

We



City College
Mesa College
Miramar College
Continuing Education

ANNETTE BENNING

A Star is Born at Mesa College

Story on page 06

KEEPING THE PROMISE

On September 20, we made great strides in the ongoing fundraising campaign for the San Diego Promise in a special gala event, which was headlined by Mesa College alumna and film and theatre star Annette Bening. The event was a resounding success, raising over \$200,000, which was \$100,000 more than the goal, with all proceeds benefiting students in the Promise program. This funding has been added to the \$820,000 that has been raised thus far. We are deeply grateful to Ms. Bening for her devotion to our efforts to serve community college students. She has given a great boost to the second phase of our fundraising campaign.



Chancellor Constance M. Carroll with Mesa College alumna and actor Annette Bening at the San Diego Promise gala.

Nearly 300 community members, representing the philanthropic community and many organizations, attended the event. Those attending heard moving stories from several San Diego Promise students who detailed how this groundbreaking program has transformed their lives. Student speakers included Rosemary Leyva, a second-year Promise student studying nursing at City College, Harley Sobreo, a second-year Mesa College foreign languages major, and John Warner, a former high school dropout who recently earned a Certificate of Performance from Miramar College as an emergency medical technician. All of the students credited their success to the opportunity afforded by the San Diego Promise. Their role at the event was a powerful reminder that the San Diego Promise is all about students.



Now in its third year of operation, the San Diego Promise has grown from 186 students in 2016 to more than 2,100 students today who meet the criteria of being first-time, full-time students taking 12 or more units. These students benefit from the waiver of tuition and fees, and also are provided textbook grants in recognition of the fact that textbooks can be more expensive than the cost of enrollment.

This unprecedented opportunity is possible in large part because of donors, both large and small, throughout the San Diego region, including hundreds of San Diego Community College District employees who contribute through the payroll deduction option. Although the first year of the San Diego Promise is now financed through state funding provided under Assembly Bill 19, the second year of the San Diego Promise program and the additional benefits are funded entirely through philanthropy.

The San Diego Promise is definitely making a difference in terms of our goals, values, and student success. Nearly 90 percent of San Diego Promise students are students of color, and 45 percent are first-generation college students. Thanks to support services such as academic counseling, educational planning, and peer tutoring, San Diego Promise students are outperforming their peers. Last year, nearly 20 percent of San Diego Promise students had a GPA of 4.0 compared to 12 percent of other first-time, full-time students.

In her speech at the event, Annette Bening noted that she was able to attend Mesa College and find her own calling at almost no cost, having attended before the California Community Colleges system began charging enrollment fees and tuition. Regrettably, that is no longer the case. Too many students are being left behind because of rising costs. It is now up to us to make sure that anyone wanting to enroll at City, Mesa, or Miramar colleges can do so, without a financial burden, and that is what the San Diego Promise is all about.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Constance M. Carroll".

Chancellor Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D.

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NEW FIRE CHIEF



Miramar College graduate Colin Stowell is the new chief of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.

A native San Diegan, Chief Stowell earned an associate degree in fire science from Miramar College before transferring to San Diego State University, where he received a bachelor's

degree in public administration. He began his career with the San Diego Fire Department in 1988 and climbed the ranks to serve as assistant chief before leaving in 2016 to serve as chief of the Heartland Fire & Rescue Department. Heartland oversees fire services in El Cajon, La Mesa, and Lemon Grove through a joint powers agreement.

San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer appointed Stowell as the city's new fire chief on July 2, and the selection was confirmed by the City Council three weeks later. Stowell was sworn in August 13.

Stowell replaces Interim Chief Kevin Ester, who earned a fire science certificate with honors from Miramar College. Ester held the job after Chief Brian Fennessy, who attended Miramar College as a cadet in the 1990 fire academy, left San Diego to lead the Orange County Fire Authority in April.

BUILDING A LARGER GATEWAY TO SUCCESS

San Diego Continuing Education is expanding its comprehensive community outreach programs in a new partnership with the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation that will double the number of disconnected youth taking part in Continuing Education's Gateway to College & Career initiative. Under the program, individuals who are 16 to 24 years old and not working nor in school are provided with a two-year San Diego Promise scholarship, plus \$500 annually for books, career training, and connections to potential employers.

"We cannot lose this generation," said Reginald Jones, the Jacobs Center's president and chief executive officer.

Others taking a key role in the partnership include the James Irvine Foundation; Peter Callstrom, president and CEO of the San Diego Workforce Partnership; Continuing Education President Carlos O. Turner Cortez; and Rabbi Laurie Coskey, who serves as executive director of the San Diego Gateway to College & Career program.

Continuing Education launched the Gateway to College & Career initiative in 2017 through a collaboration with the San Diego Workforce Partnership. Under the program, students attend free classes that can count toward college credit and take part in activities and workshops to focus on building financial literacy, leadership, career exploration, and community service.

