



SAN DIEGO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DISTRICT

City College • Mesa College
Miramar College • Continuing Education

SEPTEMBER 2015

WE

With
Excellence



HISTORY FLYBY

Students in Miramar College's Aviation Maintenance Technology program are learning more than just how to rebuild historic aircraft.

Story on page 10.

Making History at SDCCCD



The start of the academic year is always a special time for the San Diego Community College District, a time when tens of thousands of students return to school to acquire the skills needed in an increasingly complex economy and earn the credits needed to graduate and/or transfer to a four-year college or university.

But this fall is even more special than most. This fall, the San Diego Community College District is making history.

We made history when the District's Board of Trustees adopted a 2015-16 budget with the largest increase in state revenue ever received by the District, enabling us to offer 450 more course sections, hire 31 additional full-time faculty members, and expand critical support services to ensure our students' success. We made history as San Diego Mesa College opened its doors to 32 freshmen who will be among the first with the opportunity to complete a bachelor's degree program at a California community college. And we made history through a new agreement with Point Loma Nazarene University that will allow nursing students graduating from San Diego City College to earn a bachelor's degree within 15 months from the university without having to leave City College's downtown campus.

At San Diego Miramar College, we opened a vastly expanded and remodeled science building that includes a 49,000-square-foot addition to the existing science facility. And at San Diego Continuing Education, we opened the new César E. Chávez

campus, a \$50-million learning center in the heart of Barrio Logan, one of San Diego's most historic communities. Among those who will be joining the community for an official grand opening on October 28 at the new César E. Chávez campus is Continuing Education's new president, Dr. Carlos O. Turner Cortez, a longtime educational leader with an unwavering commitment to social justice.

Both the San Diego Miramar College science building expansion and the new César E. Chávez campus were financed through the \$1.555-billion Propositions S and N construction bond program, a program that continues to earn top grades from respected bond ratings agencies and continues to burnish our credentials as a responsible steward of the public's trust.

With some 53,000 students enrolled this fall at City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges, and nearly that many students attending Continuing Education's six campuses, we have an obligation to improve and excel every year. Thanks to the dedication of so many faculty and staff throughout the District, we will certainly meet that goal this fall.



Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D.
Chancellor

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WE—With Excellence Magazine

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Nursing on Point



San Diego City College nursing graduates can now earn a bachelor's degree in nursing from Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU) within 15 months without leaving the downtown campus under a new agreement between the institutions that took effect in August.

The partnership allows cohorts of up to 15 nursing students who graduate from City College to enroll seamlessly in the PLNU nursing program each fall and spring. Students will pay \$16,200, which includes fees, tuition, and books for the major courses in the accelerated degree program that will yield a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree upon completing 12 courses totaling 36 units.

Courses through the PLNU program will be taught by PLNU faculty, and the university will provide a full-time, academic advisor at the City College campus. Demand for nurses with bachelor's degrees has grown sharply in recent years, and demand for registered nurses in the state is forecast to grow by an average of 9,230 job openings annually through 2022, according to the California Employment Development Department.

City College offers an Associate of Science in Nursing that prepares entry-level registered nurses as providers of care across the health and illness continuum. PLNU's highly respected nursing program, which recently celebrated its 40th anniversary, is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and licensed by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

Putting Energy in Conservation

The San Diego Community College District continues to collect accolades for its conservation efforts. Most recently, the Association of Physical Plant Administrators named the District a recipient of its 2015 Sustainability Award.

In 2003, the District's Board of Trustees established a Green Building Policy that requires at least five percent of a project's total energy be generated from renewable resources such as solar or thermal energy. All facilities funded by the \$1.555 billion Propositions S and N bond program must, at minimum, secure a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. To date, the District is on track to obtain 43 LEED certifications.

In addition, bond-funded facilities have been fitted with low-flow water fixtures, which reduced water consumption by about 40 percent when compared to buildings using standard fixtures. Reclaimed water is used at Miramar College for irrigation, and the District has also moved away from using turf as a major landscape component, replacing heavily-watered grass with a drought-tolerant variety, or removing the turf altogether and replacing it with low-water use landscape.



