

TO: Julianna M. Barnes, Ed.D., Chancellor, and Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: John C. Hernandez, Ph.D., President

DATE: August 14, 2025

SUBJECT: **President's Report for the August 25, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting**

Laser Day Welcomes Over 1,150 New Students to IVC



On August 13, Laser Day welcomed more than 1,150 incoming students and 57 parents to campus. This event offered an introduction to college life, connecting new students with faculty, classified professionals, and peers ahead of the 2025–2026 academic year. The day began with a warm welcome from college leadership, information on how to get involved in Student Life, a welcome message from ASIVC President Mahba Ahmad, and a student panel where current students shared their experiences and answered questions. Attendees participated in academic presentations and chose from 11 breakout sessions focused on student success, including topics such as transfer pathways, support for students of color, and navigating college as an undecided major. Lunch and a campus resource fair rounded out the day, equipping students with tools, insights, and connections for a successful start at IVC. View photos [here](#).

Professional Development Week Emphasizes Growth, Leadership, and Community



Fall 2025 kicked off with a lineup of over 80 professional development sessions designed to foster growth across all areas of the campus. Designed for faculty, classified professionals, and administrators, this year's sessions focused on guiding themes such as Campus Community, Leadership Development, Self-Reflection and Self-Development, and Student Support. The week launched with the President's State of the College address, where Dr. John Hernandez highlighted recent institutional accomplishments, previewed strategic priorities for the year ahead, and emphasized the collective role of all employees in advancing student success. The session also featured a special 10-minute preview of IVC's 40th Anniversary commemorative video, with the full documentary set to premiere in October. Professional Development Week continues to serve as a cornerstone of IVC's commitment to cultivating an inclusive, innovative, and student-centered environment for the entire campus community. View photos [here](#).

IVC Named #13 in Delivering Real Value for Students in CA



IVC is proud to be named one of California's top 25 community and career colleges delivering strong, fast return on investment (ROI) for students. According to the new "Golden Returns: A Regional Look at the ROI of California's Community and Career Colleges," a new analysis by College Futures Foundation and Michael Itzkowitz of the HEA Group, IVC graduates earn back the full cost of their education within six months of completion. Read the full story [here](#).

MESA's Summer Academy for Excellence



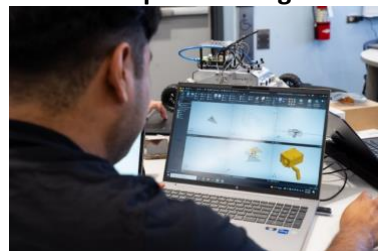
The IVC [Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement \(MESA\) Program](#) hosted its one-week Summer Academy for Excellence to prepare students for success in their first Calculus, General Chemistry, and General Physics courses this fall. Each day featured a 90-minute lesson taught by IVC faculty, followed by an Academic Excellence Workshop led by a MESA peer tutor to reinforce key concepts. Fifteen students participated in this year's academy, gaining early exposure to course content, building confidence, and fostering connections with faculty and peers.

Lionakis Foundation Supports IVC MESA Program



The Lionakis Foundation selected IVC's Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Program as one of its 2025 elected charities, awarding \$5,000 to support student success initiatives. To celebrate this new partnership, Lionakis welcomed MESA students and staff to its Irvine office for a special event highlighting the program's impact. During the visit, staff had the opportunity to hear from Haley Barrios Gomez, a MESA Summer Research Award recipient whose research experience was made possible through the foundation's generous support. This collaboration reflects the shared commitment of the foundation and IVC to empowering the next generation of innovators and advancing achievement in science, technology, engineering, and math.

MESA Completes Inaugural SPARK Research Program



This past summer, IVC's MESA Program launched the inaugural Summer Projects Advancing Research and Knowledge (SPARK) program, an eight-week immersive research experience designed to prepare first-generation, low-income students pursuing calculus-based STEM degrees for academic and professional success. Under the mentorship of Dr. Alec Sim and Dr. Steven Nguyen, students developed skills in programming, data analysis, electronics, experimental design, and chemistry. Research topics ranged from AI-powered autonomous rovers and dynamic weather analytics to aircraft wing design optimization and organic compound synthesis for renewable energy storage. The program concluded with students presenting scientific posters at a campus showcase, demonstrating innovative solutions with real-world applications. View photos [here](#).