San Diego City College
@sdcitycollege

All students are welcome to Math Jam: <https://buff.ly/2EAGN5L>. Help for ALL math subjects (Math 38-255). We proactively give help to our students who need help before exams. #sharecity #cityproud

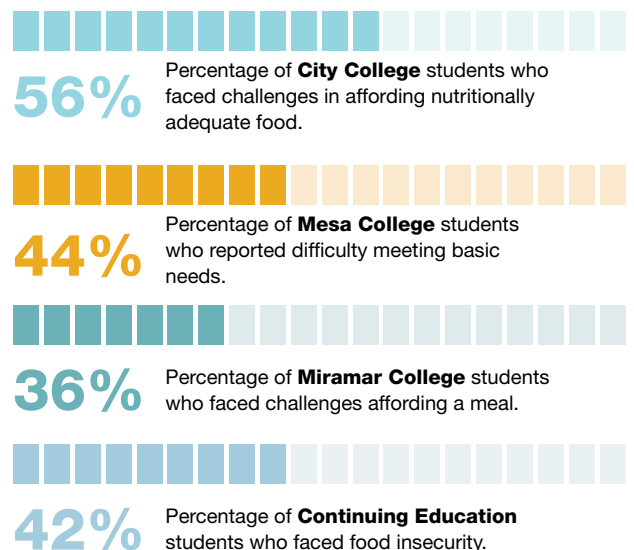
CHALLENGES TO LEARN

Hunger and homelessness continue to afflict too many San Diego Community College District students, according to a recent study conducted by the University of Wisconsin's HOPE Lab of more than 700 students in the District.

This is the second HOPE Lab study the District has participated in.

The study found that 56 percent of students surveyed at San Diego City College said they faced challenges in affording nutritionally adequate food, up from 44 percent in 2015. Forty-four percent of students at Mesa College reported difficulty meeting basic needs, up from 39 percent. At Miramar College, 36 percent of students reported they had faced challenges affording a meal, down from 40 percent in 2015. Lastly, 42 percent of students at Continuing Education faced food insecurity, up from 28 percent. The survey's national average for community college students was 42 percent.

In terms of homelessness, 15 percent of students surveyed at City College, 12 percent of students at Mesa College, and 10 percent of students at both Miramar College and Continuing Education reported that they experienced some form of homelessness in the past year. This compares with a national average of 12 percent.



Figures based on a HOPE Lab report surveying 700 students at SDCCD.

2018 SAN DIEGO PRIDE PARADE

The SDCCD was out in force at this year's San Diego Pride Parade, with a float and more than 200 marchers – members of the Board of Trustees, faculty, administrators, classified professionals, and students from City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges, Continuing Education, and various District Offices, including College Police.

▶ Check out SDCCD's highlight video from Pride!
<https://youtu.be/3OwAFI8-2G8>



SAN DIEGO PROMISE GALA

An Evening with Annette Bening to Benefit the San Diego Promise raised more than \$200,000 for the San Diego Promise program and had nearly 300 supporters in attendance. The gala was held at the Natural History Museum in Balboa Park on September 20.

📷 Check out the event photo gallery at <https://flic.kr/s/aHskJiMw8Q>.



Annette Bening

Actor, Mesa College Alumna



An Evening
with
Annette Bening
to Benefit the
San Diego Promise







Annette Bening

A STAR IS BORN AT MESA COLLEGE

Before she began her career with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival company in 1980, before she earned four Oscar nominations for films including “American Beauty” and “The Kids Are All Right,” before she married actor and director Warren Beatty, Annette Bening studied dramatic arts at San Diego Mesa College.

She hasn't forgotten her roots.

When the San Diego Community College District began organizing a gala to benefit the tuition-free San Diego Promise program, Bening readily agreed to headline the September 20 event that would raise more than \$200,000. She also stepped up to serve as honorary co-chair of the San Diego Promise fundraising campaign along with San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, and she has long been a vocal proponent of a community college education.

“I want to give back and I want to say, ‘thank you,’” Bening said when asked why she had committed so much time and energy to the San Diego Community College District and the San Diego Promise. “When I went to San Diego Mesa College, it was basically free, and now community college costs a lot of money and there are a lot of people who want to be able to go to college that can't afford it. So the San Diego Promise program is trying to rectify that.”

Bening has a history of helping others. Fundraising efforts over the years include breast cancer research, and the mother of four is a longtime supporter of Planned Parenthood.

“Annette is just a very caring individual who is generous with her time and her money,” said childhood friend Rene McKee, senior vice president for community and public relations at California Coast Credit Union.

McKee said it was clear during their youth that her friend was destined for greatness.

“We’d sit in her family’s backyard, looking at the view, and she’d tell me about all these books she was reading,” McKee said. “She was so smart, so intellectual, and she was so passionate about life and determined to get the most out of it.”

Born in Kansas, Bening – the youngest of four siblings – moved to San Diego with her family when she was in grade school and attended Green Elementary, Pershing Middle, and Patrick Henry High School. Her parents, who recently celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary, still live in the same Del Cerro house that Bening grew up in, and Bening often sleeps in her childhood bedroom when visiting San Diego.

Bening, 60, said the first time she saw a play was when a Pershing Middle School teacher, Ellen McLaughlin, took a class to a Shakespeare production at the Old Globe. After graduating from Patrick Henry High School, Bening, who became a certified SCUBA diver as a teen, worked as a cook on a dive boat before enrolling at Mesa College.

