

# President's Board of Trustees Report

The President's Monthly Report to the Board of Trustees, Campus & Community

Celebrating 99 Years of Community, Growth & Transformation

March 2025

MARCH 2025 PRESIDENT'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

## SBVC Kicks Off Black History Month with Inspiring Keynote from Dr. Christopher Emdin

San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC) launched Black History Month on February 5, 2025, with an empowering keynote address by Dr. Christopher Emdin in the SBVC Auditorium. Hosted by the SBVC Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFSA), the event set the stage for a month of reflection, learning, and celebration.

Dr. Emdin, the Maxine Greene Chair for Distinguished Contributions to Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and Director of the Schupf Family IdeaLab at Skidmore College, captivated the audience with his dynamic insights on education, culture, and the power of change. His message resonated deeply, inspiring attendees to embrace the progress ahead.

"You can feel in the air that we're on the cusp of greatness... it's inevitable," Dr. Emdin shared, energizing the crowd with his vision of transformation and empowerment.

Dr. Emdin's extensive background in curriculum and teaching, including his tenure as the Robert Naslund Endowed Chair at the University of Southern California, has made him a leading voice in reimagining education and fostering cultural responsiveness in learning environments. His work continues to inspire students, educators, and communities to engage in meaningful dialogue and action.

The keynote address marked the beginning of a month filled with events dedicated to honoring Black history, achievements, and contributions.

SBVC remains committed to fostering inclusivity and understanding through education, and Dr. Emdin's address served as a powerful catalyst for this ongoing journey.



### GOAL 1

ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS.



### GOAL 2

BE A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE, & ANTI-RACIST INSTITUTION.



### GOAL 3

BE A LEADER & PARTNER IN ADDRESSING REGIONAL ISSUES.



### GOAL 4

ENSURE FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>March 14</b><br>8am | <b>Annual HS Counselor Conference</b><br>Business Conference Center (B-100) |
| <b>March 14</b><br>7pm | <b>Planetarium Show: Pi Night</b><br>Planetarium                            |
| <b>March 17-21</b>     | <b>SBVC Annual HBCU Tour</b><br>HBCUs in Georgia & Alabama                  |
| <b>March 19</b><br>2pm | <b>LGBTQIA+ Movie Night</b><br>Library Viewing Room                         |
| <b>March 26</b><br>6pm | <b>César Chávez Memorial Dinner</b><br>Business Conference Center (B-100)   |
| <b>March 26</b><br>3pm | <b>LA Building Farewell Ceremony</b><br>Liberal Arts Building Courtyard     |
| <b>April 4</b><br>9am  | <b>MCBS Inspire Success Brunch</b><br>Business Conference Center (B-100)    |

More Events:

[valleycollege.edu/calendar](https://valleycollege.edu/calendar)



# Umoja Enters Spring with 650% Program Growth

The Umoja program welcomed its newest cohort of students at the Spring 2025 Orientation, setting the stage for another semester of growth, connection, and achievement. Enrollment in the program grew by an impressive 650% this semester, reflecting the increasing recognition of Umoja's impact and support for students. Led by Fredrick Jones, alongside Umoja's dedicated counselors and key representatives from Financial Aid, incoming students received valuable insights into the program's highlights and resources. A special moment of the event was the recognition of outstanding students from the previous semester. Their dedication and success were celebrated, reinforcing Umoja's commitment to academic excellence and community support.

One of the exciting perks of being part of the Umoja program is the upcoming Historical Black College University (HBCU) Tour in March. During this tour, students will attend admission info sessions, campus tours, and gain insight into academic programs, extracurricular activities, and campus life at various HBCU campuses in Georgia and Alabama. Attending the HBCU tour is crucial for students as it provides firsthand exposure to historically Black institutions, allowing them to envision themselves in an environment that fosters academic excellence, cultural identity, and community support. Students have the opportunity to make informed decisions about their higher education paths while networking with faculty, staff, and peers who can support their academic and career aspirations.

With another promising semester ahead, Umoja students are set to embark on a journey filled with opportunities, support, and academic achievement.



GOAL 1: ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS.



## SBVC Planetarium Reopens for Public Shows

San Bernardino Valley College is excited to announce the grand reopening of the SBVC Planetarium for public shows. The highly anticipated return marks a significant milestone for the campus and local community, offering a revitalized and immersive experience for astronomy enthusiasts of all ages.