Historic Budget Increase



More classes, more instructors, and more academic support services greeted some 53,000 students who enrolled at San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges for the fall semester that began August 24.

The San Diego Community College District was able to expand its offerings thanks to a 2015-16 spending plan that includes a record revenue increase of at least \$80 million compared to last year. The budget nearly restores the District to pre-recession revenue levels.

The Board of Trustees will give its final approval to the budget in September.

“This is the largest budget increase in the history of our District,” said SDCCD Chancellor Constance M. Carroll. “What it will mean for our students and the community is more classes, more full-time faculty, state-of-the-art instructional equipment, more support services to ensure our students’ success, maintenance improvements, and attention to all areas affected by inflation over the years. In short, this budget is a cause for celebration.”

Chancellor Carroll says the proposed budget will enable the SDCCD to add 31 new full-time faculty members. The hiring will include seven new full-time positions at San Diego City College, nine at San Diego Mesa College, eight at San Diego Miramar College, and seven at San Diego Continuing Education. Since California voters approved Proposition 30 in 2012, the District will have added 91 newly funded full-time faculty positions.



@SimBarhoum

Sim Barhoum
English Professor
San Diego Mesa College

I used to teach night classes, but now mornings ones. I like how peaceful it is then how the energy just picks up.



NEWSCENTER

SDCCD NewsCenter Goes Live — In August, the District’s Communications and Public Relations office launched SDCCD NewsCenter, an online news site with updated news and other information. In addition to news stories, SDCCD NewsCenter will feature videos, photo galleries, staff profiles, announcements, and event information from the District, City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges, and San Diego Continuing Education. The site can be found at www.sdccd.edu/newscenter.

San Diego Pride Parade 2015



The SDCCD Board members, faculty, administrators, staff, students, and friends braved the lightning and rain to celebrate equality at the 2015 San Diego Pride Parade.

Serving Those in Need



Students, faculty, and staff at the San Diego Community College District are doing what they can to help those in need.

At San Diego City College, for example, an average of 300 students each week visit The Pantry to stock up on food. The Pantry also collects and distributes items such as household goods, diapers, detergent, and personal hygiene items.

Mesa College sponsors Feed the People, an annual event held to help feed the homeless of San Diego. In addition, the Mesa College Associated Student Government has a Homeless Outreach Student Transition (HOST) Program. Each semester HOST sponsors a food/hygiene drive, and collects supplies that are made available to students in need – no questions asked.

At Miramar College, the campus Anthropology Club recently held a two-week food drive for hungry and homeless students that yielded bottled water, canned goods, and paper products.

Students interested in receiving support are encouraged to visit the counseling office at any SDCCD campus location.

Chemistry Professor Honored



Mesa College Chemistry Professor Edward C. Alexander has been named a 2015 American Chemical Society Fellow, the only community college instructor in the nation to receive the prestigious honor.

"It is wonderful to see Dr. Alexander receive national recognition from his peers for his service to the American Chemical Society and contributions to his profession," said Dr. Pamela T. Luster, president of Mesa College. "It is a tremendous success and honor for Ed, for our chemistry department, and for the entire college ... and it speaks volumes about the quality and high caliber of teaching and learning offered at Mesa College."

A Way with
Words

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
OF
SAN DIEGO COUNTY

"IN A WORD" A SPECIAL EVENT BENEFITING EDUCATION AND CULTURE

The community colleges of San Diego County and the popular public radio show *A Way with Words* are hosting a special event on September 17, "In A Word," which will celebrate the importance of language and literacy.

The event will feature an entertaining presentation by *A Way with Words* co-hosts Martha Barnette and Grant Barrett, and will also honor the colleges' most distinguished alumni. Those honored will then state a single word that best describes their college experience; hence the title, "In A Word."

Proceeds will benefit alumni and scholarship programs at the colleges as well as the educational nonprofit that produces *A Way with Words*. Visit www.sdccd.edu/inaword/ for more information.



Dedicated to Social Justice

Carlos O. Turner Cortez was aiming to enter education as an academic and was well into his postgraduate studies focusing on social welfare policy when he began teaching at Intermediate School 164 in New York's Washington Heights.

It changed his life.