“I walked into Mesa not really knowing what to expect,” she said. Among her classes was Math for People Who Hate Math (“I realize now how much I learned from my teacher that had nothing to do with algebra”), creative writing (“Here’s a test for diagramming sentences; I got an ‘F’”), and American government (“We read ‘Animal Farm,’ ‘Lord of the Flies,’ and ‘1984’”). She resolved to work as an actress after stumbling into the Mesa College theatre program.

“They had a really great theatre department,” said Bening, who credits former professors Milton “Woody” Woodruff and the late Arthur Noll with building her foundation for a career imbued with success. Noll and Woodruff, she said, “taught me that the essence of theater is teamwork.”

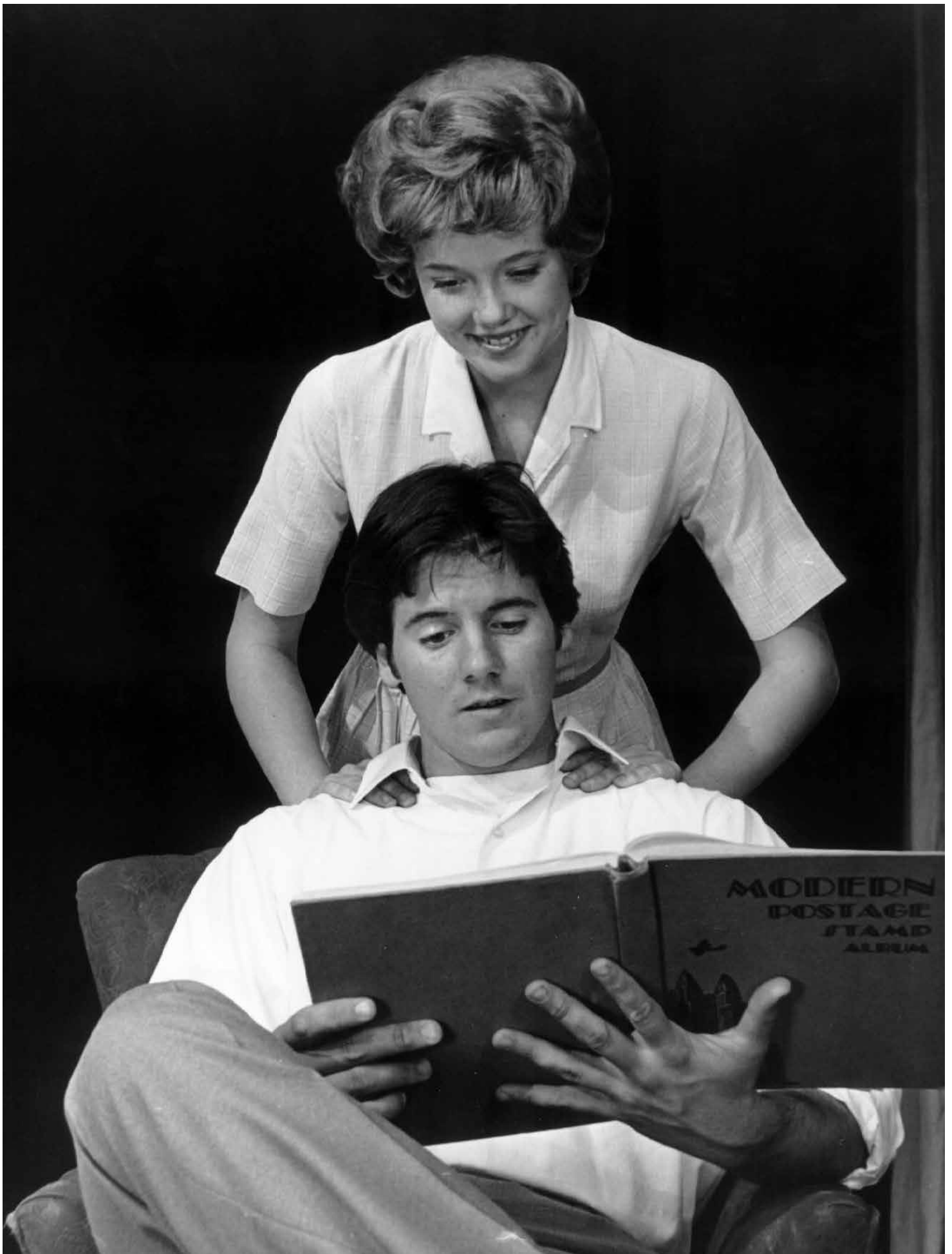
The Mesa theatre program staged two shows each semester, and students were required to learn all aspects of a production, from operating the lights and building the props to auditioning for a leading or supporting role.

“We’d sit in her family’s backyard, looking at the view, and [Annette] would tell me about all these books she was reading. She was so smart, so intellectual, and she was so passionate about life and determined to get the most out of it.”

— Rene McKee, Senior Vice President for Community and Public Relations, California Coast Credit Union



Left: Annette Bening at Mesa College commencement ceremony, 2002. **Right:** Annette Bening as a theatre student at Mesa College.





