

# GETTING TO KNOW SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE

## Southwestern College History

The Southwestern Community College District, located south of San Diego and extending to the U.S.-Mexico border, is one of 72 community college districts in the California Community College system. It serves as the primary source of public higher education for approximately 400,000 residents of the South San Diego County area including the communities of Bonita, Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, National City, Nestor, Otay Mesa, Palm City, San Ysidro and Sunnyside.

The College began offering classes to 1,657 students in 1961, with temporary quarters at Chula Vista High School. Groundbreaking for the present 156-acre Chula Vista campus was held in 1963; by September 1964, initial construction was completed and classes were being held at the new campus on the corner of Otay Lakes Road and H Street in Chula Vista.

In 1988, Southwestern College established its Higher Education Center at San Ysidro on the memorial site of the McDonalds tragedy. The College again expanded its off-campus locations in 1998 by establishing the Higher Education Center at National City. A new Higher Educational Center at Otay Mesa opened its doors in 2007 as a regional center for educational training and development. In 2009, a new state-of-the-art facility replaced the previous San Ysidro site to serve its students and the community.

In addition to its centers, Southwestern College also provides off-campus classes at several extension sites throughout the District and operates an Aquatic Center in Coronado in conjunction with the California Department of Boating and Waterways and the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Current enrollment—at all locations—exceeds 20,000 students. More than a half-million students have attended Southwestern College since its inception.

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges has continuously accredited SWC. The College offers a comprehensive curriculum, preparing students for transfer to four-year colleges or universities and for jobs and career advancement.

## Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (BP 7100)

Southwestern Community College District (SCCD) is committed to building a diverse and accessible environment that fosters intellectual and social advancement. All District programs and activities seek to affirm pluralism of beliefs and opinions, and diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, background, geography, economics, family status, ability status, sexual orientation, gender expression/identity, political inclination, religious affiliation, age, and neuro-diversity, including but not limited to Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and others. Diversity is encouraged and welcomed because SCCD recognizes that our differences, as well as our commonalities promote integrity and resilience in our evolving and changing communities. Southwestern Community College District is committed to promoting diversity district-wide through its student body, leadership, and employees. The District maintains a commitment to diversity through the recruitment and retention of students and employees that reflect the diversity of the communities in the District.

Every effort is made to initiate and establish specific activities and programs designed to meet the District's diversity goals and objectives, to foster equal participation, and to ensure a campus climate that welcomes and respects all individuals. All employees, including the Governing Board are expected to have anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion training consistent with any legal requirement and as prescribed by the Superintendent/President or designee. The Governing Board affirms the organization of employee groups to promote the diversity on campus. Examples of such employee groups are the Black Alliance, Chicano Latino Coalition, LGBTQIA+, and a new Asian Pacific Islander group. The Superintendent/President will establish a procedure for official designation of such groups.

## Equal Employment Opportunity (BP 3420)

The Governing Board of the Southwestern Community College District (SCCD) is committed to equal employment opportunity and full recognition of the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, language groups and abilities that are represented in its surrounding communities and student body. The Board believes that diversity in the academic environment fosters cultural awareness, mutual understanding and respect, and suitable role models for all students.

The District shall demonstrate its commitment to the cultural competence<sup>1</sup> of its employees and students through policies, procedures, professional development, services and activities which promote diversity and mutual respect within the District work force and student body. Members of all hiring committees shall have completed Implicit Bias and Equal Employment Opportunity training as prescribed by the Superintendent/President or designee.

The District is an equal opportunity employer that shall provide an educational and work environment in which no person is denied access to, or the benefits of, any program or activity of the District on the basis of federal or state protected classes including, but not limited to: race and/or trait(s) historically associated with race (including, but not limited to hair texture and "protective hairstyles"); color; national origin, ancestry or citizenship status; religion or creed; age; marital status; sex and gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical condition); sexual orientation; gender identity, gender expression; physical or mental disability; genetic information; medical condition; political activities or affiliations; military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking; or because one is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics or associates with a person or group with one or more of these characteristics.

The District shall monitor the success of equal opportunity in its recruitment, selection, retention and promotional policies and procedures by monitoring outcomes to assure no adverse impact against any person or group of individuals, due to race and/or trait(s) historically associated with race (including, but not limited to hair texture and "protective hairstyles"); color; national origin, ancestry or citizenship status; religion or creed; age; marital status; sex and gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical condition); sexual orientation; gender identity, gender expression; physical or mental disability; genetic information; medical condition; political activities or affiliations; military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking; or because one is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics or associates with a person or group with one or more of these characteristics. The District complies with the spirit and law of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended by providing equal opportunity for persons with disabilities.

The District shall make reasonable accommodations so that persons of all levels of ability enjoy equal access to all aspects of employment and education in our District, including but not limited to, educational services, selection procedures, retention and promotion. In order to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability, the District will allow an individual with a disability to use a service animal or miniature horse in District facilities and on District campuses in compliance with state and federal law.

The District will not tolerate offensive or abusive conduct or language including jokes, slurs, derogatory comments, or behaviors or language regarding a person's race and/or trait(s) historically associated with race (including, but not limited to hair texture and "protective hairstyles"); color; national origin, ancestry or citizenship status; religion or creed; age; marital status; sex and gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical condition); sexual orientation; gender identity, gender expression; physical or mental disability; genetic information; medical condition; political activities or affiliations; military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking; or because one is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics or associates with a person or group with one or more of these characteristics. This includes District decisions about employment, retention, compensation, promotion, termination and/or other employment status.

<sup>1</sup> "Cultural Competence" refers to the skills and ability of individuals to act in a sensitive, inclusive and respectful manner in interactions with persons who are different from themselves.

Approved by SWC Governing Board – October 2020