SAN DIEGO and IMPERIAL REGIONAL CONSORTIUM

STRONG WORKFORCE PROGRAM
ANNUAL PLAN
2024–2027

Transforming the way educators, industry, and community partners equitably advance economic mobility

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INTRODUCTION

San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium

Mission The San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium provides leadership and guidance on regional career education initiatives that serve its members and stakeholders. Driven by an equity framework, the Consortium collaborates with educators, industry, community partners, and students to develop a skilled workforce that aligns with the future needs of the regional ecosystem.

With its equity-centered mission, the San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium (SDI RC) focuses on advancing the social and economic mobility of individuals and their families by supporting innovative, high-quality Career Education (CE) programs, strategies, and activities that lead adults to more and better career opportunities in the region. Within a regional workforce ecosystem, the SDI RC partners with educators, workforce development, industry, and community-based organizations (CBOs) to prepare, bolster, and sustain a highly skilled workforce as it builds capacity of the community colleges to meet the region's needs. These efforts are in collaboration with the 10 San Diego and Imperial community colleges, which are implementing the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) — California's investment in community colleges and workforce economic development — on behalf of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium

San Diego and Imperial Community Colleges

GOALS

Build college capacity to create equitable systemic change which closes equity gaps | Unify the workforce ecosystem | Advocate for changes to policy, processes, and practices

The SDI RC partners with the region's education entities that include county offices of education, Adult Education, and K–12 local education agencies, while serving the region's community colleges:

VALUES

Adaptive
Fearless
Interdependency
Justice (Equity)
Reflective
Sustainable
Transparency

Cuyamaca College
Grossmont College
Imperial Valley College
MiraCosta College
Palomar College
San Diego City College
San Diego College of Continuing Education
San Diego Mesa College
San Diego Miramar College
Southwestern College

REGIONAL CONSORTIUM: Governance

SWP Decision-making

The SDI RC takes pride in its unique governance structure — reflecting collaboration, representation, interdependency, and transparency between stakeholders. Additionally, the SDI RC fosters an upward implementation workflow from the cross-college workgroups to the college presidents (see the SDI SWP Implementation chart). Following are descriptions of each segment of the RC governance structure and how each serves a distinct role in supporting the implementation of SWP in the region.

- **San Diego-Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association** (SDICCCA) — the college presidents, also known as chief executive officers (CEOs) — sets policy for the SWP in the region and is the final authority for all decisions.

- The **Regional Chair** facilitates representation, collaboration, feedback, and communication with stakeholders from the region's 10 community colleges. The Chair takes direction from and reports to SDICCCA and facilitates communications between the CE deans, Chief Instructional Officers, and Chief Student Services Officers.

- The **Regional Oversight Committee (**ROC) is the regionally representative governance committee for SWP implementation, providing oversight and ensuring that the work aligns with the SWP goals and strategic priorities. The ROC provides approval on funding and guidance on other issues presented for their consideration.

- The **Workforce Development Council** (WDC) is the regional community college body that is open to all constituents who engage in workforce activities. The WDC is chaired by the Regional Chair and CE Deans' Council Chair. It supports the colleges' program operations to strengthen the regional economy and reduce the job skills gap.

- The **CE Deans' Council**, comprising CE deans and CE associate deans, addresses curriculum recommendations for the region and workforce issues. The lead CE deans are designated by their respective CEOs. An elected CE dean chairs the council.

- The **SWP Implementation Committee** comprises all SWP workgroup leads, who meet to discuss and resolve implementation issues. A CE dean or designee chairs the committee.

- The **SWP Workgroups** convene constituents from all 10 colleges to develop strategies for implementing the regional recommendations. Workgroup strategies are vetted with the CE Deans' Council, WDC, ROC, and SDICCCA. For 2023–2024, SDI RC supports **six workgroups** and other related committees and communities of practice:
    1. **K–14 Career Pathways**
        - Adult Education/Noncredit (committee)
        - Credit for Prior Learning (committee)
        - Rising Scholars (committee)
        - Early College Credit (communities of practice)
    2. **Career Navigation**
    3. **Retention, Success & Support**
        - Faculty Institute (ad-hoc committee)
        - Counselor Institute (ad-hoc committee)
    4. **Employer Engagement**
        - Regional Apprenticeship Planning Team (committee)
        - Sector Investments (communities of practice)
    5. **Marketing**
    6. **Data and Innovation**

Strong Workforce Program Implementation

K14 Career Pathways:
A. Perman, SDCCD
D. Cabanilla, ICOE
A. Love, SDCOE
S. Sebring, Region

Adult Education/Noncredit:
K. Henwood, SDCCE
U. Maschke, East Region Adult
S. Sebring, Region

Credit for Prior Learning:
B. Gamboa, MiraCosta
N. Roe, Palomar
S. Sebring, Region

Early College Credit:
M. Stevens, Region
L. Wisdom, Region

Rising Scholars Region X:
C. Esquibias, Chancellor's Office
S. Sebring, Region

Career Navigation:
G. Dowden, Cuyamaca
C. Estrada-Howell, Miramar
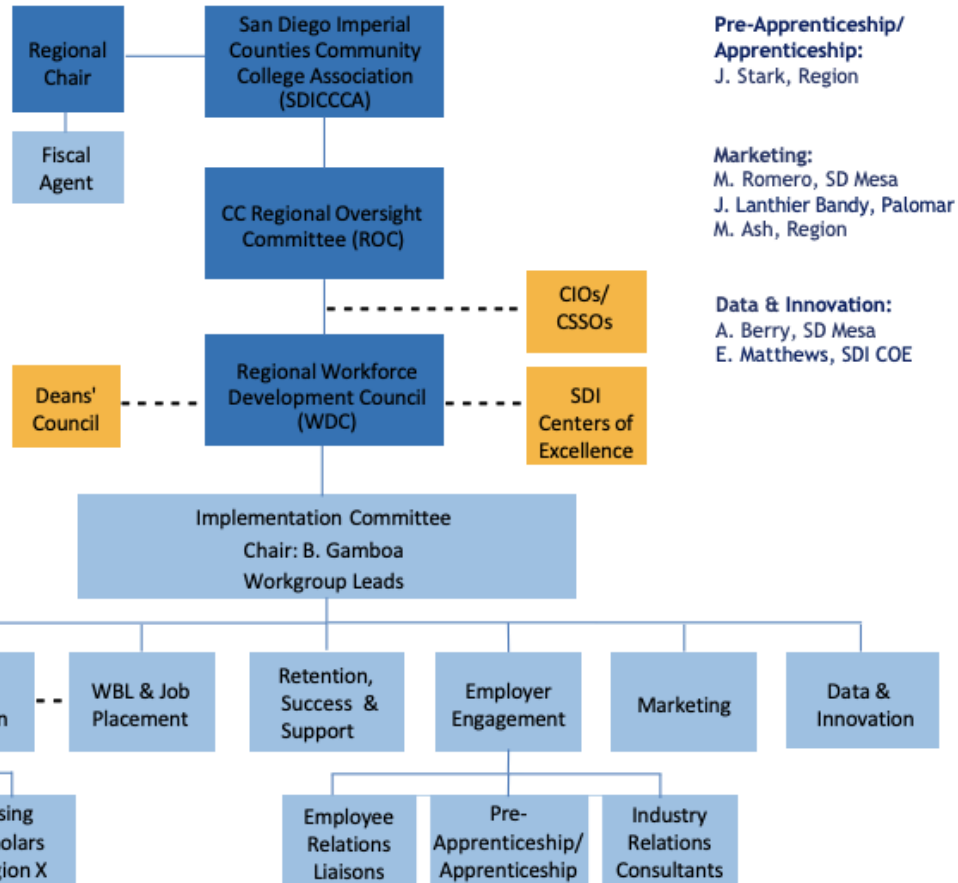K. McMackin, Region

WBL & Job Placement:
K. McMackin, Region

Retention, Success & Support:
T. Ngo Bartel, SDI COE
D. Brown, Region

Employer Engagement:
K. McMackin, Region

Pre-Apprenticeship/Apprenticeship:
J. Stark, Region

Marketing:
M. Romero, SD Mesa
J. Lanthier Bandy, Palomar
M. Ash, Region

Data & Innovation:
A. Berry, SD Mesa
E. Matthews, SDI COE

Organizational Chart

- Regional Chair
  - Fiscal Agent
- San Diego Imperial Counties Community College Association (SDICCCA)
- CC Regional Oversight Committee (ROC)
  - CIOs/CSSOs
- Regional Workforce Development Council (WDC)
  - Deans' Council
  - SDI Centers of Excellence
- Implementation Committee
  Chair: B. Gamboa
  Workgroup Leads
  - K14 Career Pathways
    - Adult Education/Noncredit
    - Credit for Prior Learning
    - Early College Credit
    - Rising Scholars Region X
  - Career Navigation
  - WBL & Job Placement
  - Retention, Success & Support
  - Employer Engagement
    - Employee Relations Liaisons
    - Pre-Apprenticeship/Apprenticeship
    - Industry Relations Consultants
  - Marketing
  - Data & Innovation

REGIONAL CONSORTIUM: Strong Workforce Program Approach

Within the SDI Regional Consortium, leaders, CE deans and educators, workforce development and industry partners come together to work collaboratively on SWP efforts. The *how* of the work — its governance structure, collaborative decision-making, and support for the colleges to build capacity — serves as a model for large-scale institutional reform.

Regional Strategies	Regional Professional Development
As the SDI RC chooses to invest its SWP funds in comprehensive systems improvements, it aims to build capacity of the colleges using the following strategies in its approach: ● An **intentional relationship** with the colleges that doesn't mandate change, but provides facilitative leadership to support the colleges' work, increase capacity, and incentivize change. ● A governance structure that includes **cross-functional and cross-institution workgroups** — comprising stakeholders from the colleges along with the region's education, workforce development, and industry partners — as an equity-centered practice that fosters collaboration and buy-in. ● **Support for workgroups** to conduct collaborative decision-making and guide the colleges in improving CE programs and student success outcomes. The SDI RC supports work where collaboration and sharing of resources across the colleges is possible, leading to achieving economies of scale. ● The SDI RC makes **data-informed investment decisions** based on where the need is. By soliciting input and feedback from stakeholders at the colleges and by using labor market information (LMI), the SDI RC assists the colleges with curriculum and program development and improvement. ● The SDI RC commissions and supports **regional studies** such as the *Black Student Equity* study to understand the Black student experience in the region's community college CE programs, identify barriers, and inform programming and strategies to increase student success outcomes for Black students.	Regional professional development (PD) for practitioners to increase capacity in equity-centered practices, such as data usage and data-informed work, WBL, or instruction. Practitioners can improve their practice through impactful PD opportunities, such as the following four examples: **Faculty Institute.** Instructional faculty engage in two sessions over two semesters, learning to analyze student data from their courses through an equity lens, identify patterns where student success gaps exist, develop an action plan, and implement equity-centered practices. SDI RC supports the Faculty Institute with stipends for participating faculty and funds to increase data capacity in the Institutional Research offices. The Faculty Institute is conducted in partnership with the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE), and since February 2020, 389 participants across the 10 colleges have attended through two cohorts. Among the participating faculty, 59 percent were CE faculty, and 41 percent were non-CE faculty. Testimonials from the Faculty Institute can be viewed on YouTube. **Counselor Institute.** Similar to the Faculty Institute, academic and career counselors engage in professional development focused on analysis of student data to understand disparities in student success and to implement new equity-centered practices that close the gap. The first regional Counselor Institute kicked off in October 2023, also in partnership with the COE and with similar SDI RC supports as the Faculty Institute. **Work-Based Learning Course.** The Work-Based Learning Course supports CE faculty and other staff, working together, to ensure

Consequently, the study identified three key student needs and research-based strategies to address them.

- **SWP-funded positions** for each college to advance career development opportunities for students, including Work-Based Learning (WBL) Coordinators, Employer Relations Liaisons (ERLs) and Job Placement Case Managers.

