goal they may have."

That's quite a change from a little more than a decade ago, when the staff was so small that school administrators had no reason to publish a phone directory. Courses were so few that they were held in portable classrooms. Today, first-class facilities and state-of-the-art technology abound.

Large-scale projects completed in recent years and funded through the Propositions S and N bond programs are numerous: a \$39.5 million Student Center, a \$39 million Library/Learning Resource Center, a \$31.3 million Mathematics & Business Building, a \$31.3 million Arts & Humanities Building, the \$22.3 million Hourglass Park Field House, and a \$16.3 million Fire Technology & EMT Training Center.

But Miramar is more than a collection of state-of-

the-art facilities. "Every time I visit Miramar, I'm reminded of how the college has evolved from when I was there both as a student and as the police academy commander at the San Diego Criminal Justice Training Center on the Miramar College campus," said Jerry Sanders,

president and CEO of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. "In a lot of ways, Miramar is San Diego: innovative, growing, technologically savvy, and open to anyone who is looking for a brighter future."

The Aviation Maintenance Technology Program is sending graduates to work on commercial and military aircraft. The Advanced Transportation and Energy Center is on the cutting edge of innovation. The School of Public Safety – which includes the Regional Law Enforcement Academy, the Fire Science/EMT Training Facility, a Regional Lifeguard Academy, a Detention/Courts Academy, and a Homeland Security Training Program – is responsible for training the lion's share of first-responders in the county.

Jeremy Mazur said the instruction he found at the Miramar campus was second to none. An honors



student who transferred to San Diego State University last fall to study history, the former Marine learned about the college while transitioning to civilian life in 2015 after serving as an electrical technician on the F-18 Hornet at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

"What I found was essentially a brand-new campus. It was small enough to not be overwhelming, yet large enough to give me a solid college experience," Mazur said. "The classes were excellent, the professors are really good, and, as a matter of fact, a lot of them are also teaching at the UCs and CSUs."

Mazur also became involved on campus and was named to the Phi Theta Kappa All-California Academic Team. He attributes much of his success to the support he received. That support has grown even stronger with a new Academic Success Center that combines tutoring, counseling, the English Center, and more under one roof in the library.

“In a lot of ways, Miramar is San Diego. Innovative, growing, technologically savvy, and open to anyone who is looking for a brighter future.”

— Jerry Sanders, Former San Diego Miramar Student, San Diego Police Chief, and Mayor

"Our students get a lot of personal care," President Hsieh said. "We are growing in enrollment, we are growing our programs, but we still have the values of a smaller, more intimate college."

Mazur agreed. "They welcomed me with open arms," he said.

President Hsieh said immediate goals for the college include exploring the potential of developing a bachelor's degree program, enhancing the college's connections with the community, and continuing to expand student access to maximize the use of Miramar's state-of-the-art facilities.

"Just growing for growth's sake does not suffice," Hsieh said. "You have to maintain the quality of instruction and you have to build on the support services to make sure students who are coming here will continue to be successful. We must continue to provide our students with the skills that they will need for the jobs that they want." **WE**



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN CYBERSECURITY



With demand for skilled computer information technicians soaring, City College is in the midst of vastly expanding its cybersecurity programs to include an Associate of Science degree in cybersecurity, a Certificate of Achievement in cybersecurity, and a Certificate of Performance in cyber incident response.

"Cybersecurity is one of the fastest-growing employment areas in San Diego right now," said Rose LaMuraglia, dean of the School of Business Information Technology, Cosmetology, and Apprenticeship programs. "When it comes down to it, cybersecurity is all about network security and protecting your data, and anyone who is paying attention to the news can see how vital that has become."

The average pay of an information security analyst in San Diego County was nearly \$100,000 per year as recently as May of 2016, according to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, and employment in the industry is projected to grow by 28 percent in the 10-year period ending in 2026. While most professionals earning that kind of money have a bachelor's degree

or higher, the median annual salary for those with a certificate in computer networking from a California community college exceeds \$53,000 just two years after securing the certificate, and nearly \$60,000 just five years after securing the certificate, according to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

City College's new programs have been approved by the San Diego Community College District's Board of Trustees. The Associate of Science degree and Certificate of Achievement programs must still be approved by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, but the Certificate of Performance in cyber incident response could launch this year.

