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SHINING LIGHT ON  
*Equity and Excellence*

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# About San Diego Mesa College

San Diego Mesa College is a fully accredited, comprehensive college committed to equity and excellence. We honor our diverse community of students, faculty, professional staff, and administrators who collaborate to foster scholarship, leadership, access, and innovation in an inclusive learning environment. By promoting student learning and achievement that leads to degrees and certificates, transfers, workforce training, and lifelong learning, we empower our students to reach their educational goals and shape their future. Among the largest community colleges in California, Mesa serves over 25,000 students per year, 25% of whom are full-time. Mesa offers nearly 200 associate degree and certificate programs and was one of the first of 15 California community colleges to offer a Bachelor's degree. Mesa ranks as one of San Diego's top transfer institutions, is a proud Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI), and a Gold Status Military Friendly School, serving nearly 3,500 veterans, military affiliated and their families.

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



**Ashanti T. Hands, Ed.D.**  
*President*



**Isabel de Los Angeles O'Connor, Ph.D.**  
*Vice President, Instruction*



**Larry T. Maxey II**  
*Vice President, Student Services*



**Lorenze A. Legaspi**  
*Vice President, Administrative Services*

## GOVERNANCE LEADERS



**John Crocitti**  
*President, Academic Senate*



**Sahar "Mona" King**  
*President, Classified Senate*



**Phoebe Truong**  
*President, Associated Students*



**Jill Moreno Ikari**  
*Chair of Chairs*



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the 2022-23 academic year, our institution embraced the theme 'Shining Light on Equity and Excellence,' drawing inspiration from the versatile symbolism of light, signifying both energy and guidance. Throughout the year, we addressed ongoing COVID-19 challenges by collaborating closely with our District colleagues to guide crucial decisions on remote work policies, mask mandates, vaccinations, and the gradual easing of State Emergency Conditions, prioritizing community health and safety. A standout accomplishment was our Enrollment Management Taskforce's comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Plan, presented at our final President's Cabinet Meeting. This visionary plan offered a panoramic view of our enrollment landscape and actionable strategies prioritizing equity and institutional goals.

Our Mesa2030 Facilities Taskforce focused on prioritizing facility needs for a potential bond measure. Their work has helped to envision a future campus infrastructure that continues to elevate learning and innovation. State Chancellor's Office support, totaling \$290,000, helped launch new initiatives, including the Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement program and the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Student Achievement Program, reflecting dedication to the success of underserved student groups.

Active engagement in equity initiatives, including Hispanic-Serving Institution and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution Grants, underscored our commitment to fostering an inclusive and outcomes-driven educational environment. Notably, our Black Student Fellows organized impactful events including our first ever Black Excellence Conference and contributed to the Statewide Black Student Success Week.

The year witnessed innovation and program expansion, introducing the Mesa Impactship Program (interning with a purpose), Small Business Virtual Incubator, and initiating brewing in our Fermentation program, providing practical experiences and growth opportunities. Expressing gratitude to generous donors for unwavering Basic Needs support, we coincided an appreciation event with the renaming of our Basic Needs Resource Center as the 'Pamela T. Luster Resource Center,' honoring a pivotal figure in our institutional journey. The grand opening of our Pride Center exemplified our commitment to providing brave and inclusive community spaces for our students.

Looking ahead, our 60th Anniversary Taskforce will curate activities, illuminating our ongoing journey toward equity and excellence. The 2022-23 academic year was defined by an unwavering commitment to equity, innovative programs, impactful partnerships, and a steadfast dedication to creating a more inclusive, just and excellence-driven educational institution. We trust that you will enjoy reviewing the many ways we have shined light on equity and excellence as much as we have enjoyed creating these special moments.

*Ashanti T. Hands, Ed.D.*

President, San Diego Mesa College



# WE ARE *Mesa*



**1964**  
Founded



**29,327**  
Students enrolled  
2022/2023



**28%**  
First Generation  
College Students



**1,761**  
Academic Degrees &  
Certificates Awarded



**\$46**  
Cost per Unit,  
CA Resident



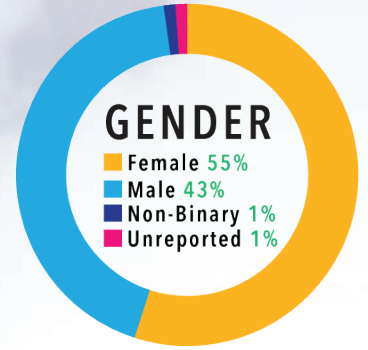
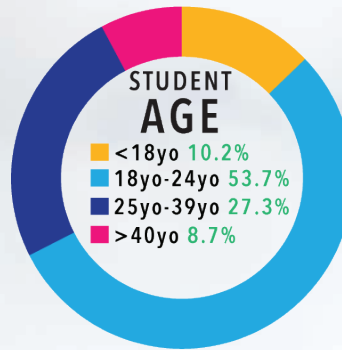
**\$23,612,851**  
Financial Aid  
Distribution



**11,622**  
Students received  
Financial Aid



**1,554**  
San Diego Promise  
Participants



## ETHNICITY

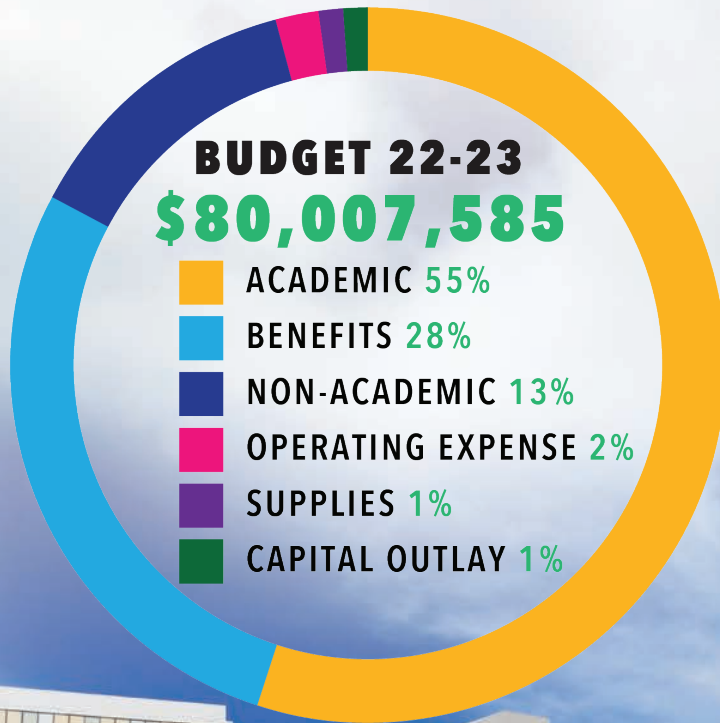


Latinx 38.9% • White 30.1%  
Asian 10.4% • Other/Multi 7.6%  
Black/African American 6.8% • Filipino 4.2%  
Unreported 1.4% • Pacific Islander 0.4%  
Native American 0.2%