- **Institutional grants** to support the colleges to engage in changemaking toward improving systems and processes. In consultation with CE deans/associate deans, the Implementation Committee, and workgroups, the SDI RC identifies specific areas of improvement for the region's colleges toward collective regional goals. Once the SDI RC develops and releases a Request for Applications (RFA) to communicate the purpose and goal, the RC invites the colleges to apply for a project and submit their plans. These oft-multi-year funding opportunities enable the colleges to plan and implement innovative, research-based practices in a particular focus area that meet the needs of their students and faculty. The colleges benefit from a regional approach, in which they collaborate regionally and learn about other colleges' emerging practices. Over the years, RFAs have focused on *Strategies for Priority Sectors, Pathway Navigation, Credit for Prior Learning, Job Placement Case Management,* and *Work-Based Learning,* to name just a few.

- **Continuous improvement** approach to recognize where change is needed and how to support it. This approach involves data analysis to identify disparities and challenges, research to inform evidence-based solutions, collaboration to implement or adapt strategies, and data again to measure progress. With its established structure for working collaboratively and regional buy-in of a continuous improvement approach, SDI RC is poised to pivot and respond to shifts in foci that either the region recognizes as a need or the CCCCO introduces.

that WBL experiences are embedded into the curriculum and support learning. The online course focuses on WBL as a critical instructional strategy that supports students' career development and future employment. The course takes participants through four modules from introducing WBL through developing a WBL lesson plan over approximately 20 hours of coursework.

Career Education Teacher Preparation Course. The Career Education Teacher Preparation Course, informed by experienced CE faculty, supports colleges in preparing new faculty coming from industry to help ensure their success in teaching CE courses. The online, cohort-based course is comprehensive, introducing CE teachers to topics such as understanding community college students; equity-minded teaching strategies; learning styles and support for student agency; basic teaching skills; integration of project-based learning and WBL into curriculum; and assessment practices.

Regional Assets: Partners and Collaborators

San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence
The SDI RC works closely with the COE (San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence) to access current and forecasted LMI in the San Diego and Imperial Counties. The COE produces reports about LMI to help ensure that the colleges' CE programs are aligned with the region's economic needs and that employment opportunity gaps are studied and reported to inform where new programs and/or practices are needed. The COE also provides data analyses in areas related to workforce development. These analyses, while related to LMI, provide additional insight for programs and support services decision-making through reports such as *Pandemic-Resilient Jobs, Childcare Industry Workforce Needs Study*, and *Equity Gaps in Priority Jobs and Programs*.

Workforce Development
A key component of SDI RC's approach is reflected in its strong partnerships with workforce development organizations, which are the result of intentional relationship building and collaborative efforts toward creating strategic career development opportunities for increased economic mobility of SDI students. In 2023–24, the SDI RC is supporting the colleges in strengthening and expanding employer relationships to offer equitable and more WBL and internship opportunities, particularly for the region's disproportionately impacted (DI) students.

Partnerships with the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Imperial County Workforce Development Board (ICWDB), and the San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP), for example, have led to SDI RC's and the colleges' involvement in Advancing San Diego. Led by the EDC, Advancing San Diego is a $3 million investment to fuel the region's economic growth in targeted industries and employ more of the region's DI population. The work of the partnerships has evolved into the Talent Pipeline Collaborative and serves as a model for cross-sector collaboration between education, workforce development, and industry. In recent years, the Talent Pipeline Collaborative has initiated crucial projects in the region including the K16 Collaborative Grant, collaboration with the U.S. Navy to expand capacity in relevant programs, and an application for phase one of the Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program, a new initiative of the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Such partnerships ensure that within the workforce ecosystem, the SDI community colleges are equipped to prepare its students for career opportunities in high-demand industries aligned to the economy's needs.

Additionally, SDI community college representatives serve on boards of the EDC, ICWDB, and SDWP, as well as on committees with economic development agencies, further cross-pollinating knowledge, resources, and new opportunities.

Industry
The SDI RC supports the community colleges' partnerships with industries and employers, which are especially strong in the CE programs. Leadership and guidance from the Career Navigation workgroup; the Employer Engagement & Job Development committee; and college-based, SWP-funded roles that actively provide WBL and job placement opportunities for students contribute to ensuring that SDI students are highly qualified candidates in a competitive workforce. The relationships offer mutual benefits to both the colleges and employers and to the students.

Adult Education

The SDI RC intentionally partners with the California adult schools in the region. It integrates adult education, together with noncredit community college programs, into its K–14 Career Pathways workgroup efforts, while coordinating with the Adult Education Super Region, comprising the five Adult Education Consortia in the region. This integration reflects the importance of adult education and noncredit programs as an on-ramp to the for-credit pathways, as shown in the Community College Student's Road to Career Success (see next section), and reflects the colleges' commitment to serving adults in the region who could benefit from further education or training at the community colleges.

K–12

Partnerships between the SDI RC and the K–12 local education agencies (LEAs) exist in multiple areas toward strengthening the path between K–12 and community college. SDI RC support for K–12 includes activities such as community college outreach to neighboring middle and high schools, creation of K–12-focused CE collateral showcasing LMI and career pathways information, as well as intersegmental PD such as the regional Counselor Conference. The SDI RC especially focuses on supporting and improving equity-focused, K–14 efforts through early college credit, increased postsecondary engagement about career awareness and CE opportunities, and large-scale data collection and analyses of K–12 student and counselor surveys to improve services. Additionally, the region's K–14 career technical education pathways are improved and strengthened by leveraging K12 SWP.

> **Values to Partners and Collaborators**
>
> We create the space and capacity to guide successful Career Education programs and initiatives.
>
> We remove barriers and make it efficient and rewarding for students to achieve their goals.
>
> We advocate for changes to policy, processes, and practices.

Rising Scholars

The SDI RC partners with the state-based Rising Scholars Network to support the region's community colleges that actively work to meet the unique needs of justice-involved students (formerly incarcerated or incarcerated individuals, or individuals with incarcerated family members) so that they can successfully achieve their career and education goals. The equity-centered work includes collaborating with corrections, community, and education partners to identify solutions; create resources; and foster a shared learning environment for success.
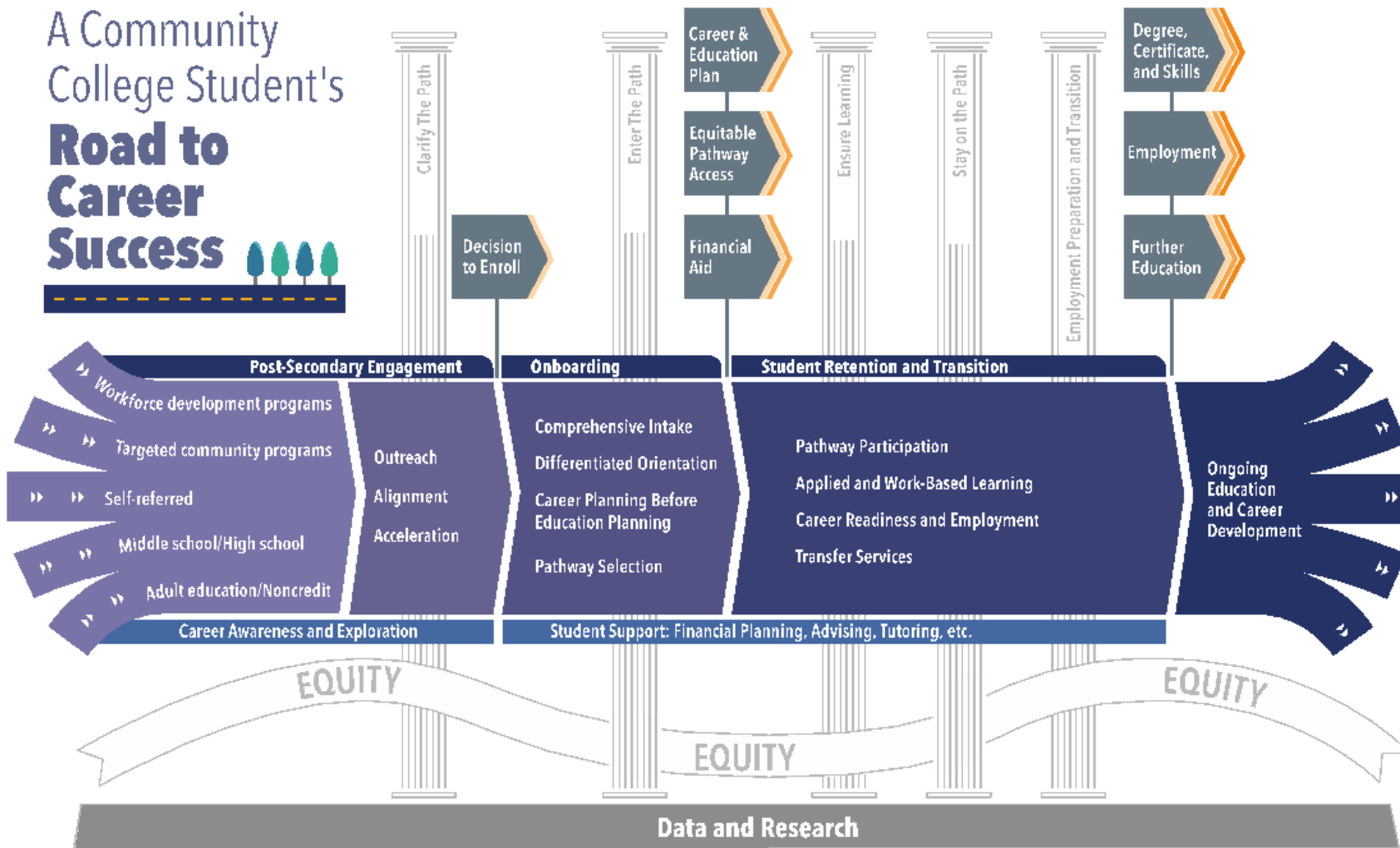
A Community College Student's Road to Career Success

Since the launch of SWP, the region's community colleges have been committed to reconceptualizing the student experience, so that students are equipped with information to follow clear, well-supported and efficient paths leading to an industry-valued certificate, associate degree, transfer to bachelor's degree, and living-wage attainment. Informed by research-based best practices and community college data, the region developed the *Community College Student's Road to Career Success*.

The Student's Road to Career Success, as shown, represents a student's career journey from postsecondary engagement of K–12 and adult students — through onboarding, student retention and transition supports, and ongoing education and career development — to careers. The road highlights key processes needed to ensure that the journey is smooth.

| Postsecondary Engagement	Onboarding	Student Retention & Transition Supports	Ongoing Education & Career Development
It begins with recognizing the myriad entry points into the varied types of postsecondary engagement — outreach, alignment, and acceleration — that prospective students can experience to guide them through community college.	Onboarding processes such as comprehensive intake, differentiated orientation, and career planning alongside education planning set students on their paths to successfully launch their college experience.	Four interrelated components ensure students are engaged and stay on their path: ● Pathway Participation ● Applied and Work-Based Learning ● Career Readiness and Employment ● Transfer Services A system of supports, including financial planning, advising, tutoring and others, undergird these components.	Students exit the path with options and see that navigating their path is continuous and may include further education such as a four-year institution, upskilling opportunities, and/or employment and successive workplaces over time.

A Community College Student's **Road to Career Success**

Clarify The Path

Enter The Path

Ensure Learning

Stay on the Path

Employment Preparation and Transition

Decision to Enroll

Career & Education Plan

Equitable Pathway Access

Financial Aid

Degree, Certificate, and Skills

Employment

Further Education

Post-Secondary Engagement

Onboarding

Student Retention and Transition

Workforce development programs

Targeted community programs

Self-referred

Middle school/High school

Adult education/Noncredit

Outreach

Alignment

Acceleration

Comprehensive Intake

Differentiated Orientation

Career Planning Before Education Planning

Pathway Selection

Pathway Participation

Applied and Work-Based Learning

Career Readiness and Employment

Transfer Services

Ongoing Education and Career Development

Career Awareness and Exploration

Student Support: Financial Planning, Advising, Tutoring, etc.

