



# President's Report to the SMCCCD Board of Trustees

President Michael Claire ~ June 28, 2017

## Inside...

Another Successful Commencement .....	1
CSM Architecture Students Build Parklets in Downtown San Mateo .....	3
Erica Vong wins CCCAA Athlete of the Month .....	4
Umoja Celebration .....	4
Transfer Tribute: A Night of Reflection and Inspiration .....	5
MANA Ceremony Fills CSM Theatre .....	6
City of San Mateo Employee Appreciation Lunch .....	7

## Another Successful Commencement



CSM held its 95th Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 26. It was an evening full of palpable excitement as graduates celebrated their academic achievements with family and friends. Some notable highlights include:

- 251 graduates participated in the ceremony
- 865 associate degrees awarded
- 1,143 two-year career and technical certificates awarded
- 2,008 total degrees and certificates awarded
- 30 international students from 13 countries earned degrees, 23 with honors

The Commencement Speaker was Ambassador Jeffrey D. Levine (retired), a CSM alumnus and the former United States Ambassador to Estonia. Levine holds bachelor's degree in journalism from Humboldt State and a master's degree in resource strategy from the National Defense University in Washington DC.

CSM celebrated seven Summa Cum Laude Graduates for 2017: Neel Ajit Joshi, Ludmila Stroganoff, Daniel Lincoln Wallace, Scarlett Wilson, Brian Israel Aguillar Bastidas, Brian Edward Lao and Lai Man Pun.

Each year, CSM honors a few select students to receive the Allan R. Brown Outstanding Student Service Award. This year's recipients include Celeni Cano, Laurie Chin, Luis Hernandez, Oscar Herrera Hernandez, Stephen McReynolds and Colby Riley. (Photo by Gino De Grandis) ■

College of San Mateo

# ONE WEEK AGO...

over 2,000 degrees and certificates were awarded at CSM's 95<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony.



Since 1922, CSM has provided high-quality education to students looking to transfer, earn a degree or enhance their skills. We invite you to learn how CSM can help you reach your goals.

*Summer session begins June 12. Fall semester begins August 16.*

**[collegeofsanmateo.edu](http://collegeofsanmateo.edu)**

## College of San Mateo

One week after commencement, this full-page ad ran in the *San Mateo Daily Journal* highlighting the achievements of our students and inviting prospective students to learn more about CSM. ■

## CSM Architecture Students Complete Design-Build Spring Project in Downtown San Mateo



In response to a request and with funding by the City of San Mateo, two CSM architecture student teams designed and built parklets in front of the downtown restaurants Pausa and 31st Union.

If you stroll through downtown San Mateo in June, you can experience the parklets at 223 E 4th Avenue (in front of Pausa) and at the corner of South Ellsworth and Baldwin (in front of 31st Union). The parklets were designed and constructed by CSM architecture students as the spring Architecture 680 design/build project. Students worked with the city and restaurant owners to develop designs that met the needs of the community and downtown businesses. The project was completed under the direction of Arch 680 instructor Alena Reyes and architecture lead faculty John Lucchesi. (Feature and photos submitted by Laura Demsetz.) ■



## Erica Vong wins CCCAA Athlete of the Month (April)



Four swimming titles for CSM's Erica Vong resulted in more honors for the outstanding student-athlete when she was named the CCCAA/CCCSIA Athlete of the Month.

Vong kept rewriting the Coast Conference women's swim record book with her performances this season. At the April Coast Conference Championships, the standout scored gold medals in the 200-yard individual medley, 100 backstroke, and 200 backstroke as well as helping CSM win the 200 freestyle and 400 medley relays. She aided the 200 medley and 400 freestyle relay squads to silver medals.

Vong broke the 200 backstroke record and two conference relay standards at the Coast finals.

She was voted Coast Swimmer of the Year. Vong is a 4.0 student-athlete, an economics major and dean's list member, is part of the CSM Alpha Gamma Sigma Honor Society, and made the CCCAA Academic All-State Team. She capped her career in May at the CCCAA Championships where she set two state meet records, won the 100, 200 backstroke and 200 IM titles and helped CSM win its first-ever relay gold in the 200 medley relay. She was named State Swimmer of the Year. ■

## Umoja Celebration—A Wonderful Experience

CSM's Umoja Program, a learning community that focuses on the African American experience through the study of culture, history, literature, and identity celebrated the achievements of its third cohort and the program's 2017 graduates. On May 23rd, the Bayview Dining Room was packed with Umoja students, their families, faculty, staff, and administrators to honor the 22 cohort students and the 15 graduates. The program's graduating students are transferring to universities including CSU East Bay, San Francisco State University, the University of Oregon, and Columbia University. We also had several dynamic and inspirational speakers. We welcomed back Umoja alumna Taylor Tang, who has just finished her bachelor's degree at San Francisco State and who was just accepted to USF Law, to speak about the foundation Umoja provided after she transferred. Deajah Nunn, a member of the first cohort and 2017 graduate, spoke about the inclusiveness she felt at CSM as a result of Umoja and how that support helped her excel academically. A third cohort member,



Christina Navarro, reflected on the community that her classmates had built over the year. Finally, we were honored to have NAACP Coastal Area Director Dan Daniels, Sr. as our keynote speaker. He challenged our students to fight injustice and to use their voices and brilliance to stand up for those who cannot.