## MILITARY

**4,369**

Active Military, Veteran  
Spouse/Dependent



# OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY

**4.5M** Total Views  
[www.sdmesa.edu](http://www.sdmesa.edu)

## Top Viewed

- Homepage 1.6M
- Academic Programs 100,440
- Counseling 78,809
- Spring Landing Page 63,451
- Apply 59,910



/SanDiegoMesaCollege



**8,232**  
Followers



**8,247**  
Page Likes



**154**  
Shares



**154,522**  
Post Reach



**34,634**  
Post Clicks



@sdmesacollege



**4,219**  
Followers



**358**  
Posts



**35,234**  
Impressions



**344**  
Likes



**93**  
Retweets



@sdmesacollege

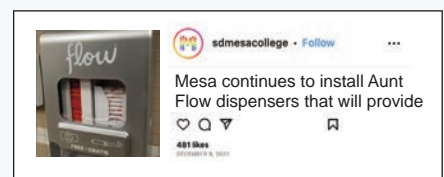


**5,231**  
Followers

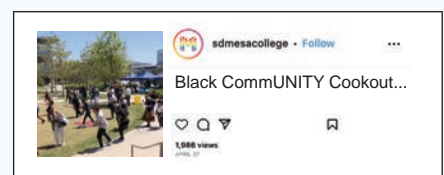


**512,957**  
Reach

## TOP POST



## TOP REACH





# HONORING OUR GRADUATES

## 58th graduating class had over 1,900 students!

1,924 Academic degrees awarded

347 Certificates awarded

22 Bachelor's Degrees in Health Information Management

110 Valedictorians

647 Graduates with two or more degrees

724 Graduated with Honors

18 age of youngest graduate

72 age of oldest graduate

60+ Veterans

100+ Promise Students

120 Student athletes

11 International students representing 11 countries; 6 graduating with honors, 2 valedictorians

44 Graduates were employees of the San Diego Community College District.



With nearly 540 graduates participating and thousands of guests and family members in the stands, it was a momentous occasion. The ceremony kicked off with a celebratory drum line and grand processional. Mesa College was proud to honor and celebrate each graduating student.

**San Diego Mesa College continues to be one of San Diego's leading transfer institutions, with more than 789 students earning a Degree for Transfer in 2023. Top five 2023 transfer schools for Mesa:**



**SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**



**UC San Diego**

# EQUITY

## In Fall 2022, President Hands welcomed our first ever Black Excellence Symposium and Conference

The Black Leadership Fellows hosted their first “Black Excellence Symposium”. The event was a huge success, with more than 150 attendees, including 60 students from Kearny High School. Black Excellence events provided space for interaction and understanding of Black history, culture, and contributions, and empowered students to take action in their own community in support of diversity and equity.





National Board Certified



SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE  
**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**  
Coaching Certificate Program  
[SDMESA.EDU/HEALTH-AND-WELLNESS](https://sdmesa.edu/health-and-wellness)

## Mesa College Offers California's First Board Approved College-Based Health & Wellness Coaching Certificate

In 2022, Mesa College started offering California's first ever community college-based Health and Wellness Coaching Certificate Program with approval by the National Board for Health and Wellness Coaching (NBHWC). The National Board-Certified Health and Wellness Coaching exam is the gold standard certification and is offered by the Board of Medical Examiners. The cost-effective program helps reduce access and equity gaps and students who complete this certificate will be able to develop motivational skills and understand behavioral theories that will help their clients manage stress, nutrition, and other activities.



## Mesa College dedicated The Stand: The Pamela T. Luster Resource Center

In May 2023, Mesa College debuted the naming of The Stand: The Pamela T. Luster Resource Center, in honor of former President Emerita Dr. Pamela T. Luster.

As a champion for basic needs, Dr. Luster's vision of equity led to the creation of the Student Success and Equity Department, along with centers dedicated to serving basic needs, dreamers, foster youth, and veterans.

Additionally, the event honored and recognized multiple donors who helped the Mesa College Resiliency Fund become a reality; The Estate of William Hudlow, The Szeto Family, Dr. Richard Jenkins, Dr. Pamela T. Luster and Steven Wong & Corrina Lam.



## San Diego Mesa College Providing Free Feminine Hygiene Products

In 2022-23, Mesa College installed approximately 50 free feminine hygiene product dispensers in all women's and gender-neutral restrooms throughout the campus. About 20 of these dispensers were donated by Aunt Flow. Mesa College also provides menstrual products at the Student Health Center and at The Stand Resource Center.

This effort was started as part of an international movement to rectify the discriminatory taxation of menstrual products, which costs Californians born with a uterus over \$20 million annually. The Act requires public schools with students in grades 6 to 12, community colleges, and the California State University System, to provide menstrual products.



# EQUITY

## Mesa's STAR TRIO Approved to Serve Undocumented Students



In 2022, the State Chancellor's Office and the US Department of Education expanded the equitable impacts of Mesa's STAR TRIO program by officially approving TRIO eligibility to include undocumented students. STAR TRIO jumped in and collaborated with our Borderless Scholars Program and the Dreamer Resource Center to maximize their undocumented student connections.



Federally funded to annually serve 225 students, STAR TRIO reached its initial objective of 5% enrollment for undocumented students for 2022-2023. They aim to double that enrollment in the next year. STAR TRIO serves students who are either first-generation, low-income, undocumented, and/or identify with a disability. Participants receive academic, career, and personal counseling, tutoring, specialized workshops, and student leadership opportunities.

