

# 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

February 2025

## "Right People. Right Place. Right Time." SBVC Highlights STEM Success at Spring 2025 Opening Day

San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC) kicked off the Spring 2025 semester on January 17th with a heartwarming Opening Day all-campus meeting that brought faculty, classified professionals and administrators together to reflect on the previous fall while energizing efforts for the conclusion of the college's 99th year.

The program opened with a land acknowledgment led by SBVC librarian Maria Notarangelo, recognizing that the college is located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Serrano People. A highlight reel showcased SBVC's accomplishments during the Fall 2024 semester, celebrating milestones in growth, innovation, and equity metrics. Additional highlights included the launch of the Wolverine Weekly, a substantial increase in student enrollment, and approval for SBVC's first bachelor's degree program in water resources management.

The program featured inspirational testimonials from four students who participated in the STEM-MESA program: Saira Gomez, Savannah Howze, Anthony Cordoba, and Cynthia De Los Santos. They shared powerful stories of perseverance and how SBVC and the STEM-MESA program has transformed their life trajectories.

President Contreras delivered an inspiring keynote centered on the theme of being "the right person, in the right place, at the right time." Reflecting on the college's 99 years of history, Dr. Contreras emphasized the unique contributions of every staff member in the vital roles they play in the success of SBVC. "Whether you are teaching, advising, or supporting our campus community, you have a unique contribution to make. In this season of renewal and opportunity, know that your work matters. Together, we can achieve remarkable things, and I can't wait to see what we'll accomplish as we step forward into the spring semester."

The event concluded with a vibrant cultural performance to honor the approaching Lunar New Year. The Teava Nui Dance Group presented a stunning Polynesian dance and music performance.

SBVC's Opening Day celebration set an uplifting tone for Spring 2025, showcasing the passion, teamwork, and commitment that define the SBVC community.



### 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

**Mar 4** 7pm  
**Wolverine Con 2025**  
Library Viewing Room

**Mar 6** 6pm  
**Applied Technology Building  
Ribboncutting Ceremony**

**Mar 27** 4pm  
**Liberal Arts Building  
Farewell Ceremony**

More Events:

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



# SBVC Marks Milestone Enrollment Growth Ahead of Centennial

San Bernardino Valley College is experiencing a significant surge in enrollment for the Spring 2025 semester, reinforcing the institution's commitment to accessibility and student success. As of January 2025, the college's fiscal year Full-Time Equivalent Student (FTES) totals exceeded the prior year's benchmarks by nearly 15%, with an increase of 546.34 FTES compared to the same date in Spring 2024.

This upward trajectory in enrollment has been evident since the start of the academic year. During the Summer 2024 session, student headcount grew by 7% compared to the previous year, with first-time students making up 28% of total enrollment. These figures highlight SBVC's crucial role in the community it serves, particularly among students embarking on their college journey for the first time.

Administrators attribute this sustained growth to a combination of factors, including expanded campus-wide efforts in enrollment and retention, innovative outreach strategies, and targeted marketing campaigns within the local community.

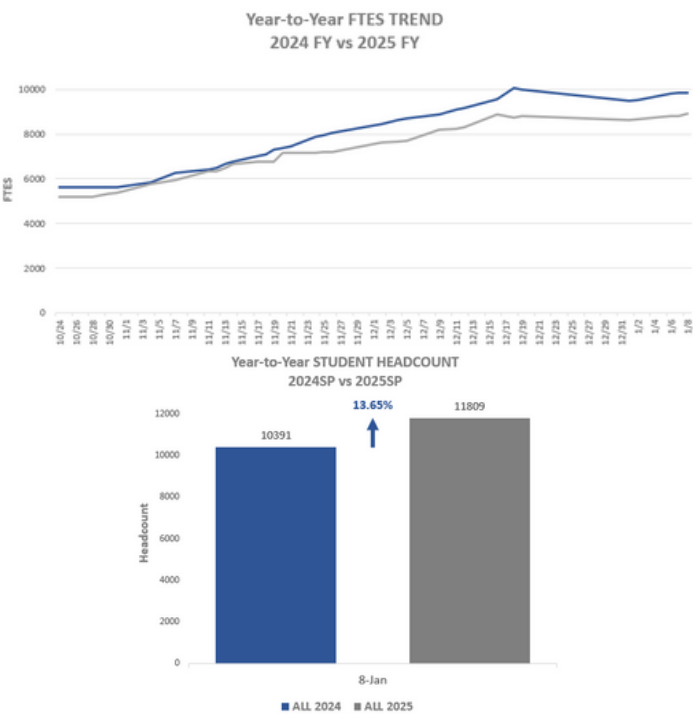
Dr. Gilbert Contreras, SBVC's 15th president, emphasized the significance of this achievement as the college moves toward its centennial celebration.

