

SAN MATEO COUNTY  
**COMMUNITY**  
COLLEGE DISTRICT

*Cañada College • College of San Mateo • Skyline College*

## Combined Report of the District Chancellor and College Presidents



### **CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY**



*Cousins Archie Williams '35 and Les Williams '39 graduated from CSM in the 1930s, achieving high-profile milestones in science, aviation and athletics.*

## CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY

Two cousins who graduated from CSM in the 1930s went on to make history. Archie Williams '35 and Les Williams '39 endured systemic racism to achieve high-profile milestones in science, aviation and athletics. As we celebrate Black history all around the District, we hope you enjoy these inspirational stories.

### Archie Williams (CSM Class of 1935)



- Olympic champion, 400 meter run
- Pilot, flight instructor and trainer of Tuskegee Airmen
- Meteorologist with the Army Air Weather Service, retiring as lieutenant colonel
- Math and computer science teacher for 22 years

"Every race that you run is a final. If you don't win, then it is final."

Read Archie Williams's story at [https://www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/100/cf\\_archiewilliams.php](https://www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/100/cf_archiewilliams.php)

### Les Williams (CSM Class of 1939)



- First African-American twin-engine bomber pilot
- Member of World War II-era Tuskegee Airmen
- Entrepreneur, dancer and dance-studio owner
- Attorney in San Mateo County for 30 years

"We told each other, 'We're going to be the best. We stuck with that, and we helped each other.'"

Read Les Williams's story at [https://www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/100/cf\\_leswilliams.php](https://www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/100/cf_leswilliams.php)

## PUBLIC COVID-19 TESTING SITE OPENS AT COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO



On January 25, San Mateo County launched a drive-through COVID-19 testing site at the College of San Mateo campus. Located in upper Hillside Lot 1 at CSM, the site is open to the public and replaces the previous testing location at the San Mateo County Event Center.

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Testing hours are Sundays through Thursdays, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm. Special time blocks have been reserved exclusively for San Mateo County Community College District students, staff, and faculty on Sundays–Thursdays from 10–11 am and 3–4 pm.

The tests are conducted with a nasal swab and results provided within 24–72 hours. Testing services are provided by OptumServe, the federal health business of Optum and UnitedHealth Group. The site has the capacity to test 1,000 people per day.

An appointment is required. For appointments, visit <https://lhi.care/covidtesting> or call the LHI Call Center at (888) 634-1123 to make an appointment by phone.

For details on the CSM testing location, see [covid-19.smccd.edu/csm-covid-19-testing-site](https://covid-19.smccd.edu/csm-covid-19-testing-site).

For information on all testing locations in San Mateo County, see [www.smcgov.org/testing](https://www.smcgov.org/testing).

### CHENG YU HOU NAMED THE DISTRICT'S NEW CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER



The District has hired Cheng Yu Hou, who began his duties on January 1, 2021, as Chief Human Resources Officer. He was hired after an extensive search, from a pool of exceptional candidates.

"I am confident that Cheng Yu will be a great addition to the District," said District Chancellor Mike Claire.

"He will be able to draw upon his wealth of knowledge and experience to lead our District human resources functions."

Cheng Yu comes to the District from Los Angeles County, where he most recently served as the Chief Diversity Officer for the County's Department of Child Support Services. Prior to that assignment, Cheng Yu was a Chief Labor Negotiator for Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office. Cheng Yu's prior

experience also includes a number of academic assignments, including as an adjunct faculty member at University of Southern California, Pepperdine University and Albany Law School.

Educated in the law, Cheng Yu also worked for a number of federal judges and is admitted to the California bar. In his work with the District, he will be acting only as the Chief Human Resources Officer, not as the District's legal counsel.

Cheng Yu holds a juris doctorate from the University of Cincinnati, a bachelor's degree from UC San Diego (where he graduated with quintuple majors).

The District formed a Chief Human Resources Officer screening committee to evaluate the pool of candidates. The screening committee included nine faculty members, staff, and administrators from all three colleges and the District Office.

### DISTRICT EMERGENCY FOOD DISTRIBUTION REACHES NEW MILESTONE OF 50,000 FAMILIES SERVED



As we near the one-year mark of the COVID-19 pandemic in our region, the San Mateo County Community College District Emergency Food Distribution program has provided free groceries to a total of 50,000 families. The CSM food distribution site has operated on Fridays for 38 weeks, and the Wednesday program at Skyline College has operated for 22 weeks.

Over that time, the District has distributed a combined 2 million pounds of food worth \$3.8 million to the public. The program is a partnership with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, which provides food boxes to District sites each week. The distributions rely on a



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network of District and College staff who volunteer their time, as well as volunteers from local companies and other organizations. Prior to the pandemic, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley was already providing food to about 260,000 people per month in the Bay Area. By summer 2020, that number skyrocketed to more than 500,000 people per month. Demand has stayed at that level. For more information see [www.shfb.org](http://www.shfb.org).

