

FRIENDS OF MIRACOSTA COLLEGE:



These last 12-months have been filled with many challenges! Yet MiraCosta College responded to a global health threat, evolving changes in our society, and subsequent economic uncertainties in powerful ways. Since 1934, MiraCosta has faced challenges by transforming them into opportunities and we are doing so once again.

In this edition of *Transforming Lives*, please enjoy reading about how, through the collaboration of generous donations from the community and innovative staff, MiraCosta was able to help students through these challenging times. Ranging from food insecurities to a technological divide, as well as career and workforce uncertainty, MiraCosta has been steadfast in ensuring students received holistic support to mitigate disruption in their educational journey.

In order to expand opportunities for students, MiraCosta College was selected to deploy a Federal Work Study Pilot Program. MiraCosta students now have additional opportunities to earn while they learn. Students can apply for paid off-campus internships that provide the necessary hands-on experience related to their area of study. This pilot program is aimed at increasing partnerships between community colleges and local industries, boosting student success rates, reducing student debt, and increasing post-graduation employment options.

Additionally, MiraCosta College made history as the only community college in California to offer new online Social Work and Human Services programs that prepare students for careers in fields with a growing number of job opportunities. Through close collaboration with community leaders in the development of this program, graduates can earn solid middle-class wages, while helping people in our community at a time when we all need it most.

My sincerest appreciation to the MiraCosta College community for your continuous partnership, financial support, and engagement. Thanks to the faculty, classified professionals, administrators, and Board of Trustees for your commitment and courage, dedication, tireless service, and innovation helping us to rise to the moment in support of our students and our community!

Sunny

Sunita V. Cooke, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President
MiraCosta College



RESILIENCE

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Unlike any other period in the history of this community, the last 18 months have been nothing less than surreal, uncertain, unprecedented, and beyond stressful. The global health crisis and economic challenges caused by the pandemic have affected us all. The lives lost, the livelihoods distressed, and the futures altered are almost unthinkable. Meanwhile, the issues of racial violence and oppression, which have persisted far too long, continue.

This moment in time necessitated innovation. From virtual and drive-through commencements, celebrations, and art performances to shipping lab kits to students; faculty and staff were inspired, and learning never ceased.

While our methods and modes of service evolved, our integrity and firm adherence to our values and goals remained aligned with our actions. Our commitment is

to create a racially just campus where individuals and their diverse cultures and identities are welcomed, nurtured, and validated.

As a collective of faculty, classified professionals, administrators, board members, students, donors, and regional leaders, we supported one another as our vision to transform lives and communities through learning remained clear.

Through MiraCosta College's dedication, passion, and service, we rose up to meet this moment. We now come together to focus on the future we seek to create. As the only community college in the nation broadly working with the Institute For The Future (ITF), we are boldly leading our community in creating just, equitable, and sustainable futures.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sunny". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "S" at the beginning.

Sunita V. Cooke, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President
MiraCosta College

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The days are longer, the nights become warmer, and at MiraCosta College we know spring is upon us when we start gearing up for the many celebrations and commencement ceremonies honoring our students. Needless to say, spring is my favorite season!

As we emerge from the global pandemic, we learned that there

are many benefits in trying new approaches. This edition of *Transforming Lives* is no exception. Rather than focusing on some of the exciting themes underway within the District, we share the stories of our students—current and alumni—who overcame challenges ranging from food insecurity and family loss to responsibilities inside and outside the classroom. Regardless of their struggle, all were resilient and triumphant.

As you read through these pages, I know you will appreciate the importance of our generous community donors and our innovative and dedicated employees. It is through this blend of support that our MiraCosta College students received the academic and holistic support to overcome obstacles in their educational journey.

MiraCosta College continues to be steadfast in our mission through innovative teaching, learning, and support services, and by offering degree, certificate, career education, adult education, transfer, and life-long learning opportunities. These efforts have recently been recognized by the Aspen Prize for Excellence in Community Colleges, one of the nation's highest awards honoring achievement and performance of America's community colleges, where we were nominated out of 1100+ to apply for the final prize.

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