"This surge in enrollment is more than just a number—it represents lives being changed through education," said Dr. Contreras. "It's an indicator that place still matters in 2025 and a testament to the hard work of our faculty, classified professionals and management team, who are dedicated to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. As we prepare to celebrate 99 years of impact, we remain focused on expanding opportunities for every student who walks through our doors."

The remarkable growth in Spring 2025 enrollment sets a strong foundation for the college's milestone centennial year. With momentum building, SBVC is poised to continue transforming lives and strengthening its role as a vital educational hub in the community.



GOAL 1: ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS.



FEBRUARY 2025 PRESIDENT'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

## SBVC Nursing Program Celebrates Largest-Ever Graduating Class

During SBVC's Nurse Pinning Ceremony on December 13th, a record 59 graduates crossed the stage to receive their pins, prepared to leave the classroom and start making a difference in the lives of patients across the Inland Empire and globally.

Having this big of a graduating class — the largest in the program's history, with double the typical number of students — would not have been possible without the hard work of the faculty and former Associate Dean of Allied Health and Nursing Director, Yolanda Simental, who retired in June.

The ceremony took place in the SBVC Auditorium, which was packed with proud family and friends who filled every seat. A keynote speech was delivered by Simental, along with remarks from graduate Jaena Sparks. "Being chosen as the student speaker at the pinning ceremony was an incredible honor," Sparks said. "It felt like the culmination of years of hard work, late nights and endless challenges. I wanted to speak not just for myself, but for every graduate in the room."

The highlight of the evening was when the graduates received their pins, a symbol of their promotion from student to professional nurse. This was also the first time in SBVC history that students were able to choose who pinned them, with the honor going to relatives, spouses, friends, and professors.



GOAL 1: ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS.



# SBVC Named “Most Engaged Campus for Student Voting”

San Bernardino Valley College has been recognized as one of a select number of college campuses honored by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge as a Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting in 2024. The ALL IN Most Engaged Campuses designation is awarded to institutions demonstrating a strong commitment to voter participation.

SBVC got the ball rolling with SBVC Votes' first-ever sticker design contest, inviting students to showcase their creativity. To foster informed dialogue, SBVC hosted a virtual watch party for the US presidential debate, featuring moderators leading engaging discussions and providing live fact-checking to ensure a meaningful experience for attendees. In September, SBVC Votes Week featured a dynamic series of events that brought nearly 400 participants together to celebrate civic engagement. The main attraction was Rock the Vote, which drew over 345 attendees to enjoy music, food, and voter education activities. National Voter Registration Day received a special boost from Pizza to the Polls, which donated food to energize participants. The college also partnered with CalMatters to host an in-person Voter Education Workshop at KVCR, featuring former State Senator and current Executive Director of KVCR, Connie Leyva, who shared insights on California's propositions and the importance of voting. The momentum continued into October with National Voter Education Week, a series of events aimed to deepen students' understanding of the electoral process. The semester culminated in an Election Night Watch Party at KVCR, uniting the campus community to witness democracy in action.