“She was a wonderful, wonderful student who was always willing to help the other kids and was always generous with her time,” Woodruff said. “She would work to solve any challenge you might have, and she was not above doing anything we asked of her.”

Theatre had become her passion. “She found herself at Mesa College,” Woodruff said.

It was while she was at Mesa that Bening landed a gig as a dancer in a pre-show presented outside of the Old Globe in Balboa Park, a part that led to a walk-on in a Shakespearean production and two plays with the San Diego Repertory Theatre.

After two years at Mesa College, Bening transferred to San Francisco State University, where she earned her bachelor’s degree, and was accepted by the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. Her career took her to summer Shakespeare festivals and regional productions before she moved to New

“[Annette] was a wonderful, wonderful student who was always willing to help the other kids and was always generous with her time. She would work to solve any challenge you might have, and she was not above doing anything we asked of her.”

— Milton “Woody” Woodruff, Former
Mesa College Theatre Professor



Left: Annette Bening with her parents, Grant and Shirley Bening, and former Professor Milton Woodruff. **Right:** Annette Bening speaking at the San Diego Promise gala on September 20.

York and earned a Tony Award nomination for most outstanding debut performance in “Coastal Disturbances.”

Bening made her film debut in 1988 in “The Great Outdoors,” a comedy starring Dan Aykroyd and John Candy. Director Stephen Frears cast Bening in the critically acclaimed role of a young hustler in “The Grifters,” a 1990 film that earned her the first of four Oscar nominations. She secured her first Golden Globe nomination for Best Actress in “Bugsy” and fell in love with her co-star, Warren Beatty, whom she would marry in 1992.

She remains as busy as ever with her roles in the recently released “The Seagull” and “Life Itself,” and upcoming films including “Georgetown” and “Captain Marvel.” Bening returns to Broadway this season for the first time in 30 years in a revival of Arthur Miller’s “All My Sons.”

Although she now lives in Los Angeles, San Diego remains her home. Bening has stayed connected to Mesa over the years, including serving as the college’s commencement speaker in 2002. When she was honored with the Gregory Peck Award for Excellence in Cinema at the San Diego International Film Festival in 2016, Bening invited several childhood friends to the party. When a cadre of volunteers at Patrick Henry High School were trying to raise money for a state-of-the-art performing arts center to replace a 1960s-style “cafetorium,” Bening kick-started the campaign with a gift of \$40,000 to fund equipment the San Diego Unified School District could not afford.

“Annette Bening represents the best of our District,” said SDCCD Chancellor Constance M. Carroll. “She came to Mesa College uncertain of the path she would take, explored her options, worked hard, enjoyed success, and through it all has remained dedicated to community.” **WE**

A man with a beard, wearing a white baseball cap and a blue long-sleeved shirt, is leaning over a table. He is looking down at a document or a piece of art on the table. His hands are resting on the table, and he is holding a yellow pencil in his right hand. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a prison setting with white walls and a window.

FINDING ART IN PRISON

*Transforming lives through the
Project PAINT initiative.*



Talk about transforming lives. Miramar College Professor Laura Pecenco's Project PAINT: The Prison Arts Initiative, is bringing artisans to teach their craft to inmates at the Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility in Otay Mesa.

The resulting oil paintings, sketches, and watercolors are impressing audiences at galleries throughout the county. A May 10 fundraiser titled "Fresh Start" was held at the prison. A weeklong show titled "Modi Operandi: The Process of Creation in Confinement" was held at the Hill Street Country Club in Oceanside last summer. Work from a developing project, "Creating Your Own Future ID," will be on display this fall at Alcatraz as part of an initiative launched by the Anti-Recidivism Coalition, the National Park Service, and others.

But the impact has been mostly personal.

Pecenco relayed a story of one inmate who had been sending unanswered letters to his daughter for years. Then he started sending her his artwork instead. The images touched her emotions. She wrote back, and the two are now communicating with each other.

"We're certainly there to teach art and the techniques and the craft, but our goals go beyond that," Pecenco said. "For a lot of people, art is a tangible piece of rehabilitation. We've had inmates tell us they've been able to stay sober through art."

"These classes have enhanced my knowledge not only about art, but about myself," said Victor Tovar, a 27-year-old inmate who was sentenced to 37 years to life in prison.

Project PAINT isn't the San Diego Community College District's only connection with the correctional facility. A partnership established in 2014 between Donovan, the District, and California Correctional Health Care Services has brought dozens of Mesa College students enrolled in dental assisting, medical assisting, and the health information technology programs to secure up to 300 hours of clinical training at the prison. That partnership has since expanded to include San Diego City College's nursing program.

Likewise, Project PAINT isn't Pecenco's only effort at impacting those who are often overlooked. She is the faculty adviser to the Miramar Researching Equity, Action, and Community for Transformation (REACT) organization. Miramar REACT launched the Miramar College Emergency Food Pantry, and the group recently created a Miramar chapter of the Urban Scholars Union, an organization for formerly incarcerated and justice-impacted students.

Professor Laura Pecenco (center) holding an art lecture with Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility inmates.



A sketch made by an inmate in the Project PAINT program.