### Other SMCCCD Emergency Programs

Before the pandemic, food-insecure students were able to pick up weekly groceries at their campus SparkPoint Center. In order to continue supporting those students during campus closures, the District now purchases and sends electronic gift cards for local grocery stores, each worth \$75, for about 1,400 food-insecure students each month.

The District Basic Needs Task Force and the SparkPoint Centers oversee a range of emergency assistance programs for students including hotel vouchers and rental assistance, Chromebook and hotspot distributions, and drive-up wifi in parking lots. Students have access to free HIPAA-compliant personal counseling and telemedicine services.

The San Mateo County Community Colleges Foundation has set up an emergency fund to support these efforts as well as emergency scholarships and other student needs. Please visit [foundation.smccd.edu](http://foundation.smccd.edu) to support our local students.



### CAÑADA COLLEGE HOSTS CONVERSATION WITH DR. CORNEL WEST

CAÑADA COLLEGE PRESENTS LATINO THOUGHT MAKERS: A CONVERSATION WITH  
**DR. CORNEL WEST & RICK NAJERA**  
THE SHARED HISTORY OF  
**AFRICAN AMERICAN & LATINX PEOPLES**  
JANUARY 28 | 4 P.M. PST | VIA ZOOM

Dr. Cornel West is Professor of the Practice of Public Philosophy at Harvard University and Professor Emeritus at Princeton University. He is best known for his classics, *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*, and for his memoir, *Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud*. His most recent book, *Black Prophetic Fire*, offers an unflinching look at African-American leaders and their visionary legacies. He is co-host of the podcast "The Tight Rope," and is committed to telling the truth and bearing witness to love and justice.

Rick Najera, host of Latino Thought Makers

REGISTER: [tinyurl.com/DrWestJan28](https://tinyurl.com/DrWestJan28)

As part of its ongoing commitment to celebrating diversity and inclusion, Cañada College hosted an important conversation on January 28 with Latino Thought Makers award-winning screenwriter, actor, and author Rick Najera, featuring renowned speaker, author and Harvard scholar, Dr. Cornel West. Dr. West is best known for his classics, *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*, and his memoir, *Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud*. Dr. West's most recent book, *Black Prophetic Fire*, offers an unflinching look at African American leaders and their visionary

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legacies. Dr. West and Najera are committed to telling the truth about intersectionality and bearing witness to love and justice. Dr. West and Najera began their conversation about race by showcasing the overlap in experience amongst Black and Brown communities. Their shared feeling of being ‘the other’ throughout their upbringing displays the numerous similarities between all people of color. Although there are specificities to each respective group, both distinguished speakers agree that what connects all minorities is oppression and a distorted sense of belonging. Dr. West beautifully elaborated, “Black and Brown people at our best are soulful people. Soul is the sharing of a soothing sweetness against the backdrop of grim catastrophe but never allowing catastrophe to have the last word.” It is this same everlasting hope within the soul of marginalized groups that ensures change is consistent and constantly growing.

As a light-skinned Latino, Najera vulnerably shared his unique experience in treatment versus his darker-skinned Latina sister. Najera explained his discomfort in being treated better solely due to the color of his fair skin. Because of his exterior, Najera was able to witness the effect skin color has in the Latin community similar to what Dr. West experiences in the Black community. Najera expressed, “Black issues are Brown issues. They are our people as we are their people. We cannot have one side get to the promised land without the other.” Because Najera’s parents preserved and nurtured his Mexican identity, he was able to reject inequities such as skin color assumptions and be a successful advocate for Latinx people at large.

Dr. West also shared a common event he experiences frequently, and has also written about in his novel *Race Matters*, which is taxi cab drivers ignoring his hail. Dr. West affirmed, “I try to live my life in such a way that I am never surprised by evil or paralyzed by despair. I come from a people who have had to live through slavery working sunup to sundown. When that taxi man drives past me and keeps going, I say he is as wrong as they can be. If I had to render them accountable I would, but that’s not my point of reference. I got too many important things to do. I got to keep my energy moving in the same direction my great-great-grandmother had to keep hers as she was occupied and obsessed with Jim Crow. She kept track of the evil but she wasn’t surprised which means she wasn’t overwhelmed. Despair will debilitate you if you allow it to.”

The inequity in the treatment of darker-skinned people should be a relevant issue to all people, not just Black and Brown communities. Through these real-life experiences, Najera and Dr. West solidified the importance of allyship and empathy towards fellow oppressed communities. It is only through unionship that the voice of the oppressed can be heard and liberated.

