



# PRESIDENT'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

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

## SBVC Tops Off Student Services Building

San Bernardino Valley College celebrated the topping off of its Student Services Building March 16, five months after the groundbreaking.

"Our community will have access to people just like them, with the heart and talent to lead with love and to help each and every student with professionalism, compassion, and care every step of their educational journey," said SBVC President Dr. Gilbert J. Contreras.

Event attendees could sign the wall before it was closed up, and each person received a "boarding pass" for their group tour of the construction site.

The \$117 million, 102,691-square-foot building is replacing the 1970 Liberal Arts building and will be a one-stop shop for student resources. It will house classrooms; tutoring, assembly, and collaboration spaces; offices; a conference room; counseling and matriculation resources; and health and wellness services. Construction is slated to be finished in April 2027.

San Bernardino Community College District Chancellor Dr. Diana Z. Rodriguez told attendees she sees herself in the first-generation students on campus.

"I see their hope, I see the pressures that they have, I see how hard they're working to create a better life for themselves — not just for their families, for their entire community," she said.

When Rodriguez looks at the building, "I think about the students who are going to walk through these doors looking for help, looking for direction, maybe just having a few questions, or maybe just somebody who tells them they belong here — that they can do this," she said. "And that's exactly what they're going to find in this building."

Builders are seeking LEED Platinum certification, the highest rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. The facility has sustainability features like concrete ceilings, walls, and floors; vertical windows; easy access to public transportation; trees; and native landscaping.



# Faculty & Staff Get Moving for **Campus Wellness Challenge**

The 45-day “Valley Up: Every Move Counts” wellness challenge for faculty and staff launched with a high-energy campus walkathon on March 4.

The event started at the SBVC Stadium, where participants received a T-shirt, water bottle, towel, tote, and drawstring bag. The challenge runs through April 18, and those who signed up to track their activity through the Wellbeing+ app could win prizes.

“We were thrilled to see such a strong turnout for the Walk-A-Thon kickoff — it was great seeing so many members of our campus community come together to support wellness and connect with colleagues,” said Shyla Cobbett, Administrative Assistant III in Research, Planning, & Institutional Effectiveness. She spearheaded the challenge alongside Technology Support Specialist II Jeff Huynh.

The idea for Valley Up: Every Move Counts grew out of conversations held during last summer’s Valley Up the Mountain leadership summit, where attendees decided to prioritize wellness and staff connection. Seeing the plan come to life has been exciting, Cobbett said, and she hopes the event can be built upon in the future.

“Even after the challenge ends, we hope this encourages our campus community to continue moving together and supporting one another in building a lifetime of wellness,” Cobbett added.

Within the first week of the challenge, more than 180 people signed up to participate. Teams are competing to log the most steps, and the SBVC Foundation donated \$1,000 to the \$2,000 prize pool.



## **Black Art Expo** Spotlights Talented Local Artists



More than 20 artists from across the Inland Empire showcased their paintings, photography, sculptures, drawings, and mixed media works during the Black Art Expo March 7.

The San Bernardino Community College District Black Faculty and Staff Association hosted the event, which benefited its scholarship fund. All donors received a special shirt.

The art expo was held in San Bernardino Valley College's gym, and included a cocktail hour and reception, remarks from BFSA leaders, dinner by Ashley's Catering, and entertainment from Higher Music & Media Group.

## **Funding Doubled** For Finish Line Scholars Program

Funding for San Bernardino Valley College's Finish Line Scholars Program was increased to \$300,000 for 2026-2027, double the previous academic year's amount.

SBVC Foundation Executive Director Mike Layne said this boost recognizes the fact that more than 90% of SBVC Finish Line scholarship recipients have earned a degree or certificate from the college.

The program, which has been funded by California Community Colleges for seven years, supports students facing unexpected hardships and those who are transferring to a college or university or completing a certificate or degree.

This expanded support of SBVC aligns with the California Community Colleges system's Vision 2030 strategic plan. One of the outcomes of its Equity in Access goal is to increase with equity the number of community college students completing a certificate, associate degree, or baccalaureate degree by 30%.

## Wolverine Con 2026 Elevates Student Storytellers

The stars of tomorrow shined during Wolverine Con 2026, San Bernardino Valley College's annual celebration of filmmaking.

Held March 10-13, Wolverine Con included the International Student Film Festival, IE High School Film Competition, screenings of short films created during the 66 Hour Film Competition, workshops, a Meet the Pros networking reception, and red carpet opening night.