EQUITY

EQUITY

EQUITY

Data and Research

Regional Investments for 2023–2024

Part of the SDI RC's regional approach is its annual budget and how its investments reflect the SDI RC's regional priorities, regional projects, and ongoing SWP efforts as shown in Figure X.

Figure X. *SDI RC Investments in Regional Projects, 2023–2024*
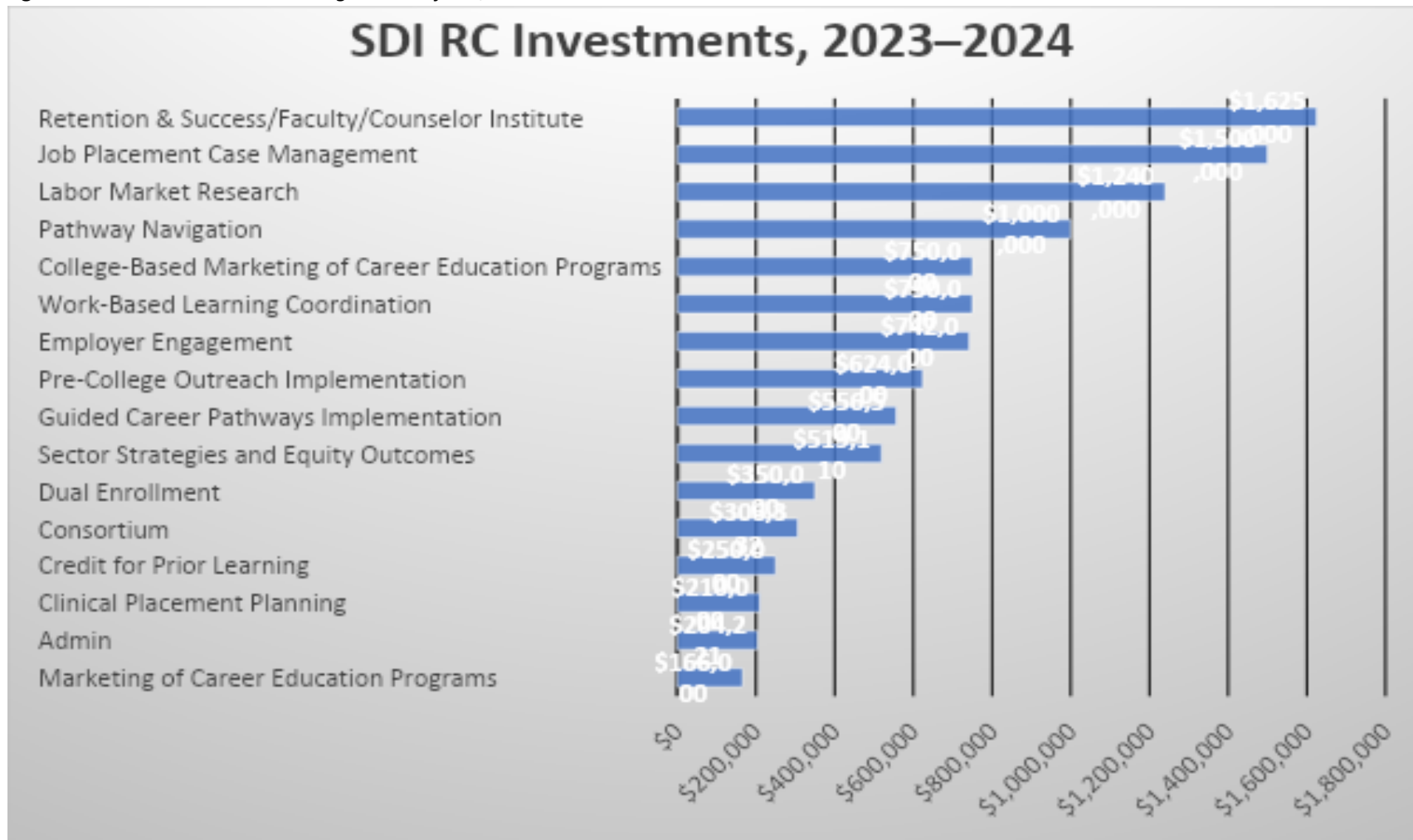
The Regional Consortium Story

The progress of the San Diego and Imperial Counties community colleges in improving student success outcomes reflects the coordinated efforts of colleges with the SDI RC. As the region's SWP work has matured and advanced, aspects of the SDI RC have evolved to best support the colleges.

A History of Regional Collaboration

1960s SDICCCA	XXXX SDI Regional Consortium 1.0	2014–2015 New SWP Initiative	2015–2016 SDI Regional Consortium 2.0	2016 SDI RC Workgroups
For decades, San Diego Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association (known as SDICCCA) has been where the region's community college presidents and chancellors network and collaborate. Through SDICCCA, the senior leaders have built strong rapport, fellowship, trust, and regional pride in its 10 community colleges.	The San Diego Imperial Regional Consortium was established as the region's fiduciary to manage the distribution of funds issued by the federal or state government, such as the Carl D. Perkins grants and the SWP grants, as well as other funding sources. The Foundation for Grossmont & Cuyamaca Colleges is the fiscal agent for the SDI RC.	With the launch of SWP, SDI RC engaged the 10 community colleges as partners to understand the needs of the colleges related to Career Education and workforce. The process began with an inquiry, involving cross-college interviews, and a needs assessment of the community colleges. This initial work led to a set of comprehensive recommendations to guide systemic change at the community colleges.	By leveraging SDICCCA's collaborative way of working as a region, SDI RC is designed to carry out the SWP efforts and necessary support for the 10 colleges with a regional lens. The organizational structure of the consortium includes SDICCCA's leadership, the Regional Oversight Committee, the Workforce Development Council, and cross-functional and cross-institution workgroups focused on key change areas.	Within the workgroups, the SDI RC makes space for the collective body of 150 stakeholders across the colleges to play active roles in determining how to address issues and make positive changes for the region. The initial workgroups each focused on a specific component of SWP implementation: ● Career Pathways ● Pathway Navigation ● WBL & Job Placement ● Retention, Success, & Support ● Employer Engagement ● Data and Research ● Marketing

Intentional Approach to Guide, Support, and Collaborate

The SDI RC has always intended to guide and support the colleges in improving systems that lead more students to success, while building capacity of the colleges in areas such as data-informed decision-making, equity-centered approaches, career development, and academic and non-academic student supports, among others. As previously stated, the SDI RC intentionally takes a collaborative approach with the colleges, rather than a mandated approach. With representation of the colleges within each workgroup, the SDI RC has worked to establish a culture of collective problem-solving and sharing of promising practices.

Shifts Over Time

Investing in Regional Projects

Compared to the early years of SWP, the SDI RC has shifted away from investing in short-term, one-off, college-based projects to its current approach of investing in long-term regional projects. For example, during rounds 1–4 (2016–2017 through 2019–2020), the SDI RC invested in one-year projects at selected colleges such as the Innovative Collaborative Projects, Tutoring Pilot Project, and the 21st Century Employability Skills Pilot (see Table X for project investments over eight rounds of SWP). Instead, with the SDI RC using a strategic approach of long-term investments in regional projects, it can focus on comprehensive systems improvements across the region's community colleges. In this way, the SDI RC can better leverage its resources to support the colleges with data, PD, technical assistance, and funds. Moreover, as the SDI RC helps the colleges implement new regional initiatives or new CCCCO mandates using a regional approach, the colleges are not having to create 10 individual ways to respond.

Following are the projects, target, investment amounts, and the specific SWP round(s) during which those projects were funded.

Table X. *Regional Consortium Investments by Project and Round, 2016–2017 through 2023–2024*

Project	Target	Total Investment (Rounds 1-8)	Round							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Pre-College Outreach	Region-wide Support	$5,493,658	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Guided Career Pathways Implementation	Region-wide Support	$5,862,920	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dual Enrollment	Colleges	$850,000							x	x
Credit for Prior Learning	Colleges	$400,000							x	x
Pathway Navigation	Colleges	$4,282,616		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Retention & Success/Faculty Institute	Colleges	$7,021,142			x	x	x	x	x	x
Sector Strategies and Equity Outcomes	Colleges	$4,542,171		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Clinical Placement Planning	Region-wide Support	$728,445						x	x	x
Employer Engagement	Region-wide Support	$2,401,704						x	x	x
Work-Based Learning Coordination	Colleges	$5,025,405		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Job Placement Case Management	Colleges	$12,278,733	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Marketing of Career Education Programs	Region-wide Support	$7,337,875	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
College-Based Marketing of Career Education Programs	Colleges	$3,733,965	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Labor Market Research	Region-wide Support	$5,090,319	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Innovative Collaborative Projects	Colleges	$412,802	x							
Tutoring Pilot Project	Colleges	$48,032		x						
21st Century Employability Skills Pilot	Colleges	$132,659		x						
Work-Based Learning Assessment	Colleges	$165,378		x						
Improving the Student Enrollment Process	Colleges	$1,485,254		x	x	x				
Retention & Success Acceleration Projects	Colleges	$824,952			x					
		$68,118,030								
Consortium Staffing	Region-wide Support	$2,167,315	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Administrative Cost	Region-wide Support	$1,444,878	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
		$71,730,223								

Building Trust and a Partnership

The active participation and problem solving of the consortium members has contributed to the building of trusted relationships within the SDI RC over the years. But it took time. Initially, the community colleges were uncertain about their trust in the SDI RC, and understandably, the colleges and the SDI RC needed time to understand how best to work together in this unique relationship.

Today the SDI RC's relationship with the colleges is symbiotic as the core of the region's education and workforce ecosystem. In recent years, the SDI RC has seen a shift in how the colleges rely on the consortium to support the advancement of their SWP efforts as reliable partners who can provide capacity-building support, resources, research-based practices, and structures for problem-solving and collaboration. For example, the colleges depend on the consortium to lead learning opportunities, such as communities of practices for shared learning across the colleges, and to provide professional development informed by regional needs, such as the Faculty Institute focused on faculty using student data to inform equity-centered practices or the online CE Teacher Preparation course for new teachers coming from industry. The colleges have learned they can depend on RC support for building capacity and on RC partnership for help.

Evolving Workgroups and Focus Areas

The strength of their working relationship enables the RC to be nimble in how it supports the colleges when needs change. As the colleges make strides in their progress and evolve, they identify new regional priorities that are important for continued systems change. Following are some examples of shifts in recent years:

- Re-envision and implementation of a new employer engagement model
- Emphasis on the importance of WBL experiences from an equity perspective
- Evolving workgroups to meet changing needs within a structure that allows for new priorities

Moving Equity to the Center

Since the start of SWP, the SDI RC has recognized the need for improving systems and practices to ensure equitable success outcomes for every student, especially for DI students. SWP investments in the region have enabled the SDI RC to forge established relationships with partners, including the colleges, to work collaboratively on advancing change; support capacity for data collection and analysis of disaggregated data; and cultivated a culture within the workgroups to lead SWP efforts based on research, among other foundational achievements.

In recent years, the SDI RC has sharpened its focus on equity, and the region is even more equipped to assertively make a difference in 2023–2024 through 2026–2027. The SDI RC's plans build on the equity work begun in 2022–2023:

- Implement equity-minded and race-conscious recommendations to systems and practices informed by the findings from the *Black Student Equity* report, commissioned in fall 2022

- Provide regional support for the colleges to develop a strategic plan for Career Services

- Support new cohorts of faculty and counselors participating in their respective Faculty Institute and Counselors Institute as they learn to analyze disaggregated data and adopt data-informed practices; continue support for existing cohorts of practitioners

- Support the colleges and districts to build capacity around CTE data usage, such as identifying equity gaps in CE programs and access to, retention in, and completion of early college credit and credit for prior learning opportunities for historically DI student groups

- Update and implement new technologies, such as RFA software to better track the colleges' outcomes for regionally supported SWP projects and redesign of the SDI RC website, that increase internal efficiencies to better communicate with and support stakeholders and the colleges

- Increase career opportunities, including WBL and paid internships, for every student, particularly for DI students, through positions that build local capacity at the colleges: WBL Coordinators, Employer Relations Liaisons, Job Placement Managers

Regional Demographics

[Geography]

INSERT VISUAL map of SD and Imperial counties in context of being the southern-most counties of CA.