The planetarium has been equipped with a brand new, state-of-the-art projector, dramatically enhancing the visual quality and creating a fully immersive environment that brings the wonders of the universe to life. Audiences can now enjoy vivid depictions of celestial bodies, galactic formations, and space phenomena as never before.

"The upgraded technology truly transforms how visitors experience astronomy," said Tom Varden, Planetarium Specialist. "Our goal is to inspire curiosity and make science accessible and engaging for everyone."

The first public show took place on February 7, with additional showings scheduled throughout the semester. These shows offer an excellent opportunity for students, families, and community members to explore the mysteries of space right here on the SBVC campus.

The planetarium's reopening is part of SBVC's broader commitment to providing cutting-edge educational experiences in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields.

For a full schedule of upcoming shows, visit [www.valleycollege.edu/planetarium](http://www.valleycollege.edu/planetarium). Don't miss this opportunity to journey through the cosmos without leaving San Bernardino!



## SBVC Opens the Village: A New Hub for Student Support

This spring, San Bernardino Valley College proudly opened The Village, a new space designed to serve as a centralized hub for essential student support services and faculty offices. The Village was created to house programs and services that were previously located in the Liberal Arts building, providing students with easy access to a variety of resources in one convenient location.

Students can now find vital services in The Village, including the High Tech Center, Staff Resources Center, Adult Education, English as a Second Language (ESL), the Writing Center, Umoja, Honors, and the Dreamers Resource Center. By bringing these services together, The Village fosters a supportive environment that encourages academic success and student engagement.

Faculty offices for key departments are also located within The Village, providing students with greater opportunities to connect with instructors and receive academic guidance.

Whether students need tutoring, technology support, or help navigating their educational journey, The Village is designed to be a welcoming space where all Wolverines can thrive.



## SBVC Graduation Rates Up By 12% and Climbing



Recent data from the college's Student Equity Plan analysis shows significant progress in student completions, with the 2021-2022 student cohort already surpassing the previous year's graduation rate by 12%—despite still having time remaining to complete their programs.

Under the Vision Goal Completion metric, students are provided three academic years to graduate after starting at SBVC. For the 2021-2022 cohort, this timeline extends through Spring 2025. Impressively, early results indicate that these students are completing their programs at a higher rate than the previous cohort, underscoring SBVC's ongoing commitment to student success. Research Analyst Samantha Homier noted that while local rates are still improving, they align closely with statewide averages. "Even with time remaining, our students are achieving milestones earlier, which speaks to the effectiveness of SBVC's support services and academic programs," she said.

SBVC President Dr. Gilbert Contreras praised the achievement, highlighting the college's unwavering commitment to student success. "These improved graduation rates are a direct result of the hard work of our students and the dedication of our faculty and classified professionals. We are proud to see our efforts to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment pay off, and we will continue to focus on helping every student reach their goals."





# Campus Spotlight

## SBVC NextUp Students Win Prestigious Trade Scholarships



Three students from San Bernardino Valley College's NextUp program—Owen, Josiah, and Laura Jean—have been awarded the Brandsource Trade Scholarship, a prestigious national scholarship that provides up to \$12,000 over two years for foster youth pursuing trade certifications at two-year colleges or vocational schools.

Out of just five scholarships awarded nationwide, SBVC students claimed three of the spots, demonstrating both the determination of these students and the strength of the support services available through the NextUp program.

"This is a huge achievement for our students," said Evelyn Luna, NextUp Coordinator, who guided the students through the application process and helped them prepare for interviews. "They showcased professionalism, passion, and determination—qualities that the scholarship committee recognized immediately."

The NextUp program at SBVC provides dedicated support services for current and former foster youth, including academic counseling, transportation assistance, financial aid guidance, and resources to promote overall student success. These services proved vital in preparing the students for the rigorous application process.

"It was an incredible opportunity," said recipient Josiah, noting how the scholarship brings him closer to achieving his dream of working in the automotive industry. Laura Jean added, "I didn't expect to get this far, but with the support of the NextUp staff, I believed in myself."

The scholarship, offered in partnership with Foster Love, focuses on empowering foster youth to pursue stable, high-demand careers through trade programs—a pathway that can often be overlooked.

"I'm so proud of Owen, Josiah, and Laura Jean," said Dr. Gil Contreras, President of SBVC. "This accomplishment reflects their hard work and the incredible support of our dedicated NextUp team. At SBVC, we are committed to providing pathways that change lives, and this scholarship is proof of that commitment."



@sbvalleycollege

701 Mount Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92410