When asked by a Cañada student, “Do you think we will see an America free of white supremacy?”, Dr. West responded, “It’s hard to say, but it depends on what we do. If we can build on what took place this summer (Black Lives Matter Movement) with this marvelous manifestation of people concerned about our dear brother Floyd Jr. being publicly lynched by the policemen in the attempt to speak in the name of truth and justice, we can make sure no one has to undergo that sort of treatment no matter what color they are, gender, sexual orientation, national identity, or religion. If we have enough folk moving in that direction then we have a chance of fundamentally pushing white supremacy back.” Najera passionately added, “I love this country so much I have to complain. I love this country so much I have to point out inequities and problems, not in a cruel way, but it is a human potential we are fighting for. We need everybody to succeed. Patriotism is what drives Americans to protest, raise awareness, and vote to create a better America, not as it is but as it should be.”

Dr. West and Najera ended their conversation and Q&A by advising students to do their part by continuing to fall in love with learning. Through their academic journey, students should find allies in professors who care about furthering racial equity and abolishing education barriers for all students of color. It is through the conviction of love, truth, and justice that future generations will end the suffering of people of color and rebuild an equal and just nation.

The event concluded with a panel to digest the conversation with Dr. West and share how we can move forward with the work to dismantle racism. Cañada College President, Dr. Jamillah Moore, concludes, “As Dr. West said, we have to be long-distance runners, for this will forever be a marathon because the work we are doing right now is not for me and it is not for you it is what I call for my future grandchildren; just as my great grandparents built the foundation that I am enjoying now. We cannot lose sight of that because there will be many people who will tell you what you can’t do, what you shouldn’t do, that you need to sit

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down but I am telling you to keep moving forward even when you feel overwhelmed. Think about what folks did long before us against impossible odds. We need to build upon that as a hybrid people. We must lift as we climb, every voice, not just one!"

The special event drew in more than 1,000 attendees and generated more than \$4,200 in [donations](#) and sponsorships for the Cañada College Scholarship Fund, which supports student's daily basic needs such as groceries, food vouchers, Chromebooks and hot spots. The event was recorded and can be accessed [here](#).

have a safe space to congregate on the upper campus. The space identified for the Cultural Center is in Building 9, Room 154B. It is 1,062 square feet and is located near many of the campus' Student Support Services. In addition to the space, the College will have a prayer room that will be available for students who require that needed privacy. From the plans listed, the Art Gallery will also be adjacent to the space for CIETL (Center for Innovation & Excellence in Teaching & Learning) which is separate from the Cultural Center space.

### CAÑADA GATHERS FEEDBACK ON NEW CULTURAL CENTER



*Share Your Experience*

Help us create a new Cañada Cultural Center.

Small Group Discussions  
Via Zoom

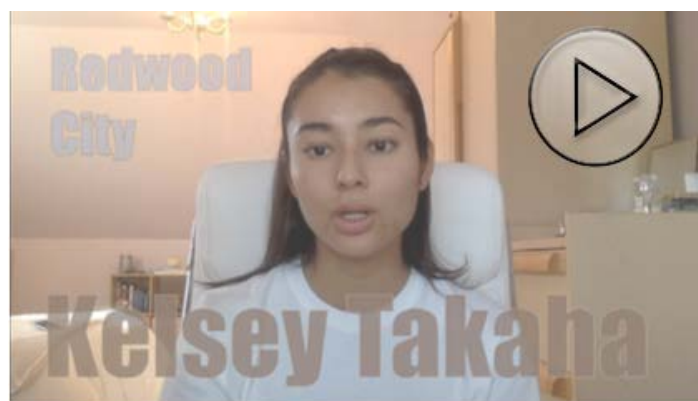
<https://tinyurl.com/CANculturalCenterFeb>

To support its efforts to become an antiracist institution, Cañada College is providing opportunities for community members to share their voices in the planning of its new Cultural Center. The College is hosting seven focus group discussions to gather information and perspectives from a broad range of campus stakeholders about the College's new Cultural Center. The feedback will inform the fundamental pillars of the new Cultural Center. To register for one of these sessions and to learn more about the focus groups, [please register here](#).

The Cultural Center will be located on the upper-campus level adjacent to the International Student Program. In review of the plans for the International Student Program, the Cultural Center has been part of the space allocation in order for students to

## College of San Mateo

### CSM DIGITAL MEDIA STUDENT CREATES DOCUMENTARY FOCUSED ON ONLINE LEARNING CHALLENGES



As the coronavirus pandemic pushed in-person classes to online formats last year, CSM Digital Media student Blake Merkes faced a challenge. He needed to complete a video project for the Digital Media Independent Study class he was enrolled in but no longer had access to the resources available at CSM.

Blake needed to figure out how to create an engaging video in the new masked and socially-distanced world he found himself in. Additionally, whatever he ended up producing would have to be done solely with his equipment at home. Acknowledging



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his challenges while collaborating with his digital media professor Michelle Brown, they came up with an idea to produce a documentary focused on the challenges CSM students were having with the transition to virtual learning.