Overlaid text: San Diego and Imperial Counties span the width of California at the state's most southern region with the Pacific Ocean to the west and Arizona to the east, and with Riverside County to the north and Mexico to the south.

San Diego County is the second most populous county of 58 counties in California and the fifth largest county in the US.

Imperial County is the least populous county in southern California and is the 31st largest county in the state.

San Diego and Imperial Counties offer a wide range of occupations and career opportunities within its diverse regional economies:

San Diego County

San Diego County is largely urban with a highly educated workforce. The region offers a diverse economy that includes "the largest military concentration in the world and a strong tourism industry" and has become an innovation hub in cybersecurity, wireless technologies, and software. Top local employers in the region are the US Navy, University of California San Diego, Sharp HealthCare, and the County of San Diego. In Q1 2023, San Diego led employment growth in CA, with the strongest growth in government and leisure and hospitality. (*Source*: San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation)

Imperial County

Imperial County is largely rural and boasts a strong and established agricultural industry. The county is emerging in renewable energy production and is quickly growing its capacity to produce energy through solar, geothermal, and wind. Imperial County is also emerging as California's "Lithium Valley," developing mineral extraction facilities to support the state's investment in electric-fueled transportation. (*Source*: Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation)

San Diego and Imperial Counties' demographics are reflected in the region's diversity of population size, race and ethnicity, income, and education.

	San Diego County	Imperial County
Population [graphic]	3,276,208	178,713
Forecasted Population Growth (2030) [graphic]	9%	3%
Age [graphic]		
0–24 years old	1,010,306 (31%)	67,358 (38%)
25 years and older	2,265,902	111,355
Race/Ethnicity [graphic]		
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.4%	0.9%
Asian	12.1%	1.2%
Black	4.4%	2.1%
Hispanic or Latino	33.9%	85.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.4%	0%
White	43.1%	9.4%
Other	1.2%	1.2%
Two or more races	5.1%	0.9%
Veterans (2017–2021) [graphic]	200,573	5,605
Median Household Income (2017–2021) [graphic]	$88,240	$49,078

(CA $84,907)		
Unemployment Rate (2022) [graphic] (CA 4.2%)	3.4%	14.7%
Persons in Poverty [graphic] (CA 12.3%)	10.7%	17.3%
Education (highest level attained) [graphic] 18–24 years old		
High school (includes equivalency)	35.6%	34.7%
Some college or associate degree	43.3%	53.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	13.5%	1.2%
25 years and older		
High school (includes equivalency)	18.1%	26%
Some college or associate degree	20.3%	26.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher	40.0%	13.5%

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2021, 2022

Regional Labor Market Information and Landscape

San Diego and Imperial Counties each have their own thriving economies — from the life sciences and military and defense industries in San Diego to the long-established agribusiness and mineral extraction in Imperial County that have paved the way for the new lithium industry. Each county has unique characteristics of its industry needs and individuals and families making up the local workforce.

The COE (San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence) provides LMI that drives community college CE program development. The COE equips the region with comprehensive analyses of the middle-skills labor market, while also leading the Data and Innovation workgroup, the latter of which is made up of institutional researchers who identify common research needs across the region. Some key research is detailed in this section, while the full list of the region's LMI resources can be found at the SDI RC's website.

Increased Labor Market Demands

Between 2022 and 2032, the number of jobs in San Diego and Imperial Counties is expected to increase by 14 percent and 18 percent respectively, as shown in the data reported from the COE (see Table X).

Table X. *Number of Jobs and Projected Percentage Change Imperial County, San Diego County, California, 2022–2032*

Region	Jobs, 2022	Jobs, 2032	Job Change, 2022–2032	Projected Percentage Change
San Diego County	1,767,478	2,007,861	240,383	14%
Imperial County	68,865	81,301	12,436	18%
California	20,352,832	23,201,331	2,848,499	14%

Source: San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence, 2023

Selection of Regional Priority Industry Sectors

To adequately meet the demands of the local labor market across the two counties, the region has selected four priority industry sectors (in bold) among the 11 industry sectors to guide the community colleges in strategic planning and program development.

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
- **Advanced Transportation & Logistics**
- Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies

- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Education & Human Development
- Energy, Construction & Utilities
- **Health**

- **Information Communication Technologies & Digital Media**
- Life Sciences & Biotechnology
- Public Safety & Government
- Retail, Hospitality & Tourism

The SDI RC selected the four regional priority sectors based on industry demand, the potential living wage, and the programs offered at the San Diego and Imperial community colleges. Informing the selection were the analyses detailed in the COE's two 2022 reports, *Sector Analysis: San Diego County* and *Sector Analysis: Imperial County*, which examined the 11 industry sectors across 15 metrics — number of jobs, percentage of change in job availability over time, average entry-level earnings by job, and average median earnings by job, to name a few. The analyses also included qualitative data from town hall meetings and inclusive feedback strategies solicited from stakeholders across the region.

Jobs and Earning Potential by Priority Sectors

With the LMI that the COE prepares, the community colleges can better understand the region's job demand and wages information to support individuals and families to earn a living wage. Job and wage information by priority sector in San Diego County is shown in Table X and in Imperial County in Table Y. Median hourly earnings for all 11 sectors in the two counties can be found in the *Career Education Guide 2024* [hyperlink] developed for the San Diego and Imperial community colleges.

Table X.

Number of Jobs, Job Change Percentage, Earnings by Priority Sector in San Diego County, 2022

INDICATOR *Analysis by SOC CODES*	Advanced Manufacturing	Health	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	ICT & Digital Media
Number of Jobs by Sector in San Diego, 2022	127,528	245,883	135,449	91,404
Percentage Job Change by Sector in San Diego, 2012–2022	11%	24%	23%	21%
Average Entry-Level Hourly Earnings by Sector in San Diego, 2022	$21.07	$39.03	$22.89	$28.31
Average Median Hourly Earnings by Sector in San Diego 2022	$25.46	$51.41	$27.92	$37.83

Source: Lightcast 2023.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Table Y.

Number of Jobs, Job Change Percentage, Earnings by Priority Sector in Imperial County, 2022

INDICATOR *Analysis by SOC CODES*	Advanced Manufacturing	Health	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	ICT & Digital Media
Number of Jobs by Sector in Imperial, 2022	2,933	12,965	5,876	941
Percentage Job Change by Sector in Imperial, 2012–2022	20%	22%	19%	8%
Average Entry-Level Hourly Earnings by Sector in Imperial, 2022	$10.57	$22.76	$18.24	$18.93
Average Median Hourly Earnings by Sector in Imperial, 2022	$12.43	$28.14	$23.48	$23.85

Source: Lightcast 2023.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Equity Gaps in Priority Sectors

With the SDI RC's commitment to equity, workgroups such as Employer Engagement, Marketing, and Data and Innovation are engaged in making connections between LMI and equity gaps in local priority sector jobs and community college enrollment. To better understand the equity gaps in these sectors, the COE released two 2023 reports — one each for San Diego County and Imperial County — *Equity Gaps in Priority Jobs and Programs,* which document labor market demand and postsecondary program data for each county. These reports pinpointed priority jobs (or jobs with earnings above the living wage and in high demand) as well as priority programs (programs that train for priority jobs). The reports identified equity gaps by race/ethnicity, age, and gender for each job and program. For the jobs, the COE compared the demographics of each job with the workforce overall. For the programs, the COE compared the demographics of each program with the overall community college student population.

With the end goals of growing and supporting priority programs and equitable representation in priority jobs, findings of these reports can inform diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging strategies, such as targeted recruitment and retention efforts for priority programs as also reflected in the SDI regional priorities and projects described later in this plan.

Career Education Student Demographics

The regional demographic data and LMI in the previous sections, illustrate the San Diego and Imperial Counties landscape with a need to educate and employ a growing population by 2030. The data also show a need to increase the economic mobility of the region's residents who are not earning a family-sustaining wage and industry sectors where job growth is anticipated.

CE programs serve an important and key role in preparing students for career success, and the aforementioned LMI help the colleges align CE programs to the region's labor market needs. Demographic data of the region's CE students provides another lens to understanding who CE students are at San Diego and Imperial Counties community colleges, how many enroll in CE programs, and supports that CE students, particularly CE students from DI populations, need to succeed.

CE Enrollment

In 2020–2021, the 10 San Diego-Imperial community colleges served a total of 167,742 students, including 85,374 CE students (see Figure X). In San Diego and Imperial Counties, CE students comprise one-half of the students enrolled at the community colleges.

Figure X
One-Half of San Diego and Imperial Community College Students are Enrolled in a CE Course
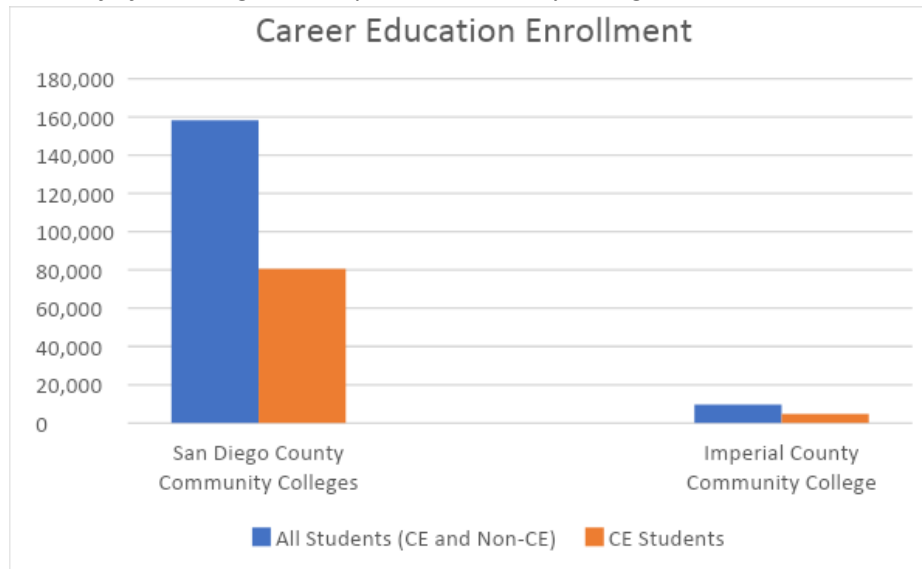
Source: LaunchBoard, 2020–2021

CE Students by Race/Ethnicity

With a highly diverse CE student population in race/ethnicity, socioeconomics, and age, SDI community colleges are trying to intentionally design programs and supports to meet the range of student needs (see Figures X and Y).
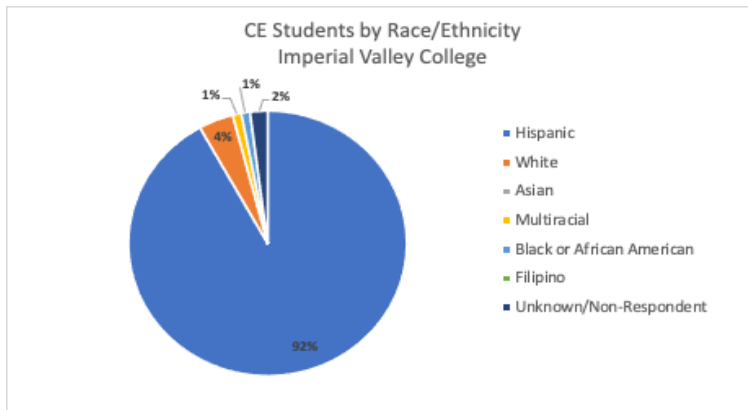
Figure X

Two-thirds of CE Students Identify as Students of Color at San Diego County Community Colleges

CE Students by Race/Ethnicity
San Diego County Community Colleges

- Hispanic — 44%
- White — 31%
- Asian — 6%
- Multiracial — 6%
- Black or African American — 5%
- Filipino — 5%
- Unknown/Non-Respondent
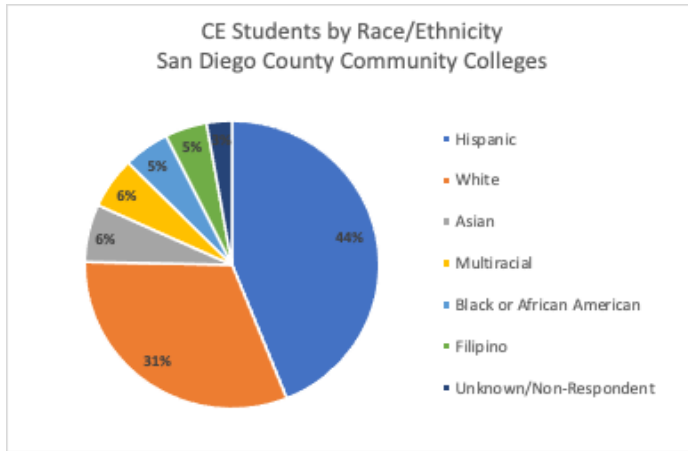
Source: LaunchBoard, 2020–2021

Figure Y.