The International Student Film Festival was truly global, with films submitted from as far away as Australia. The Grand Jury Award went to the University of Monterrey's Patricio Azpeitia for *Endless Blue*, while SBVC student Taysia Galeano took home the 2-Year Award for *Echoes*.

SBVC students were well-represented at Wolverine Con, with several of their projects screened during the event. One exceptional film, *Edie and Iris*, was nominated for Best Picture at the annual College 48-Hour Film Competition, where it won Best Costumes and was runner-up for Cinematography.

Wolverine Con is organized by SBVC's Institute of Media Arts, with Film, Television, and Media Chair Lucas Cuny serving as director.

## Valley Up! SBVC Strengthens Pathways for Future Wolverines at Counselor Conference



Counselors from 27 local high schools learned about the advantages of a San Bernardino Valley College education at the counseling department's High School Counselors & Career Technicians Conference March 6.

"Your role is so important for our students' success," SBVC President Dr. Gilbert J. Contreras told attendees.

The high school counselors enjoyed food prepared by SBVC culinary arts students, answered trivia questions posed by Contreras, and listened to a faculty panel speak about trades like aeronautics, HVAC, and water supply technology. The school with the most representatives, Arroyo Valley, won \$500 for their ASB.

Dean of Counseling and Matriculation Marco Cota outlined the Valley Up! initiative and how its priorities serve incoming Wolverines and told attendees SBVC counselors hope "you'll be successful in opening doors for your students to come to Valley College."

Counseling staff members also spoke about the dual enrollment program, sharing that dual-enrolled high schoolers learn essential skills like time management, and the Dedicated Engagement to Empower Part-Timers (D.E.E.P.) program, which started in 2023.

"The goal is to make those students feel integrated, make them feel welcome, and they know where to go," D.E.E.P. Coordinator Ayanna Spivey said.

## The Arrowhead

### STATE WIDE COMPETITION



The Arrowhead Newspaper  
March 30, 1962

A particular piece of San Bernardino Valley College is marking its centennial along with the campus — the student newspaper.

While it has changed names, the publication now known as The Arrowhead has been published in some form for most of the past century.

"It's a good capture of who was here, and you also see student perspectives of major events," said English Associate Professor Edward Shea, who began advising the then-dormant Arrowhead in 2021.

"I was tasked with reviving it and had three students," he shared. "Luckily the department chair wanted to bring it back."

The Arrowhead is now a monthly magazine, and the revival of the publication has allowed Shea's students to explore journalism, including plumbing SBVC's newspaper archives. In a recent issue, The Arrowhead printed clippings of part articles related to Black history and an article about the many famous entertainers who performed at San Bernardino's Swing Auditorium.

One thing Shea stresses to students is that The Arrowhead will "become part of our campus and part of our history," and he hopes more Wolverines take his Introduction to Journalism course and join the SBVC newspaper's legacy.

## SBVC Theater Students Dazzle Judges at American College Theater Festival

San Bernardino Valley College theater arts students received the highest praise at this year's American College Theater Festival (ACTF), taking home a record eight awards.

Sixteen talented students attended the February event in Glendale, where they performed, attended workshops, gave presentations, watched shows, and networked. The group also made school history, with the most students ever cast in performances and most award finalists.

Caitlyn Tiszai was invited to participate in the festival thanks to her costume design, and ended up cast in a 10-minute play and receiving an award for being a Music Theater International (MTI) Dance finalist.

"I got to see my fellow SBVC students perform and present, and I got some wonderful feedback both as a performer and as a designer," she said. "Truly, I really think this conference helped solidify my new passion for costume design and encouraged me to pursue it in a career."

Jose Garces joined her as an MTI Dance finalist, and was also chosen to appear in the Theatre for Young Audiences Showcase. He went to his first festival last year, and this time around "I said yes to everything," Garces shared.

Five SBVC students competed in the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship Audition, including Ivan Carreon. He dove right into the action, auditioning for as many productions as possible and participating in multiple acting workshops. "They all taught me something that I was missing in my performances and now I have more versatility under my belt," he said.

Being part of the Theater Arts Department has been a gift, said Ana Perez, who served as Vice Director of Student Advocacy and Connection on the ACTF Student Advisory Board.

Prof. Melinda Fogle ensures that productions are "very student-driven," Perez said. "There are so many opportunities to learn and work. Valley gives you everything you need."

