

# 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

May 2025

## SBVC Says Goodbye to Liberal Arts Building After 55 Years

Ahead of its scheduled demolition in August, the SBVC campus paid tribute to the Liberal Arts Building on March 26, celebrating its 55 years as a hub of learning, community and creativity.

The building has served generations of students since opening in 1970, and during his remarks, SBVC President Dr. Gilbert Contreras shared that visitors can "really feel a sense of the 1970s with the courtyard and in areas where the offices are located. It's so important to understand the psychology of space: how space creates community, how space can advance learning, and how space can help advance what we stand for at SBVC."

Students, alumni, and current and former professors came out in force to bid farewell to the building, with many using markers to write messages and sign their names on the walls. They also had a chance to take a sneak peek at the new Liberal Arts Building, putting on headsets and taking a virtual reality walkthrough developed by SBVC's Marketing Department.

The Liberal Arts Building was not just for academics. For 11 years, it was also home to the Dreamers Resource Center (DRC) and its iconic butterfly mural. "This center and the L.A. building has very much been the home for all undocumented students," DRC Counselor Evelyn Ruiz said to IE Community News. "It's a space that has become a hope, an opportunity, a place where students have found not just resources but community, empowerment, and resilience."



### 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

**April 24** 12pm **Botanical Gardens Grand Reopening**  
Gardens near HLS building

**April 25** 5:30pm **Spotlighting Our Success Awards 2025**  
Applied Technology Building

**April 25** 7pm **Planetarium Show**  
JPL Missions

**ends April 24** **Art Gallery Exhibit**  
From the Sasse Collection • [valleycollege.edu/artgallery](http://valleycollege.edu/artgallery)

**May 6** 6pm **Scholarship Awards Ceremony 2025**  
Auditorium

More Events:

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





# Senior Day 2025 Introduces Hundreds of Local High School Seniors to Life at SBVC



San Bernardino Valley College rolled out the welcome mat for the Class of Fall 2025 in April, hosting Senior Day 2025: an annual open-house that turns the 90-acre campus into an interactive showcase of academic programs, student services and campus life.

Throughout the morning, busloads of high-school seniors moved between information fairs, lab demonstrations and guided tours. Faculty members staffed program booths from the sciences to the arts, while peer ambassadors highlighted resources such as the Valley-Bound Commitment, EOPS, and the Valley 360° student-support center.

"Senior Day gives prospective students a tangible sense of belonging and possibility," SBVC President Dr. Gilbert Contreras said. "The moment they step on campus, they can see themselves succeeding here, and that changes futures." Planning for the outreach effort began months in advance under the direction of Outreach and Recruitment office, whose team coordinated logistics with dozens of academic departments and service units. Volunteers greeted visiting students with welcome bags.

## GOAL 1: ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS

# SBCCD Enters Historic Health Partnership with IEHP

The Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP), San Bernardino Community College District (SBCCD), and California Community Colleges has launched the IEHP College Care Program, a first-of-its-kind partnership to ensure students at SBVC and Crafton Hills College have affordable, quality health care.

The Inland Empire Health Plan Equitable Support Demonstration Project aims to enroll all eligible students in Medi-Cal, Covered California, and CalFresh; make it easier for them to receive health care and behavioral health services; and strengthen campus infrastructure to provide Medi-Cal services. When students have access to medical care and fresh food, it helps them stay healthy, motivated, focused on their studies, and more likely to graduate.

"This means healthier families, a stronger local economy, and a workforce ready to support our businesses," SBCCD Chancellor Dr. Diana Z. Rodriguez said. "It's about building a healthier, more vibrant Inland Empire, one student at a time."

This is a pilot program, and if successful will be replicated across California. To kick off the partnership, a signing ceremony was held on April 3 at Crafton Hills College, with SBVC President Dr. Gilbert Contreras among the leaders who participated.