AN ARTFUL JOURNEY

Pecenco's interest in exploring art and the incarcerated began when she was studying sociology at UC Berkeley and volunteered through a Teach in Prison program to tutor inmates preparing for the General Educational Development (GED) exam needed to secure a California High School Equivalency Certificate.

"I noticed that some of the prisoners we were working with had these beautiful pictures and

drawings in their notebooks," she said. "The art that I saw was quite fascinating and, quite frankly, a little feminine – drawings of a woman crying, flowers, unicorns. It just seemed like a paradox that you would have people convicted of serious crimes in an environment that is hyper masculine. It was something I wanted to explore further."

Pecenco got her chance at UC San Diego while writing her dissertation on arts in prisons. After state budget cuts decimated California's Arts in Corrections initiative, she launched a mission to resolve the loss. "I just decided one day I was going to create a program to fill what I saw was an obvious void."

Pecenco set her sights on Donovan, where 4,000 inmates are serving lengthy terms for the most serious of crimes. In 2011, she began calling the warden's office for a meeting to discuss her vision. Those messages never got through; a staffer opposed to the idea refused to forward the entreaties. Her



UC San Diego adviser suggested Pecenco begin volunteering at the prison as a way to gain access, and after working for several weeks with a creative writing course, she began making connections with Donovan administrators.

Project PAINT was born, first as a volunteer-run program until spring 2014, when the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation announced it would begin restoring Arts in Corrections at a handful of prisons on a pilot basis. Project PAINT, which Pecenco heads, secured a contract to teach classes at Donovan in 2014, and it has been funded by Arts in Corrections every year since.

PICTURE PERFECT

Project PAINT hits you as soon as you walk into Donovan. One of the first pieces created by inmates is a large, four-panel oil painting (pictured top left) depicting a Southern California sunset along the coast, lighthouse in the distance, sunlight reflecting on the water, the wind powering a sailboat to shore.

Classes can run anywhere from a weekend to 40 weeks. Among the options this fall: painting poetry, art as a social practice, paper craft, and painting and portraiture.

“We’ve had people go from doing stick figures to creating beautiful portraits,” Pecenco said.

Steve Fenner, a 54-year-old serving a 20-year sentence, hasn’t advanced that far. Yet.

“Before I started taking these classes, my art skills were pretty much limited to doodles,” Fenner said. And today? “I’m probably doing advanced doodles now.

“I like art,” Fenner continued. “At first I thought these classes would help pass the time and help me get rehabilitation credits. But I’ve learned different techniques like shading, using brushes, sketching with a pencil, and then when I found out that some of our work will be displayed in a gallery, you realize you’re actually being heard. That’s kind of cool.”

That’s how Kathleen Mitchell feels. Mitchell is a San Diego-based artist who has been teaching classes since Project PAINT began.

Why bother? “I believe in redemption, I believe in rehabilitation,” she said. “And, truly, this is one of the most gratifying things I’ve done in my life. I have never been thanked more than I’ve been thanked by the people we work with in this classroom.” **we**



Kathleen Mitchell, artist and Project PAINT instructor

AIMING TO TRANSFER

Former City College student **Sergio Sandoval** graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology and landed a job at NASA. Former Mesa College student **Joshua Quiroz** is at San Diego State University studying business administration with plans to earn a master's degree. Former Miramar College student **Thaimae Le** is at Arizona State University majoring in English with plans that include becoming a community college dean.

Sandoval, Quiroz, and Le are among the growing numbers of San Diego Community College District students who are transferring to four-year colleges and universities en route to launching rewarding careers. But challenges remain despite the successes that are being fueled by initiatives that include the District's Honors Program; Bridges to the Baccalaureate; and the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program.

The biggest challenge? Not enough room at some of the most sought-after public universities in the region to accommodate every qualified transfer student.

"We can change the rules, we can change the dynamics, we can change the instruction, and it wouldn't make any difference if there is no room at the universities students want to transfer to," said Lynn Neault, the District's vice chancellor of Student Services. "We have eight community colleges in the region that are feeding students into a limited number of seats at universities in San Diego County."

In fact, 19 percent of students from the region's eight community colleges who earn an associate degree for transfer cannot get into San Diego State University, where the number of applications from community college students rose from 6,249 for fall 2017 to 6,687 for fall 2018.

City College
alumnus Sergio
Sandoval





Former SDCCD students
Joshua Quiroz and
Thaimae Le

Thaimae Le is Exhibit A. Le was one of only 75 community college students from a nationwide pool of 2,400 applicants who earned a 2016 Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, which pays up to \$40,000 per year for tuition, living expenses, and fees for the final two to three years necessary to earn a bachelor's degree at a four-year university. Yet Le, an honors student at Miramar, was unable to get into San Diego State after she decided to leave UC San Diego after one semester.

"English is an impacted major at SDSU, so it didn't matter that I had this scholarship, it didn't matter that I had a great grade point average, it's just not easy to get into," Le said.

Instead, she enrolled in an online Arizona State University program. She hopes to earn bachelor's degrees in English and anthropology in spring 2019, then secure her master's degree in educational leadership.

