

SAN MATEO COUNTY
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT

Cañada College • College of San Mateo • Skyline College

Combined Report of the College Presidents





SMCCCD STUDENTS RALLY FOR FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



On September 22, in a ceremony held at Cañada College, students and leaders from throughout San Mateo County rallied in support of Senate Bill 893.



Written as a pilot program for San Mateo County, SB 893 would allow the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) to operate a program that will pay tuition and enrollment fees for students from underrepresented and

marginalized communities for the next five years. With the Governor's signing of the bill, SMCCCD is able to expand its free community college initiative throughout San Mateo County, which could allow all of its nearly 20,000 students to attend one of the District's three campuses at a reduced or possibly no cost.

The SMCCCD's Board of Trustees invested \$6.75 million into developing their initial *Free Community College Initiative*, and an additional \$6 million has been allocated in the District's 2022-23 budget to implement SB893. Through that investment, SMCCCD has been able to create a dual enrollment program with local high schools, book vouchers, and assists student with basic needs, including food, transportation, and health services.



OCTOBER BRINGS MANY ENRICHING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

October has brought many fun and culturally enriching events throughout the campus community, particularly for our students.

Cañada College celebrated [Latinx Heritage Month \(LHM\)](#) with workshops and events for students, faculty, staff and the broader Redwood City community to amplify Latinx voices and identities,

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as well as a space to come together. This included Cañada en la Comunidad: Narratives from Latinx Staff/Narrativos del personal Latinx where employees met with community members at the North Fair Oaks Library and shared stories and resources that Cañada College offers!



On October 7, the Fashion Department welcomed a huge crowd for a Garment Designer Show. The donor who shared her collection for the show is a student who had worked on Wall Street, traveled the world and needed such a wardrobe and it was her great pleasure to have people who love fashion enjoy these garments. Attendees could not believe they were seeing such beautiful garments from the top fashion houses in Milan, Paris, London and New York. It was a white glove occasion so that the 70 garments on display could be examined.



In addition, the Center for Student Life and Leadership Development hosted a number of events in October. Events included a celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day where participants learned about Native food ways (food sovereignty). Participants were able to try Native Hawaiian poi and Native bars from Wahpepah's Kitchen in Oakland. Student Life shared some of their favorite Indigenous culture children's books as well. The Center for Student Life and Leadership Development also hosted a campus-wide National Coming Out Day event on October 11. At the event, attendees learned about the important human right of coming out, how coming out happens in many stages, what different LGBTQ+ flags represent, and advice on how to be an ally and your authentic self. An incredible panel of students, staff, faculty, and administrators at Cañada College talked about their experiences coming out. The attendees left the event feeling incredibly grateful to the panelists for sharing their deeply emotional stories as attendees cheered, teared up and were validated to share their own coming out stories.



CAÑADA IN THE COMMUNITY

With Spring registration on the horizon, Cañadians were busy in the community, connecting with prospective students and promoting programs and student support services that are available at Cañada College! Cañada College Outreach team joined community partners College Advising Prep and Police Activity League (PAL) for College Night, an event that connected with nearly 150 families to make information about college accessible to our community. In addition, the Financial Aid team represented Cañada College at a collaborative Cash for College event at PAL in Redwood City. Financial Aid Director David Vera presented important information for families and helped them with their financial aid applications. Our Outreach team

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attended Copita Telemundo 48 Redwood City Soccer Festival, a wonderful community event where the team talked with many families. Cañadians also connected with nearly 400 people at their information table at the San Carlos Art & Wine Faire on October 8-9.



In partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank, Cañada College launched a free grocery distribution on campus on October 11. This event is open to students and the community and will provide clients with the opportunity to select the food they want. This weekly distribution will serve 200-250 families to start. Also this month, students from the Cañada Fashion and Middle College programs made 32 pillowcases for local children who are hospitalized with cancer as part of [Cases for Smiles](#). Not only did the students learn sewing techniques, they did it for a great cause!



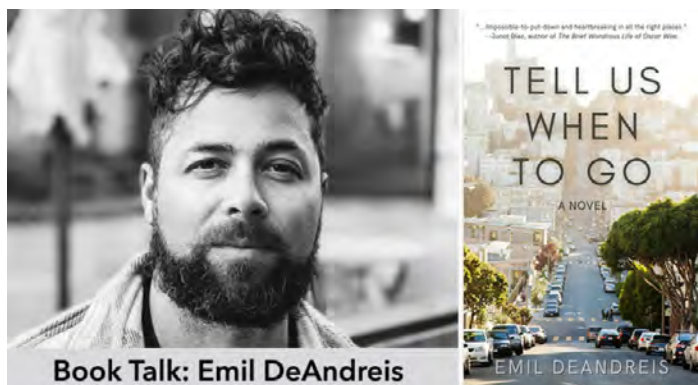
Lastly, on October 14, Cañada welcomed local non-profit organizations and educational institutions for a Community Open House, that showcased the new Kinesiology & Wellness

Building! Members of the Kinesiology, Athletics & Dance (KAD) Division, Athletics Center and Administrative Services team provided a tour of the Kinesiology & Wellness Building (Building 1) and shared partnership and facility rental opportunities available at Cañada College.