Ninety-One Percent of CE Students Identify as Hispanic at Imperial Valley College

CE Students by Race/Ethnicity
Imperial Valley College

- Hispanic — 92%
- White — 4%
- Asian — 1%
- Multiracial — 1%
- Black or African American — 2%
- Filipino
- Unknown/Non-Respondent

Source: LaunchBoard, 2020–2021

CE Students by Economically Disadvantaged Designation

The Perkins Act V ensures that all secondary and postsecondary students, but especially historically underrepresented students, are provided high-quality CTE programs. In the region's community colleges, more than three-quarters of CE students are low-income adults, unsheltered individuals, and individuals who have aged out of foster care (see Figures X and X).

Figure X
About 75% of CE Students are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at San Diego County Community Colleges
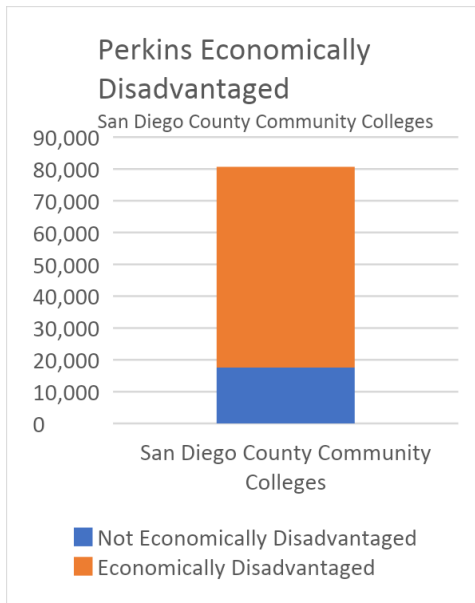
Source: LaunchBoard 2020–2021

Figure X.
More Than Ninety Percent of CE Students are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at Imperial Valley College
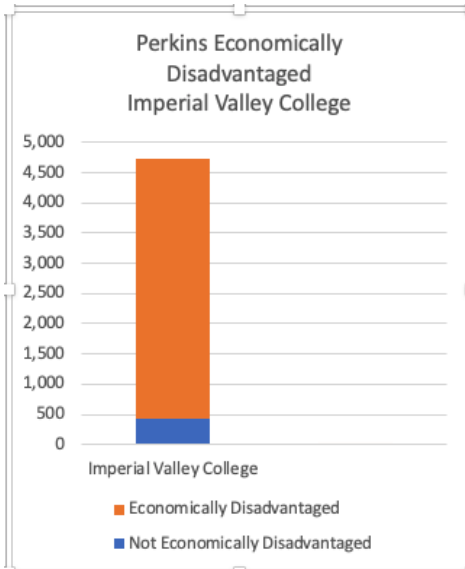
Source: LaunchBoard 2020–2021

CE Students by Age Group

SDI community college students who are enrolled in CE programs span a wide range of age groups. About two-thirds of all SDI CE students comprise two age groups—*19 years or less* and *20 to 24 years*— which means that one-third of CE students are older adults (see Figures X and X). Some of these "non-traditional," older adult students may be wanting to "upskill" to seek higher wages, change careers, return to civilian life, or attend college for the first time.

Figure X
More than two-thirds of CE Students are 24 Years Old and Below in San Diego County Community Colleges
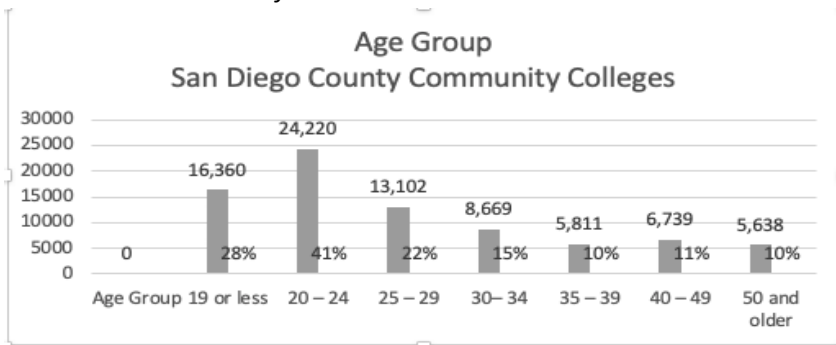
Source: LaunchBoard, 2020–2021

Figure X
Two-thirds of CE Students are 24 Years Old and Below at Imperial Valley College

Age Group
Imperial Valley College
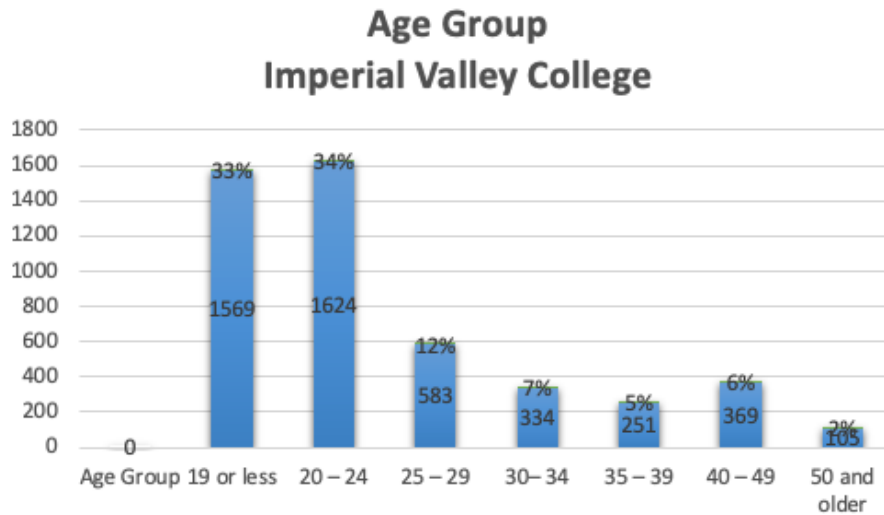
Source: LaunchBoard, 2020–2021

Reasons Why High School Students Choose Community College

In 2023, the SDI RC wanted to understand the perspectives of the region's high school students concerning their interests and reasons for choosing community college as their option after high school. Between January and March 2023, more than 10,000 high school students from the region participated in the *Options After High School Survey*. Among 1,822 high school seniors (class of '23) who indicated community college as their choice for postsecondary education, 59.2% identified as Hispanic or Latinx, and 37% identified as White. Students indicated the following reasons for choosing community college for their postsecondary education:

- Saving money was the primary reason for choosing community college according to 64.9% of students.
- Community college programs will help them prepare for a career reported by one-third of students.
- Community colleges have connections to local employers for internships and jobs reported one-third of students.

Strong Workforce Program Metrics

Today, the SDI RC has established itself as an integral entity to the collective efforts of systems change toward increasing opportunities for student success. The results of these efforts are reflected in the commitment to improvement and innovation, collaborative work, and measurable progress at the region's 10 community colleges. Since 2015–2016, the year prior to the launch of SWP, **SDI community colleges have moved the needle** in educating and preparing more CE students who are completing CE credits, attaining degrees and certificates, and earning higher wages after exiting.

SWP progress at the SDI community colleges is measured by the CCCCO's Student Success Metrics — *Momentum, Success, Employment, and Earnings* — as shown in the following eight figures. In the case of one metric, Job Placement in a Related Field of Study, the rate fell slightly; however, the SDI community colleges are actively focused on increasing career opportunities as previously described. Separate from the Student Success Metrics, the colleges examine disaggregated data to understand and improve the outcomes of DI students. All data presented are from LaunchBoard reporting on the academic years between 2015–16 (the last year prior to SWP) and 2021–2022 (the most recent year for which there is data), unless noted. ~~Definitions of the metrics can be found in Appendix X~~.
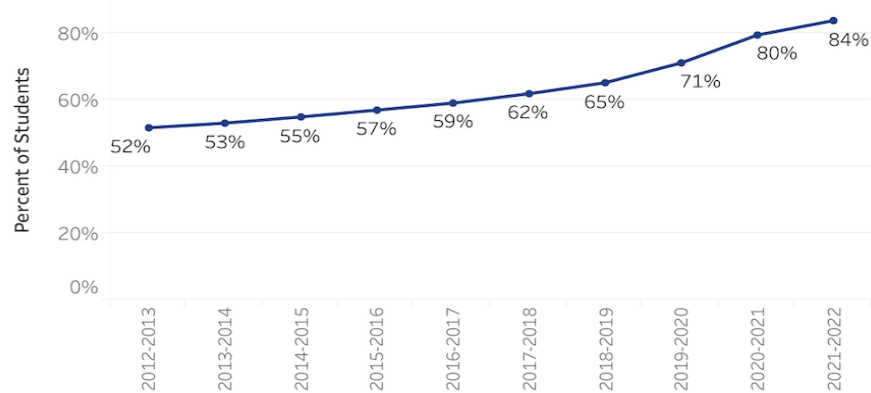
Momentum

Career Education Course Completion

The rate of SDI CE students who completed a noncredit CE or workforce preparation course or had a minimum of 48 contact hours in a single year **increased** from 57% to 84% between 2015–16 and 2021–22 (see Figure X).

Figure X.

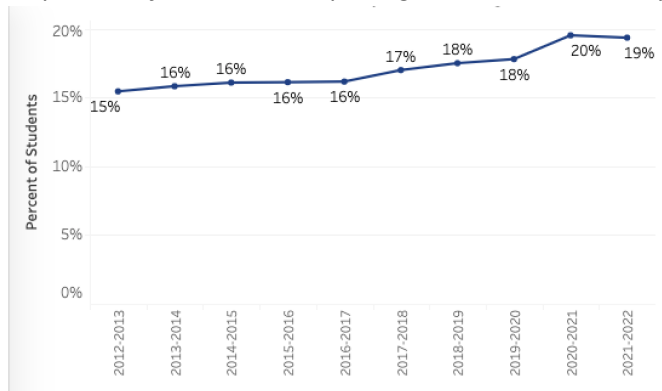*CE Course Completion Rates Grew by Nearly 50% over a Seven-Year Period*

9+ Career Education Units

SDI colleges saw an **increase** in CE students successfully completing 9 or more CE credits in a single year, rising from 16% in 2015–16 to 19% in 2021–22 (see Figure. X).

Figure X
*Proportion of Students Completing 9+ CE Credits Rose by about 19% over a Seven-Year Period*

Success

Degree Completion

The rate of SDI CE students who earned a noncredit certificate, CCCCO-approved certificate, associate degree, and/or CCC baccalaureate degree or attained apprenticeship journey status has steadily **increased** from 8% in 2015–16 to 12% in 2021–22 (see Figure X).