Throughout the semester, SBVC Votes prioritized voter registration efforts, participating in the California University and College Ballot Bowl Competition. These efforts yielded impressive results, with 159 students registering to vote—a significant increase from the 27 registrations in 2022. Additionally, SBVC Votes launched a new website, [valleycollege.edu/sbvcvotes](http://valleycollege.edu/sbvcvotes), and a dedicated email address to enhance voter outreach. These initiatives were supported by generous funding, including \$750 from National Voter Registration Day, \$2,500 from the Arts, Lectures, & Diversity Committee, and \$10,000 from the First Year Experience program. SBVC Votes' achievements this semester demonstrate the college's commitment to fostering an informed and engaged student body. Through creativity, education, and active participation, SBVC continues to empower its community to make meaningful contributions to democracy.



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

## SBVC Adds 26 New Courses During 2024-2025 Academic Year



San Bernardino Valley College students now have more than two dozen new courses to choose from, with Introduction to Air Traffic Control, Film Cinematography, Advanced Karate, and Introduction to the Politics of Race and Gender among the 26 fresh courses being offered in the 2024-2025 academic year.

"SBVC is leading the way in developing innovative and impactful courses," Curriculum Coordinator Kay Dee Yarbrough said. "Through close collaboration with faculty and the Curriculum Committee, we ensure that every course is thoughtfully designed to meet the needs of our students. Our commitment to DEIAA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism and Accessibility) initiatives, relevance, and quality guarantees that the curriculum prepares students for success in their future academic, professional, and personal endeavors."

These exciting new offerings build on to the solid foundations already in place. Professor Kimberly Jefferson has "created a whole new education department that will allow students to obtain an Elementary Teacher Education Transfer Degree," with EDUC 200, Introduction to Elementary Education, the first course to go in effect in Fall 2024. In the architecture program, Professor Nicole Lambrou "updated her program to be more technologically savvy and environmentally friendly," Yarbrough said, and students can now take ARCH 106, Sustainability in the Built Environment.

Courses are developed and chosen through various processes, "all of which begin with a faculty member identifying the need," Yarbrough said. "This need may arise from analyzing workforce demands to ensure students gain the skills required for employment in growing industries or from recognizing gaps transferability."

Depending on the type, it can take up to 18 months to build and offer a course, with the faculty member tackling "a lot" of research, Yarbrough said, and once the course is developed, "the curriculum team steps in to ensure it complies with institutional policies, state and accreditation requirements, and any relevant regulations."





# Campus Spotlight

## Jaena Sparks Finds Fulfillment in Caring for Others



For Jaena Sparks '24, nursing is not just a job — it's a calling.

While working in a nursing home as a certified nursing assistant, she found the "experience of connecting with residents, providing care, and becoming part of their lives was incredibly fulfilling," Sparks said, adding that these "powerful" bonds created during the "most vulnerable moments" made it clear that nursing "was what I was meant to do."

The Fontana resident was drawn to San Bernardino Valley College's Nursing program because of its "excellent" reputation in the community. Her mom is a registered nurse (RN) who "always told me how hospitals highly regard SBVC nurses because of the strong foundation the program provides," Sparks said. "From day one, I could see that this was true."

She immediately found the faculty and staff members were "passionate about producing top-notch nurses," Sparks said, and their support and guidance was "instrumental in my success." She excelled in the program, graduating in December with honors, and was chosen as the student speaker for the Nursing graduation and pinning ceremony. In her remarks, Sparks reminded her classmates they were "not just graduates; we're future nurses with a deep sense of purpose."

In her spare time, Sparks enjoys crocheting and hanging out with her husband, Anders, and their Shih Tzu puppy, Nico. She is also preparing for the next step in her professional journey: taking the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) to become an RN. Her ultimate goal is to become an ICU nurse, but Sparks also wants to return to her roots and serve as a clinical instructor at SBVC.

"The Nursing program has had such a positive impact on me, and I would love to give back by guiding future nursing students the same way I was supported," she said.



@sbvalleycollege

701 Mount Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92410