



EMBRACING THE FUTURE

53rd Chicano Latina Graduation among 18 year-end celebrations

By SUSANA SERRANO, Multimedia Editor

Jesus Rolando Martinez, 57, felt ready to give up on school every week.

But Chicano Studies Professor Velma Calvario's encouragement kept him coming back to San Diego City College.

"Now I want to help high school kids finish high school successfully and also (students) at juvenile hall," said Martinez, a Chicano and behavioral studies graduate.

Martinez, who will be transferring to San Diego State University in the fall, was one of approximately 80 students celebrated at the Chicano Latina Graduation May 17.

It was one of 18 events held to celebrate the end of the academic year.

Danza Azteca dancer Mario Cuauhtlehcoc Aguilar spoke to the audience before performing "La Danza del Agua" as a blessing for the graduates.

"We want our young people to be proud and celebrate," Aguilar said. "Also, realize you just started helping our gente by getting an education."

The ceremony featured several speakers, including alumni and keynote



City's Cristal Conde, who graduates this spring with two associate degrees, hugs stepfather Miguel Solis after the Chicano Latina Graduation ceremony, May 17, 2024. Susana Serrano/City Times Media

speaker Miguel Castañeda, Chicano studies professor Octavio Garcia and City College President Ricky Shabazz.

"La Chona" played as graduates lined up to receive a sash resembling a Mexican zarape.

The outgoing students also had the opportunity to say a few words to their friends and families.

"My wife, the best is yet to come," psychology major David Acevedo said in Spanish.

The ceremony ended with "El Son de la Negra" playing while graduates clapped, thanking loved ones for their support.



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AN ASTRONAUT COMES HOME

Keynote speaker blazes a trail from City to space



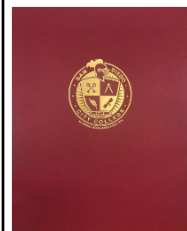
The first Mexican-born woman to travel to space said the time she spent at San Diego City College was the most pivotal in her life.

"I truly don't think I would be where I am if I hadn't gone to City College," Katia Echazarreta said. "That's where I found myself."

Echazarreta will be the keynote speaker at City's spring 2024 commencement ceremony.



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SDCCD Chancellor Greg Smith. SDCCD photo

NO LONGER ACTING, SMITH MOVES INTO TOP ROLE

Following a search process that started in June 2023, the San Diego Community College District's Board of Trustees announced the appointment of Acting Chancellor Greg Smith as its next chancellor at its December meeting. Smith will oversee California's second-largest community college district, including four colleges serving approximately 100,000 students. The chancellor-designate will manage a \$1 billion district budget facing contracting state revenue for the current fiscal year. The selection came after Smith's announcement in November as among three finalists for the position.

- Marco Guajardo



Cheyenne Jensen, a first-year nursing student at San Diego City College, works through a learning simulation in the V building, April 16, 2024. Samantha Griffen/City Times Media

NURSING B.S. IN THE WORKS? Pilot program could bring new 4-year degree to City

By SAMANTHA GRIFFEN, Multimedia Journalist

The San Diego Community College District Board of Trustees adopted resolutions that support Senate Bill 895 and Assembly Bill 2104 at its March board meeting.

These resolutions are for the Community Colleges Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program that authorizes select community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in nursing.

City College has the No. 1 ranked nursing program in the county with the highest pass rate on the nursing exam, according to nursingprogress.org, an independent educational resource for prospective nursing students.

The two bills would allow City College to offer a bachelor's degree in nursing at an affordable cost compared to other four-year university programs.

Budgeting for the program will be discussed at a later date by the SDCCD.

"We strongly want to advocate for this," SDCCD Chancellor Greg Smith said, "I'd appreciate the board's support."

This would be City College's second bachelor's degree offered.

Last year, City College opened applications for the cyber defense and analysis bachelor's degree program.

The first cohort begins this fall.

Mesa College created a health information management bachelor's degree in 2015.

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ASG PRESIDENT PASSES BATON

While Bethea reflects, Dalia Narly Ramirez waits in the wings

By BAILEY KOHNEN, News Editor

Diego Bethea will complete his final term as City College's Associated Student Government president. The two-term student trustee will hand the reins to Dalia Narly Ramirez at the end of the Spring 2024 semester.

Bethea sat down with City Times to reflect on his legacy.

"Finding balance" was a lesson Bethea said he would pass on to future ASG leaders.

"(Understand) that sometimes you may have to give up on something for just the time being so you can really focus on your school work or your personal life," Bethea said.

The relationships and personal growth he developed as ASG president are among his proudest accomplishment. The business major highlighted the mentoring, advice and encouragement he received from administrators across campus.

"I would hope the relationships between our different communities ... (is) a legacy that I hope to pass on," he said.



ASG President Diego Bethea waits to greet visitors at City College's Open House, April 20, 2023. Daniel Lasker/City Times Media

FAMILY AT THE FINISH LINE

LOVED ONES, SUPPORTERS AMONG ATTENDEES AT CAMPUS CEREMONIES, BANQUETS

A mother of two and an Army veteran, Evey Augustin was initially apprehensive about returning to college.

Augustin, 30, previously went to school to study nursing and worked in the field before enlisting.