## Mesa's Enrollment Management Taskforce

In the Fall of 2022, Mesa created and kicked-off the Enrollment Management Taskforce with the primary goal of creating a student-centered schedule that is predictable, responsive, efficient, and supports student success, completion, and equity outcomes. The task force began by developing a collaborative, innovative, and student-centered three-year strategic enrollment management plan (SEMP), which was completed in May 2023. The SEMP was developed by a cross functional collegewide team by analyzing existing data, assessing the effectiveness of current practices, and using best practices to make new recommendations for enrollment management.

The task force recommended forming a governance committee to support meeting or exceeding enrollment targets and increasing overall enrollment and student retention. The Strategic Enrollment Management Committee will use data analysis and progress monitoring, to suggest improvements and adjustments to the Plan.







## Mesa College Selected as Partner by Generation Hope to participate in FamilyU

Nonprofit Generation Hope selected Mesa College to participate in their FamilyU assistance program. Through FamilyU, Generation Hope partners with colleges and universities across the country to increase the number of parenting college students who complete their programs and graduate.

Parenting students account for 1 in 5 undergraduate college students nationwide, however, their odds of college completion are far slimmer than college students who are not parenting. Despite having higher GPAs than students without children, parenting students are ten times less likely to graduate due to inadequate support systems designed to accelerate student parent success. The program will help Mesa to bolster completion odds for student parents by developing stronger support systems.



## Mesa College Alumna Advocating for AAPI Scholars: Dr. Nellie Tran's Insights on AAPI Education and Mental Well-being

This past year, alum Dr. Nellie Tran joined host Interim Chancellor of California Community Colleges, Daisy Gonzales, Ph.D. to talk about the importance of cultural competency at community college campuses. Dr. Tran is a published San Diego State University professor, and a Vietnamese-American research scientist who received her B.A. in psychology from UCLA after attending Mesa College and Miramar College.



While attending Mesa college, she was inspired by two of Mesa's faculty members: Professor Jaye Van Kirk and Professor Dina Miyoshi.

Dr. Nellie Tran credits both professors for being the only Asian American women that encouraged her to obtain a Ph.D. in Psychology. When asked how educators can show support for their AAPI students, Dr. Tran shares that access to information needs to be a priority.

Mesa College has already begun moving towards the right direction for AAPI communities by securing a \$1.5 million grant that provides opportunities to improve academic attainment of AAPI, Native American, and low-income students. Mesa College takes pride in its official designation as an AANAPISI by the United States Department of Education.



July 2022



Summer Readiness  
EOPS Scholars  
Session

September 2022



Mesa College Art  
Gallery LatinX  
Heritage Month  
In Lak'ech: Tu eres  
mi otro yo

November 2022



Veterans Celebration  
Week

## 2022-2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Allied Health  
Orientation



August 2022

Diverse Careers  
in Congress



October 2022

CalWORKS  
Families Holiday  
Luncheon



December 2022

January 2023



**Path to STEM  
Success**

March 2023



**Mesa College  
Dental Clinic  
Open House**

May 2023



**Transfer Recognition  
Luncheon**

## 2022-2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

**Mesa College  
Black Leaders Fellowship  
Sip and Dip**



February 2023

**Unity Week:  
Festival of Colors**



April 2023

**50th Anniversary  
of Title IX  
Celebration**



June 2023



# EXCELLENCE



## **The new Mesa Impactship Program (MIP): Interning with a Purpose supported 70+ students during spring 2023**

The MIP was designed to promote workforce training and employment opportunities with a focus on underserved student populations, supporting students with exploring careers, developing professional skills, and compensating hands-on industry experiences through internships, volunteering, or Directed Clinical Practice (DCP). Eligible Mesa students received a one-time \$1,000 stipend or hourly compensation

for student workplace training and enrollment in a Work Experience or a DCP course. The funding assists students with reducing or eliminating out-of-pocket expenses such as childcare, equipment, fees, meals, and professional attire. Each semester, MIP students will be part of a cohort community supported by Mesa faculty to help them prepare for career pathways.

## **Mesa launched the Small Business Virtual Incubator (SBVI)**

The SBVI at San Diego Mesa College launched in Spring 2023 and has been a game-changer for student entrepreneurs, empowering them to transform their dreams into successful businesses. The first cohort of 14 students consisted of a diverse group across gender, racial and economic backgrounds. Additionally, each student was seeking varying degrees of assistance, from students who were just beginning on their entrepreneurial journey, to students who have been in the industry for years, and were looking for refinement, improvement and/or to take their business to the next level.

Through technical assistance and personalized 1:1 guidance with access to a pool of talented professionals, students received mentorship in various aspects of their business crucial to their success such as sales and marketing, organization, and financial strategies among other topics. Many participants successfully launched their businesses or grew an existing business, contributing to the local economy and many have already started building generational wealth.

**By providing mentorship and access to diverse talent, the program empowers students to transform their passion into tangible and thriving ventures, leaving a lasting impact on their lives and the community.**





# FUNDING EQUITY

Representatives Sara Jacobs, Scott Peters, and Juan Vargas, presented the District with a check for \$3.4 million from the U.S. Congress.



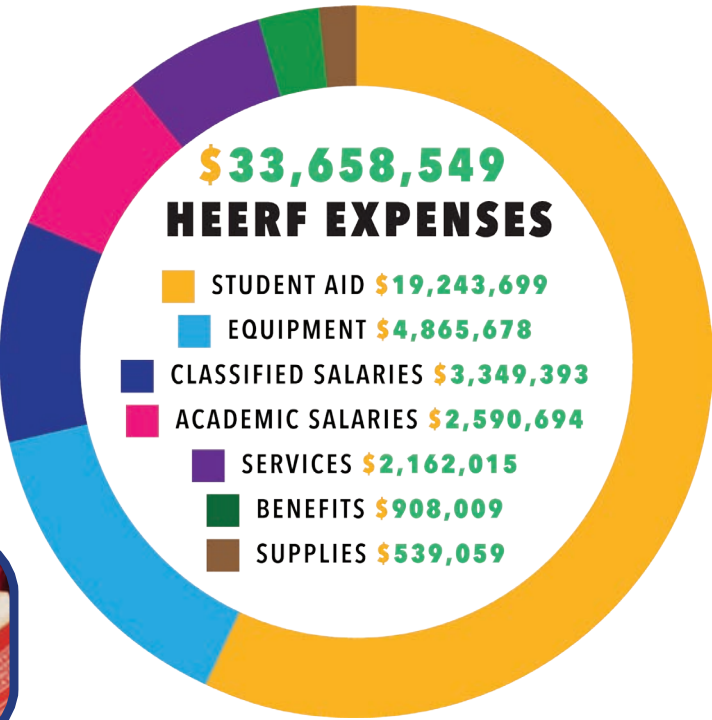
Members of San Diego’s congressional delegation, including Rep. Sara Jacobs, Rep. Scott Peters and Rep. Juan Vargas presented the San Diego Community College District with a check for \$3.4 million in funding from the U.S. Congress. The funding, approved in December 2022 as part of the fiscal year 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill, will benefit and better serve lesbian, gay, and transgender students, youth who have recently aged out of the foster care system, and by supporting new and expanded centers serving undocumented students.