"The classrooms had broken windows, there were not enough chairs for the students, there was no air conditioning, the heat was working intermittently, all the books were hand-me-downs from other schools," Cortez said. "The school looked like something out of a developing country, and I realized then that I could make more of an immediate impact through teaching and administrative work than through academia and research."

On July 15, his journey brought him to the San Diego Community College District as the new president of Continuing Education, his commitment to social justice and leveling the playing field through education is as strong as ever. President Cortez assumes leadership of an institution serving 45,000 students per semester, and Continuing Education plays a vital role in workforce development through courses ranging from accounting and office skills to welding and upholstery.

"My educational philosophy is closely aligned to the vision and the mission of Continuing Education," President Cortez said. "All of my professional experiences have focused on efforts to promote equity for underserved populations, and the programs at Continuing Education are designed to do just that."

Former colleagues say Continuing Education is fortunate to have landed President Cortez.

"Carlos is passionate about the transformative role education can play in people's lives and I have seen his dedication motivate the people who work with him to do their best," said Dr. Linda McAllister, Chair of the Social Sciences Department at Berkeley City College, where Dr. Cortez served as Acting Vice President of Instruction and Dean of Academic Pathways, Workforce Development, and Student Success until moving to San Diego.

Shirley Slaughter, Berkeley City College's Director of Business and Administrative Services, is similarly impressed.

"In all my years of experience, some people stand out for their great qualities and Dr. Carlos Cortez is one of those people," she said. "He is well known for his intelligence, work ethic, positive attitude, teamwork mentality, leadership, and diligence. He has superior interpersonal skills, and is by far the best administrator I have ever had the pleasure of working with."

President Cortez said he was drawn to the District and Continuing Education because both are respected for their commitment to all students.

"San Diego Continuing Education's reputation across the country is second to none," President Cortez said. "The District as a whole has built a remarkable

reputation, in large part because of the chancellor."

In addition to his position at Berkeley City College, President Cortez served as Director of Education Extension at UCLA, and as a teacher and administrator at public schools in New York and Los Angeles. He also is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California. His research interests center on the role of educators and administrators of color in the historical development of American social welfare and education policy. He is also an expert in the area of promoting equity and access in urban education through literacy and policy initiatives.

President Cortez's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in History and Sociology from Georgetown University, a master's degree in Race and Gender Politics from New York University, and a Ph.D. in Education Policy and Administration from the University of Southern California.

The recruitment for the presidency of Continuing Education began in summer 2014 when former




president Dr. Anthony Beebe was named president of San Diego City College. President Cortez has purchased a home in San Diego and spends his free time running, hiking, gardening, and traveling.

"Dr. Cortez is a remarkable person," said San Diego Community College District Chancellor Constance M. Carroll. "As an experienced educational leader, he combines academic interests, innovation, research, and effective management with a deep and compassionate commitment to students."



HISTORY FLYBY



Miramar College Aviation Maintenance Technology student Derrick Caceres rivets aluminum sheets that make up the wings of the P-51D Mustang.

They've restored one of only 32 Curtiss P-40 Warhawks left in the world, a type of aircraft flown by the legendary Flying Tigers in China during World War II. That followed their restoration of a Grumman TBM-3 Avenger, which first saw action at the Battle of Midway.

Now the current and former students of San Diego Miramar College's Aviation Maintenance Technology Program who have gone on to work at Flyboys Aeroworks in El Cajon are restoring a P-51D Mustang, a single-seat fighter/bomber that will be painted to match a plane flown by Capt. Roscoe Brown of the acclaimed Tuskegee Airmen.

"This is not just an airplane, this is history," said Flyboys Aeroworks Chief Engineer Rolando Gutierrez as he placed his right hand on the restored fuselage of the P-51D Mustang. "This is going to be exhibited in one of the most prestigious museums in the United States."

That would be the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, home of the restored P-40 Warhawk and TBM-3 Avenger.

Remarkably, few of those working on the restorations knew anything about airplane maintenance before enrolling at the Miramar College Aviation Maintenance Technology Program, the only FAA-approved school of its kind in either San Diego or Imperial Counties.

