

STRONG WORKFORCE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

June 5, 2023 – EDITION 34

DATA & RESEARCH

Chairs: Eddie Matthews, Regional Research Associate, Center of Excellence (COE); and Alex Berry, Associate Dean, CTE, San Diego Mesa College

In March, the Data & Innovation Committee provided feedback on the data components of the Counselor Institute assignments, helping determine the viability, relevancy, and sustainability of the data being requested. This informs what data is included in the assignments that counselors will evaluate through reflection questions. This feedback is part of the iterative process these assignments are undergoing through both the Counselor Institute Advisory Group and the Data & Innovation Committee. In April, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Temporary CTE Research Experts was sent to all colleges interested in regional research support. This MOU was created in response to a need identified by the Data & Innovation Committee in 2022 and aligned with the committee's top priority for 2023—increasing staffing to meet regional project demands. In May, the Center of Excellence hosted an in-person Data & Innovation Committee meeting to network with each other and celebrate all the work our researchers have done over the past few years. Looking ahead, the co-chairs invited the Vice Chancellor of Digital Innovation and Infrastructure, Valerie Lundy-Wagner, for a Q&A about Student Success Metrics and other recent Chancellor's Office updates.

MARKETING

Chairs: Monica Romero, Dean, Business & Technology, Mesa College; Julie Lanthier Bandy, Director, Communications, Marketing and Public Affairs, Palomar College; and, Molly Ash, Program Manager, Region

The regional marketing campaign is near full launch! Many tactics have already begun so you may hear a Community Crafted ad on the radio, see a billboard along your daily commute, or see an ad at the gas station. In direct response to a request from the Regional Oversight Committee, 3fold has been engaging in a new research project aimed at uncovering education goals and marketing needs for our veteran and veteran dependent communities. Research included 1:1 stakeholder interviews with on-campus resources as well as current students (both veterans and dependents). The outcomes were presented at the May 11, 2023 marketing committee meeting and next steps will unfold over the coming months. The regional campaign is exploring an exciting new partnership opportunity with the San Diego Padres that would include signage/brand awareness, digital and fan engagement, brand media, and outreach opportunities. The marketing committee has approved the project and next steps are underway. More information to come.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Chairs: Amertah Perman, Dean, Career Education and Workforce Development, San Diego Community College District; Al Love, Senior Director, College and Career Leadership, San Diego County Office of Education; and, Denise Cabanilla, Director, Higher Education and Adult Learning, Imperial County Office of Education; and, Suzanne Sebring, Manager, Career Pathways, Region

In March, the K14 workgroup structure was adjusted to include Middle School/High School (MS/HS) Engagement, rather than continuing to have a separate workgroup. MS/HS will continue to be an explicit goal of the K14 workgroup. Presentations and discussions at monthly meetings included Supporting Special Populations, Regional Goal Alignment, Equity Gaps in Priority Jobs and Programs, Pathway Partnerships, and the results of the 2nd annual Options After High School Survey. Around Pathway Partnerships, a document titled "Recommendations for Community Colleges to Support Development of High Quality K14 Career Pathways" was developed out of workgroup activities and needs expressed by the membership. This document is being vetted at membership agencies and the final version will be presented for approval to Deans, ROC, and SDICCCA in the fall.

Adult Ed & Noncredit Chairs: Kim Bellaart, Director, Grossmont Adult Education; Beatriz Aguilar, Director, Noncredit and Adult Education Programs, MiraCosta College; and, Suzanne Sebring, Director, Post-Secondary Engagement, Region

The Adult Education/Noncredit workgroup continued its horizontal alignment work completing the work on Business programs. The participation across schools has been strong and beneficial. The horizontal alignment work will continue, followed by vertical alignment between AE/NC and CC credit programs.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Chairs: Nichol Roe, Associate Dean, Workforce Development and Extended Studies, Palomar College; Ben Gamboa, Associate Dean, Career Education, MiraCosta College; Suzanne Sebring, Director, Post-Secondary Engagement, Region

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A Request for Application (RFA) has been released with several options for funding CPL work in FY 23-24. The deadline for applications is May 31st. Candace Rose, from Palomar College, will provide regional support/coaching offering 1:1 meetings with the CPL leads to guide them in implementing CPL practices; answer any questions they may have; help them respond to the CPL RFA based on their starting point in FY 23-24; and offer hands-on CPL training/professional development workshops for faculty, staff, and administrators on a case-by-case basis aligned with college specific goals. The CPL marketing videos are now available on the regional websites to share with students, colleagues, and leadership. In addition, the CPL training in the Vision Resource Center should be deployed by the end of May.

Rising Scholars Chairs: Chelsea Esquibias, Regional Coordinator, Rising Scholars, Educational Services and Support, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office; Suzanne Sebring, Director, Post-Secondary Engagement, Region

The Rising Scholars Workgroup continued monthly meetings to address how college practitioners can support justice-impacted students. [The Onward! Student Workshop Series](#), developed by regional workgroup practitioners, was offered statewide through the Rising Scholars Network. The workshops were well attended and received. Other work focused on building resources for students with a presentation by the San Diego Rescue Mission, offering information about housing options; discussions around Rising Scholars funding; as well as reflection on FY 22-23 and planning for FY 23-24.