Meanwhile, City College recently began offering several new courses, including Introduction to InfoSec, Introduction to Computer Forensics Information, Cybersecurity Analyst+ Certification Training (SDA+), Certified Secure Computer User, Certified Ethical Hacker, and CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner. What's more, San Diego City College has partnered with CompTIA, EC-Council, Microsoft, Oracle, and VMware to ensure courses meet industry standards.

"We are building one of the stronger cybersecurity programs in the region," LaMuraglia said.



THE STAND AGAINST HUNGER

Farmers Market in Partnership with Feeding San Diego

The Stand offers additional resources, including representatives from the CalFresh program which provides free money for food to eligible students.

San Diego Mesa College this spring proudly debuted **The Stand: Farmers Market**, created through a new partnership with Feeding San Diego. The April 19 event offered students and members of the Mesa College community access to free food, including fresh produce. The initiative is part of Mesa College's Taking a Stand Against Hunger – its larger effort to curb food insecurity. The Stand: Farmers Market operates like a traditional farmers market, except that

everything offered is free. Nearly four tons of fresh produce were distributed at the April 19 event. Members of the Mesa College community had the opportunity to choose between several types of produce, including tomatoes, onions, asparagus, corn, nectarines, and apples. More than 700 campus community members, including 500 students, participated. Free reusable grocery bags were given to the first 300 attendees. The second event was held May 17 and served more

than 1,000 students and community members. Along with fresh food, The Stand: Farmers Market offers additional resources, including representatives from the CalFresh program, which provides money for food to eligible students. Faculty and staff were on hand to answer questions about The Stand, the college's food and clothing pantry, and to provide access to other campus resources. Going forward, Mesa College plans to host the Farmers Market each month.





ART STUDENT PAINTS HER WAY TO A PRESTIGIOUS CHICAGO ARTS SCHOOL



HANNA HUNTER
Miramar College Alumna

Hanna Hunter had never shown her artwork to anyone aside from her parents and teachers. That changed when a representative from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) -- one of the top art schools in the country -- was invited to give a presentation to a San Diego Miramar College art class and students were asked to present a portfolio of their work.

Now Hunter, 22, is preparing to enroll at the prestigious downtown Chicago university, which has been ranked as the most influential arts school in the United States by Columbia University's Art Critics National Arts Journalism Survey.

Hunter is still pinching herself.

"The representative saw my work and encouraged me to apply to the school," she said. "It was nerve-racking. I had never applied to a college before, and this is one of the top arts schools in the world. I couldn't be happier that I was accepted."

Her classmates and instructors are thrilled, too.

"We are extremely proud that Hanna is transferring from Miramar to SAIC," said Hunter's art professor, Jessica McCambly. "It is truly an honor. It has been a pleasure to work with her and I am confident that she will continue to thrive in her new academic environment. She will be an excellent addition to their outstanding program."

A native of Richland, Washington, who moved to San Diego when she was 13, Hunter had taken a few art classes at Mt. Carmel High School, but was an English literature major when she enrolled at Miramar College in fall 2015 after tiring of work as a cashier at a local crafts store. "I needed to do something besides sit by a cash register all day," she said.

Her life changed forever when she enrolled in McCambly's class. "She has inspired me and helped make me see that you can make art for a purpose and not just for a hobby," Hunter said.

McCambly also has encouraged Hunter to display her work. One of her more recent pieces, "Ophelia," which depicts the character from the Shakespeare drama "Hamlet" disintegrating into the abyss, was on display at the San Diego Central Library in its recent "You Are Here" exhibit celebrating more than two dozen works of art from higher education arts departments.

"I love painting," Hunter said. "My passion is painting. I love that you could take something that is three-dimensional and make it two-dimensional with just as much of an impact connected to it."

"Ophelia" illustrates not only Hunter's focus on feminist values, the female experience, and how men typically view the female body, it also underscores her lifelong love of English literature.

"I continue to be impressed with the innovative approach that Hanna takes to both her studio practice and to her academic development as an artist and as a thinker," McCambly said.

So what does the future hold?

"Art has been a constant for me since high school, and I would love to be a working artist, but what I really want to do is become an art teacher, especially after seeing the impact Professor McCambly has had on me and other students."

Hunter will drive out to Chicago with her mom this summer. She earned her associate degree in English from Miramar in spring.