"I've gone from knowing nothing about aviation to restoring airplanes for a museum affiliated with the Smithsonian," said Gutierrez, whose Gillespie Field-based company has also restored, renovated, or rebuilt aircraft on display at the USS Midway Museum and the San Diego Air & Space Museum.

Gutierrez wasn't looking for a new career when he found the program. The retired corporate executive enrolled after he began volunteering at the Midway Museum about seven years ago and wanted to learn more about the ship's aircraft that he was caring for. Before long, he and others at the school formed a bond that became a business – Flyboys Aeroworks – that caught the attention of the folks at the National World War II Museum. The Avenger was the first project commissioned by the museum.



Miramar College Aviation Maintenance Technology graduate Dan Smith inspects the P-51D Mustang propeller.



Miramar College student and Chief Engineer Rolando Gutierrez explains the P-51D tail wheel assembly to Miramar College Aviation Maintenance Technology student Genevieve Cindrich.

Twelve students were hired to work on the 18-month project.

"They were so impressed with the quality of the work that they asked us to do their next plane," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez put together another crew for the P-40 Warhawk, this one composed primarily of ex-military personnel. Again, everyone who worked on the project was either a current or former Miramar College Aviation Maintenance Technology student.

Among those working on the P-51D Mustang are two Aviation Maintenance Technology interns.

"It's an incredible opportunity," said Genevieve Cindrich, 26, who spent her summer working on the wings and engine of the plane with fellow student Derrick Caceres, 22.

"I'm trying to get my foot in the door of aircraft maintenance, and this program is helping me do that," Caceres said.

Jenny Bishop can vouch for that. She is an Aviation Maintenance Technology graduate who worked

with Gutierrez on the first two National World War II Museum restorations.

"I learned everything from nose to tail, everything about the functionality of an airplane, through the Miramar program," said Bishop, who later worked with a civilian contractor maintaining Navy F-18 Hornets and the E-2C Hawkeye and C-2A Greyhound at Naval Air Station North Island before moving to her current assignment on Sikorsky H-60 Seahawks.

The Miramar College curriculum includes more than 1,900 hours of instruction designed to be completed in three, four, or five semesters. The program is designed to enable students to secure an FAA Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) Technician Certificate. Such certificates are needed to work on an aircraft in this country, and virtually all Miramar College graduates who take the A&P exam pass the test and earn their mechanic's license.

"It is the principal pipeline to the industry in this region," said James Ostrich, 60, a program manager in the research and development division at Qualcomm who enrolled at Miramar College

"I learned everything from nose to tail, everything about the functionality of an airplane, through the Miramar program."

Jenny Bishop
Aviation Maintenance
Technology Graduate



because he also owns and operates Warbirds West Air Museum at Gillespie Field in El Cajon.

Students are anywhere from 18 to 70 years old. About 240 are enrolled annually.

"We have people who come in here with some experience, we have people who come in here with some military background, we have people who come in here straight out of high school with no experience, and we have people coming in here looking for a change in careers who have no experience in the field," said David Buser, an Aviation Maintenance Technology professor and former Aviation Maintenance Technology chair. "It runs the gamut."

Often, the path from Miramar leads to Flyboys Aeroworks.

Lead mechanic Dan Smith has worked on the past two restorations for the National World War II Museum. "As soon as I saw the P-40, my eyes lit up like a kid at Christmas," said Smith, who worked on Huey and Cobra helicopters when he was in the Marine Corps. "I knew this was what I wanted to do. I knew I had made the right decision in coming here."

Gutierrez feels the same way.

"We do this because we love it, and because it's a passion, and it is a privilege most of all," he said.

"I think it's a good experience for young people to not only work on an aircraft, but work on an aircraft that has so much history behind it. They have learned not just about who built them and who designed them but who flew them and how brave these men were."



Capt. Roscoe Brown of the acclaimed Tuskegee Airmen.



LOOKING GOOD

COSMETOLOGY THRIVING AT CITY COLLEGE

Ask Cosmetology/Esthetician students why they chose the program at City College and they consistently say it's because of students' high pass rates on the State Board examination.

In fact, City's program is number one in the state, with students boasting a 100 percent pass rate on the practical section of the exam and a 94 percent pass rate on the written section.