PATHWAY NAVIGATION

Chairs: Claudia Estrada-Howell, Associate Dean, Career Education, Miramar College; Javier Ayala, Dean, Career & Technical Education & Workforce Development, Grossmont College; and, Stephanie Lewis, Dean, Career & College Transitions, San Diego College of Continuing Education

In April, the Pathway Navigation workgroup began to wrap up its work. The last two workgroup meetings incorporated celebrations of Pathway Navigation successes. The colleges had an opportunity to share their greatest Pathway Navigation accomplishments. The group also reviewed the Pathway Navigation goals from 2018: Entering the Path: Align with Guided Pathways, Intake: Increase student enrollment in pathways and student utilization of needed academic and other support services available at their college, Differentiated Orientation: Increase the number of students entering college with knowledge of pathways and services, while facilitating students' integration into college life, and Career Planning: Increase the number of students' knowledgeable about their own interests and careers goals, to support effective education planning and long-term success. The goals served as a reminder of the outstanding Pathway Navigation work that has taken place over the last six years to improve the onboarding processes for students in our region. A huge thank you to the workgroup co-chairs - Claudia Estrada-Howell, Javier Ayala and Stephanie Lewis. We could not have done this work without you. The last Pathway Navigation workgroup meeting will be June 15, 2023 at 10am, with a presentation by Barbara Endel - Community College Student Employment Outcomes: Landscape Scan. Members of the Work-based Learning (WBL) and Job Placement workgroup have been invited to attend. Lastly, some colleges have submitted their application for the Career Navigation RFA, which will continue the work of the Pathway Navigation, by providing support for colleges to evaluate their career services.

WORK-BASED LEARNING/JOB PLACEMENT

Chairs: George Dowden, Interim Dean, Career & Technical Education, Cuyamaca College; and, Kevin McMackin, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Region

The Work-based Learning (WBL) and Job Placement workgroup held their final meeting in May ahead of transitioning to a new workgroup called Career Navigation, which is connected to a new [RFA](#). While the workgroup structure will change slightly, the region will continue to collaborate with the colleges and the new workgroup to prioritize their work to: focus on equitable processes and services, track WBL opportunities consistent with SG21 requirements, increase student and faculty awareness of the WBL and job placement services available, and increase capacity for employer engagement through collaboration. The new workgroup will seek to integrate college career center representatives into the important discussions and progress being made around work-based learning and job placement. Lastly, the Region continues to support equitable work-based learning by offering a [Regional Faculty Work-based Learning Professional Development](#) to support faculty in providing these crucial experiences to students. The spring cohort was the largest to-date with 69 faculty registered. Registration for the June 16th summer cohort can be found [here](#).

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STUDENT RETENTION, SUCCESS, & SUPPORT

Chair: Tina Ngo Bartel, COE Director, Region

The COE recently released the study, [Black Study Equity: Overcoming Barriers and Providing Support](#). [Prior research demonstrated](#) that Black students have lower completion rates (i.e., certificate or degree) than any other racial or ethnic group due to psychological, physical, and financial barriers. To better understand Black students' experiences with community colleges in the region, the Regional Consortium commissioned the San Diego Workforce Partnership to conduct research with current and former Black students. Last year, 200 students participated in qualitative focus groups (n=46) or a quantitative survey (n=154) to help the region answer the following research questions:

- What should each of the region's community colleges provide in the classroom and on campus to retain Black students?
- What barriers prevent Black students from completing community college programs or courses?

Analyses revealed six key barriers that Black students experience: 1) finances, 2) caregiving, 3) residual impacts of COVID-19, 4) microaggressions, 5) fatigue and mental health challenges, and 6) lack of guidance. Two factors that mitigated some of these barriers for students were: 1) supportive instructors and 2) student support services (Umoja in particular). Consequently, this study identified three main student needs and research-backed strategies to address them:

1. Students need colleges to foster inclusive learning environments, promote equity-mindedness and data literacy, develop inclusive curriculum and pedagogy/andragogy, and increase diverse representation among faculty and staff.
2. Students, particularly adult learners, need flexible course schedules that colleges could achieve by optimizing Career Education program paths and local scheduling practices.
3. Students need transformative employment opportunities. Colleges can support these efforts by educating industry and employer partners, empowering race conscious and equity-mindedness in these partnerships, and developing measurable diversity and inclusion goals.

Associate Dean of Career Education [Ben Gamboa presented the study](#) to the May Workforce Development Council and Regional Oversight Committee (ROC). The region's colleges could use this study and his webinar to better support the retention and completion of Black students.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Chairs: Tina Ngo Bartel, COE Director, Region; and, Kevin McMackin, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Region

The Region continues to collaborate with the colleges as the new [Employer Engagement Model](#) is implemented to increase WBL opportunities for students, increase student jobs and employment outcomes, and develop approaches that are more responsive to industry needs. The Region has staffed an [Employer Relations Liaisons \(ERLs\)](#) at each of the ten colleges and they are currently working to develop relationships as they engage employers and assist colleges to expand employer engagement to accomplish the aforementioned goals. Since the first group of ERL's started in April 2022, the team has engaged 991 employers and developed almost 1500 work-based learning and job opportunities.

The Region continues to collaborate with external partners like the San Diego Regional EDC and the San Diego Workforce Partnership on a number of initiatives to further support students and businesses in the region. Most recently, the team has been collaborating with our partners to address the concerning talent shortages around ship building and ship repair. Over a year and a half ago, the Director of Strategic Partnerships and one of the Region's Industry Relations Consultants met with a representative of the Navy to discuss opportunities in the region related to nuclear submarines. Given the serious talent pipeline challenges, the region looped in the San Diego Regional EDC who is now leading a major initiative to address the Navy's needs and released a [report](#) to support the work. On April 4, Deans, Associate Deans and faculty participated in a [Shipbuilding Regional Industrialization Pilot \(SHIP\) Regional Visioning event](#) to address San Diego's needs for the Shipbuilding Industrial Base with the Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) Program.