College of San Mateo

CSM ENGLISH FACULTY EMIL DEANDREIS PUBLISHES NEW NOVEL



Emil DeAndreis is a CSM English adjunct instructor and the author of *Tell Us When To Go*, a new novel about the lives and friendships that were changed, for better or for worse, by the San Francisco tech boom. He has two prior books, *Beyond Folly* and *Hard To Grip*, and has had fiction pieces in *StoryQuarterly*, and *The Barcelona Review*, among many other publications.

Emil has been teaching English at CSM for seven years. In early October, he gave a book talk on his new book as part of the CSM English Department's 2022-23 speaker series, *Craft & Criticism*, a monthly series of lectures and presentations ranging in topics from creative writing to literary criticism.



Tell Us When To Go explores how the latest tech boom has impacted the lives of Bay Area residents. When asked about his experience with impacted CSM students, Emil shared, "My students have had to move, or consolidate families into

crowded homes, or drop out to take on two jobs. But I think something less obvious, less itemizable, is the emotional toll. I feel like the influx of tech, and the money it brings in, and its general optics can leave vulnerable populations feeling alienated and intimidated as they are physically pushed out, and those impacts can be just as profound."

However, Emil also believes that CSM has solutions, sharing, "The resources and support available to students at CSM, both financial and emotional, are inspiring. From programs like the Promise Scholars Program, cohorts of which I've had the opportunity to teach through the [College 1](#) course, to cultural learning communities like Umoja, Puente, and Mana, which provide guidance and support not just academically but via financial aid. I love the different avenues CSM sets up for those whose path to success is hindered merely by the cost of living of the Bay Area."

CSM'S PROJECT CHANGE CELEBRATES HISTORIC STATE INVESTMENT



CSM Project Change student alumni panel.

College of San Mateo's Project Change Learning Community has positively transformed the lives of juvenile justice-impacted youth on the campus for many years. Project Change provides wrap-around student support services, direct access to postsecondary education for incarcerated youth, and in-person college instruction inside juvenile youth facilities. CSM's Project Change was the first community college-supported program of its kind in California, but it will no longer be the only one.

With the advocacy of local elected officials, including the SMCCCD Board of Trustees, and the hard work of the San

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Francisco-based national nonprofit legal advocacy group, The Youth Law Center (YLC), a monumental moment arrived this past summer. Governor Gavin Newsom committed ongoing annual funds of 15 million dollars in the California Budget to support the replication of CSM's Project Change across the state through the California Community College Chancellor's Office Rising Scholars Network.



CSM Project Change founder and former coordinator, Katie Bliss.

College of San Mateo and YLC celebrated this accomplishment on Tuesday, September 7, with an intimate event on campus. Speakers included former CSM English Professor and Project Change Coordinator Katie Bliss, CSM President Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza, and SMCCCD Trustee Maurice Goodman. Other speakers included critical community partners in the Rising Scholars Network, San Mateo County's Chief Probation Officer John Keene, and Nancy Magee, San Mateo County Office of Education's Superintendent.

The highlight of the event was the CSM Project Change alumni student panel. These incredible students shared their stories of being neglected by the criminal justice system at a very young age and the trauma they endured. These personal stories all had a very different ending from how they began, thanks to Project Change. The students credited Project Change with transforming their lives and starting them on a journey of self-

empowerment, and the countless opportunities investment in higher education can provide.



SKYLINE LIBRARY HOSTS EVENTS FOR BANNED BOOKS WEEK



On September 29, 2022, students, faculty, poets and writers came together at the Library for an international program about

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book banning and our freedoms of expression. Pia Walawalkar, Outreach and Equity Librarian for the College, explained the impetus for the program – the recent attack on Salman Rushdie by someone who had read only two pages of his famous novel, *The Satanic Verses*. She provided background on the Ayatollah Khomeini's 1989 fatwā calling for Rushdie's assassination and the resulting attacks on his life and those of his translators. She also spoke of the PEN international organization which helps to protect exiled writers living in danger around the world.

Speakers emphasized that in our democratic society all of our rights are connected, noting the Supreme Court's recent ban on our constitutional right to reproduction, and asking which rights might we lose next if we don't take action?

Students engaged with faculty to ask, "Who is responsible for book banning?" Language Arts instructor Rob Williams then continued, "When we think of banned books we often think about books in the U.S. by white writers." Attention on banned books has often excluded queer writers, writers of color, and international writers. Recently our nation's teachers (and curriculum) have also come under fire, especially around the teaching of critical race theory. We must continue to bring attention to this and fight back.