### Mesa College has saved students over \$4 million dollars through zero text book cost initiatives

Through 2023, Mesa College has saved students over \$4 million dollars through zero textbook cost initiatives (ZTC). ZTC degree pathways are degrees where a student can attend and graduate from Mesa without paying for a single college textbook. Equity and overcoming barriers to student success are the hallmarks of ZTC.

As the leading college of equity and excellence, Mesa College believes that textbooks should not be a barrier to education. As of 2023, Mesa has 14 ZTC degree pathways. Mesa college faculty and staff have been dedicated to this initiative, and have overhauled classes to make them ZTC compatible.

As good stewards, Mesa College utilized HEERF funding to provide direct aid to students, and support programs and services.



# EXCELLENCE

## Mesa College Listed as Top Five “Best” Fashion Design Schools in California

In 2022, Best Universities ranked San Diego Mesa College the #3 top fashion design schools in California. Mesa College’s Fashion program provides students with the opportunity to create inventive designs while informing our culture with their unique contributions.

Best Universities collected data from the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education survey to rank schools based on an average annual cost of no more than \$13,000, a median starting salary no lower than \$34,000, and accredited programs.



## Mesa College 2023 PTK All-California Community College Winners

The Community College League of California (CCLC) recognized the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) All-California Community College Winners for Mesa College:

Jaynell Armstrong

Juanita Lukisa

Phoebe Truong

PTK recognizes the academic achievement of college students and provides opportunities for its members to grow as scholars and leaders.

## In May, Mesa College celebrated the AAPI Recognition Ceremony

Over 100 students and their families celebrated their achievements, where we honored our Asian-American and Pacific Islander students.





## Mesa College Athletics Trainer Saves Life of Senior Runner

During Fall 2022, Mesa College Athletic Trainer and alumnus, Yuki Matsuzawa, along with two students and a coach, helped save the life of a 66 year old athlete, who collapsed on field after his event during the annual Senior Games Track Meet held on campus at Merrill Douglas Stadium.



When the senior collapsed student-athletes, Sidney Garcia and Azucena Hernandez, immediately called 911, and ran to get Yuki Matsuzawa, the Mesa College Certified Athletic Trainer for the event. Upon arrival, Yuki checked for responsiveness and breathing where he realized the man was barely responsive. He then immediately applied the AED and began chest compressions for CPR, and ensured that EMS personnel were on their way while continuing CPR until the AED advised for a shock.

Yuki continued CPR until the man began breathing again and regained consciousness.



Coach Sean Ricketts and others followed Mesa's Emergency Action Plan where the EMS crew took over and the senior was stabilized and recovered at Sharp Hospital later that day. According to coaching staff, Yuki Matsuzawa's swift actions and emergency medical training as a Certified Athletic Trainer undoubtedly saved this man's life. The senior runner recovered well and even earned a medal, placing second in the Men's 65-69 age group.

## Dr. Inna Kanevsky on debunking misinformation regarding mental health and her 1.1 million Tik-tok Fame

Dr. Inna Kanevsky, Mesa College Professor, has taken the mental health side of Tik-Tok by storm by debunking falsely spread information.

With 1.1 million followers, her videos concentrate on exposing false information contained in widely spread content to prevent it from affecting the mental health of people using the app, especially teenagers and children who can be easily distressed.

Dr. Kanevsky was interviewed by CBS, where she explained that she spoke to people at TikTok regarding the widespread misinformation about psychology and mental health available in the content the app circulates.

For the last few years, Kanevsky has been battling psychological misinformation on TikTok, debunking faulty mental health information one video at a time.

She affirms that you can give people advice based on your experience as long as it is clear that that's where you're coming from. With a million followers and more than 36 million views, Kanevsky has become a TikTok star and reverse influencer herself.





# MOVERS, SHAKERS, AND MAGIC MAKERS



## Mesa College President Dr. Ashanti T. Hands Selected for the Aspen Institute's New Presidents Fellowship

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program (Aspen) announced that Dr. Ashanti T. Hands of Mesa College is one of 26 leaders selected for the 2022-23 class of the Aspen New Presidents Fellowship. This program supports community college presidents in the early years of their tenure as they work to achieve higher and more equitable levels of student success.

The class of fellows represents the diversity of our nation's community colleges, collectively serving over 250,000 students at colleges across the nation in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The fellows will work closely with other transformational community college presidents and Aspen leaders over nine months to learn from field-leading research, analyze their colleges' student outcomes, and clarify their visions for excellent and equitable outcomes for students while in college and after they graduate.



## Dr. Isabel O'Connor, Mesa College Vice President of Instruction, Announced as a 2022-23 Fellow of HACU's Leadership Academy/La Academia de Liderazgo

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities was pleased to announce the 39 fellows who will be part of the fourth cohort of its Leadership Academy/La Academia de Liderazgo, which includes Dr. Isabel O'Connor, Vice President of Instruction at Mesa College.

The program is designed to increase diverse representation in executive and senior-level positions in higher education. Dr. O'Connor has served as Mesa's Vice President of Instruction since January 2019. She has led several of Mesa's equity efforts related to the college's designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, including securing a new Title III HSI STEM grant in 2021.

Additionally, she has improved equity and access through curriculum review and development, pioneered professional development initiatives, such as the Curriculum Equity and Excellence Review Institute, and led the college's Mesa Pathways initiative which provides Mesa's diverse student population with clear direction, and well-developed roadmaps to achieving their educational, career, and life goals.

Dr. O'Connor serves on the CCCIO Board and as a member of the San Diego Hispanic Scholarship Fund Advisory Council.