Marc Lugo, a recent graduate, says he looked at several other cosmetology schools but ultimately chose City's program because of its low cost and track record for student success.

"I could have taken a student loan for \$26,000 a year, but City has a better pass rate. Why spend the money?"

Lugo, 48, wants to start his own business. The former software engineer says cutting hair has always been his passion. Having graduated in August, he says he plans to go to barbering school and then open his own men's salon. He also hopes to return to City College to teach in the Cosmetology program one day a week.

The faculty will probably need the help. Similar to its students' careers, City's Cosmetology/Esthetician program is on an upward trajectory. Department Chair Sudie Phillips, says the program recently expanded and is now enrolling 50 new students every eight weeks,

Opposite page, from left: students Veda Schmigel and Madison Bright with Department Chair Sudie Phillips; From left: students Anthony Martinez and Marc Lugo



CLIENTS WANTED

One of San Diego's best-kept secrets is San Diego City College's Cosmetology Salon. The salon is open to the public most weeks Tuesday through Friday and offers low-cost salon services. Special discounts are available to students, District staff, and seniors (Wednesday and Thursday only).

For more information, visit www.sdcity.edu/Cosmetology

including half in Cosmetology and half in the Esthetics program, which trains students in professional skin care. Phillips says the department also plans to start an evening manicure program.

"When we saw potential students waiting up to four years to get in our program; we knew we had to create more opportunities for students to be enrolled," Phillips said.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for cosmetologists will grow by 12.7 percent, or 77,600 new cosmetologist positions, by 2022. Phillips says graduates can expect to earn between \$20 and \$40 per hour.

But for many student and graduates, the reward is beyond monetary. Veda Schmigel, 18, is a recent graduate who now works at a high-end salon in Little Italy. She says she enjoys seeing the happiness she can bring to her clients. "I like when people feel empowered, helping someone out."

Like Lugo, Schmigel also plans to return to City College – but as a student. Having completed the one-year Cosmetology program, she's only 12 units away from also earning an associate degree. Schmigel says she wants to eventually get a bachelor's degree in business and open her own salon.

"I want to do something I enjoy. I can envision doing this for the rest of my life."



Alysoun Knox enrolled at San Diego Continuing Education (CE) to earn her high school diploma some 14 years after dropping out of high school. Now the 31-year-old San Diego resident is an academic standout at Mesa College who is on track to complete an Associate of Science Degree in Nutrition and is thinking about starting her own business.

Eric Matson enrolled in Continuing Education to earn a certificate in Automotive Technology so he could have a better idea of what he was doing while working under the hood of his vehicle. Now he's on his way to San Diego Miramar College for an Associate of Science Degree that he hopes could lead to a new career as a mechanic.

Gaby Medina earned her high school diploma at Continuing Education before moving on to San Diego City College, where she is on her way to earning an Associate of Arts Degree in Philosophy with dreams of transferring to an Ivy League school.

Alysoun, Eric, and Gaby are among the more than 1,500 Continuing Education students who transition to City, Mesa, or Miramar College annually after earning a certificate or high school diploma, making the San Diego Community College District's CE program among the largest de facto feeder high schools in the region.

Alysoun Knox, Nutrition Student

MAKING THE TRANSITION



Eric Matson, Automotive Technology Student

Nearly 6,000 students have transitioned from Continuing Education since 2009.

"The Continuing Education counselors are pretty helpful and the teachers there are pretty encouraging," said Gaby, 19, who enrolled at City College this summer and envisions a career as a philosophy and mathematics professor. "They're always keeping you up to date on when assessment tests are coming up, they let you know when the colleges are having an open house, they just give you a lot of support. They make it very easy for you to move on."

In fact, the San Diego Community College District has embarked on a strategic effort aimed at boosting the number of CE students moving on to for-credit college courses. As part of its Student Equity Plan, CE has hired additional adjunct counselors to help students interested in transitioning to college. The District also has an outreach employee who visits CE sites with information and provides application assistance to students who are interested in furthering their education. City College holds an annual CE Day, in which any Continuing Education student can visit the downtown campus for a feel of college life.

"A lot of our students have had their education interrupted at some point and they come back to us to get their feet wet," said Star Rivera-Lacey, CE's Dean of Counseling and Student Services. "They get here and see that, 'Hey, I can do this,' and when we hear that, our job is to encourage them to transition to one of the District's college campuses."

