

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

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

DATE: September 17, 2026

SUBJECT: **President's Report for the September 28, 2026, Board of Trustees Meeting**

IVC Named a “2026 Great College to Work For®” Fifth Consecutive Year



For the fifth consecutive year, IVC has been named one of the nation’s 2026 Great Colleges to Work For®. IVC was also named to the Great Colleges Honor Roll, recognizing institutions that receive the highest level of recognition across multiple workplace categories. This year, IVC was recognized in nine categories: Job Satisfaction & Support; Compensation & Benefits; Professional Development; Mission & Pride; Supervisor/Department Chair Effectiveness; Confidence in Senior Leadership; Faculty & Staff Well-being; Shared Governance; and Faculty Experience. The recognition is based on an assessment that includes institutional

data and workplace policies, along with feedback from faculty, administrators, and professional support staff. The results underscore IVC’s continued commitment to its strategic priority of Workplace Culture & Growth and fostering a culture of care, engagement and mutual respect across the college community.

IVC Hosts 2026 Veteran Health and Wellness Conference



Veterans Services Center

On September 17, IVC hosted the 2026 Veteran Health and Wellness Conference, a collaborative event dedicated to supporting the health and well-being of veterans and military-connected students. IVC was proud to host the conference in partnership with Orange County Health Care Agency, Orange County Veterans & Military Families Collaborative, UCI Health, Strong Families

Strong Children, VA Long Beach Healthcare System, Council on Aging – Southern California, and Human Works Foundation. The conference featured keynote speakers, interactive workshops, and breakout sessions focused on mental health, holistic wellness, financial readiness, and navigating benefits and resources. President Hernandez welcomed attendees and recognized the importance of partnering with community organizations to support veteran students and military-connected dependents. Vice President McDonald spoke about the concerns of IVC’s student veteran population and highlighted the college’s ongoing commitment to serving veterans and their families. The event reinforced IVC’s role as a trusted partner in advancing the health, wellness, and educational success of the veteran community by connecting attendees with valuable insights, resources, and services from organizations dedicated to strengthening the support network available to veterans.

Latiné Heritage Month Celebration at IVC



On September 16, IVC hosted a Latiné Heritage Month Celebration bringing students, faculty, and staff together to honor Latiné history, culture, and contributions. The event included the annual Paletas with the President Hernandez; Latiné-owned Vendor Mercadito, a live DJ, games, and food for participants. Campus departments and community partners came together to further foster community, connection, and cultural pride, reflecting IVC's continuing commitment to inclusivity and student engagement. [View photos here.](#)

Walk of Hope for Suicide Awareness and Prevention



On September 15, IVC hosted its annual Walk of Hope for Suicide Awareness and Prevention. President Hernandez welcomed participants and encouraged everyone to take a moment to pause, step away from the everyday and care for their own mental health and well-being and that of those around them. He also reminded students and employees of the resources and services available through IVC and the district. Vice President McDonald followed with remarks sharing her personal journey. Students and employees then joined together for a one-mile walk promoting awareness, education and hope. The event also featured a resource fair with community partners sharing mental health resources and support services. [View photos here.](#)

Day of Remembrance – 9/11



IVC honored the lives lost in the 2001 terrorist attacks with a Day of Remembrance ceremony on September 10 hosted by IVC Campus Police in partnership with local first responder agencies. President John Hernandez welcomed the campus community, followed by brief remarks from Chief of Police Phil Romero. The program included a moment of silence, a flag-folding ceremony led by Officers Timothy Gutierrez and Manny Fregoso, and a bagpipe performance of

"Amazing Grace" by retired Deputy Sheriff Holly Fisher from the Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriffs. At the center of the gathering stood a memorial table with symbolic vases representing the Twin Towers, the Pentagon, and Flight 93, serving as a powerful reminder of the day's lasting impact. This annual ceremony honors the sacrifices of first responders and the spirit of unity and reflection within the college community. [View photos here.](#)

Consulate of Mexico Independence Day Commemoration



IVC President Hernandez, Vice President McDonald and Puente Program Co-Coordinator Ruby Pastrana attended the Consulate of Mexico in Santa Ana's commemoration of the 216th Anniversary of the Independence of Mexico on September 11, at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana. The event celebrated Mexico's history and heritage and recognized the longstanding friendship and strong ties between Mexico and the communities it serves. IVC was honored to join this special occasion.

