



Celebrating Juneteenth, Pride and Remarkable Achievements by our District Community

June 16, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

This long weekend we will mark a momentous occasion in our country's history: the end of slavery in the United States. We will celebrate the Juneteenth holiday by closing our offices and campuses on June 20.

Juneteenth is considered the oldest observed African American holiday in the United States. Juneteenth commemorates the date – June 19, 1865 – when the last remaining slaves in the Confederacy were freed. This holiday is a time to honor African American history and culture.

Juneteenth events will be taking place across San Diego County this weekend. Some are listed in [this article](#) in *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. If you would like to learn more about the history and importance of Juneteenth, check out the [Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture resources](#).

As we wrap up our academic year and get ready to head into the summer, I wanted to share a few additional updates.

Celebrating our LGBTQIA+ Community

Acceptance and inclusion are at the core of who we are as a District. Recognizing that diversity is one of our greatest strengths, the Governing Board on Tuesday night approved a resolution celebrating June as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and Ally (LGBTQIA+) Pride month. The resolution also supports raising the Progress Pride Flag to honor the history of the LGBTQIA+ movement.

After a two-year hiatus, employees are invited to represent our District at the San Diego PRIDE Parade on Saturday, July 16. The parade will begin at 10 a.m., with this year's theme of "Justice with Joy!" To participate, please register through [this link](#) before Monday, July 11 at 5 p.m.

A Return to In-Person Commencements

We were thrilled to celebrate commencements in person last week for the first time in three years. Both events were inspiring and moving. A combined 2,325 students received a total 5,203 degrees and certificates from our two colleges this year. There is nothing more rewarding than celebrating these achievements and watching the pride on the faces of our graduates, and their families, friends and other loved ones, as they walk across the stage.

Our students are at the heart of what we do and why we are here. Without the collective efforts of all of our employees, they could not have achieved these milestones. Our students have weathered a great deal, and so have all of you. Thank you for your resilience and perseverance.

Campus Safety Initiative

Sadly, mass shootings continue to spread violence, fear and anxiety over the safety of our shared spaces. We are outraged by the ongoing racially and politically motivated attacks, and the assaults in what should be safe places, such as schools. The trend is simply unacceptable.

We take campus safety very seriously. That is why we will be launching a multi-pronged initiative this summer, designed to assess safety across our campuses. The effort will identify areas of potential improvement and ways to raise preparedness levels. Work will include:

- Conducting Campus Safety Assessments
 - Looking at the status of equipment and design, including lighting, callboxes and landscaping
- Reconvening the DEC Safety Task Force
 - Will be led by Interim Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Aimee Gallagher
- Offering Active Shooter Training
 - Starting June 21, followed by additional sessions depending on interest

A Special Congratulations

I want to express how proud we are as a District that our own Cuyamaca College Research and Planning Analyst Katie Cabral has received the coveted statewide Classified Employee of the Year award.

Out of the hundreds of thousands of classified professionals working in the state's community college districts, Katie was one of just seven to be selected. The award recognizes those demonstrating the highest level of commitment to the mission of the state's community colleges.

We are deeply honored that one of our employees was selected for such a prestigious honor.

As we wrap up this academic year, thank you again for your remarkable efforts and I hope you get some time this summer to rest and rejuvenate.

See you in the fall.

Lynn

Lynn Ceresino Neault, Ed.D., Chancellor