That's what happened to Alysaun Knox after she enrolled at CE's North City Campus. "I was excited to be in the classroom and using my brain again," she said. "I've been waiting for this for almost 15 years. Everyone knew I had the potential, it was really just me that never did anything about it, but it's never too late to do something you want to do."

To further help students transition, CE offers a Credit by Exam program that provides college credit for certain courses. Eric Matson picked up a few college credits through his automotive technician courses at CE that way.

"It just made sense for me to continue on to Miramar," he said.

Administrators are hoping to see even more CE students transition to college in coming years.

"Many success stories are the students who begin at CE for High School Diplomas or equivalencies, basic skills classes, or who are in programs that articulate to the college level, said Carlos O. Turner Cortez, Ph.D., president of Continuing Education. "It's an excellent opportunity for students to move on to the college level, and it's absolutely wonderful to hear these stories about people who were homeless or struggling to find a job and who are now not only graduating from our colleges, but graduating from some of the top universities, too."



Gaby Medina, Philosophy and Mathematics Student



Anthony E. Beebe, Ed.D.
President
San Diego City College

Getting a Jump on Success at San Diego City College

At San Diego City College, student success comes through many avenues. One is the San Diego Early/Middle College High School (SDEMC).

Situated on the City College campus, SDEMC is governed by the San Diego Unified School District and works closely with the San Diego Community College District. Thirty percent of SDEMC students are homeless. Eighty-five percent come from struggling families that qualify for the free-lunch program. Yet most SDEMC graduates go on to college, including schools such as UC Berkeley, UCLA, and the University of San Diego.

Brannndon Mariscal is among the students who have benefited from the program. Mariscal, who enrolled at City College after graduating from SDEMC in 2012, transferred to UC Berkeley this fall to further his studies in mathematics and computer science. He is the first in his family to go to college.

"It's a tight-knit school," Mariscal says. "Everybody is there to support you and nobody is willing to give up on you. Plus, the college prep attitude is really nice. It's just a nice environment to be in."

Since 2010, SDEMC students have earned 1,800 university transferable units at San Diego City College, with an average GPA of 3.2. In 2014, *Newsweek* magazine ranked SDEMC in the top 20 percent of

"America's Top High Schools that Beat the Odds for Low-Income Students."

This summer, the San Diego Community College District's Board of Trustees accepted a \$150,000 grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to expand coordination between the college and high school. The school will receive an additional \$100,000 grant for the 2016-17 school year.

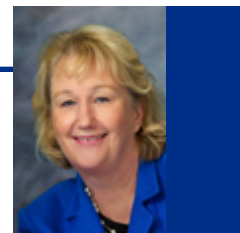
The Student Success Grant will pay for AVID tutors who are City College students – many of whom went to SDEMC. The grant will fund a San Diego City College Counselor to meet with every SDEMC high school student annually in developing and maintaining a college educational plan. The grant will help with targeted marketing to grow enrollment.

SDEMC serves students in grades nine through 12, and about 115 students are now enrolled. The school hopes the new grant will help push that number to 150 by fall 2016.

"The small, early/middle college high school model fits students who would not necessarily thrive in a large, traditional high school," said Elizabeth Larkin, SDEMC's founding principal. "They do thrive in a smaller school with the extra academic, social, and emotional support that we provide."



SDEMC students celebrate completing classes at San Diego City College.



Pamela T. Luster, Ed.D.
President
San Diego Mesa College

CRUISE-ing into College

In direct response to a growing population of Latino and other underrepresented students, San Diego Mesa College this summer launched a summer bridge student experience to empower incoming students, reduce anxiety about college, and provide tools for success.

Two hundred freshmen took the free summer CRUISE — an acronym for Creating Rich, Unique, Intellectual, Student Experiences.

“Everyone says college is the best years of your life, but in fact, it can be pretty scary and stressful,” said Dr. Pamela T. Luster, Mesa College President. “The CRUISE is the first of many programs that will engage our students from day one, and make success achievable for each and every student.”

