



Commencement

Grossmont College hosted its 57th annual Commencement Ceremony on Thursday, June 7. More than 700 graduates and their families celebrated the momentous occasion that included a welcome by President Nabil Abu-Ghazaleh in a trio of languages -- Arabic, English and Spanish -- and student commencement speaker Kenda Willie, among other highlights. This year's ceremony also featured two large video screens designed to provide a better experience for the more than 2,000 guests in attendance. The ceremony was live-streamed and a recorded version of both the video of the ceremony and the pre-ceremony video that features student-submitted thank you videos are available online.

Grossmont College alumnus Richard German, a student diagnosed with cerebral palsy, graduated with an associate's degree in business after enrolling at the college 16 years ago. Ricky, as he's more widely known, was celebrated and featured in several news stories produced by local television stations. He also submitted a thank you video for the pre-ceremony video, thanking his Extended Opportunity Programs and Services counselors Pearl Lopez and Michael Perez, and Instructional Operations staff member Reyna Torriente.



Student of Note Awards Program

The annual Students of Note Awards Program was held May 18 in Bldg. 34. The event celebrated 30 students who overcame significant obstacles in pursuing their degree and/or certificate. The event included opening remarks from Dean of Counseling Martha Clavelle, students speaking to those in attendance about their achievement, and students singing "Lean on Me," among other highlights. Additionally, Cal Coast Credit Union generously donated funding to purchase regalia for Students of Note who chose to participate in the college's commencement ceremony.

Latinx Graduation Ceremony

This year, Grossmont College hosted its first-ever Latinx Graduation ceremony on May 24 in the Main Quad. Nearly 60 students who self-identified as Latino/a and their families attended the event that was presented in English and Spanish. The more than 400 attendees enjoyed remarks by EOPS Counselor Dr. Pearl Lopez and President Abu-Ghazaleh, music and refreshments, and graduates received a Latinx graduation packet that included a *sarape*-style regalia sash.

Pride Graduation

Additionally, the Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (SOGI) Club hosted its second annual Pride Graduation that celebrates students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex or asexual. The event, held May 25 in Griffin Gate, allowed students who may not be “out” to celebrate their graduation and/or transfer achievements in a safe, welcoming environment. Student graduates received sashes and leis, certificates with preferred names, and professional photography.

Outreach

Super Saturday

On June 2, Grossmont College hosted its second Super Saturday that provided additional onboarding to students who had already submitted an application. More than 250 students from 62 high schools completed additional onboarding steps, including orientation, advising and assessment, in order to qualify for priority registration for fall 2018. Super Saturday was coordinated by the Student Success and Support Program.

High School Outreach

On May 31, Grossmont College Outreach visited Helix High School to celebrate the more than 50 students who will enroll at Grossmont College this fall. The visit included individual photos of each student waving the college’s pennant to commemorate their decision to join Grossmont College. This was the first-ever celebration for community college-going students at Helix High School.



Additionally, Outreach, along with several other departments, visited El Capitan High School on May 29 to promote the Grossmont Cuyamaca College Promise. The event included remarks from President Abu-Ghazaleh, Vice President of Academic Affairs Katrina VanderWoude, Dean of Career Technical Education/Workforce Development Javier Ayala, and Outreach Coordinator Heriberto Vasquez. Representatives from career education programs, such as Administration of Justice, Business Office Technology, Computer Science and Information Systems, the Career Center and the Via Rapida program, among others, also shared information with students and their families.

Street Fair

Grossmont College Outreach staffed a booth at the Santee Street Fair on May 26 to promote the college. The fair, organized by the Santee Chamber of Commerce, is held in the heart of Santee and welcomes more than 30,000 attendees. Santee residents stopped by the booth to ask questions regarding the Grossmont Cuyamaca College Promise, learn about career education programs and fitness classes, and for giveaways featuring the college logo.



Grossmont College Day

Grossmont College hosted Grossmont College Day in conjunction with the East County Education Alliance on May 23. More than 250 students and two dozen chaperones from Valhalla, Monte Vista, Santana, Granite Hills, El Capitan and West Hills high schools attended the daylong event that included a campus tour, drone demonstration, motivational speech by alumnus Tazz Philips and much more.