**Dr. Veronica Gerace received this year's ASCCC (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges) Regina Stanback Stroud Diversity Award**

This year, Mesa College Professor Dr. Veronica Gerace received the prestigious 2023 Regina Stanback Stroud Diversity Award from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). As the official voice of California community college faculty in academic and professional matters, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) is committed to equity, student learning, and student success.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges acts to empower faculty to engage in local and statewide dialog and take action for continued improvement of teaching, learning, and faculty participation in governance. Dr. Gerace's innovation, and hard work advancing an inclusive, supportive, and engaged campus climate that benefits all aspects of our campus community.

Dr. Gerace's contributions to equity spans a broad range of more than 25 initiatives, new organizations, programs, policies, processes, workshops, and classes.



**ACADEMIC SENATE**  
for California Community Colleges



**Communication Studies Professor and Coach Das Nugent received the 2022 Pacific Southwest Collegiate Forensics Association (PSCFA) Wyman-Howe Coaching Award**

The Pacific Southwest Collegiate Forensics Association has awarded Communication Studies Professor, Coach Das Nugent, as the recipient of the 2022 (PSCFA) Wyman-Howe Coaching Award.

This award is considered the most prestigious award the organization gives, and is specifically awarded for excellence in coaching. Coach Das Nugent has been an active member of the speech and debate community for more than 20 years.

His contributions to speech and debate students and the Mesa community have impacted our campus and earned him this distinguished award.



# MOVERS, SHAKERS, AND MAGIC MAKERS



## **Professor Manuel Velez selected as the new Vice President of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC)**

As the official voice of California community college faculty in academic and professional matters, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) has named Mesa College Professor Manuel Velez as the Vice President of their committee.

The ASCCC is committed to bringing inclusiveness, equity, and student learning at community colleges in San Diego. Professor Velez's dedication to diversity, equity, and student success as a chicano/a and raza studies professor has earned him this position as a leader of the ASCCC at the state level.



**ACADEMIC SENATE**  
for California Community Colleges



## **Alison Steinberg fellowship with Stanford University Global Studies Department in School of Humanities and Sciences**

The Stanford University Global Studies Department determined Alison Steinberg as a fellow for the School of Humanities and Sciences. The program is called EPIC (Educational Partnership for Internationalizing Curriculum) and there were 11 California community college faculty chosen as fellows this year.

It began in August 2022 with a multiday meeting on the Stanford campus and concluded on the Stanford campus in May 2023 where Steinberg's project "Bringing Global Consciousness and an Equity Lens to Information Literacy Instruction" was shown to the Stanford community and guests at "The EPIC Symposium". With the support of the Stanford community, she created Information Literacy Modules in Canvas that use globally conscious research examples. Her goal is to create modules that can be used in total or in parts depending on what aspect of the research process the classroom faculty member wants to focus on.

These modules became available in the Fall 2023 through the Canvas Commons for any Canvas community member to download and use with their classes. During this year, she connected with various faculty and programs throughout Stanford to help us with our projects as well as a monthly three-hour meeting with the fellows and Stanford faculty where we discuss globalizing curriculum, interact with Stanford faculty involved with global issues and check in on project progress.



**Stanford**  
University





### San Diego Mesa College Student Wesley Renda Invents “WesCup”, available in over thirty 7/11 Stores in Spring 2023

Mesa College Student, Wesley Renda, has found a way to change the drinking game forever. He invented a cup called, “WesCup”, that is able to hold three drinks in one cup. The drinking cup allows consumers to enjoy three flavors of their favorite drink at one time.

These cups are being sold at 30 stores in San Diego and is going into 7/11 this month. He thought of this creative idea at the age of 11. Wesley was tired of having to finish a 48 ounce drink with just one flavor, saying that people could get bored with it. Wesley graduated from Mesa in Spring 2023 at the age of 19. He has been a Mesa student since he was 16, as a dual-enrolled high school student.



### San Diego Mesa College Alumnus Josh Edler Davis Became Editor-In-Chief of The Gramblinite

Mesa College Alumnus, Joshua Edler Davis, is proud to serve as Editor-In-Chief for The Gramblinite. As a senior mass communications major from San Diego since 2022, this was his second year attending Grambling State University.

The TV Center, KGRM, and The Gramblinite were all the resources for him to create content. His first experience as a journalist was at San Diego Mesa College, where he worked as a Staff Writer. He was able to gain experience covering local news and writing opinion pieces. He plans to finish school and pursue a career as a political journalist.



GRAMBLING  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

# PARTNERSHIPS

## Mesa College Partnered with SDSU to Receive a \$1 Million USDA Grant to Support Sustainable Food and Agriculture Training for Latinx Students

As Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI), SDSU partnered with Mesa College to create a pipeline of students from community college through graduate school. Selected Mesa College students received financial support to take the team-taught class at SDSU and for researching at the college's vegetable garden.

Students who continue in the program will receive counseling, scholarship opportunities, and mentoring from faculty and peers. The Transnational Approaches to Sustainable Food Futures (CAL 400) is taught by an interdisciplinary team of faculty. They will prepare undergraduate and graduate students to engage in summer internships in San Diego and Mexico, learning from immigrant and Indigenous farmers and cooks. The grant will then support the research projects of 36 undergraduates, seven master's students, and three Ph.D. students.



## Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems Sector partnered with Mesa College on their fall 2022 Community College Internship Program

Aeronautics Systems is a premier provider of military aircraft, autonomous systems, aerospace structures and next-generation surveillance, strike and commercial solutions to assist their customers.

Alexander Szeto has been a Public Director on the The Mesa College Foundation's board since 2017, and holds high-profile responsibilities at Northrop Grumman. Two entities formerly connected only by the outstanding work and dedication of Mr. Szeto, has led to a new partnership.

In this new partnership, Mesa students have the opportunity to become interns at Northrop Grumman's Autonomous Design Center of Excellence.





# Striking a Pose at Mesa College

## Mesa Fashion Show Returns to Campus in 2023

This year, the Mesa College Fashion Program was excited to host the return of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Golden Scissors Fashion Show: Designed to Last, in the beautiful new on-campus Quad for the first time.

The event featured a live in-person runway show, a design showcase, awards, and a reception featuring music performed by students from the music department. This evening event featured some of Mesa College's top fashion student designers.