Over the course of four days, students were introduced to “peer navigators” and given the support tools they need to prepare for the rigors of college. Faculty members tested new techniques and led lab exercises, and parents got tips to on how to support their college student.

The Summer CRUISE program was the first to launch under a \$2.62 million federal grant designed to help Latino students succeed. The Mesa College grant, called “Proyecto Éxito,” is a play on the Spanish word for success that combines the idea of successfully exiting the college with a degree or certificate and transfer-readiness.

“Research shows that when you focus on what helps Latino students become successful, it floats all boats,” Luster told a reporter, referring to the saying, “A rising tide lifts all boats.”

Luster mingled with the students, and led a session for parents on how to support their new college freshmen. She added, “We’re all learning. And we’re having fun.”

Indeed, the agenda did look like something one would find posted on the lido deck for the entire family.

There were games, college trivia, talks by student leaders, tours, faculty-led workshops in English and



CRUISE Peer Navigators — “super trained” currently enrolled Mesa Students — guided the CRUISE participants through the four-day voyage. The navigators will continue to mentor CRUISE participants through their freshman year.

math, and a sampling of science, culinary, and art lab experiments. Students interacted with college faculty members and administrators one-on-one, a key factor in helping students feel like they belong.

“While there’s fun involved on the CRUISE, there is a real and serious intent, and clear, measurable goals for this project,” said Julianna Barnes, Vice President of Student Services. “That is to increase completion and success rates, and to provide clear pathways and support that will enable not only our Latino students, but all students to succeed.”

Through “Proyecto Éxito,” Mesa College plans to train its faculty and staff in best practices in pedagogy and student services; to offer structured learning assistance support in basic skills and gateway college credit courses; to develop an innovative peer-mentoring program for at-risk students; and to create supportive spaces for teaching and learning.

A spot on the CRUISE was the perfect place to start for Alec Alba, fresh out of Madison High and the first in his family to go to college.

“I learned how not to be afraid of college,” said Alec, a shy 17-year-old. “I broke down barriers, met new friends, and overcame certain fears. Now I’m comfortable, and I’m ready.”



Patricia Hsieh, Ed.D.
President
San Diego Miramar College

Fire Tech Students to the Rescue

July 18, 2014, began as any ordinary day of instruction for Miramar College Fire Technology students Phillip Mainini and Brendon Simmons. The two had just completed rappelling exercises at the Naval Training Center fire training facility and were heading home when Mainini spotted a commotion in the parking lot of the Point Loma Home Depot on Sports Arena Boulevard. He noticed an older man and a youth struggling over a can of gasoline. As Mainini inched closer to inspect, he noticed the gas can was full and zip-tied to the older man's hand. The youth shouted, "He is trying to light himself on fire! Help!" And that's exactly what Mainini did.

His first action was to immediately call 911 for assistance and attempt to guide the man away from others. Mainini then attempted to talk the man out of his plans to commit suicide, but the man began to douse himself with gasoline. The man made it clear that he did not want to hurt Mainini or anyone else. After a brief conversation, he dropped to his knees in a puddle of gasoline, took out a lighter, and was quickly engulfed in flames.

Mainini showed off his leadership skills developed in Miramar's Fire Technology program. He asked onlookers if they had a fire extinguisher, water, or blankets. He took a blanket and smothered the man's face in an attempt to keep his airway open. While smothering the flames, he instructed a bystander to pour water on the blanket. However, the fire continued to spread.

Mainini's classmate, Brendon Simmons, saw the developing incident from his passing car and stopped to assist. Simmons quickly used a fire fighting jacket he had in his car to smother the flames. He then cut off the man's clothes, and a chemical extinguisher from a nearby gas station was used to extinguish the fire. Mainini and Simmons continued to keep the man's airway open until paramedics arrived. The suicidal man was taken to the Burn Institute of San Diego for treatment and was conscious during transport thanks to

the bravery shown by Mainini and Simmons. Sadly, the man suffered burns over 90 percent of his body and later died as a result of his injuries.

On May 14 at the Hyatt Regency Mission Bay, Mainini and Simmons were honored for their heroic actions. The two received the 2015 Spirit of Courage Award from the Burn Institute.