Bike to Work Day

On May 17, Grossmont College participated in the countywide Bike to Work Day by hosting a pit stop near the CA-125 south on-ramp. Personnel from the college and Campus and Parking Services greeted cyclists, and provided healthy snacks and giveaways that promoted Bike to Work Day and Grossmont College.

California Apprenticeship Initiative Grant

Earlier this academic year, Grossmont College, in partnership with Ironworkers, Local 229, was awarded a California Apprenticeship Initiative grant to provide apprenticeship career exploration and pre-apprenticeship industry prep training. Two information sessions took place at Grossmont College's Career Center during the month of May. More than 20 students participants attended each information session. Following the sessions, more than 66 people have expressed interest in participating in the pre-apprenticeship program that will enroll future ironworkers in classes at Grossmont College.

Employer Appreciation Night

On May 31, the Division of Career Technical Education/Workforce Development hosted an Employer Appreciation Night to recognize and thank local employers. Eight community professionals were awarded a plaque for their partnership with Grossmont College and CTE. The more than 100 participants received a complimentary dinner as they networked and learned about the division's in-demand programs. CTE Dean Javier Ayala, Vice President of Academic Affairs Katrina VanderWoude and Chancellor Cindy Miles presented, among others.

BOT Mixer

Also in May, CTE hosted the Business Office Technology (BOT) Mixer to provide employment opportunities for BOT graduates. Students were able to network with 14 different employers and more than 20 students received job offers following the event. Participants received complimentary refreshments and Grossmont College giveaways. Employers also learned about other college student services, such as Career Services and their Job Readiness Training Academy certification program intended to prepare students with a series of soft-skills workshops.

Engagement

San Diego Pride Parade

Grossmont College, along with Cuyamaca College and District Services, will once again participate in the San Diego Pride Parade on July 14. The parade takes place between 11 a.m and 3 p.m., in Hillcrest. The San Diego Pride Parade is among the nation's largest, with more than 200,000 participants and attendees. To RSVP, contact Susan Berry at Grossmont College at ext. 7236 or Susan.Berry@gcccd.edu.

EOPS Summer Institute Program

On June 28, the EOPS Summer Institute Program will host Olivier Ndacyayisenga from Kigali, Rwanda. Ndacyayisenga is a survivor of the Rwandan genocide and will speak to EOPS students about resiliency and his experiences in East Africa. His presentation will take place from 3 - 5 p.m. in Griffin Gate. The event is free and open to the public, and is sponsored in part by the World Arts & Cultures Committee.

Student Athlete Eric De La Rosa

Grossmont College baseball outfielder Eric De La Rosa was named to the Pacific Association Southern California All-Region Second Team and Southern California Position Player of the Year. The selection process for this honor is led by the ABCA Pacific Association Division All-America Committee, which is chaired by Paul Moore of the California Community College Baseball Coaches Association. The Pacific Association Division is comprised of junior colleges from the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) and the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC).



Speech and Debate Team

On May 23, the Speech and Debate Team presented its final showcase of the year, featuring its award-winning speeches from this season. Twenty-one team members performed a group presentation, and seven students presented individual speeches and one debate. Approximately 70 guests attended the performance, including a first-time student attendee who was “blown away by the experience.” All funds raised at the event support the team’s travel to regional, state and national competitions. Congratulations to the team and advisor Communications Professor Roxanne Tuscany on the completion of another successful year of competition!

Retention

El Cajon Elks Lodge 1812

The El Cajon Elks Lodge 1812 visited Grossmont College on June 13 to support former foster youth. About eight students from Grossmont and Cuyamaca colleges Guardian Scholars programs attended the afternoon financial literacy workshop. The Elks Lodge generously donated lunch and gift cards to Barnes & Noble and Albertsons to each student attendee. This is the first year the event has been hosted at Grossmont College. The Elks Lodge has previously partnered with Cuyamaca College on this event. Guardian Scholars provides counseling, financial aid and other support services to former and current foster youth.

De-Stress Fest

The week before Finals, Grossmont College hosted De-Stress Fest, a week of events designed to help students manage the stress of their upcoming final exams. This year’s event featured free healthy snacks, adult coloring and art sessions, guided meditation, chair massages, therapy dogs, mortarboard decorating for graduating students, and much more. The event was organized by Student Affairs.