In a sense, Le is an anomaly. According to a 2016 report from the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College, just 14 percent of the nearly 1.1 million students who enroll at a two-year institution annually earn a bachelor's degree within six years. The report noted that improving degree outcomes is critical to achieving national goals for improving upward social mobility and economic vitality. In addressing such concerns, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors in 2017 adopted a strategic plan titled "Vision for Success," which calls for increasing by 35 percent the number of community college students statewide transferring annually to a University of California or California State University campus. A memorandum of understanding signed by UC President Janet Napolitano and California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Oakley calls for a new UC transfer

pathway similar to the CSU pathway, guaranteeing those graduating with an Associate Degree for Transfer a spot at a UC campus.

Students, however, are not guaranteed a spot at a specific UC or CSU campus. Because so many students are working and raising a family, leaving San Diego to attend, say, UC Merced or Cal State Los Angeles is not always an option. "A lot of our students want to stay local," said Kelly Mayhew, co-coordinator of the Honors Program at City College. "Because so many majors are impacted, there's just no room for a lot of the students who want to transfer to San Diego State."

Still, nearly 3,900 City, Mesa, and Miramar college students transferred to a four-year institution in the 2016-17 academic year, the most recent full year for which statistics are available. In 2016-17, transfers increased by 8 percent at City College, 4 percent at Mesa College, and 9 percent at Miramar College. The number of Latino students who have transferred has increased by nearly 50 percent in the past five years.

Higher transfer rates are not occurring in a vacuum. Numerous initiatives have been launched across the District to help students continue their education at the university level. Among them:

- Funded by a three-year, \$2.6 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Preparing Accomplished Transfers to the Humanities (PATH) is a collaborative transfer support program between the District and UC San Diego that guides students from City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges into arts and humanities majors at the university. It includes a residential summer academy at UC San Diego that helps students acclimate to a university environment. Over the past two summers, more than 50 students have transferred to UC San Diego through the program.

- The Honors Transfer Council of California has negotiated transfer partnerships enabling students completing the Council's programs at the District's three colleges to enjoy enhanced transfer consideration and other benefits at partner campuses. Such agreements, campus officials say, help students get to where they want to go.

- The UCLA Transfer Alliance Program involving Honors students has resulted in a transfer rate that is three times higher the average transfer rate to the university. Under the cooperative agreement, City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges offer enriched academic programs and all courses necessary to transfer, and the colleges and UCLA work together to help students navigate the transfer process.

- The Bridges to the Baccalaureate at both City and Mesa colleges is aimed at boosting transfer rates of students studying the sciences and who are from underrepresented populations and interested in research careers. Students are paired with mentors, tutors, and counselors, work in laboratories, and present their findings at research conferences across the country.

- At Miramar College, the Transfer Center is broadening its outreach into the classroom to discuss pathways to various universities. The college also has a "Transfer Banter" series where the Transfer Center sets out information tables where students tend to congregate, and it has invited UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego, and San Diego State University to conduct various workshops.

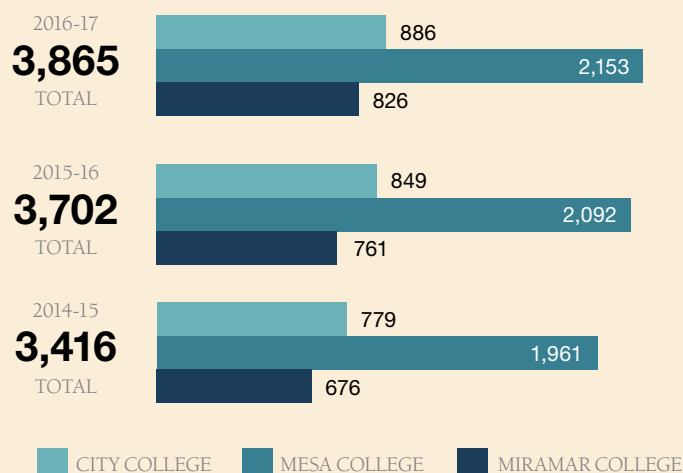
"Our Transfer Center teams read up on the latest research regarding our incoming populations and tries to shift our practices to best address the needs of our students," said Transfer Center Director Naomi Grisham. "We are mindful of the barriers experienced by our students, and we focus on teaching them how to become experts of their own transfer pathway."

San Diego State University is, by far, the top destination for students transferring from the San Diego Community College District. UC San Diego is the second most popular choice for students at San Diego Mesa and Miramar colleges, and National University for students at San Diego City College. Others have transferred to the likes of UC Berkeley, Stanford, Cornell, and Dartmouth.

Born in San Diego and raised in Tijuana, Sergio Sandoval enrolled at San Diego City College and participated in the school's MESA program, which focuses on creating a culture of success by raising expectations, establishing mentorships, and improving study habits.

"When I was at City College, my biggest goal was to transfer to Georgia Tech," Sandoval said. "That's what I wanted to do. I wanted to get my bachelor's and then be able to apply for a job. NASA was not even in my mind. When I went to Georgia Tech, I started doing research, and thanks to that I got called into work at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), and then I got a recommendation to apply for the Johnson Space Center, and got the co-op (a NASA program), so everything was just like a little bit of luck. I mean, of course the effort had to be there, but having the opportunity of being at the right place at the right moment was essential. I never thought I was going to make it that far."