The students' poster titles are:

1. AI-Enhanced Autonomous Rover for Terrain Navigation
2. Recognition and Real-Time Object Search
3. AI-Powered Smart Rover: Pose Estimation, Object Detection, and Maze Navigation Powered by Raspberry Pi
4. Dynamic Weather Intelligence: AI-Powered Analysis Using Real-Time Data
5. Using GPS Navigation & Temperature Sensors on Rovers for Firewatch
6. Obstacle Avoidance and Body Recognition Using AI Models
7. Optimizing Wing Designs and Aerodynamic Evaluation of Elliptical vs. Bell Lift Distribution Wings
8. Motor Characterization and Thrust Measurement Stand to Support Wing Evaluation
9. Synthesizing Alloxazine-Based Organic Compounds for Use in Redox-Flow Battery Development

IVC MESA Student Completes Research Internship at the Salk Institute



IVC MESA student Steve Salinas completed a 10-week research internship at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California, where he studied mechanisms of early pregnancy failures using a non-human primate embryo model. The paid internship provided housing and included seminars, research training, and professional development workshops, along with networking events and tours of local biotech and pharmaceutical companies. This experience enhanced Salinas' technical skills and deepened his understanding of collaborative biomedical research.

Transfer Center Expands Student Support Through Summer Workshops



Transfer Center

The Transfer Center hosted a series of workshops to help students prepare for university applications and admission agreements. During July 8–10, Transfer Counselor Tuan Nguyen led five Transfer Planning and Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) workshops and one UC Application and Personal Insight Questions workshop. In total, 35 students attended, seeking early guidance on transfer requirements, application processes, and TAG opportunities. On August 7, IVC partnered with Western University of Health Sciences, College of Pharmacy, to host its first virtual workshop with university representatives. This event engaged eight students and parents. As a result of this collaboration, one-on-one transfer appointments with WesternU representatives were introduced to help students confirm course completion and receive direct expert advice. The Transfer Center also supported students applying to California State University campuses for Spring 2026 admission. Two CSU Application Workshops and one Application Lab drew 18 students to presentations, while 10 students participated in hands-on sessions. Among these applicants, common destinations include CSU Fullerton, Long Beach, and Channel Islands.

IgniteHER Summit Empowers Future Female Leaders



On July 18, IVC partnered with Girls Inc. of Orange County in conjunction with the office of Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris to host the second annual IgniteHER Summit. The event welcomed over 200 girls in grades 7th through 11th for a day of confidence-building, leadership development, and personal growth. The summit strengthened the partnership between IVC and Girls Inc., both of which are committed to supporting underserved youth. SOCCCD Chancellor Julianna Barnes and President John Hernandez welcomed attendees and emphasized IVC's commitment to inclusive spaces where young women envision bold futures. President Hernandez shared plans for future workshops, summer camps, and programs at the main campus and ATEP site in Tustin. SOCCCD Board President Carolyn Inmon and Board Vice President Ryan Dack were also in attendance. The day included a keynote by Joone Kim-Lopez and panels featuring professionals, including Vice President for Student Services Martha A. McDonald. Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris praised the summit as an energizing event that affirmed the importance of mentorship and investment in youth leadership.

IVC Student-Athlete Approved to Compete in 2025 FIBA Asian Championships



Incoming IVC student-athlete Ahmed Al-Hammouri has been approved by the California Community College Athletic Association (3C2A) to represent Jordan in the Fédération Internationale de Basketball Amateur (FIBA)

Asian Championships which began on August 5. The decision ensures that he may participate in this prestigious international basketball competition without affecting his amateur status or future athletic eligibility. Al-Hammouri is a recent graduate of Western High School in Anaheim with dual citizenship that enables him to compete for Jordan's national basketball team. Jordan has a strong presence in international basketball and is a regular contender in the FIBA Asia circuit. Representing the country at this level is a rare and exceptional opportunity for a community college athlete.

