



NEWS RELEASE

Santiago Canyon College Reports Record Enrollment Gains

March 27, 2023

At a time when most community colleges are grappling with declining enrollments, Santiago Canyon College (SCC) is reporting unprecedented growth. Between Spring 2022 and the current Spring 2023 semester, full-time equivalent student enrollment at the college has increased by more than 12.5% in credit programs and more than 9.7% in noncredit programs. In noncredit programs, the college is currently serving an additional 1029 students this spring semester compared to the prior spring semester which represents a growth of 19.4%. Officials anticipate that the upward trajectory will continue into Summer and Fall 2023 terms.

SCC's growth during a time of decline has not gone unnoticed. In 2023 alone, the college was ranked 11th out of 116, as one of the best community colleges in California by Intelligent.com. Additionally, SCC was nationally ranked in the top 1% of U.S. community colleges, and received gold-level accolades as a Military Friendly® college. With its finger on the pulse of community and student needs, this award-winning college was planning and preparing for the next generation of students, even before the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic took hold. This foresight launched what would become a momentous change in how SCC serves its community and students, both strategically and academically.

About two years before the pandemic, Santiago Canyon College, SCC's Division of Continuing Education, and SCC's Department of Distance Education had begun transitioning several credit classes to online modalities. Along with those classes was a single, noncredit, Continuing Education life-skills class. This critical test proved that online Continuing Education classes could be as effective and practical as in-person classes. With this successful introduction, Continuing Education started developing more distance education learning courses. At the onset of the pandemic, the college was poised to pivot to online instruction, providing both credit and noncredit students with robust remote learning options. A mere two days after state-mandated lockdowns, SCC had transitioned to fully online classes, resulting in no lost learning hours for students. As a result, SCC's ability to continue offering online Continuing Education classes through the pandemic paved the way for post-pandemic growth.

In addition to SCCs' agility in distance education, novel approaches by division deans, department chairs, Admissions and Records, and Student Services have intensified the effectiveness of college outreach. One such example is SCC's personal approach of calling part-time students and students not currently registered in classes. This has resulted in many students who may have stopped out re-enroll or increase their part-time load to full-time status, taking advantage of the college's Cash-for-Credit program, thereby decreasing their time to degree.

"Santiago Canyon College is well on its way to becoming a mid-size college. Our BHAG 'big hairy audacious goal' is to grow our full-time equivalent student enrollment by 6% year over year" said Dr. Jeannie G. Kim, SCC's president. "To facilitate this growth SCC is engaging our entire campus and the broader community in developing both credit and noncredit programs that meet our regional workforce development needs, including areas such as precision medicine, big data analytics, and social media while simultaneously creating direct and guaranteed transfer pathways to institutions such as UCLA, UCI, UC Berkely, CSU Fullerton, Chapman University, and HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges & Universities)." [SL1]