Figure X
The Percentage of CE Students Earning Degrees, Certificates, or Journeyman Status Rose by Half Across Seven Years
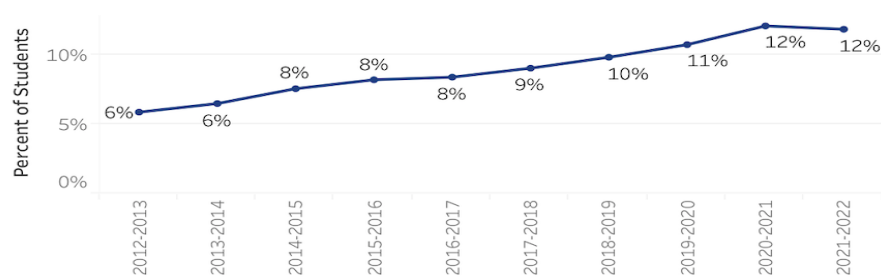
Transfer to a Four-Year Institution

The rate of SDI CE students who transferred to a four-year institution **rose** from 5.5% in 2015–16 to 8% in 2020–21, despite a 14% decline in CE student enrollment during the same years (In 2015–16, 98,867 students enrolled in a CE course, and in 2020–21, 85,819 students enrolled) (see Figure X).

Figure X
The Rate of CE Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Institution Rose by More Than 30% in a Six-Year Period

Source: CCCCO Launchboard Strong Workforce Program Dashboard
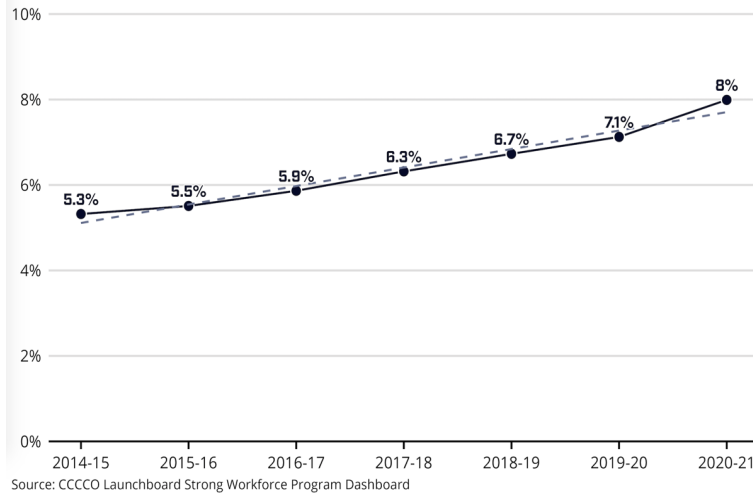
Employment

Employment in Related Field of Study
Despite **slight declines** in job placement rates between 2015–16 and 2019–20, about 3 out of 5 SDI CE pathway students transitioned to jobs related to their fields of study upon program completion in 2019–20 (see Figure X).

Figure X

The Rate of CE Students Working in Jobs Related to their Field of Study Fell Slightly in a Five-Year Period
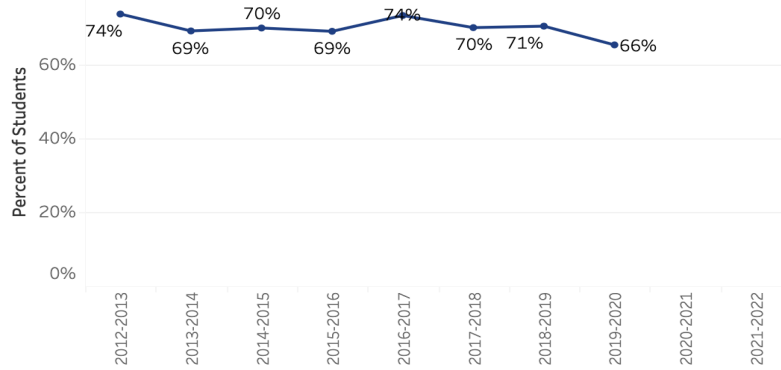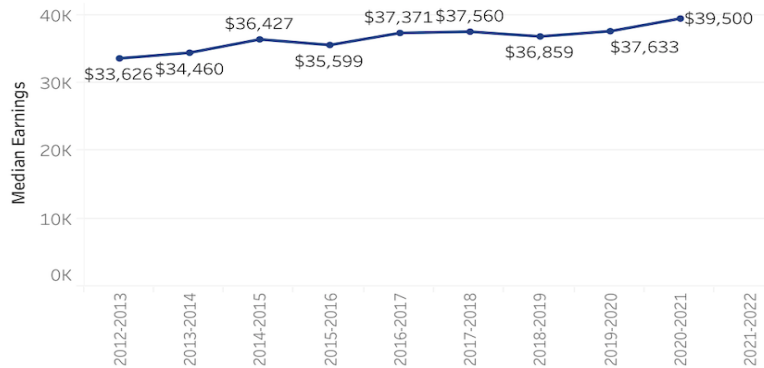

Earnings

Median Annual Earnings of Exiting CE Students

The median annual earnings **rose** from $35,599 in 2015–16 to $39,500 in 2020–21 for SDI CE students who exited the community college system and who did not transfer to any postsecondary institution during that period of time (see Figure X).

Figure X

Median Annual Earnings of Exiting SDI CE Students Rose about 11% in a Six-Year Period

Median Change in Earnings of Exiting CE Students

The median change in earnings prior to community college enrollment and after exiting **rose** by one-third, from 18% to 24% between 2015–16 and 2020–21 for SDI CE students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution (see Figure X).

Figure X
Median Change in Earnings for Exiting SDI CE Students Has Trended Upward for Six Years
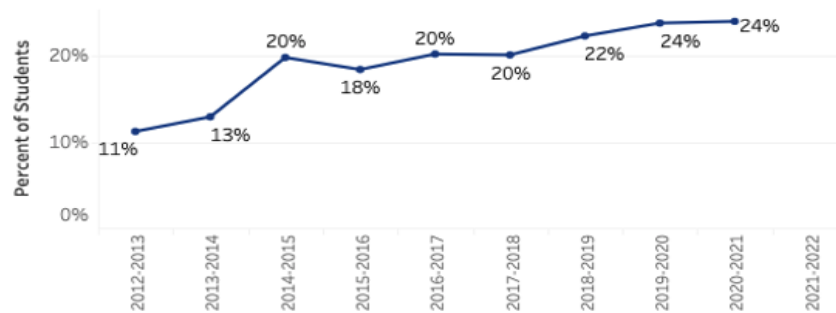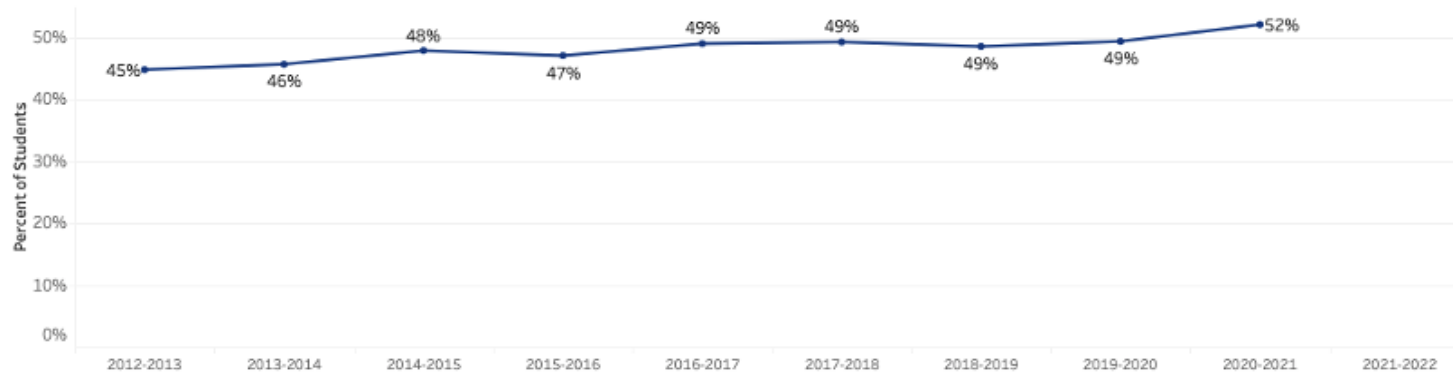

Exiting CE Students Who Attained the Living Wage

Among SDI CE students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, a little over half (52%) obtained living-wage jobs in 2020–21, **up** from 47% in 2015–16 (see Figure X).

Figure X
The Rate of SDI CE Students Who Attained the Living-Wage Following Exit Rose 5% Over a Six-Year Period

OVERVIEW of REGIONAL GOALS and PRIORITIES

Goals of the SDI RC

Build college capacity to create equitable systemic change, which closes equity gaps

Unify the workforce ecosystem

Advocate for changes to policy, processes, and practices

Regional Priorities of the SDI RC

With consideration to the region's LMI, the demographics of the region's population, the needs of SDI students, and the region's SWP progress, the SDI RC has identified five **regional priorities** to guide its work in support of the colleges toward achieving the region's SWP goals.

1	2	3	4	5
To **better prepare the region's prospective students** for college through outreach, alignment, and acceleration	To **better onboard and support students** in their education, and prepare them for the workforce and launch of their careers	To **involve employers** in students' preparation of the workforce and provide opportunities through aligned curricula, career exploration, work-based learning experiences, and job placement toward increasing students' socioeconomic mobility	To **ensure that colleges have data-based resources** to make informed programmatic decisions that equitably benefit students and create opportunities for them, while supporting regional continuous improvement	To **increase awareness** throughout the region of the San Diego and Imperial Counties community colleges and Career Education programs

Workgroups and Committees

K–14 Career Pathways   Career Navigation   Retentions, Success & Support   Employer Engagement   Marketing   Data & Innovation

Six distinct workgroups, plus related committees and ad hoc committees as needed, lead the efforts to enact the regional priorities through their own set of goals and activities. Aligned to the regional goals, the focus and work of the workgroups and committees reflect the region's commitment to equity and strive to ensure that every student has opportunities for increased socioeconomic mobility.

REGIONAL PRIORITY
1

[Insert gray-color graphic of the Student Road to Career Success in gray; except use color to emphasize the first section of the road (Postsecondary Engagement)]

Regional Priority

To better prepare the region's prospective students for college through outreach, alignment, and acceleration

Workgroup

K–14 Career Pathways

Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the K–14 Career Pathways workgroup, contributing toward the SDI RC Strong Workforce Program goals:

Administered *Options After High School* **survey twice to all high school CTE students in the region**	**Showcased promising practices during Workgroup meetings**	**Supported efforts of regional community colleges' Outreach Community of Practice to middle and high schools**	**Launched and promoted regional career mapping K–14 Program Finder**	**Compiled baseline data to provide regional view of Early College Credit access and success**	**Launched and continued support of regional dual enrollment Community of Practice**
Response rate increased by almost 70% between the first and second administration. Results have yielded recommendations for region, colleges, and K–12 stakeholders and a district-level dashboard of results.	Organized series of presentations in which members presented on challenges and solutions in career pathways, e.g., career pathway course guides, apprenticeships, and adult dual enrollment.	College outreach community of practice (CoP) piloted a series of events ("Map Your Path") showcasing career education programs to engage students from high schools with low college-going rates — by pathway, not by feeder school.	Project includes a website that graphically displays how the region's high school, adult school, and college pathways connect, as well as tools and resources for practitioners, students, and parents to navigate the site.	Collected aggregated course-level dual enrollment (DE) and articulation credit by exam (CBE) data for students enrolled in high school DE or CBE in AY 2021–2022; collected the number of college and high school courses with an articulation agreement.	Supported K–14 DE practitioners: Hired DE consultant; convened CoP for K–14 DE practitioners; conducted needs assessment; provided resources on a regional webpage; assisted via office hours and 1:1 consulting with adult education, colleges, and K–12 LEAs as requested. Provided grant support for K–12 LEAs and made possible DE SWP funding to colleges with regional RFA.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for K–14 Career Pathways

Four-Year Goals

Goal 1: Strong, collaborative, and integrated working relationships across K–14 CE pathways focused on regional Strong Workforce Program goals and priority sectors.