PUENTE Lauches New Cohort



This year, IVC launched its sixth PUENTE Program cohort and welcomed 26 new Puentistas, including the first non-Hispanic student, a new co-coordinator and English Faculty, Andrea Briseño, and the Puente MaS Math Advocate, Nichole Carver. PUENTE also welcomed their 2026-2027 Puente Student Ambassadors (PSAs): Coral Santos, Angel Islas Duran, Isabella Gonzales, Lauren Melchor, and Daisy Rios. On September 11, the

Puente Program also hosted its annual Noche de Familia, bringing together students and their families for an evening centered on community, culture, and connection. The gathering honored the families of Cohort 6, highlighting the vital role they play in supporting their students' educational journeys and celebrating the cultural traditions that unite the Puente community.

California Community Colleges Future Summit



On September 9-10, IVC joined more than 1,000 participants at the California Community Colleges Future Summit, focused on preparing colleges and students for an increasingly digital future. Guided by the theme, Human Skills in an Autonomous World, the Summit explored how creativity, judgment, collaboration and leadership remain essential as colleges integrate next-generation artificial intelligence tools. Participants explored practical strategies for improving student outcomes, strengthening workforce pathways and modernizing institutional operations. Anchored in Vision 2030, the Summit highlighted opportunities for capacity-building and cross-sector collaboration. Representing IVC were Vice President of Instruction Rick Miranda; Vice President of Student Services Martha McDonald; Ryan Cummins, Director of Dual Enrollment; Debbie Vanschoelandt, Dean of Career and Continuing Education and Integrated Design, Engineering and Automation; Rebecca Beck, Professor of English as a Second Language and President of the Academic Senate and Samera Lee, Applications Specialist II from Technology Services. SOCCCD is a founding partner of the Digital Resource Center, reflecting the district's commitment to advancing digital innovation and preparing students for the future.

Celebration of IVC Teacher Preparation Pathway Initiatives



On September 10, the Human Development Department hosted a celebration highlighting the continued growth of its Teacher Preparation Pathway (TPP) initiatives. President Hernandez opened the event by thanking the many educational and community partners who support IVC students pursuing careers in education. The event showcased IVC's efforts to create clearer and more accessible pathways into teaching and education careers, including a new fall apprenticeship program that combines college credit with paid, hands-on experience in early childhood settings; a planned summer study abroad opportunity focused on global and culturally responsive teaching

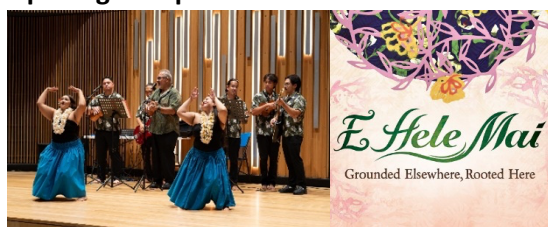
practices; and expanded coursework for careers in special education and educational leadership. IVC is also advancing statewide efforts to strengthen visual and performing arts education pathways and developing enhanced visual guides to credential and permit requirements, supported by strong collaborations with the Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs (ACCTEP) and Regional Technical Assistance Center (RTEC). Special appreciation was extended to The Irvine Company for its valued support of IVC's commitment to inspiring and preparing the next generation of educators.

Club Day Welcomes Students from Across the Campus



Hosted by the Office of Student Life and the Inter-Club Council on September 2, IVC's Fall Club Day welcomed more than 850 students to connect with 70+ student organizations. The event transformed the campus into a hub of activity, where students connected with peers, discovered leadership opportunities, and learned how involvement in clubs can enrich their academic and personal growth. Attendees engaged with club representatives, took part in interactive activities, enjoyed a cooling station, and complimentary treats including ice cream. Club Day showcases the various ways students can get involved, fostering connections, leadership, and community on campus. [View photos here.](#)

Opening Reception for *E Hele Mai: Grounded Elsewhere, Rooted Here*



On August 27, IVC hosted a campus and community opening reception for *E Hele Mai: Grounded Elsewhere, Rooted Here* in the IVC Art Gallery and the Arts Hall. The exhibit features the work of artists Dane Hi'ipoi Nakama, Alina Kawai, Anela Ming-Yue Oh, and Nainoa Rosehill. The opening ceremonies included remarks from President Hernandez, Thuy Tran, (gallery coordinator) and a special dedication led by Kumu Hula Keoni Chang, along with musicians and dancers who offered a Hawaiian chant and pule, or blessing. The exhibition will remain on view through October 1. [View photos here.](#)

President Hernandez Engages with Learning Communities



At the start of the fall semester, President Hernandez continued an annual tradition, visiting two of IVC's learning communities, Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer, and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders ([ELEVATE AAPI](#)) and Puente. On August 26, he joined ELEVATE AAPI students for a Lunch and Learn, where he reflected on his academic and professional journey in an informal setting that fostered dialogue and connection. While meeting with the incoming [Puente](#) cohort on August 27, Dr. Hernandez shared his experiences as an immigrant and first-generation college student, encouraging students to value community and perseverance as keys to success. In both gatherings, students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage directly with the president and were inspired by his story of resilience and achievement. Together, ELEVATE AAPI and Puente exemplify IVC's commitment to cultivating supportive, student-centered communities that empower learners to thrive academically and personally. [View photos here.](#)