STUDENT TRANSFERS BY COLLEGE



He's now in a master's degree program in aerospace engineering at San Diego State.

By far, most students in the District who seek to transfer to a UC campus are accepted. At City College, 70 percent of 217 students who applied to a UC campus were accepted; at Mesa College, 68 percent of the 586 students who applied to a UC campus were accepted; and at Miramar College, 74 percent of students who applied were accepted. What's more, Mesa College is among the leading California community colleges in the number of students who applied and who were admitted to a UC campus.

Those who transfer say their community college experience had prepared them well.

"There's really not much difference between Mesa and San Diego State regarding the content," said Quiroz, who graduated with an Associate Degree for Transfer last spring. "It's just that the professors are different, obviously, and the classroom sizes are bigger. Mesa helped provide the tools I needed to get where I am today." **we**



SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE

REDUCING FOOD INSECURITY ON CAMPUS

San Diego City College partners with Feeding San Diego to help reduce food insecurity on campus.

The partnership will double the capacity of the San Diego City College Emergency Food Pantry and establish a monthly farmers market for students to obtain fresh produce.

“With this partnership, we hope that we can further reduce food insecurity for our students experiencing homelessness,” said Rose LaMuraglia, San Diego City College dean of Business, Information Technology, and Cosmetology. “One of the new elements that I am excited about is the establishment of a monthly farmers market where our students can get fresh produce.”

The San Diego City College Emergency Food Pantry supports enrolled students in need by providing pre-packaged items suitable for an on-campus lunch or meal. An example of a typical meal may be a pop-top can of soup or pasta, a fruit or applesauce cup, or granola bar and bottled water. A bowl and spoon are provided so students can microwave their meal in the cafeteria.

“Feeding San Diego is so grateful for the growing collaboration between our hunger relief organization and San Diego City College,” said Alicia Saake, chief operating officer of Feeding San Diego. “When

more than half the students at community colleges experience severe or very severe food insecurity, it’s vital that partners come together to fix the problem. We’ve seen a large increase in applications for benefits now that one of our CalFresh capacity coordinators holds regular appointments on-site to make sure eligible students receive benefits. Our partnership is continuing to grow, as we are now looking into connecting City College and all its students directly with food, including fresh produce, using our network of resources. We hope that the entire San Diego City College community will take advantage of these important programs to increase their food security and ability to learn and thrive.”

The City College Emergency Food Pantry is a project operated by student interns and generously supported through donations from the staff and faculty of City College, community partners, private individuals, neighbors, and friends. This special program accepts donations of checks and grocery store gift cards. If you would like to donate lunch items such as pop-top canned goods, granola bars, cases of water, fruit cups, or personal hygiene or care items, please contact Professor Tania Serhan at tserhan@sdccd.edu.





STEM SCHOLARS PARTICIPATE IN NASA NCAS



From left: Rob Ronayne, Alexander Beltzer-Sweeney, Ana Parra, and Alex Hewett

The National Community College Aerospace Scholars (NCAS) program provides selected students with a four day, in-person learning experience at a NASA center.

Four San Diego Mesa College students – Alexander Beltzer-Sweeney, Ana Parra, Rob Ronayne, and Alex Hewett – have been selected to participate in the National Community College Aerospace Scholars (NCAS) program, an educational experience for community college students interested in exploring careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Students earn a four-day, in-person learning experience at a NASA center and are encouraged to pursue a degree in a NASA-related field or career.

Beltzer-Sweeney, Parra, Ronayne, and Hewett credit the support of the STEM Conexiones Program, led by Dr. Leticia Lopez and Mesa faculty, with their success. Beltzer-Sweeney says Professor Irena Stojimirovic introduced him to the Boyce Research Initiatives and Educational Foundation, enabling him to spend the past two years conducting peer-reviewed binary star research. Parra has a bachelor's degree in molecular biology, but was inspired to return and pursue astronomy. Hewett, a physics major, spends his days studying at the STEM Center and encourages other students to get involved with STEM. Ronayne is a peer mentor in the STEM Center and hopes to one day work for NASA. Aside from taking classes and becoming part of NCAS, these students are in the process of reviving the Mesa College Astronomy Club to develop a community for those interested in any aspect of astronomy.



WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL DEBUTS AT MIRAMAR COLLEGE



The process of building Miramar College's sixth intercollegiate sport rested squarely on the shoulders of Mark Smith. It was November 2017, and Smith at the time was the co-head coach for women's soccer. The San Diego Community College District Board of Trustees had approved the creation of a women's volleyball team at Miramar College. Just three short years earlier, the college was given the blessing to start a men's volleyball team, and in 2018, that team won the Pacific Coast Athletic Conference (PCAC) title outright under the direction of head coach John Landicho.