Goal 2: Equity in regional CE pathway students' success with inclusive K–14 transition supports.

Goal 3: Adaptable career pathways that meet regional priority workforce demands.

Goal 4: Broad awareness and understanding of regional career pathways from middle school and high school, adult education, and community college.

Goal 5: Accessible high-quality CE pathways to high-wage, high-demand occupations that include career exploration, work-based learning, and pathway accelerators for each student.

One-Year Goals

Goal 1: Outreach & Alignment - To ensure equitable access and smooth transitions, support the collaborative growth of high-quality, existing and new CE pathways by increasing awareness and identifying opportunities for strengthened alignment with industry and across educational segments (K–12, Adult Education, Community College).

Goal 2: Alignment - Develop, implement, regularly update and promote a career mapping K–14 Program Finder that helps facilitate program alignment and encourage collaboration among partners to improve transitions and postsecondary pathway completions.

Goal 3: Acceleration - Accelerate student completions by improving, aligning, and expanding career education early college credit opportunities for disproportionately impacted students.

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The K–14 Career Pathways workgroup plans to engage in the following activities toward achieving its one-year goals.

Outreach
- Support K–14 partners to identify and make progress on closing equity gaps within career pathways
- Support smooth transitions
- Support implementation of recommendations from *Options After High School Survey*
- Strengthen middle school/high school engagement with regional community colleges

Alignment
- Launch and promote new Program Finder tool on CareerEd.org
- Create "how-to" videos, social media marketing, district/site level marketing
- Support K–14 partners to identify and make progress on closing equity gaps within career pathways
- Support smooth transitions

Acceleration
- Support K–12, Adult Education, and community college dual enrollment practitioners

- Explore opportunities to strengthen CTE articulation credit by exam (high school to college and adult education to college)

Additional Workgroup Projects

ADULT EDUCATION/NONCREDIT (AE/NC)

Focus
Increase awareness of adult education and noncredit programs at institutions and for students, ensure curriculum and instruction incorporates skills that align with industry needs, ensure students have access to training programs and career pathways with multiple entry and exit points, and examine equitable learning across student populations.

Accomplishments
- Held RC-sponsored workshops for region adult education providers to identify needs and work towards alignment among systems.
- Provided facilitated training sessions with adult education consortia representatives to identify, align, and bundle courses.
- Developed a data repository to store CTE programs to help set the stage for future horizontal and vertical alignment, coordination and sharing of best practices. Offerings were classified by type and capacity to lead into jobs, clustered into coherent sequences or bundles (occupational training programs [OTPs]), and coded to Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC). Created a User Guide.
- Formed a Data Community of Practice to ensure the repository was kept current.
- Created an Adult Education college credit flier to illustrate acceleration options for students.
- Began horizontal alignment work.
- Uploaded adult education data to the regional K–14 Program Finder tool.

Goals
- Continue horizontal alignment until all OTPs are complete.
- Follow with vertical alignment between AE/NC and credit community college courses and programs.
- Promote sharing of best practices in alignment and transition.

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL)

Focus
Increase regional awareness and implementation of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), in which college credit is awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom.

Accomplishments
- Initiated a regional approach to CPL across ten colleges within the region by providing training, exposure, and implementation support
- Provided funding for a faculty CPL lead to participate in professional development and then support the development of CPL process on their own campus
- Formed a regional CPL Community of Practice (CoP) from this group

- Attended the 2021 Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) Conference held in San Diego. Twenty-one attendees from the SDI region attended.
- Trained CPL leads and campus colleagues on topics such as student services processes in evaluations and counseling for CPL.
- Developed a catalog of marketing videos available on the regional website CareerEd.org.
- Developed course housed in the Vision Resource Center to support system professionals in the planning and implementation of a local CPL program.
- Assisted colleges in identifying the best way to respond to a regional RFA providing continued support, based on their starting point in FY 2023–2024.

Goals

The CPL technical assistance provider/coach will continue to support the regional efforts by holding 1:1 meetings with all college CPL leads to:
- Guide in implementing tasks agreed upon in the CPL RFA
- Assist with progress reporting as needed
- Offer hands-on CPL training/professional development workshops for faculty, staff, and administrators
- Provide written and verbal update on status of work at each college awarded a CPL RFA.

RISING SCHOLARS

Focus

Expand the number of justice-involved students participating and succeeding in the region's community colleges.

Accomplishments
- Initiated meetings within the region; guest speakers addressed topics of interest
- Formed subcommittee to design a series of student workshops
- Promoted the Onward! Online Workshop Series for Formerly Incarcerated Students and offered it to the statewide network

Goals
- Continue the student-centered focus, building a community of connections and support
- Design a spring student workshop around their needs of the Rising Scholars population
- Continue sharing of resource

REGIONAL PRIORITY
2

[Insert gray-color graphic of the Student Road to Career Success in gray; except use color to emphasize the next two sections of the road (Onboarding and Student Retention, Success & Transition)]

Regional Priority

To better onboard and support students in their education and prepare them for the workforce and launch of their careers

Workgroup

Career Navigation
(Formerly Pathway Navigation and Work-Based Learning/Job Placement)

Background of Evolved Workgroups

The Career Navigation workgroup launched in the Fall of 2023 after colleges responded to a RFA early in the year. It combines two key workgroups (Pathway Navigation and Work-Based Learning/Job Placement workgroups) that have grown more connected in recent years.

- Pathway Navigation focused on adopting and embedding onboarding strategies for every student — namely, intake processes, outreach, pre-enrollment engagement, orientation, and career exploration and planning processes — all aligned with colleges' Guided Pathways and Student Equity and Achievement Program efforts. The regional colleges achieved significant gains but also uncovered the need to support Career Services and better expose students to and prepare them for careers.

- Work-Based Learning focused on improving and increasing work-based learning and job placement opportunities across the continuum of experiences that would lead students to better job opportunities and employment outcomes. This included embedding WBL Coordinators and Job Placement Case Managers on campuses in the region as well as the development of an employer engagement model to connect the region's employers to the workgroup.

Both the Pathway Navigation and Work-Based Learning workgroups agreed to the interconnectedness of their respective projects around supporting students, especially the region's disproportionately impacted students. The Career Navigation workgroup focuses on providing the support that students need to learn about careers and pathways and to gain a competitive edge for entering the workforce. Career services on campuses are critical in offering students the opportunities to explore career options; understand and experience workplace expectations; hone soft skills; and find employment opportunities via career assessments, work-based learning, or job referral programs. Thus, based on the colleges' need for career services support and on research pointing to career development as integral to student success, the Regional Consortium is committed to supporting the colleges through the efforts of the new Career Navigation workgroup.

Workgroup Accomplishments

Following are a sample of key accomplishments of the **Pathway Navigation** and **Work-Based Learning (WBL)** workgroups, contributing towards the SDI Strong Workforce Program goals:

PATHWAY NAVIGATION	PATHWAY NAVIGATION	PATHWAY NAVIGATION	WBL	WBL	WBL
Developed Pathway Navigation Community of Practice	**Aligned Pathway Navigation and Guided Pathways**	**Established key practices in using data to address equity in onboarding practices**	**Embedded Job Placement Case Managers and Work-based Learning Coordinators at each college**	**Developed SG21 Framework Dev**	**Developed and implemented faculty PD course about the importance of WBL**
Established ongoing community of practice (CoP) consisting of key practitioners and leaders on campuses to grapple with critical equity issues and share promising practices. Workgroup included student voice through student panels to better understand onboarding issues facing students, especially those from DI populations. After six years, the group established trust and a charge for equity-focused practices, building capacity across the region.	With common goals of supporting students as they *enter the path*, the group worked to break down the silos to align and integrate the college's Guided Pathways and Pathway Navigation efforts.	With a shared charge of supporting DI students, especially Black students, the workgroup prioritized the need to identify data sources, equity gaps and needs around creating data-driven onboarding practices. Colleges documented and shared their onboarding practices.	Identified need to connect students with WBL experiences and direct student career placement using a case management approach. These annually funded positions exist across the region through the Strong Workforce Program.	The framework facilitates use of the SG21 data tool to ensure students receive equitable access to WBL opportunities. Foundational for the framework, the workgroup also established a shared understanding of all types of WBL activities and the critical connection between WBL and equity through a glossary of shared definitions, all approved by the college presidents.	A 20-hour Canvas WBL course covers topics regarding equity, access, and the WBL continuum. Regionally, over 200 faculty have participated, and other regions are duplicating the effort.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Career Navigation

Four-Year Goals (Long-Term Desired Outcomes)

Goal 1: A career services experience that gives every student, especially populations of DI students, myriad opportunities for career awareness and career exploration throughout their student journey

Goal 2: Increased participation of students in WBL

Goal 3: Embedded career navigation processes into all community college coursework

Goal 4: Successful implementation of colleges' unique Career Services Strategic Plans over three years with support and technical assistance from the Regional Consortium

One-Year Goals

Goal 1: Successfully merge the Pathway Navigation and Work-Based Learning membership into the new Career Navigation workgroup

Goal 2: Support colleges in reviewing current practices and creating effective and impactful Career Services Strategic Plans including the use of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) standards evaluation tool

Goal 3: Establish Career Navigation workgroup goals and metrics while building buy-in and understanding from leadership on the importance of these goals and metrics

Goal 4: Successfully maintain existing and ongoing projects from each of the former workgroups

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Career Navigation workgroup will establish its detailed plans to engage in projects and strategies toward achieving its one-year goals.
[NOTE: This workgroup will meet for the first time in September 2023 so the detail below can be added until this Annual Plan is delivered to the Chancellor's Office.]

Workgroup goal setting and establishing metrics to measure progress
- Establish baseline goals with equity focus
- Identify strategies to measure progress toward goals
- Integrate the existing and ongoing projects in the Pathway Navigation and WBL into the common Career Navigation goals
- Build capacity to help the workgroup understand the connection between career development, WBL, and equity impacts on lifelong learning and social mobility

Establish the detailed strategic planning process and plan for technical assistance support
- Create a timeline for using NACE standards to identify strengths and gaps in college's Career Services offered, identifying areas of focus for strategic planning process
- Support colleges in producing their strategic plans

Support and maintain existing, ongoing projects, including:
- WBL Faculty Professional Development Course
- Ensuring Equitable Work-based Learning (SG21) Framework
- Career planning efforts (e.g., Career Everywhere report)

REGIONAL PRIORITY
3

[Insert graphic of the Student Road to Career Success; use color to emphasize all sections of the road]

Regional Priority

To involve employers in students' preparation of the workforce and provide opportunities through aligned curricula, career exploration, work-based learning experiences, and job placement toward increasing students' socioeconomic mobility

Workgroup

Employer Engagement

Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the Employer Engagement committee, contributing toward the SDI RC Strong Workforce Program goals:

New Employer Engagement Model	New Platform for Managing Employer Engagement	Knowledge Sharing	More Career Development and Job Opportunities for Students	Strengthened Partnerships with Economic and Workforce Agencies
Successfully launched a new employer engagement model and hired 10 Employer Relations Liaisons (ERLs), each focused on the employer relationships at their college (see Exhibit X for a visual representation of the model)	Implemented regional CRM (customer relationship management) tool, HubSpot, for ERLs to provide monthly reporting of employer engagement activities. This method tracks the progress at each college towards meeting their localized needs.	Presented the region's unique employer engagement model and its use of a CRM to nearly all of the other regional consortia and to CA Community College Association for Occupational Education. Presented the collaborative workforce-education-industry relationships and structure of Advancing San Diego to ensure that students learn skills from the colleges' industry-valued programs	Increased WBL and job opportunities in the region by cultivating more and stronger employer-college relationships. In 2022–2023, the ERLs met or collaborated with 1,126 employers in the region, resulting in 1,902 WBL and job opportunities, plus participation in other career activities such as speaker panels and career fairs.	Established and improved relationships between the SDI RC and partners—San Diego Regional EDC, SDWP, East County EDC, North County EDC, South County EDC, Imperial Valley EDC, and Imperial County Workforce Development Board—and furthered the collaborative work of Advancing San Diego at the colleges.