This show aimed to expand the knowledge of sustainability in fashion. Through this event, the Fashion Program fostered sustainability, designing pieces that last. The fashion student designers introduced their work and discussed different innovative ways they each found to create impactful sustainable pieces. The winners of the runway portion were:



### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**Natural Sensibility**  
by Grace Rossburg



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**Kuneho Buwan**  
by Robbie Matawaran



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

**Hello Working World!**  
by Victoria Krenz



### People's Choice

**Fruitful Harvest**  
by Lydia Niebla





# WHAT'S COOKIN' WITH CULINARY

## Culinary breakfast and dinners

San Diego Mesa College's very own 72 Fifty breakfast AND dinner came back this year – and they had everything needed to start the day off right! Located in the 2nd floor of Mesa Commons, students, faculty and staff stopped by and to enjoy their delicious breakfast and dinner items. Offering a variety of fresh breakfast foods daily, such as: Baked croissants, baked chocolate chip scones, fresh smoothies, acai bowls, country fresh toast with butter and powdered sugar, and blueberry pancakes with butter smothered in warm maple syrup.



Culinary's 72 Fifty also featured a Steak and Seafood Fall dinner that focused on preparing juicy and delicious cuts of steak and perfectly cooked seafood accompanied by roasted potatoes. Our culinary program is one of few in the nation that operates a classroom-driven restaurant that's open to the public, where students gain first-hand experience food preparation techniques, food safety, sanitation, and menu planning while working with modern equipment in newly renovated facilities.



## Culinary Arts Professors and students participate in Gator by the Bay Festival

This year, Mesa College Culinary Arts Professors and students participated at the Annual Gator by the Bay Festival. Professor and Chef Michael Fitzgerald, who has been participating in Gator by the Bay for nearly 15 years, and Adjunct Professor and Chef Jack Gambrell from San Diego Mesa College Culinary Arts Department, were joined by renowned Louisiana Chef Patrick Mould. Chefs and students, prepped at Mesa College in advance of the event.

# HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM



## Connie Renda selected as California Health Information Association (CHIA) president-elect

Mesa College Health Information Management (HIM) Program Manager Connie Renda, MA, RHIA, CHDA, has been voted president-elect of the California Health Information Association and the California affiliate of the American HIM Association. Renda is serving a three-year term in office as president-elect that started in July 1, 2023. Renda has been in the HIM industry for 25+ years. In 2013, Renda designed, developed, implemented, and led the first HIM Bachelor of Science

degree program in the state of California.

She is also co-department chair for Allied Health in the School of Health Sciences and Public Service. Both programs are nationally, regionally, and locally accredited. Renda also ensured both programs received external accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Information and Informatics Education (CAHIIM) so Mesa Graduates are eligible for the RHIT and RHIA exams after graduating from the programs.

**“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.”**



## The Value of Mesa’s Baccalaureate Program Supported by UCLA Study

A 2022 University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) study confirmed that Mesa College’s bachelor’s degree provides an excellent choice for students who otherwise might not have pursued higher education. Research by the Civil Rights Project found that the bachelor’s degrees help meet the need for college-educated workers and offer an education for economically-disadvantaged students. Additionally, the RP Group recognized Hai Hoang at Mesa College for his leadership in the statewide evaluation leading to AB 927. Hai collaborated with UCLA to publish a research brief titled “Benefits and Opportunities: California’s Community College Baccalaureate Programs,” at UC Davis, which provided compelling evidence that the Bachelor’s Degree Program has increased access and success for special populations, helped them secure good-paying jobs, and is benefiting the California economy.



Hai Hoang  
Dean of  
Institutional  
Effectiveness



# OLYMPIANS SHINE IN SPORTS

Mesa College celebrated the 50th anniversary of landmark federal law of Title IX, enacted in 1972 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in all federally funded educational institutions. Title IX created a dramatic increase in interscholastic and intercollegiate athletic opportunities for girls and women.



## Mesa Wins the DeVore Trophy for the 4th time

San Diego Mesa College Athletics has been awarded the DeVore Trophy for the 2022-23 calendar year. The DeVore Award is presented each year to a Pacific Coast Athletics Conference (PCAC) member college with the most successful men's and women's intercollegiate athletic program for the academic year. This is Mesa's 4th time winning the trophy, leading all other schools in Chet DeVore trophy awards.

### CHAMPIONS

Women's Cross Country  
Men's Cross Country  
Men's Track and Field  
Women's Track and Field  
Women's Swim and Dive  
Women's Beach Volleyball

### 2ND PLACE

Women's Volleyball  
Women's Water Polo  
Men's Volleyball  
Softball  
Men's Swim and Dive

### 3RD PLACE

Women's Soccer  
Men's Basketball





## Mesa student athletes received over \$2.4 million dollars total in accepted scholarship offers

After winning the 2022 Southern California Bowl, Mesa College Football set a new College record – as of June, 2023 - with players receiving 156 scholarship offers.



Head Coach Gary Watkins Jr. was selected to serve as the Tight Ends Coach for the United States Football League Michigan Panthers.



The Houston Texans hired Mesa College alumnus and former football player, Stephen Adegoke, as their new safeties coach. He served with the 49ers, on the University of Michigan's staff under Jim Harbaugh, and coached with University of Florida, where he completed his master's degree. He played college football as a safety at Mississippi State from 2017-18 after transferring from Mesa College.



Mesa College Officially Welcomes Coach Travis Nichols as Full-time Head Coach for 2022-23 Men's Basketball Season. Travis Nichols was a former Mesa Star, and became the first African American head coach for men's basketball.



Mesa women's beach volleyball team once again became the Pacific Coast Athletic Conference Champions. Mesa concluded the regular season with a 21-2 overall record, and an unblemished 12-0 conference record.

# MESA COLLEGE FOUNDATION

## Annual Highlights



**\$458,000+**

Raised in support of Mesa's students and mission



**\$160,000+**

Awarded in scholarships for students



**\$25,000+**

Secured in Innovation Grants to Mesa leaders for projects supporting student success



**11,000+**

Served over 11,000 students through campus Innovation Grants

## 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony



In May 2023, Mesa College in conjunction with the Mesa College Foundation, honored the 2023 scholarship winners during their 30th Annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

The Ceremony was held on campus where 236 scholarships worth nearly \$160,000 total, were awarded to 168 students – with many students winning multiple awards.



30<sup>th</sup>

## Foundation Board Member and Donor Shines Excellence on Mesa

The Armstrong Family has supported the foundation's growth for over a decade and deepened their impact this year with the establishment of an Endowed Scholarship.