"I am so excited," Hunter said. "I'm also ready. This is going to be amazing."





FROM HOMELESS TO APPRENTICE:

Student Gets a Second Chance at a Successful Future



OZZIE LUBACH
Future Plumber

San Diego Continuing Education and San Diego Rescue Mission Expand Partnership

Ozzie Lubach was raised by his mother and stepfather in San Diego and was on track for a scholarship to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. However, when he was asked to leave the Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC), the military scholarship disappeared and Lubach's future changed forever.

"I was very interested in joining the Navy after high school. It was a big part of my life," he said. "NJROTC gave me a sense of purpose."

For most of Lubach's high school years, he moved in and out of public and private institutions because of substance abuse and bad behavior.

"I chose a lifestyle that I couldn't get out of," Lubach said, opening up about his academic journey and sharing his battle with depression and addiction. "I put my family through a lot. It was difficult for my mom to watch me struggle. So I ended up at a boarding school in Arizona."

Just months after his high school graduation, Lubach found himself without a place to sleep when

he returned home to San Diego, so he found shelter at the Mission Valley riverbed and bathed at a nearby Starbucks.

Lubach's life turned around when he was admitted to the San Diego Rescue Mission's 12-Month Residential Recovery Program, a rehabilitation service that guides men with therapy, vocational training, and educational classes. Within six months, Lubach was selected to learn a trade at San Diego Continuing Education (SDCE).

In 2016, SDCE began a pilot partnership with the Rescue Mission by offering free classes at the nonprofit. Now in its second year, the expanded partnership granted 12 Rescue Mission clients the opportunity to pursue free career training

programs in plumbing; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC); welding; and office assistance. Students attend classes at an SDCE campus.

"These men were hand-selected from a competitive pool that showed the most promising potential for success," said Carlos O. Turner Cortez, Ph.D., president of SDCE. "Once the students complete their career-training programs, we will work with the San Diego Workforce Partnership and SDCE employee partners to find jobs for students."

Lubach considered a career in plumbing, but was nervous about learning a new trade.

"I was worried about being inside a classroom after being on the streets for a while, but I started thinking about what I could do to provide for my future and my family," he said. "My instructor works all day in the trade and then comes at night just to teach us. Knowing that there are teachers willing to do that sparked a fire in me."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median pay for a plumber is \$24.74 per hour. Lubach aspires to be journeyman plumber within the next five years.

"I no longer have to worry about stealing something just to eat or where I will rest my head the next day," Lubach said.

A RISING Star AT Miramar

Never give up. That's the message from Miramar College standout Nhan Nguyen, 28, a former Marine drill instructor who serves as secretary of the Associated Student Government, was named to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society's All-California Academic Team, and who co-chairs the LGBTQ Alliance Task Force. Nguyen, who is transferring to UC Berkeley in the fall, said he was a below-average student in high school student and barely passed the handful of classes he took at Miramar before enlisting in the military nearly a decade ago. It's been a different story since he returned. Nguyen is graduating with a GPA just shy of 4.0.

We recently sat down with Nguyen to learn more about his experiences.

Q. How were you able to transform yourself academically?

A. A lot of it comes with maturity. I was 19 when I first came here, 27 when I returned. I also owe a lot to my mentors. Carmen Jay with the Honors Program is phenomenal. She has supported me the whole way.

Q. How do you relax?

A. I don't. I have a wife, we're raising a child, I'm running a business, and I took 26 units in the fall and 25 this spring. I'm getting ready to move to the Bay Area, so I'm pretty much busy all the time.

Q. What are you most proud of during your time at Miramar College?

A. I'm most proud of my position as co-chair of the LGBTQ Alliance Task Force. I wanted to help create and maintain a sense of safety at this campus where no one feels intimidated and everyone is comfortable with who they are.

Q. What makes Miramar College stand out?

A. A lot of things. The faculty here is amazing. The students are wonderful. I've made some amazing friends. And everybody is so supportive.

Q. What most surprised you about your academic journey?

A. That I could be really good at school. I never considered myself a scholar. When I found out I was named to the All-Academic Team, it was an amazing experience.

Q. What's next?

A. A bachelor's degree in political science and then law school. I'd really love to go into civil rights law, but we'll see what happens.



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