Exhibit X. San Diego & Imperial Counties Strong Workforce Employer Engagement Model

SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES STRONG WORKFORCE EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT MODEL

ENGAGEMENT DRIVERS

Regional Employer Engagement Team

Director of Strategic Partnerships
Director of Apprenticeships
Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research
Employer Relations Liaisons
Industry Relations Consultants

Regional Partners

Economic Development Corporations
Workforce Development Boards
Community-based Organizations
Industry, Labor, & Trade Associations
Chambers of Commerce
Local Education Agencies

College Employer Engagement Teams

Work-based Learning Coordinators, Job Placement Case Managers, & Career Centers at:

Cuyamaca College
Grossmont College
Imperial Valley College
MiraCosta College
Palomar College
San Diego City College
San Diego College of Continuing Education
San Diego Mesa College
San Diego Miramar College
Southwestern College

TECHNOLOGY & COLLABORATION

Regional Partners
Industry Sectors
College Employer Engagement Teams

Regional Employer Engagement Team

COLLEGE OUTCOMES

- Student preparation: knowledge, skills & abilities aligned to industry needs
- Equitable work-based learning
- Careers that lead to social mobility

EMPLOYER OUTCOMES

- Access to a well-trained talent source
- Early exposure to students in work-based learning
- Training resources for current staff

Industry Sectors

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Transportation & Logistics
- Agriculture, Water, & Environmental Technologies
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Education & Human Development
- Energy, Construction, & Utilities
- Healthcare
- Information Communication Technologies & Digital Media
- Life Sciences & Biotechnology
- Public Safety
- Retail, Hospitality, & Tourism

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES
CAREER EDUCATION

CareerEd.org

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Employer Engagement

Four-Year Goals – Employer Engagement	One-Year Goals
Goal 1: Increase outreach to employers to create more work-based learning opportunities for students **Goal 2:** Cultivate relationships with employers that lead to Increased equitable student employment opportunities and outcomes **Goal 3:** Develop approaches that are more responsive to employer immediate training needs, particularly with emerging technologies **Goal 4:** Continue to foster strong relationships with regional and local workforce development, community-based organizations, industry, and LEAs	**Goal 1**: Generate and develop equitable and more work-based learning (WBL) opportunities for students **Goal 2:** Increase student job opportunities in careers that lead to social mobility and improve employment outcomes **Goal 3:** Develop programmatic approaches that are more responsive to employers' immediate training needs, particularly with emerging technologies

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Employer Engagement team, specifically the ERLs, plan to implement the Key Performance Indicators established for the Employer Engagement Model by engaging in the following activities:

Increase and Improve Relationships with Employers and Colleges
- Actively participate in employer engagement activities, including meetings, phone calls, emails, visits
- Actively engage with key college stakeholders (e.g., faculty, dean, WBL Coordinators, Job Placement Case Managers, career center) involved in WBL and employment outcomes
- Collaborate with new and existing employers, as well as colleges, to develop more WBL and job opportunities

Participate in Industry/Networking Events to Learn Industry Trends and to Network for Expanding WBL, Jobs, or Advisories
- Attend multiple networking events each month, and follow-up with new contacts

Support capacity building at colleges in WBL and employment work
- Assist colleges to identify industry contacts for advisories and to improve advisory experience
- Collaborate with colleges to develop a College-Employer Partner Gap Analysis
- Support college events that promote WBL and employment for students

Additional Committee Projects

APPRENTICESHIPS

Focus

Identify opportunities for efficient collaboration and opportunities to build or expand the apprenticeship model as an equity-centered strategy, encourage transparency, and leverage existing resources to further serve students and employers.

Accomplishments

- Created a regional apprenticeship planning team, which identified the need for an apprenticeship director and led to the hiring and onboarding of the new apprenticeship director
- Through the regional apprenticeship planning team, identified the need to further educate the region on apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, which led to the development and delivery of a five-session PD series in partnership with High Road Alliance to equip college leaders with expanded knowledge about apprenticeships
- Identified employer engagement resources for Employer Relations Liaisons (ERLs) and conducted an ERL training on apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships
- Created a new online Apprenticeship Resource Library, primarily for community college staff to strengthen apprenticeship opportunities
- Developed new partnership with LAUNCH Apprenticeship to strengthen community colleges' capacities to work effectively with business and industry in developing and sustaining pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs
- Collaborated with the San Diego-Imperial Center of Excellence on a regional apprenticeship report, which will provide a foundation for informing and guiding regional priorities and investments about apprenticeships over the next three to five years
- Developed a revised definition of apprenticeship for the WBL glossary, inclusive of new and innovative sectors outside the building trades

Goals

Goal 1: Develop a regional intermediary structure to support and expand equitable access to registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in the region

Goal 2: Work collaboratively with industry and community college collaborators to identify new apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship opportunities in high-growth industries, including new and innovative sectors

Goal 3: Engage in cooperative efforts with community college and industry partners to offer technical and related support, while establishing viable funding strategies to build local capacity and ensure successful initiation and long-term growth and sustainabilit

REGIONAL PRIORITY
4

[Insert graphic of the Student Road to Career Success; use color to emphasize all sections of the road]

Regional Priority

To ensure that colleges have data-based resources to make informed programmatic decisions that equitably benefit students and create opportunities for them, while supporting regional continuous improvement

Workgroup
Data and Innovation

Workgroup Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the Data and Innovation workgroup, contributing toward the SDI RC Strong Workforce Program goals:

Partnership with Center of Excellence	Capacity Building for Data-Driven Work	Support for Data-Driven Work	Support for Professional Development	Data and Research Expertise
Established strong relationship with the COE (Center of Excellence) that have led to collaborative work: The regional Faculty Institute and the Counselor Institute for building capacity in data-driven work ● Current labor market information (LMI) and emerging trends for informing programmatic decisions ● Contributions to the recent study and report, Black Student Equity:	In partnership with the COE, conducted the Faculty Institute and the Counselor Institute to build data literacy among the region's faculty and counselors to conduct inquiry- and data-driven work that improves student success outcomes, especially for DI students, while improving practices, and shifting mindsets.	Designed job descriptions for the Temporary CTE Research Experts and successfully advocated for funding from the Regional Consortium to expand research capacity for CE data requests that support Strong Workforce Program projects.	Designed job description for Regional Research Associate and successfully advocated for funding from the Regional Consortium to facilitate communication, planning, and execution of professional development in the region.	Provided a reliable forum for problem-solving related to data needs from the region. Regional workgroup leads have used the Data & Innovation workgroup as a resource to answer data questions and get feedback on data products. Two examples include the Marketing workgroup requesting data related to military-affiliated communities and the K–14 Career Pathways workgroup seeking feedback on a dual enrollment dashboard.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Data and Innovation

Four-Year Goals

Goal 1: Sustain long-term funding opportunities for research. Build a regional, sustainable investment infrastructure for regional data needs that supplement the support of local colleges without burdening them

Goal 2: Build a sustainable, long-term channel of communication with the Chancellor's Office that is not contingent on individual relationships (i.e., can withstand staff turnover)

Goal 3: Develop a yearly Data & Innovation showcase that brings together local colleges and highlights effective data products and uses at the research, faculty, and counselor levels

One-Year Goals

Goal 1: Sustain long-term funding opportunities that increase staffing to meet additional project demands regionally, particularly, those focused on achieving the regional Strong Workforce Program goals

Goal 2: Increase capacity to support understanding of MIS LaunchBoard and internal data product alignments

Goal 3: Develop and maintain a list of curated resources, best practices, and frameworks to support research offices

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Data and Innovation workgroup plans to engage in the following projects and strategies toward achieving its one-year goals.

Increased Support for CTE Data Use at the Colleges
In partnership with the Center of Excellence, hire seven new temporary CTE Research Experts, dedicated to regional CTE projects through 2024–25. This additional staffing will build capacity locally at the colleges' institutional research offices by being the point person for fulfilling regional research requests (i.e., data to support the efforts of the Faculty Institute, Counselor Institute, and workgroup requests) as well as local, college-specific CTE needs (e.g., program review, Strategic Enrollment Management).

Capacity Building about MIS LaunchBoard
Professional development for the Data & Innovation Committee involves a collaborative approach where presenters from WestEd and CCCCO, along with SDI researchers, discuss new updates to MIS and talk through interpretations of legislation, policy, and reporting.

Repository of Promising Practices for Teaching and Counseling

Jesus Rivas (Associate Dean of Research, Planning, and Innovation at San Diego College of Continuing Education) is developing a comprehensive repository of promising pedagogy, counseling, and research practices for regional use by researchers and faculty. It will have a web-based interface and a navigable search bar for easy access.

REGIONAL PRIORITY
5

[Insert gray-color graphic of the Student Road to Career Success; except use color to emphasize the first section of the road (Postsecondary Engagement)]

Regional Priority

To increase awareness throughout the region of the San Diego and Imperial Counties community colleges and Career Education programs

Workgroup

Marketing

Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the Marketing workgroup, contributing towards the SDI RC Strong Workforce Program goals:

Market Research Data to Inform Macro and Micro Campaigns on Regional Awareness	Market Research Data to Inform Campaign on Regional Awareness for Military-Affiliated Communities	Regional Campaign for CE Awareness	Regional Campaign Strategy involving Media	Culturally Inclusive Campaign for CE Awareness in Imperial County	Regional Campaign for CE Awareness with Broader Audience
Completed qualitative and quantitative market research on regional awareness and perception of local community colleges, which led to the development of one macro- and five micro-campaigns.	Completed qualitative and quantitative market research on regional awareness and perception of local community colleges with regards to SDI military and military-affiliated communities, which led to a specialized campaign specific to this population.	Reached consensus on regional campaign design and media plan to achieve mutually beneficial awareness of Career Education programs within the region through consistent information-sharing and collaboration.	Created Regional Marketing Campaign: "Community Crafted," inclusive of design, media planning, purchase, and placement.	Created individualized campaign creative, messaging, and tactics specific to the diverse economy and target audiences within our Imperial County community.	Leveraged regional funding for broader audience engagement, including digital advertising inside Petco Park.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Marketing

Four-Year Goals

Goal 1: Continue to increase awareness around Career Education programs in San Diego and Imperial Counties

Goal 2: Address the regional priorities and directions with the appropriate marketing strategies

Goal 3: Continue annual data analysis and informed decision-making through an equity lens to define marketing audiences and strategies

One-Year Goals

Goal 1: Complete launch of Regional Awareness Campaign

Goal 2: Evaluate Regional Awareness Campaign

Goal 3: Optimize the performance of Regional Awareness Campaign

Goal 4: Engage with local college/district marketing professionals to share best practices on research and campaigns, including the College-Based Marketing investments

Goal 5: Launch Regional Military-Affiliated Campaign

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Marketing workgroup plans to engage in the following activities toward achieving its one-year goals.

Regional Awareness Campaign
Creation of several regional marketing campaigns focused on increasing awareness of the SDI community colleges with a focus on culturally inclusive language and messaging.
- Spanish-language campaign to reach Spanish-speaking community: prospective students and their families, high school counselors, employers
- Military campaign to reach military-affiliated community members

Micro-campaigns
- Out-of-Home campaign to reach prospective students and their families, high school counselors, employers via outdoor messaging tactics, such as billboards, bus wraps, and movie theater advertisement
- Digital campaign to reach target audience members via digital banner ads
- Broadcast campaign to reach target audience members via English- and Spanish-language advertisement on television and web-based viewing platforms
- Streaming campaign to reach target audience members via streaming platforms
- Social media campaign to reach target audience members via social media

Systemic Alignment of Communication Efforts

Monthly meetings to align marketing efforts involving representatives from campus Public Information Office, Career Education (i.e., faculty administrators, faculty), student services, noncredit, adult education, K–12, and employer engagement.