Blake's next challenge was finding students willing to record themselves answering his questions. Working together, Professor Brown helped Gregory find 15 students to participate. These students captured their thoughts on video and provided them to Gregory to use. His final challenge was condensing the student's testimonials into a final documentary titled "Coping with Covid."

After almost a year of work Blake is proud to share his documentary with the SMCCCD community.

Watch it on [Vimeo](#).

### FIVE HONORS PROJECT STUDENTS TO PRESENT AT HONORS RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The Honors Project is delighted to report that five students have been accepted to present their research projects this spring, at the 2021 UC Irvine Community College Honors Research Conference—to be held virtually, in March.



Here are the five students, followed by the courses and instructors for which they did their research projects:

- Isabelle Antaran – PHIL 100 (Jeremy Ball)
- Kyle Guanzon – CIS 255 (Kamran Eftehkari)
- Drew Marquiss – CIS 140 (Mounjed Moussalem)
- Andrianna Pellini – ENGL 110 (Rene Anderson)
- Kelsey Takaha – COMM 110 (Briana Avila)

A major academic event sponsored by the Honors Transfer Council of California, the conference "gives community college

honors students the opportunity to present their academic work," inviting "research-based presentations, posters, and creative performances reflecting inquiry into the humanities, sciences, arts, social sciences, and pre-professional programs."

The virtual conference will take place March 25, 26 and 27. Learn more at <https://www.honorstransfercouncil.org/the-conference-1>



### SKYLINE COLLEGE FOOD DISTRIBUTION REACHES \$1 MILLION IN GROCERIES



This past week marked the 21st Skyline College Free Drive-Thru Community Market! At this most recent weekly grocery distribution event we had 30 volunteers and served 850 families! We also hosted a small media event with several news outlets on hand to capture a financial donation from the Barry Bonds Family Foundation to Second Harvest Food Bank of Silicon Valley. You can see the distribution in action, as well as an interview with Barry Bonds in the video here.

Every week each household or family receives almost 40 lbs of groceries, including milk, eggs, pasta, rice, fresh produce, canned goods and dry goods, as well as a protein item (ham, chicken, turkey, etc.). Second Harvest Food Bank calculates that over 559,518 pounds of groceries have been distributed since our program started in September 2020 and that we have offset over \$1,001,536 in grocery costs for the most at risk members

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of our local community! A special thanks goes to SMCCCD employees from SparkPoint, public safety, and facilities, as well as the wonderful volunteers who make this event possible every week.

This event is held at Skyline College every Wednesday, 11:00am-1:00pm and has been extended through May 2021. All staff, volunteers and participants adhere to all COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols at all times.

- Only drive-thru pickups will be served
- All participants must remain in their cars at all times and wear a mask
- Open to students and the community
- No I.D. required to pick up food
- Please call 650-738-7970 for weather and air quality closure updates
- Please use Skyline Blvd entrance

If you are interested in volunteering, please sign up through the [Second Harvest Food Bank website](#). If you have any questions please email us at [skylinesparkpoint@smccd.edu](mailto:skylinesparkpoint@smccd.edu).

*Article by Chad Thompson*

### BAEC AWARDS MICRO GRANTS TO SMALL BUSINESSES



On Thursday, January 28, 2021, the Bay Area Entrepreneur Center of Skyline College held its virtual awards ceremony for the sixteen local businesses who received Micro Grants of over \$4,000, through the Small Business Recovery & Assistance Program. The Small Business Recovery & Assistance Program is

a local business recovery initiative largely supported by the San Bruno Community Foundation, to support small businesses as they work to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The BAEC developed the Micro Grants Program, whereby businesses in San Bruno were funded to maintain and adapt and improve operations to meet the needs of our rapidly changing environment. Aubrey Merriman, CEO of the Boy & Girls Club of North County, served on our Micro Grants Review Panel, a group comprised of esteemed community members, all charged with the big task of combing through grant applications and vetting award recipients. Aubrey says, "It was a true privilege and pleasure to serve in this capacity and support the important work of our small businesses!" The sixteen Micro Grant award recipients, along with other businesses, are attending workshops and one-on-one business strategy sessions with the BAEC's team of coaches for continual support of their business recovery.

The BAEC would like to thank our many community partners, especially the City of San Bruno, the San Mateo County Community College Foundation, the San Bruno Chamber of Commerce, the San Mateo County Economic Development Association, Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, our Micro Grants Review Panel and the San Bruno Community Foundation. We would also like to thank the small businesses-vital and essential to our communities.

For more information on the BAEC connect with us [here](#) and at [BAEC YouTube](#).

*Article by Pcyeta Stroud*

*Image by Olivia Vialau and Nicole Moreno-Deinzer*