



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

President's Report to the Governing Board January 18, 2022

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

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY



Approximately 40 people attended a December 17 topping-out ceremony at Grossmont College's new science, math and career technology complex, marking the apex of the \$37.1 million construction project.

"This topping out illustrates how Grossmont College continues to grow in our community," said college President Denise Whisenhunt. "A symbol of growth

and newness -- this is what this ceremony is about."

The 59,000-square-foot structure, spread across twin buildings, will greatly expand classroom, lab and office spaces for programs and departments including Physical Geography and Oceanography, Human Geography and Social Sciences, Math and Geology. Targeted for completion in spring of 2023, the structure will also quadruple the space of the current Veterans Resource Center and include a one-stop center providing counseling, tutoring and social space for the college's student veteran population.

Chancellor Lynn Neault said the new center is a milestone project updating a cluster of aging buildings badly in need of renovation and reconstruction to accommodate new technology and other pressing student needs.

Phase 1 of the two-phased project was completed in spring 2020 and included the full renovation and replacement of Building 31, which now houses the Administration of Justice program and Child Development Center. “This is more than a building,” Neault said. “It will be a state-of-the-art facility for years to come. With it, we will be ready serve the constantly changing needs of our students.”

Governing Board President Brad Monroe thanked the taxpayers of East County for their many years of support of the college district, particularly for the passage of Proposition V, the \$398-million bond measure approved in 2012. Proposition V funding has enabled the new construction and remodeling taking place at both Grossmont and Cuyamaca colleges.

OUTREACH

“The higher you climb, the greater the obligation and duty to serve.”

That’s the message from Grossmont College counselor and Umoja Coordinator Dr. Jason Allen, whose journey took him from Morse High School in San Diego to Morehouse College, and the makings of a business career back in San Diego before earning his master’s degree at the University of San Diego and an Ed.D. in educational leadership at San Diego State University before landing at Grossmont. As the campus Umoja coordinator, Dr. Allen has gained the respect of his peers and the entire Grossmont College community for his dedication to serving students and doing all he can to ensure their success.



“I wasn’t the smartest kid in school, but I was determined,” he said. “whatever it took for me to succeed, I was going to do it.” A second-generation educator (his mother was a biology teacher and an uncle was an assistant superintendent), Dr. Allen has been adept at using his experiences as a tool to enrich others. “You have to rely on your supports,” he said. “You’ve got to let your students know that if they’re struggling, we’re here for you.”

The Umoja community, along with A2MEND, has been building stronger ties with the Athletics Department and last fall co-sponsored a presentation and conversation on striving for excellence through discipline, dedication, determination, teamwork, leadership, and respect. It

is now putting the finishing touches on an array of Black History Month events, beginning with a February 1 kickoff celebration with food, music, and fellowship in the Main Quad and concluding February 28 with a Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) College Fair in partnership with other community colleges in the region.

“The whole goal of the program I coordinate is to increase the graduation rates of our African-American and Black students,” he said. “I feel we’re making a difference, thanks to the support of our dean, Martha Clavelle, our Vice President, Dr. Marsha Gable, and our campus leadership team.

ENGAGEMENT

Spring Convocation at Grossmont College has been moved back online in the wake of rising COVID-19 cases caused by the Omicron and Delta variants. Spring Convocation, set for January 24, was being planned for the gym. Instead, Convocation will be offered remotely.

Among the Spring Convocation highlights will be the official launch of “Random 60,” a celebration of Grossmont College’s 60th anniversary with 60 random acts of kindness from members of the campus community during the coming semester.

Speaking of the spring semester, Grossmont College has planned a robust Week of Welcome with in-person activities, programming, and events. As part of Week of Welcome, Kitchens for Good will be arranging for 100 meals to be served on January 31 and February 3.

RETENTION

Grossmont College has secured a \$50,000 grant to build enrollment and retention in career education.



The Round 5 College-Based Marketing Grant, funded through the Regional Strong Workforce Program, will build off the Round 4 College-Based Marketing Project, which created and implemented a strategic digital marketing strategy aimed at increasing inquiries, application,

and enrollment in career education. The funds will be used for outdoor, newspaper, and digital advertising and must be spent by June 30.

In addition, Grossmont College has been notified it will be granted an additional \$100,000 through Round 6 of the Strong Workforce Program as early as February. Those dollars are targeted for retention strategies such as identifying and reaching out to students who have applied but not enrolled in the past two years; identifying students who are close to earning a degree or certificate and scheduling appointments with a career counselor; promoting lunch-and-learns with career speakers; hiring two, part-time outreach ambassadors to focus solely on promoting career education; and hiring a part-time, dedicated career education associate counselor for up to one year.

Round 6 dollars must be spent from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. The regional investment is designed to increase student awareness, recruitment, retention, and completions at community colleges in San Diego and Imperial counties, with the long-term impact of increasing student employment and reducing the middle-skills jobs gap in the region.