Volleyball was in Mark Smith's wheelhouse. In the past, he had led a dozen programs on the high school and college level around San Diego, but this was a new challenge. After coaching high school football for 30 years in the fall, Smith never had the schedule flexibility to run his own women's program at any level other than club. Women's volleyball is played in the same season. "I went to every high school club coach and high school program around Southern California trying to put together a roster," Smith said. "It wasn't easy but I was able to land 13 young women for the program just in time for our first scrimmage game on August 24." That scrimmage drew a large home crowd. "I was happy with the way we competed in

our first scrimmage against Cuyamaca," Smith said. "I think a realistic goal this season would be to win a couple of games." Keep in mind, the men's program won only one match in its inaugural season of 2015. It didn't take long for the women to get win number one out of the way and get halfway to Smith's goal for the season. While playing in their first tournament on September 1, the women's team won its second match of the day. The team's first official win came 3-1 over Southwestern College at a tournament in Imperial Valley.

All but one player on Smith's roster are from San Diego County. Sabrina Nasery is a freshman outside hitter from Mira Mesa High School. This is her first year at Miramar College and she attends the college, tuition free, as part of the San Diego Promise program. "I was ready to say goodbye to competitive volleyball after high school before I learned that Miramar College would be fielding its first ever women's volleyball team," Nasery said. "I am very excited to get going and very excited about the legacy my squad will begin building."

The Jets will compete in the PCAC with the regular season running through November 9 and playoffs set to begin November 16. All home matches are scheduled to be played inside Hourglass Fieldhouse.

2018 Miramar College Women's Volleyball Team with Head Coach Mark Smith and Assistant Coach Sally Cull

BRINGING ISTANBUL STYLE TO EAST COUNTY



MELIKE BELL
San Diego Continuing
Education Graduate

Melike Bell, an interior design entrepreneur from Istanbul, Turkey moved to the United States with her sister, Mehtap Safi.

When the sisters were ready to decorate their first home in San Diego, they could not find what they were hoping for.

Bell desired to bring the colorful culture of Turkey into their home. “It was impossible to find the same quality textiles and cotton here that I was used to,” she said.

The former bank manager dreamed of importing luxurious home goods from Istanbul to San Diego. “I loved my occupation. I learned a lot for 18 years,” Bell said. “But 18 years was enough for me. I wanted to start something new in a new country.”

“After brainstorming with my sister we came across the idea that we could introduce people to our culture. That is how our business started.”

Bell enrolled in San Diego Continuing Education’s (SDCE) Small Business Certificate Program in hopes of making her artistic dream a reality.

“We didn’t have a lot of money to open a new business,” she said. “We wanted to do it but we didn’t know where to begin.”

SDCE’s free business courses provide students with the practical application skills to start and manage a small business. The 12-week program includes training in the requirements of local, state, and federal organizations; identifying best practices in hiring; and sales and marketing strategies.



Two months after Bell completed the Small Business Planning Certificate Program, she and Safi opened Bell and Moon. The storefront is located in Parkway Plaza Mall in El Cajon.

The home decor company carries organic hand loomed Turkish rugs, bright shower curtains, and round beach towels.

In addition to creating pathways to self-employment, SDCE believes in community. Entrepreneurial students are able to build their network with their peers and established business owners while studying in the classroom.

Bell and Moon’s next goal is to grow online sales. SDCE’s Small Business program requires students to develop a capstone or a written business plan that demonstrates a business model concept that creates customer value in a product or service.

While business degrees can take minimally two to four years to complete, SDCE’s Project Management, Small Business Growth, and Small Business Planning Certificate programs can be generally completed in 135 hours or 16 weeks. Upon completion, students are equipped to join the workforce immediately or grow their business venture.

ON THE *Road* TO Success

Humberto Perez embodies the promise of San Diego Continuing Education. SDCE offers 70 free career training programs – including four certificates in automotive technology – and Perez wasn't going to let the opportunity pass him by. Perez, 29, wrapped up an Auto Body and Paint Technician program in 2010, went to work at a repair shop in Lemon Grove, then returned last year to earn an Auto Technician Certificate. Now the San Diego resident has his sights set on earning an associate degree at Miramar College to further his career. His long-term goal: open his own auto body shop.

We talked with Perez about his experiences.

Q. Why Continuing Education?

A. *I felt that I can really use the skills and learn from what the school had to offer in the auto tech and collision industry, especially since I was consistently fixing my own car.*

Q. How would you describe the training you received?

A. *Everything was very well explained and simple to understand. I never felt pressured or overwhelmed with my learning experience and I love the way that the curriculum is set up. I felt that I discovered new skills and a more professional way of doing things. Not only that, I also learned to work as part of a team.*

Q. What stood out the most?

A. *The tools we had. With state-of-the-art equipment, I felt that any task could be completed. Any tool that I needed to complete the job was always there. The instructors are super knowledgeable and very dedicated to their students. I definitely had a great experience.*

Q. What are you planning for the future?

A. *Finish working on my Associate Degree for Science in Automotive Technology. I'm thinking Miramar will be my next step, and I really want to graduate from that campus. I will search for another job but I do have that little urge of also working for a school as an assistant or instructor. If anything, I can work at a shop to gain more knowledge when it comes to running a business and hopefully offer a complete automotive service.*

Q. Any advice for others thinking about Continuing Education?

A. *This is the best place to embark on reaching your career goals, or even a good place to explore what your potential skills may be. There are so many programs available and the best part is that there is no financial commitment needed to become a student. Besides that, the faculty here are very committed to their students.*



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Email us cpr@sdccd.edu.



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