We are particularly proud of the third Umoja cohort, who raised the bar for activism and engagement for all future Umoja students. In addition to the English and Ethnic Studies classes that these students take as part of the program, they attended two leadership conferences, participated in field trips to the De Young Museum and Sugarloaf Mountain, and guided the work of the Umoja Club/Black Student Union. Furthermore, the Umoja Club/BSU held a supplies drive for the homeless, organized this year's very successful Black History Month, and partnered with Puente for the Dia de los Muertos celebration. (Submitted by Jeramy Wallace.) ■

## Transfer Tribute: A Night of Reflection & Inspiration



On the eve of Commencement, the campus community came together to celebrate the achievements and journeys of CSM's transferring students in the fifth annual Transfer Tribute. The event included great conversations, delicious food, and dynamic speakers, which featured students Laurie Chen and MANA's Walter Manuofetoa along with faculty speakers Martin Bednarek and biology professors Paul Hankamp



and Ellen Young. Attendees were also serenaded throughout the event by the CSM Jazz Trio and the MANA music group's special performance, "Sounds of the Ocean." During the last part of the celebration, students had an opportunity to reflect on their time at CSM during the open mic.

This year's transferring class will be representing CSM at a range of UCs, CSUs, private schools, and out-of-state public schools, including Stanford, UCLA, and Syracuse, among others. We are very proud of our transferring students and we wish them the best in the next part of their academic journeys. ■

## MANA Ceremony Fills CSM Theatre to Capacity



On Tuesday, May 23, CSM President Mike Claire sat alongside Tongan Consul General Sela Tukia, Samoan Dignitary Manufou Anoa'i, and SMCCCD Trustee Maurice Goodman as they collectively celebrated in the final steering of this year's canoe of 2017 MANA Spring Graduates. *Vakatasi: Navigating As One* illuminated the theater stage as over five hundred people found their place behind the seats of honor, awaiting for their graduates. As the velvet curtains dropped and the house lights dimmed, the audience was met with surprise video footage which guided them through each keynote speech and into the recognition ceremony. The spontaneous theater production, strategically designed by the MANA Planning Committee, enhanced each student's story while elevating the vision and mission of MANA: Using the strength of the Ocean (Faith, Family and Culture) to increase the retention and transfer rates of Pacific Islanders in higher education.

And elevated it was.

The 2017 MANA Graduation and Student Recognition Ceremony brilliantly blended two integral components into one—education and culture. The MANA students celebrated achievement in both Tongan and Samoan practice, performing a Tongan ma'ulu'ulu and a Samoan sasa number. Further into the night, MANA Program Coordinator Finau Tovo graced the stage to honor Dr. Henry Villareal, dean of enrollment and Jennifer Hughes, vice president of student services, for their years of service and dedication to the MANA community and the wider College of San Mateo body. The ceremony ended in deep gratitude to the families, staff, and the continued journey of yet undiscovered enlightenment that remains for all thirty MANA students. (Submitted by Fi Tovo.) ■



## City of San Mateo Employee Appreciation Lunch Their Best Ever



On April 26, the City of San Mateo honored its administrative staff for National Administrative Professionals Day at CSM's Observatory. Themed "You're Out of This World," staff were treated to use of the observatory, solar telescope and planetarium.

The City of San Mateo was enthusiastically thankful for CSM's help in making the event such a wonderful one. They received praise from staff saying that the event was the best support staff celebration the City has ever hosted. People loved coming up to the College, experiencing the planetarium show and the observatory tour. Many staff are saying that they're already planning their next visit to CSM with family members.

City administration effusively thanked CSM's contribution to such a successful and enjoyable event, and wanted to thank all of the CSM students who volunteered. Casia Ravi, management analyst in the City Clerk's Office, reflected "The students exemplified so many wonderful qualities, including leadership and a spirit of service. Their enthusiasm definitely added to the wonderful spirit of the day."

The City of San Mateo representatives intend to continue to promote CSM's program and astronomy resources through their contacts and look forward to partner again in the future. (Photos courtesy of Casia Ravi.) ■



*San Mateo Fire and Police Chiefs,  
John Healy and Susan Manheimer.*