ACCCA's Admin 101 Program Returns to IVC for Third Year of Leadership Development



IVC served as the host campus for the Association of California Community College Administrators' (ACCCA) Admin 101 Program, held from July 20 to 24. Now in its third consecutive year at IVC, the intensive summer training brought together emerging leaders from across California's community colleges for a week of professional learning, collaboration, and practical skill-building. The curriculum covered essential topics, including governance, budget and finance, human resources, equity, and change

management. The week concluded with participants delivering group project presentations that reflected their learning and growth in leadership. President John Hernandez welcomed this year's cohort with remarks that highlighted IVC's innovative strategies for advancing student success and institutional transformation. IVC is honored to continue its role as a key partner in preparing the next generation of community college leaders. Congratulations to Assistant Dean of Students Armineh Dereghishian, Director of Disabled Student Programs and Services Maria Ek Ewell, Interim Assistant Director of Technology Services Tim Van Norman, Interim Assistant Director of Technology Services Afif Achmad, and SOCCCD Project Manager Erin Price for completing the training this summer.

OC United Way and IVC Continue Free Tax Prep Services for the Community



IVC and Orange County United Way continued their long-standing partnership in 2025 to provide free tax preparation services to low-income households through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Between February 1 and April 12, IVC hosted 11 tax prep days, supported by 21 volunteers and staff who contributed 603 service hours. The site prepared 335 federal and 332 state tax returns at no cost to taxpayers, whose average adjusted gross income was \$29,029. These services saved community members an estimated \$91,455 in preparation fees and returned \$419,882 in federal and state refunds, including \$97,823 in Child Tax Credits, \$127,542 in federal Earned Income Tax Credits, and \$20,130 in California Earned Income Tax Credits. In total, the program delivered a \$769,762 financial impact for the taxpayers served. IVC has proudly served as a VITA location since 2011 and remains committed to this impactful partnership.

IVC Men's Soccer Standout Commits to NCAA Division I University of Evansville



Sophomore midfielder Armon Haghighat has committed to continuing his academic and athletic career at NCAA Division I University of Evansville in Indiana. A local graduate of University High School in Irvine, Haghighat was a two-year starter for the Lasers, appearing in 43 matches over his IVC career. In the 2024 season, he played in 21 matches with 16 starts, recording three goals and eight assists to help lead IVC to an 8-12-1 overall record. As a freshman, Haghighat contributed five goals and four assists over 22 matches, helping the team to a 12-4-6 record, a second-place finish in the Orange Empire Conference, and a berth in the SoCal Regional Playoffs. Haghighat joins an Evansville program coming off an 11-7-3 season, capped by a Missouri Valley Conference Tournament Championship and its first NCAA Tournament appearance in more than 25 years.

Former IVC Men's Basketball Standout Joins University of Florida Coaching Staff



Former IVC men's basketball team captain Jonathan Olsen has been named director of basketball strategy and analytics for the University of Florida Gators. Olsen returns to Gainesville after two seasons as an assistant coach at his alma mater, the University of San Francisco (USF), where he helped guide the Dons to a 48-21 record and back-to-back NIT appearances. Highlights during his USF tenure included wins over Saint Mary's, Oregon State, Minnesota, and DePaul, as well as postseason victories against Washington State and Utah Valley. A native of Villa Park, Olsen played for the Lasers from 2016–2018, serving as a team captain and later coaching with West Coast Elite Basketball while attending IVC.

Upcoming Events

Instruction Begins

August 18

Club Day

September 3

Welcome Week

August 18-21

Walk of Hope: Suicide Awareness

September 23

Health Fair

August 27

Respectfully Submitted,



John C. Hernandez, Ph.D.
President