IVC Awards CPA Review Courses to Outstanding Accounting Students



IVC, through the IVC 30 to CPA Program and the IVC Foundation, has awarded three Certified Public Accountant ("CPA") review courses to outstanding accounting students, helping reduce financial barriers and support their progress toward professional certification. The awards were made possible through the generous support of TimeValue Software and UWorld, a global leader in comprehensive academic and professional education. [Learn more here.](#)

College Corps Cohort 5 Orientation



On Aug. 21, IVC's College Corps Program hosted Orientation for Cohort 5, bringing together approximately 80 IVC faculty, staff, students and College Corps Community Host Partners. Students learned about program requirements and service-learning strategies, connected with their Community Host Partner site supervisors over lunch, and participated in activities designed to build community and prepare them for the service year. The orientation featured interactive trivia, icebreakers, group activities, and a reflective writing assignment. Students gained the opportunity to meet their site supervisors and further understand the responsibilities and expectations of the program. [View photos here.](#)

Elevate Hosts Orientation



On Friday, August 14, IVC's ELEVATE Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) program hosted its student orientation, welcoming more than 60 students from the ELEVATE learning community and EMPOWER, the program's certificate-focused cohort. Attendees included incoming first-time college students and continuing students. Students received their textbooks and learned more about program services, available resources, and expectations. A student panel provided an opportunity for peer-to-peer engagement, while interactive exercises and activities fostered community building. Students also connected with peer mentors, shared lunch, and participated in activities designed to build connections. The focus of the Fall orientation provides students with a welcoming and informative introduction to the ELEVATE program by strengthening connections among students and providing a clear understanding of program expectations. [View photos here.](#)

Women's Flag Football Team Focuses on Confidence and Leadership



IVC's women's flag football team recently participated in a leadership and confidence workshop with motivational speaker and coach Kari Ehmer, a West Point graduate and U.S. Army veteran. IVC coach Sami Logan invited Ehmer to work with the student-athletes on mindset, confidence and leadership, with a focus on thriving under pressure, responding to adversity and building a strong team culture. The Lasers are preparing for the spring season, when they will look to defend their Orange Empire Conference championship. Following last season, six IVC players received scholarships to continue their athletic careers at four-year colleges.

Irvine Valley Women's Soccer Player Named OEC Athlete of the Week



Freshman forward Jayden Reynolds was named the Orange Empire Conference Female Athlete of the Week following a standout opening to the 2026 women's soccer season. IVC opened the season with two victories, scoring nine goals, with Reynolds contributing five goals and an assist. A graduate of Mountain House High School, Reynolds scored three goals and added an assist in IVC's 5-0 home victory over Norco on Sept. 1. She followed with two goals in the Lasers' 4-0 victory at San Diego City College on Sept. 4.

IVC Students Participate in Renters Roundtable led by Congressman Min



On September 9, IVC students participated in a Renters Roundtable led by Congressman Dave Min (CA-47th). The discussion focused on the challenges students, veterans and working professionals face as they navigate the high cost of housing and living in Orange County. Representing IVC were veteran students Ahmed Ahmed, Brody Phillips and Igor Goes; Associated Students of Irvine Valley College (ASIVC) student leaders Mahba Ahmad and Ethan Liang; and a student participating in the City of Irvine's housing stipend program Ahmad Rahmani. The students were joined by Cynthia Cavale, representing the IVC Veterans Services office, and Erin Pollard, director of College Equity, Inclusion and Access. IVC students shared their personal experiences and perspectives on the challenges of affording housing in Irvine and surrounding communities, helping to highlight the impact of the region's high housing costs on community college students. The roundtable also included three students from the University of California, Irvine, as well as representatives from Orange County United Way, 211 Orange County and other local organizations working on housing advocacy and homelessness prevention.

IVC Veterans Lead, Learn, and Connect Beyond the Classroom



Throughout August, the IVC Veterans Services Center provided veteran and military-connected students with opportunities to build community, develop leadership skills, and connect with campus and community resources. Each Friday, students participated in paddleboarding at Dana Point Harbor through a collaboration with the Orange County VetCenter, providing opportunities for teamwork, camaraderie, and connection with fellow veterans. In addition, IVC student veteran leaders and Student Veterans of America (SVA) Co-Presidents Ahmed Ahmed and Brody Phillips represented IVC through the Warrior-Scholar Project, traveling to MIT and the College of Charleston to participate in workshops and help teach Academic Boot Camps. The one-week college preparatory programs help veterans prepare for the transition to higher education. The Veterans Services Center also hosted an internship information session with Team Kids, a community nonprofit developing a pilot program to place IVC student veterans in youth mentor roles, providing students with opportunities to develop leadership and mentoring skills. The Center also welcomed veteran and military-connected students to its Fall Military-Connected Orientation, where students learned about campus resources, academic success strategies, and available support. These activities reflected IVC's continued commitment to supporting veteran and military-connected students in achieving their academic and personal goals.