## GOAL 3: BE A LEADER & PARTNER IN ADDRESSING REGIONAL ISSUES



# SBVC Earns 6th Year of Finish Line Grant Funding with \$150K Bonus for Student Achievement

SBVC has once again been recognized for its commitment to student success. Thanks to strong outcomes and diligent stewardship, the SBVC Foundation has secured a 6th year of funding through the Finish Line Scholars Program, bringing in an additional \$150,000 to support emergency scholarships for students on the path to graduation.

SBVC was one of the original community colleges selected in 2020 by the California Community Colleges Foundation to receive Finish Line funding, which provides direct financial support to help students overcome barriers and stay on track to complete their degrees. Over the last five years, the SBVC Foundation has received a total of \$750,000, distributing emergency micro-grants to hundreds of students in need.

Now, thanks to continued student achievement outcomes, SBVC has been awarded an additional round of funding, making it one of only a handful of colleges statewide to receive a sixth year of support.

## GOAL 1: ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS

## BSI Convening Jumpstarts Efforts for SBVC to Become Black-Serving Institution



SBVC has taken a decisive first step toward formal recognition as a Black-Serving Institution (BSI), a designation for California colleges that excel at providing Black students with the resources and support they need for academic success. In late March, more than 40 faculty, classified professionals, and managers packed SBVC's Student Lounge for the BSI Convening: an intensive discussion that kicked off the campus-wide push toward BSI status.

Conversations were co-facilitated by April Dale, Carmen Rodriguez, and Samantha Homier. A BSI designation can unlock targeted grant funding, professional development networks, and statewide visibility, all aimed at closing equity gaps. "SBVC has an opportunity to be a leader in California by showing what it looks like to be Black-student-centered," Dale said. "It isn't in competition with other groups but an expression of inclusive excellence."

## GOAL 2: BE A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE, & ANTI-RACIST INSTITUTION

## FTVM Class Project Wins BEA Festival Award

Accolades are coming in for Viviana Bivian's "Ghoul-Be-Gone," a video project she produced in the fall for her FTVM 130: Film and TV Production Basics class with Prof. Kevin Lyons. Bivian received the Best of Two-Year Colleges award during the Broadcast Educators Association (BEA) Annual Festival of Media Arts in April, a competition with 2,285 entries from more than 300 participating schools. Prof. Lyons and Prof. Lucas Cuny joined Bivian at the BEA Festival in Las Vegas, with her trip covered by the Film, Television, and Media Department.

Bivian, an FTVM major, wrote, directed, edited, and made graphics for "Ghoul-Be-Gone," a Halloween commercial promo. She worked on the project with several other students, including Alexander Salas, Faustino Gonzalez Enrique, Damian Romero, Letisha Williams, Juan Brambila, Caleb Gifford, Tushar Oza, and Rory Ferranto.





# Campus Spotlights

## From SBVC to Cal Poly Pomona: Savanah Howze's Journey in Chemical Engineering



For Savanah Howze, education has been a journey of exploration, perseverance, and growth. As a first-generation college student, her time at San Bernardino Valley College not only shaped her career aspirations but also provided invaluable experiences that set the foundation for her future in chemical engineering.

The Colton native's passion for science was sparked by a high school chemistry teacher, but it was at SBVC where she truly found her path. After meeting Prof. Sheri Lillard, "she encouraged me to explore physical chemistry and engineering," Howze said. "That guidance helped solidify my decision."

One of Howze's most rewarding experiences at SBVC was securing an internship in materials science, which led to an opportunity to present her research at the American Chemical Society (ACS) conference in Atlanta. "Presenting my research on a national stage was surreal," she said. "It gave me confidence and showed me what's possible in this field."

Now in her third and final year, Howze is set to graduate this spring with associate degrees in chemistry, math, and physics before transferring to Cal Poly Pomona, with aspirations of pursuing a Ph.D. in physical chemistry. Looking back, she is incredibly proud of how far she has come. "Being the first in my family to earn a college degree and transfer to a four-year university is huge," she said. "Sometimes I feel like I should be further along, but then I remind myself, I'm 21, and I'm about to earn a bachelor's degree. That's something to be proud of."