



PRESIDENT'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

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



Summerfest Kicks Off SBVC's Centennial

San Bernardino Valley College launched its centennial year with a sparkling SummerFest on July 5, complete with fireworks, music from the San Bernardino Symphony, and family-oriented activities.

This year's celebration featured new attractions, including a Ferris wheel and an expanded kids' zone, along with crowd favorites like food trucks and live entertainment.

The event culminated in a symphonic concert and fireworks show at SBVC's stadium, themed "America the Beautiful: Dancing to the 80s." The symphony played a mix of '80s hits and patriotic classics, ending the evening with fireworks set to Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.



SBVC Jams for Juneteenth

Community members enjoyed food, music, and educational workshops at San Bernardino Valley College's Juneteenth Jam on June 18, welcomed to campus by VPSS Yvonne Gutierrez-Sandoval.

Hosted by Umoja, the Black Faculty and Staff Association, and the San Bernardino Community College District, the event included a special screening of the hit new movie *Sinners*; workshops from SBVC's IT department about the role of AI in higher education and Umoja on the significance of Juneteenth; live tunes from Higher Music & Media; and a meet and greet with SBVC mascot Blue on the Greek Theater lawn.

"We are proud to mark this historic moment in our nation's history with an annual campus celebration for the community," said SBVC President Gilbert Contreras. "It is a time to reflect on the legacy of resilience and resistance and to stand together in recognition of the progress made and the work that still remains."



Celebrating 100 Years: SBVC Debuts Centennial Hub and Campaign

San Bernardino Valley College has officially launched its centennial branding and web portal at valleycollege.edu/100, marking the start of a historic yearlong celebration. The portal showcases the college's 100-year legacy of education and service, featuring "100 Events for 100 Years," a centennial podcast series and documentary coming in the spring, and a growing archive of campus snapshots that highlight the spirit of the centennial experience.

The site will continue to evolve throughout the 2025-2026 academic year, reflecting both the proud history and forward momentum of SBVC. The centennial branding includes commemorative visuals, merchandise, and storytelling designed to engage students, alumni, and the broader community in honoring a century of transformation and impact.



SBVC Partners with VARP to Expand Access to Higher Education for Justice-Impacted Individuals

San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC) has launched a transformative partnership with VARP, Inc. (Veterans Alcohol Rehabilitation Program), a leading nonprofit provider of substance abuse recovery services, to expand college access for individuals impacted by the justice system.



Through this collaboration, SBVC's Rising Scholars program is working hand-in-hand with VARP to support prospective students with academic advising, enrollment assistance, and pathways into high-demand programs such as aviation, welding, and HVAC. The partnership creates a powerful bridge to opportunity for individuals navigating recovery and reentry.

"I am excited to see this partnership develop further as we continue to open doors and create pathways for every learner," said SBVC President Dr. Gilbert Contreras. "Together with VARP, we are opening doors, removing barriers, meeting people where they are and helping them rise."

The SBVC/VARP partnership features:

- Quarterly visits by SBVC representatives to VARP's facilities to meet directly with participants and share the message that college is within reach.
- Bimonthly campus tours for VARP consumers, giving prospective students an immersive look at academic programs, student services, and campus life.
- On-site presentations by SBVC staff at VARP's Gibson House facilities every two months, beginning in July.
- Training for VARP Discharge Counselors on key college application and enrollment processes, including the CCCApply application and FAFSA/Dream Act submissions.

On June 26, SBVC welcomed a cohort of prospective VARP students for its inaugural campus tour, where participants explored programs of interest and received college swag and refreshments. Many of VARP's staff and alumni are proud SBVC graduates.



New 'Coffee with the PEC' Series Promotes Campus Connection

Throughout the summer, President Contreras hosted a series of Coffee with the President's Executive Cabinet conversations, bringing together faculty, staff, and managers for informal discussions over coffee and light refreshments. These gatherings provided an open forum for colleagues to share concerns, offer feedback, and hear updates on key college initiatives.

Topics included fostering a deeper sense of community and belonging, enhancing campus safety protocols, and addressing recent concerns around ICE activity in the region. Attendees also discussed ideas for improving internal communication, strengthening student support systems, and celebrating the college's upcoming centennial. The summer series concluded with a sense of shared purpose and renewed momentum as the campus prepares for an historic 2025–2026 academic year.

From Cap and Gown to 'I Do'

On May 23, Mitzu and Michael Esther walked across the stage at San Bernardino Valley College's Commencement to receive their degrees. Then, just a few hours later, they stood together once more and got married. It was a day filled with celebration, joy, and the love of the five children who were their motivation on every step of the journey.

Mitzu and Michael met in 2010 while working at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, and their friendship grew into something more in 2018. Along the way, they made a decision that would change everything: they committed to going back to school and finishing what they had started years before.

"We were talking one day about our goals," Mitzu said. "We had both taken classes here and there, but we knew if we were going to build a better life, especially for our daughters, we had to go back and finish."

They made it work however they could. While one was working, the other was studying. Homework happened during nap time, in the car, or whenever they could grab a few minutes. Mitzu studied psychology and liberal arts, while Michael focused on administration of justice, history and philosophy. Their majors were different, but their reason was the same: they wanted something better for their family.

Once they received their graduation clearance earlier this year, "it just hit us," Mitzu said, and they decided to get married the same day as commencement. Their children, ranging in age from two to 19, witnessed both milestones. "Our biggest goal is to leave something meaningful for our kids," Michael said. "What better example than to show them what it looks like to not give up."



100 Centennial Events

AUG
02

SBVC Pilot Program Open House

Saturday, August 2 3-4pm

AUG
21

Den2Den Housing Pathways Kickoff

Thursday, August 21 12-1pm

AUG
22

Centennial Opening Ceremony

Friday, August 22 8-9am

AUG
22

Valleyball Home Opener

Friday, August 2 5-6pm

AUG
30

Alumni Classic Home Football Game

Saturday, August 30 6-7pm