IVC SEM PROJECT SELECTED AS A PROMISING PRACTICE



Congratulations to the IVC team who led and participated in Year 1 of Irvine Valley College's Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) project. Following a review of projects from the 2025-26 cohort, IVC has been notified that its 2026 SEM project was selected as a SEM Promising Practice by the SEM Core Team. The project will be featured in the Chancellor's Office Vision Resource Center SEM Community of Practice. The committee was particularly impressed with the project's alignment with the SEM framework, the outcomes achieved during the project year, and the thoughtful steps taken

to integrate and sustain the work over time. This recognition reflects the IVC's commitment to strengthening student success and developing strategies that can have a lasting impact. During 2026-2027, IVC is participating in Year 2 of the SEM project. Launched in summer 2025, the initiative focuses on enhancing enrollment, retention and career readiness for adult re-entry students. The project brings together a cross-campus team to examine the needs and experiences of adult learners, identify barriers and opportunities, and develop streamlined academic and career pathways aligned with their goals and responsibilities. Aligned with the priorities of Vision 2030 and [IVC Inspire 2035](#), the initiative supports workforce readiness, digital access and equity-focused student outcomes while creating opportunities to increase degree and certificate completion, strengthen workforce connections and expand educational opportunities for adult learners.

IVC Students Showcase Research at Cal State Fullerton Symposium



Twelve IVC students were among 64 students from nine community colleges who presented original research at the 13th Annual California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Summer Research Symposium on August 6 at the Titan Student Union Pavilion. The annual symposium, co-hosted by CSUF's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Center (UROC) and Project RAISE (Regional Alliance in STEM Education), brought together students to share their scholarly and creative work with faculty, peers and the broader academic community. The students

participated through Project RAISE's Undergraduate Research Experience, which provides community college students with hands-on research opportunities alongside CSUF faculty mentors in STEM fields. The program helps prepare students to transfer and pursue bachelor's degrees and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. [IVC is one of nine community college partners participating in Project RAISE.](#)

IVC student projects included:

- Ethan Adunagow "Photocatalytic degradation of organic dyes using perovskites."
- Roxana Bazargani (Engineering Academy) "Influence of new emerging supplementary cementitious materials on surface electrical resistivity of concrete."
- Juan Castorena (MESA) "Experimental investigation of adhesive bonding for composite T-joints in aerospace applications."
- Ella Chagan (MESA) "Comparing tidal effects with Cosmic Explorer."
- Javier Gonzalez (MESA) "TutorGPT: LLM agent tutors and their usefulness for undergraduate students in calculus courses."
- Angel Islas (MESA) "Recent environmental changes in the Tijuana River Estuary identified through elemental proxies."
- Nimrat Kaur (Engineering Academy) "Synthesis of Glycosylated Amino Acids." PI: Michael Ferracane (Chemistry & Biochemistry.)
- Ines Khodja "Late glacial to early Holocene relative lake depths changes at glacial Lake Mojave."
- German Leon (MESA) "Enzyme identification for the development of an inkjet-printed digital microfluidic biosensor." PI: Ankita Mohapatra (Electrical and Computer Engineering)
- Ashley Mendiola (MESA) "PreSense lab: Optimizing protective CAD frames for early wildfire detection."
- Larry Perez (MESA) "PreSense lab: Design and characterization of inkjet-printed humidity sensors."
- Danielle Zee (ELEVATE AAPI) "Unexpected consequences of long-term vitamin B12 exposure on antimicrobial resistance."

Upcoming Events

Instrumental Music Benefit Concerts
September 26, 27

Manufacturing Day
October 2

Job Fair: Fall 2026
October 20

Filipino American History Month Celebration
October 21

A Midsummer Night's Dream
October 22, 23, 24, 25

A Midsummer Night's Dream
October 29, 30, 31

Día De Los Muertos Celebration
October 28

The Glass Canvas
October 29- December 12

College Fair
November 3

Annual Real Estate Summit
November 6

IVC Jazz Faculty with Anibal Seminario
November 13

MOVEMENTscape Dance Concert
November 19, 20, 21, 22

Holiday Mingle
December 1

Respectfully Submitted,



John C. Hernandez, Ph.D.
President