Six participants read from banned works they had selected and students had an opportunity to ask questions.

Devi Laskar, feminist poet, novelist and former journalist, author of the 2019 novel [The Atlas of Reds and Blues](#) and other works, joined the group by zoom, explaining that her writings have been inspired by Claudia Rankine's [Citizen: An American Lyric](#) and Sandra Cisneros' [The House on Mango Street](#), books she felt gave her permission to tackle the subjects of racism and misogyny and to "be a champion for people to write what they want." She read movingly from Rushdie's [The Satanic Verses](#) and Taslima Nasrin's [Lajja \(Shame\)](#), banned in Bangladesh, and of the fatwā against Nasrin. "People should be reading as much as they can... It's so unfair to these writers in particular and we need to call attention to that."

Faculty members Rachel Cunningham (Geography) and Jessica Silver-Sharp (Library) read passages from banned books they'd experienced as teenagers; Prof. Cunningham read from Stephen Chbosky's [The Perks of Being a Wallflower](#) (1999), commenting, "it always feels like an active rebellion to read banned books!"

Jessica read the opening passage of Ray Bradbury's [Fahrenheit 451](#) (1953).

World languages professor Luciana Castro, who grew up under a military dictatorship in Argentina and other countries, explained how this environment of repression made her "more prone to listen and pay attention to people who were less visible but needing to be leaving their mark in history." She introduced the group to Marielle Franco, politician, sociologist, feminist, socialist and human rights activist, who gave voice to Brazilians living in the favelas. Assassinated in 2018, Franco's books remain banned and largely untranslated. Prof. Castro shared Franco's words, "The roses of resistance are born in the asphalt. We receive roses, but we will be with our fists clenched speaking of our existence against the push and pull that affects our lives."

Aileen Cassinetto, author, poet and former poet laureate of San Mateo, introduced herself as "an immigrant writer who grew up during times of martial law in the Philippines." She recalled unprecedented human rights abuses there during the Marcos era, and spoke about how subsequent leaders (post-Marcos) altered history by revising textbooks and banning other books such that children today understand the times of repression as a "golden age" they were not.

Faculty member Susanne Schubert (Chemistry) who grew up in Germany spoke of times of repression in East Germany when many artists lived under house arrest. One such writer was poet, singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann. In both English and German, Prof. Schubert and her son Paul read Biermann's poem "Ermutigung" (Encouragement), a work written to a friend then under house arrest. The poem speaks of staying quiet, living in between the lines.

Students voiced excellent questions for the speakers. Cuban international student Yessica explained that in her native country, countless writers have been banned. She spoke of the famous Cuban poet Dulce María Loynaz (d. 1997) who despite being exiled within Cuba, continued to fight for freedom later in life. As many of Loynaz's poems remain untranslated, Yessica read "[Roses](#)" in Spanish and then translated the poem into English herself.

Professor Walawalkar concluded by reminding the gathering that while today we celebrate our freedom to read and speak

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out, if we aren't vigilant our rights can be taken away from us. "Perhaps it's actually our obligation to read. Maybe that's our quiet revolution."

Note: Book displays featuring banned books around the Library will remain in place through October 21. All members of the Skyline College community can check out library books; no library cards are required. You are also encouraged to donate a banned book to the Free Library box built by Professor Kaplan-Biegel's journalism students. You'll find it in the Library foyer by the glass wall display. More information is available here: bit.ly/WritersUnderAttack.

Article by Jessica Silver-Sharp

STRONG TURNOUT ON TRANSFER DAY 2022



We want to thank the entire Skyline College community for supporting Transfer Day and Alma Mater Day on October 6, 2022. The event included 35 colleges and universities and welcomed over 175 students. Students gained valuable information to inform their transfer planning while enjoying an event that included music, giveaways, and games. Students provided their feedback that expressed their gratitude for bringing back in-person interactions with admission professionals. Admission professionals also shared their enthusiasm about

the strong turnout and return to pre-pandemic levels of student engagement.

Fall is the primary transfer period for Skyline College applicants, and the event was scheduled to coincide with UC and CSU transfer application periods. This event supported students at different points of their journey. Transfer Day helps students who are just beginning at Skyline College by engaging them in transfer planning early. It supports continuing and returning students who are defining and committing to their transfer plans. It also supports students who will be applicants and will enroll into universities by Fall 2023.



Thank you to the entire Skyline Community for all the incredible support. We are grateful to the Facilities and Maintenance team for the setup. Thank you to the Public Safety department for parking arrangements. Thank you to the Outreach Department for all their support by providing staffing to support the event. Thank you to each of you that staffed and visited the event.

Article by Ernesto Hernandez and Alexandra Kaplan