



G R O S S M O N T C O L L E G E

President's Report to the Governing Board November 9, 2021

The Grossmont College Strategic Plan, which evolved from Grossmont College's Achieving the Dream goals, is focused on outreach, engagement, retention, and institutional capacity.

OUTREACH



The Fall Festival. Latinx Heritage Month. Filipino American History Month. The Fall Reading Series. Grossmont College has been a hive of activity for students, faculty, and classified professionals.

Filipino American History Month included a live event at Griffin Gate, "Samahan: Music & Dance" on October 26 with food sponsored by ASGC and provided by Tita's Kitchen. The ASGC also sponsored the Fall Festival, which was held October 21 in the Quad and which included fall-

themed music, games, food, and more. Latinx Heritage Month, which concluded on October 15, included several on-campus events, such as a performance by Mariachi Mi San Diego, a salsa concert with Manny Cepeda, and a Ballet Folklorico history and performance.

In addition to those events, the President's leadership team organized a Candy Get Down! outside Griffin Gate and an Ice Cream Social in the Quad, the latter featuring a fully-stocked ice cream truck that made a stop at GCCCD offices at the Grossmont College campus before pulling into the Quad.

ENGAGEMENT

Grossmont College is pulling out all the stops to keep the college community informed about the return to campus. Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than the new Griffin Weekly Reengagement with the Campus sessions every Tuesday afternoon.

The weekly sessions kicked off October 26 with nearly 100 people on Zoom. Presentations covered COVID-19 Health and Safety, Taking Care of You, a Student Enrollment and Registration Update, and Instructional Services Update, and a Student Services Update – all followed by breakout sessions in which small groups discussed topics such as how the pandemic is reshaping education and how we can

increase momentum as our students of color step out of the classroom at rates higher than we would like.

Breakout sessions were especially productive and response to the events has been overwhelmingly positive.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Dr. Ricardo Crespo has been teaching political science at Grossmont College for just a little more than two years but is already having a profound impact on the campus community. Crespo is the catalyst behind a trio of new political science courses that could potentially launch as early as next fall and is the force behind a Grossmont College *Journal of Politics* and a student research symposium.



“The fact that I can do what I love doing in a place as amazing as Grossmont College makes me a very lucky person,” said Crespo, whose higher education journey began as a community college student in Santa Maria.

Students give him high marks, calling him “knowledgeable,” “passionate about what he teaches,” and “best professor I’ve had at Grossmont thus far.”

Crespo’s journey to teaching began when he enrolled at Allan Hancock College, transferred to UC San Diego for a bachelor’s degree in political science, went to law school for a semester before switching gears and embarked on a master’s degree in international relations from the University of San Diego. Crespo earned his Ph.D. in political science from UC Riverside and began teaching at Grossmont College in 2019. His dissertation explored currency warfare and how states engage in counterfeiting and other forms of currency manipulation to spark hyperinflation and a resulting loss of faith in government as part of a coercive foreign policy or military strategy during armed conflicts.

He founded the Grossmont College *Journal of Politics* as an avenue for students to get their research published. He also launched a Grossmont College Student Research Symposium that debuted in May of 2021. In addition, Crespo is awaiting approval on three new courses for next fall: Introduction to Latin American Politics; Government and Politics of the Middle East; and American Foreign Policy.

“He’s an amazingly talented and energetic professor,” said Agustin Albarran, Dean of English/Social and Behavioral Sciences. “He could easily be at a four-year college or university, but he wants to teach. We’re lucky to have him.”

RETENTION

Dr. Pearl Lopez, Grossmont College Academic Senate President, EOPS/CARE Counselor, and educator extraordinaire, was presented with the inaugural Latinx Excellence Award at the concluding Latinx History Month event on October 15.

Said Grossmont College President Denise Whisenhunt: “It is my privilege to honor someone who has done so much for this college, someone who is the soul of this campus, and someone who is a model for our students.”

Dr. Lopez was praised by the Latinx Planning Committee for her efforts in organizing a hugely successful Latinx Heritage Month at the campus. “None of this could have happened without our fearless leader, Dr. Pearl Lopez,” said Director of Student Development Heriberto Vasquez.