Since 2013, Elizabeth Armstrong has led the Foundation as a Board Member, taking on various leadership positions such as Treasurer, Vice President, and Strategic Planning Co-Chair.

She has served on every committee and her thought leadership, as well as integrity, have charted out a course of growth and improvement for the Foundation over the years. The Armstrongs established an endowment that will mean their generosity will impact students in perpetuity.

The Armstrong Family scholarship honors the memory of John Wilhelm Armstrong. The scholarship honors John's devotion as a husband, father, and grandfather, and his lifelong love of learning. The scholarship recognizes students with an equal love for education and learning.



## Foundation Board Member, Aviva McPherron, named in the Top 25 Healthcare Technology CTOs of 2022

Chief Technology Officers are indispensable to the success of companies operating in the healthcare technology space, and enable their management teams to pursue some of the most advanced technological visions. Foundation Board member, Aviva McPherron, serves as Chief Information Officer and Senior Vice President of IT for NuVasive. NuVasive is committed to transforming surgery, advancing care, and changing lives through less invasive, procedurally integrated solutions.



## 2022-23 Mesa College Foundation Board of Directors

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Lisa Cole-Jones

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Dr. Isabel O'Connor  
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Dr. Denise Rogers

Alexander Szeto  
Tara Yousefi

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Krista Stellmacher



# THE MESA COLLEGE ALUMNI NETWORK



*Mesa  
Alumni*

*The Mesa College Alumni Networks goal is to connect alumni with each other and their alma mater – Mesa College.*

***Alumni are welcomed and encouraged to stay connected to Mesa College through campus events, news, affinity groups, and by engaging with the Mesa College Foundation***

With the support of the Foundation and the Office of Communications, Mesa established an “Alumni Network” in 2019, and began communications and alumni engagement efforts. Through social media and a robust email campaign, Mesa initially reached out to over 50,000 Mesa Alumni, with nearly 600 engaging back requesting to be reconnected to Mesa.

The Alumni Network continues to expand and grow. Alumni are invited to join the Mesa College Alumni Network. Membership is free, and it is a great way for Alumni to keep in touch with classmates, to stay informed, connected, and support Mesa College.



[sdmesa.edu/Alumni](https://sdmesa.edu/Alumni)



[sdmesa.edu/handshake](https://sdmesa.edu/handshake)



[#SDMesaAlumni](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sdmesaedu)



### **MIREILLE KAMARIZA**

Hired by UCLA  
Bioengineering  
Department as  
Assistant Professor

The UCLA Samueli School of Engineering welcomed an outstanding scholar to the Bioengineering Department — Mesa College Alumnus Mireille Kamariza, who joined as an assistant professor. Kamariza is a chemical biologist whose research focuses on infectious disease, including developing low-cost diagnostics. As a doctoral student at Stanford University, she developed technology that helps detect and diagnose tuberculosis, for which she was awarded a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant. Mireille immigrated to the United States and attended San Diego Mesa College. She later transferred to UC San Diego for her bachelor's degree in biochemistry, where she pioneered a mentorship program for transfer students. She received her master's degree from UC Berkeley and Ph.D. from Stanford University, both in cell biology. Mireille Kamariza was recognized as one of the World's Most Powerful Women by Fortune Magazine in 2017 and was named one of Chemical & Engineering News' Talented 12 in 2020. Kamariza has demonstrated efforts in diversifying representation in STEM and intends to continue pushing for more equity and inclusion in scientific academia.



### **JONATHAN HART**

Selected to join the  
Inaugural Cohort of the  
U.S. Digital Corps

The U.S. Digital Corps has selected Jonathan Hart, Mesa College Alumnus, to be a part of the inaugural cohort of the U.S. Digital Corps. The U.S. Digital Corps is a program launched last year by the White House to bring early-career technologists to serve in the federal government. Jonathan will work two years as a data scientist at the State Department leveraging data and technology in innovative ways to implement the Department's Enterprise Data Strategy (EDS) and data informed diplomacy. As a staff scientist at a research facility, he supported researchers' genomics experiments for oncology research. In addition, he has developed hardware, software infrastructure and data pipelines to efficiently mine the mountain of publicly-available cancer datasets to discover new regulatory genes. His research has been published in leading journals and presented at major conferences.

### **CARMEN LEEDHAM** Uses GIS While Working with the Health and Human Services Agency



Mesa College GIS Alumnus Carmen Leedham has been assisting the County of San Diego, Department of Health and Human Services Agency in the Office of Business Intelligence. The department works and provides support for; Aging, Independent, and Public Health Services. Carmen saw GIS as a gateway to success during a period of her life where she felt unstable. At 18, she experienced housing and food insecurity, and saw GIS as a path to achieve stable housing and a stable wage.

She started thinking about a career in GIS, and in May 2019, she completed the GIS certificate of achievement at Mesa College – the requirement to get an entry level job in GIS with the County of San Diego. Since September 2019, she has been working a full-time job in the Land Use and Environment Group with the County, learning and honing her skills in GIS.



# SPACES & PLACES

## Grand Opening of the New Pride Center

This year, the Pride Center has led a variety of ground-breaking events by supporting students and leading events that aid Mesa's LGBTQIA+ community.

Mesa College held a lively grand opening for its brand-new Pride Center. Local elected officials and the San Diego Community College District joined Mesa College administrators, faculty, staff, students, and LGBTQ+ community members to celebrate. The Pride Center creates a safe environment where LGBTQIA+ students, staff, faculty, and allies can be their authentic selves, and feel welcomed. Services include academic/career/personal counseling, workshops, a computer lab, free supplies, an LGBTQ+ library, training and meeting space, along with referrals to community resources.



## In Spring 2022, Mesa Brewing achieved the long-awaited and historic moment

This past year, Mesa debuted their fermentation course and brewed their first batch of beer in the new brewing space. Mesa's Fermentation Management program is one of just a few in the nation dedicated to teaching the history of fermentation, the fundamentals of brewing, distilling, and wine making. With a foundation in business, customer service, and standards of hospitality, the program provides the qualifications to start a small business or assume a leadership role in an established company. After completing the program, students are closer to a career in the brewing world.





# INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The Institutional Effectiveness and Research offices provide college-wide leadership and support for the infrastructure and integration of the College's institutional effectiveness efforts. IE promotes a commitment to equity, excellence, and continuous quality improvement through college-wide planning, research, program review, outcomes assessment, resource allocation, and accreditation. **2022-23 significant accomplishments:**

## ➞ CLASSIFIED APPRECIATION WEEK RECOGNITION:

Our team received the 2023 Outstanding Department of the Year Award

## ➞ ACCREDITATION:

Successfully began the Institution Self-Evaluation Report

## ➞ GOVERNMENT 101:

Developed a guideline for the committee, aimed at establishing a shared understanding of the committee's purpose, structure, and responsibilities.

## ➞ DOCUMENTATION:

Piloted project management and productivity tools to enable team members to document and share office processes and project procedures

## ➞ PROGRAM REVIEW/ OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT:

Working on implementing the new Nuventive Platform for Program Review

## ➞ HSI (HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION) INITIATIVES:

Supported new HSI programs under the HSI STEM E<sup>3</sup> grant, such as Path to STEM Success and Accelerated Chemistry Project

## ➞ AANAPISI (ASIAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER-SERVING INSTITUTION) SURVEY:

Conducted the Mesa (AAPI) Student Experience Survey, gathering valuable insights on experiences, engagement, services, and perceptions of AAPI students. Strong Workforce Faculty Institute:

Supported the Strong Workforce Faculty Institute, contributing data, professional learning, and project management support with a focus on equity.

## ➞ NEW CLASSIFIED INSTITUTE:

Supported the creation and implementation of the New Classified Institute

## ➞ NEW ENTERPRISE DATA WAREHOUSE:

Collaborated with the District's Institutional Effectiveness & Research in developing a new enterprise data warehouse.

## ➞ ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY SURVEY:

Conducted a survey to gather actionable data for the development of Mesa College's Climate Action Plan and other sustainability initiatives aligned with the Roadmap to Mesa2030.

## ➞ TUTORING DATA ANALYSIS:

Utilized the Tutoring and Equity Data Dashboard to highlight the role of tutoring in closing the equity gaps.

## ➞ STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT:

Provided leadership support to the Strategic Enrollment Management Taskforce.

## ➞ LISTENING AND LEARNING TOUR:

Supported the President's Office by capturing feedback and tying themes to the Mesa2030 roadmap and goals

# MESA2030

The Mesa2030 Comprehensive Master Plan continues to drive our Educational and Facilities vision. Mesa2030 sets the long-term goals and the Roadmap to Mesa2030 identifies priorities and strategic objectives. Via our annual Program Review, Mesa showcased how individual programs and departments connect their work to the Strategic Objectives and Mesa2030 Goals.

During the 2022-23 academic year, Mesa College supported and developed systems to implement Mesa2023 strategic objectives, track progress, and measure efficacy.

- Created Mesa2030 Facilities Planning Task Force to be at the forefront of development of new instructional and student support spaces on campus.
- The Committee for Diversity, Action, Inclusion, and Equity (CDAIE) created a Mesa College Land Acknowledgement and a DEIA Discussion Guide to increase conversation and awareness opportunities.
- New partnership pathways were established to engage incoming students with tools for career and university transfer success, including one award in Information Communication Technology Foundations that gives high school students the opportunity to earn a 13-unit Mesa College certificate.
- Approved a Climate Action Plan to reduce Mesa College's carbon footprint, focusing on climate literacy and student action, and mitigation of Mesa's impact on climate change.
- Budget and Allocation Recommendation Committee (BARC) increased discussion/ learning regarding Accreditation Standard III Resources, SDCCD Preliminary Budget, and the Governor's Budget Revisions.
- Began compiling the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) in conjunction with campus stakeholders and the District
- Supported the LOFT in Professional Learning offerings with a focus on race consciousness, cultural relevance, and equity, through initiatives such as the Mesa Online Success Team, Curriculum Equity and Excellence Review, New Classified Institute, and New Faculty Institute.

**Mesa  
2030**

# We Are Mesa

## MISSION

San Diego Mesa College is a comprehensive community college committed to access, success, and equity. We honor those commitments as a diverse community of faculty, students, professional staff, and administrators who collaborate to foster scholarship, leadership, innovation, and excellence in an inclusive learning environment. By promoting student learning and achievement that leads to degrees and certificates, transfer, workforce training, and lifelong learning, Mesa empower our students to reach their educational goals and shape their future.

## VISION

To be the leading college of equity and excellence, educating students to shape the future.

## VALUES

- Access
- Accountability
- Diversity
- Equity
- Excellence
- Freedom of Expression
- Integrity
- Respect
- Scholarship
- Sustainability

### SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We, at San Diego Mesa College, acknowledge that the land we occupy is unceded territory of the Kumeyaay people, indigenous to this region from time immemorial. The Kumeyaay people continue to demonstrate strength in their ability to surmount generational trauma, which started with the injustices of colonization and continues to this day. The relationship of the Kumeyaay people with the land underlies their strong commitment to protect the land, preserve their heritage, and work for balance and harmony. This land acknowledgment is our commitment to honor the Kumeyaay people and to establish a relationship with them based on truth and mutual respect.



## San Diego Mesa College Leadership

Ashanti T. Hands, Ed.D., President

Isabel de Los Angeles O'Connor, Ph.D.,  
Vice President, Instruction

Larry T. Maxey II, Vice President, Student Services

Lorenze A. Legaspi, Vice President,  
Administrative Services

The San Diego Community College District includes City College, Mesa College, Miramar College and the College of Continuing Education. The SDCCD is governed by its Board of Trustees. No oral or written representation is binding on the San Diego Community College District without the express approval of the Board of Trustees.

**San Diego Community College District Board of Trustees:** Geysil Arroyo, Mary Graham, Craig Milgrim, Bernie Rhinerson, Maria Nieto Senour, Ph.D.

Gregory A. Smith, Acting Chancellor

The San Diego Mesa College Annual Report can be viewed online at [sdmesa.edu/newsroom](http://sdmesa.edu/newsroom).

To request a printed copy, please email [mesacommunications@sdccd.edu](mailto:mesacommunications@sdccd.edu).

**Published by:** San Diego Mesa College,  
Office of Communications

**Editor:** Jennifer Nichols Kearns, M.S.

**Editorial Assistants:** Ashley Atkinson,  
Alexis Groves, Valerie Gomez, Noah  
Lacsina, and Saisha Banks

**Design:** Amy Millard

**Photography:** Hai Duong, Anabel  
Pulido, Pablo Vela, Jennifer Nichols  
Kearns, Amy Millard