She came to San Diego City College at the encouragement of her sister, Student Services Technician Edwidge Dupard.

“(By my) fourth semester, I’m like, I’m not stopping now,” said Augustin, who will be a sociology major at National University. “I’m going straight for my bachelor’s (degree).”

Augustin was among those honored at City’s Veterans Graduation May 14.

The communication major and her family were among the approximately 65 attendees, including students, families, faculty and City College counselors.

Augustin, who will open her own day-care later this summer, was among 30 military-affiliated students honored with veterans’ sashes at the celebration, including six Federal Work-Study Program students.

The celebration, hosted by Veterans Student Services, included live music by DJ Birdy Bird, food from Phil’s BBQ and a photo booth.

- Keila Menjivar Zamora



Evey Augustin, left, celebrates with, from left, daughters SaMiyah Augustin, 13, Raelynn Augustin, 4, and sister, Edwidge Dupard, May 14, 2024. Keila Menjivar Zamora/City Times Media

City’s athletes, staff honored at Knights Awards Dinner

While City College student-athlete Josephine “Phina” Bustos was “a little surprised” when she found out she would be receiving a James Swinson Scholar-Athlete award, in part for her 4.0 GPA and full schedule of classes while playing two sports, it was also the realization of a goal.

“I really wanted to get an achievement and I spent a lot of time

making sure that I never slacked, that I always put my academics first,” Bustos said. “I really wanted to prove to myself that I can do it and better my future.”

Those achievements, academic and in competition, of Bustos, her fellow student-athletes, coaches and training staff were celebrated during the annual Knights Award Dinner May 16 at the Marina Village Conference Center on Mission Bay.

The event included the recognition of over 40 individuals for achievements including scholar and graduating athletes, City Athletic Department Awards, and all-conference individual and team awards.



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- Vince Outlaw

3rd Lavender Graduation celebrates LGBTQ+ students’ success

Students and their loved ones gathered May 9 to participate in the 3rd annual Lavender Graduation.

The number of students honored at the event doubled from last year to 30.

While the graduation was a joyous celebration, Lavender Graduation originated as a way to fight back hate.

The event was created by a University of Michigan faculty member after she was denied entry to watch her child’s graduation because of her sexuality.

“Lavender Graduation is a space where LGBT folks can be recognized for their accomplishments, for our students, for our families,” Pride Hub Counselor Lucy Plascencia said.

- Samantha Griffen



Asia Raymond, left, chats with Lavender Ceremony graduate Monique Dunn. Samantha Griffen photo



Josephine Bustos, left, receives a scholar-athlete award from Dean Aaron Detty. Vince Outlaw photo



Queen Johnson, left, places a cord on Alice Xaymountry at the AAPI graduation. Irie Carballo photo



A YEAR IN REVIEW

By MARCO GUAJARDO AND KEILA MENJIVAR ZAMORA

The 2023-24 academic year at City College included two student-led walkouts and other Palestine solidarity events. City Times provided live coverage of the most recent walkout May 7.

The return of the Trans Excellence drag show April 3 featured returning

drag queens for International Trans Day of Visibility. The show took place at the Black Box Theater, making it bigger than last year.

The men's basketball team earned all-state honors while making an Elite Eight state tournament appearance. The Knights won the Pacific Coast Athletic Conference title. City Times provided play-by-play at home games.

In an effort to encourage male stu-

dents to enroll and complete academic programs at City College, Fresh Cutz barber shop opened on campus April 23. Services include free haircuts and counseling services. To qualify, students must bring a copy of a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Visit sdcitytimes.com or scan a QR code anywhere in this edition to read more.



ALL-CONFERENCE AWARDS

BASEBALL

- ALL-PCAC FIRST TEAM: ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ, ISAIAH HILKE, BOBBY PEREBZAK, JACOB PFITZNER

SOFTBALL

- ALL-PCAC SECOND TEAM: ARI MALLARI

MEN'S SOCCER

- PCAC GOAL KEEPER OF THE YEAR: SEBASTIAN GUILLEN

WOMEN'S SOCCER

- ALL-PCAC FIRST TEAM: MIA MARTINEZ

WOMEN'S TENNIS

- PCAC ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: SINAIA HASKAL
- ALL-PCAC FIRST TEAM: LUCIA FARMER, SINAIA HASKAL, JESSICA HOFFPAUIR, ANYA VILLANUEVA

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

- ALL-PCAC FIRST TEAM: DIANDRA JARA, ISABELLE DALTON

WOMEN'S BEACH VOLLEYBALL

- ALL-PCAC FIRST TEAM: SYDNEY BISHOP, ALLISON WYGAL

MEN'S TENNIS

- IEAC, SINGLES: PORTER NICCUM, JONATHAN PHAM

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

- ALL PCAC FIRST TEAM: CERINA NGUYEN, ELISSA ST. JULIEN

MEN'S BASKETBALL

- PCAC CHAMPION
- PCAC MVP: KJAY BRADLEY
- ALL-PCAC FIRST TEAM: KJAY BRADLEY, ALEX CRAWFORD, AL GREEN

BADMINTON

- SCAC STATE INDIVIDUAL QUALIFIERS, SINGLES: NICONA MARUYAMA, ISABELLA BEJARANO