From left: Burn Institute Chairman of the Board Jerry Davee, Miramar College Fire Technology students Brendon Simmons and Phillip Mainini, and NBC 7 San Diego anchor Bridget Naso.

"It was an amazing honor to receive this award and be recognized by our peers and community," Mainini said. "I think we both understand that we were just at the right place at the right time. While nothing could prepare us for seeing another person go through what the victim did, it just so happened we were lucky enough to have had training that helped us deal with this type of situation." No one else was injured on that July day.

Both Simmons and Mainini are currently volunteer firefighters for the San Diego County Fire Authority as they continue to work toward degrees at Miramar College. Mainini is hoping to transfer to San Diego State University upon completion of his Fire Technology degree to study Civil Engineering. Simmons is undecided on his future plans.



CE Students Participate in National Opportunity with Cisco

Cisco's annual national partner convention in North America, Cisco Live, was recently held in San Diego and drew more than 20,000 participants. Information Technology professionals agree the event is a perfect venue for training on new technologies, as well as for having access to the engineers behind the products.

As part of the conference, Cisco supports education partners by providing opportunities for students to participate in the event through Dream Teams (DT). DTs are determined by an application process for national (10 candidates) and local (20 candidates) teams. For the local team, nine students were chosen from San Diego Continuing Education's (SDCE) Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) Certificate Program.

"The DT students gain experience setting up and tearing down network equipment to support the wireless users at the event," said Don Aragon, Continuing Education instructor and DT mentor.

"With more than 17,000 users and over 1,000 access points, the support is significant." The hands-on experience is also an extension of what students learn in SDCE's short-term Cisco Certificate Program, which serves 150 students annually.

DTs provide coverage of the Network Operation Center help desk so they answer actual questions and troubleshoot real issues during the event. Joni Blakeslee, Senior Manager in Cisco Corporate Affairs, says, "Our students at Cisco Live, or the 'Dream Team' as we call them, demonstrate increasing value, and provide excellent technical support to Cisco teams and customer support to attendees."

DT members also have the opportunity to interact with Cisco executives, engineers, and partners during the convention. "The most valuable opportunity was the social networking," said Nick Saylor, a graduate of SDCE's CCNA Certificate Program, who was chosen for the DT.

Following the conference, Saylor competed successfully in a national candidate search for a Wireless TAC Customer Service Engineer. The position is a one-year contract with a starting wage of \$30 per hour. Plus it means a genuine possibility of a future full-time career with Cisco. "I had the chance to speak directly with Cisco executives in a more relaxed manner as opposed to what would be the typical application process," Saylor said. "That opportunity was invaluable."



Dream Team students gained experience with the access point installation process and assembly of necessary hardware.

JAVIER CHEN

FROM VETERAN TO STUDENT

Javier Chen is a 25-year-old Navy veteran who graduated from San Diego Miramar College in the spring with an Associate Degree in Social and Behavioral Science and is transferring to UC Berkeley this September with plans on a career with the Environmental Protection Agency.

We asked Javier a few questions about his experience at Miramar College.

Q. Why Miramar College?

A. After being honorably discharged from the service, I decided to stay in San Diego to continue my education. At the time I was residing in Mira Mesa, and Miramar College was conveniently located close to my home. What interested me the most about Miramar was that the campus was newly renovated and environmentally sustainable.

Q. What's the biggest difference between the Navy and college?

A. In the Navy, most of your time is managed by the military instructions of the day and your mission. In community college, you have more time to manage your academics and your social life.

Q. What advice would you give to military veterans interested in pursuing a college degree?

A. Plan ahead. Make sure they check out the campus veterans' office and ask questions regarding the benefits they are entitled to utilize.

Q. Favorite spot to relax at Miramar?

A. The Student Veterans Center.

Q. How has Miramar College changed your life?

A. Miramar provided me with a lifelong learning experience that I will forever hold dear as I progress into my future academic and professional life. The knowledge acquired from my professors, friends, tutors, and staff members are tools I'll use as I continue in higher education.

Q. Most memorable college moment?

A. My commencement ceremony. I had the chance to see all my professors, counselors, staff, and my fellow students graduate with me in receiving our certificates of achievement and associate degrees.





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C A M P U S



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10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

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