

June 5, 2026

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PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Congratulations Palomar Comets!

The 2026 commencement ceremony was one for the record books. We conferred 4,735 degrees and certificates, the most conferred in the last nine years. We also had one of the youngest graduates in history at 14 years old, and over 750 of the 2,900 eligible students walked the stage. It was an honor to preside over the ceremony and to celebrate student achievement with over 3,500 attendees.



Superintendent/President Emeritus Dr. George Boggs, Governing Board Vice President Yvette Marie Acosta, Student Trustee Ariel Fridman, Interim Superintendent/President Dr. Tina Recalde, Governing Board Secretary Dr. Judy Patacsil, Governing Board Trustee Roberto Rodriguez, and Governing Board President Dr. Holly Hamilton-Bleakley

The success of our commencement ceremony is due to planning, commitment, and teamwork from dozens of employees. The preparation of the stadium, the design and décor, our talented musicians, national anthem performance, fantastic speeches, and our vendor partners made it a great day for our students and their friends and families. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I recognize each and every one of you. On behalf of our students – THANK YOU!

A Month-long Celebration of Student Success

Leading up to commencement, nearly 30 student achievement celebrations and year-end events were hosted. The event calendar started with the Speech and Debate Team Showcase and ended with the Cabinet and Furniture Technology Year-end Celebration. Each event honored the incredible talent and dedication of our students bringing true meaning to our mission, vision, and values. All of the events were thoughtfully planned and our students and their families enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate success and achievement. I am also grateful to our Governing Board members who were able to attend so many of the celebrations.

Speech and Debate Team Showcase



Speech and Debate Team Showcase Team with faculty members Dewy Hockett and Jordan Kay

Phi Theta Kappa Induction Celebration



2026 Phi Theta Kappa Induction Celebration



Transfer Recognition Ceremony



Class of 2026 Transfer Students at their Transfer Recognition Ceremony

EOPS/TRIO/Promise/Rising Scholars Recognition Ceremony

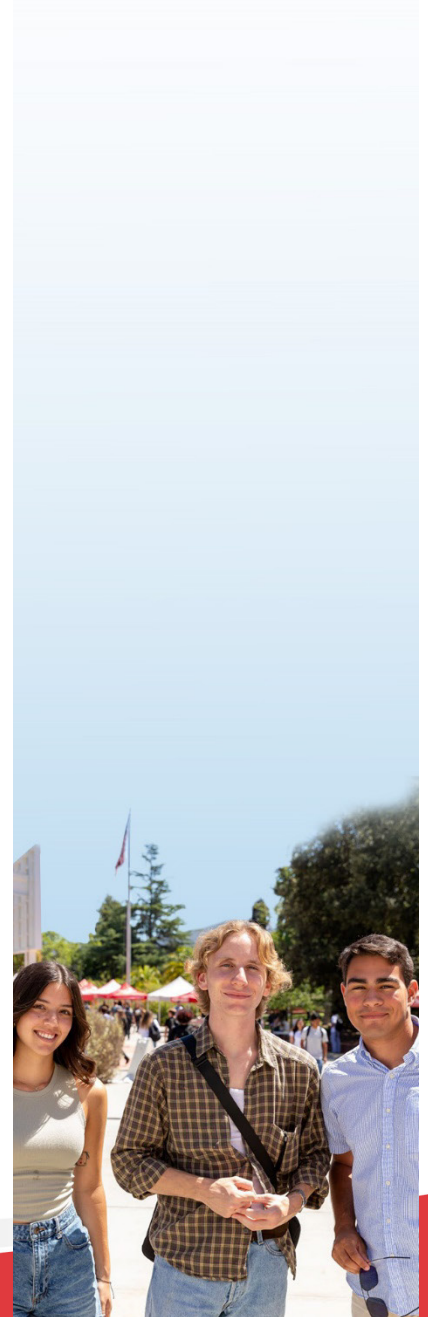


2026 EOPS/TRIO/Promise/Rising Scholars Recognition Ceremony

Native American Graduates Celebration



2026 Native American Graduates Celebration



Puente End of Year Celebration 2026



Puente End of Year Celebration 2026

La Raza Scholars Celebration



2026 La Raza Scholars Celebration

Disability Resource Center Year-end Celebration



Disability Resource Center Year-end Celebration



2026 Service Learning Awards



2026 Service-Learning Award Ceremony

Lavender Celebration – Pride Center Recognition Ceremony

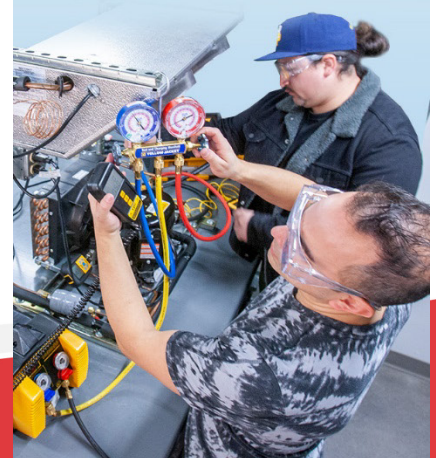
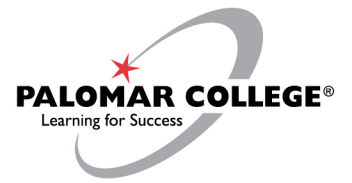


Lavender Celebration - Pride Center Recognition Ceremony

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANAHI) Celebration



Participants of the 2026 AANAHI Celebration with Governing Board Secretary Dr. Judy Patacsil



69th Fire Academy Graduation

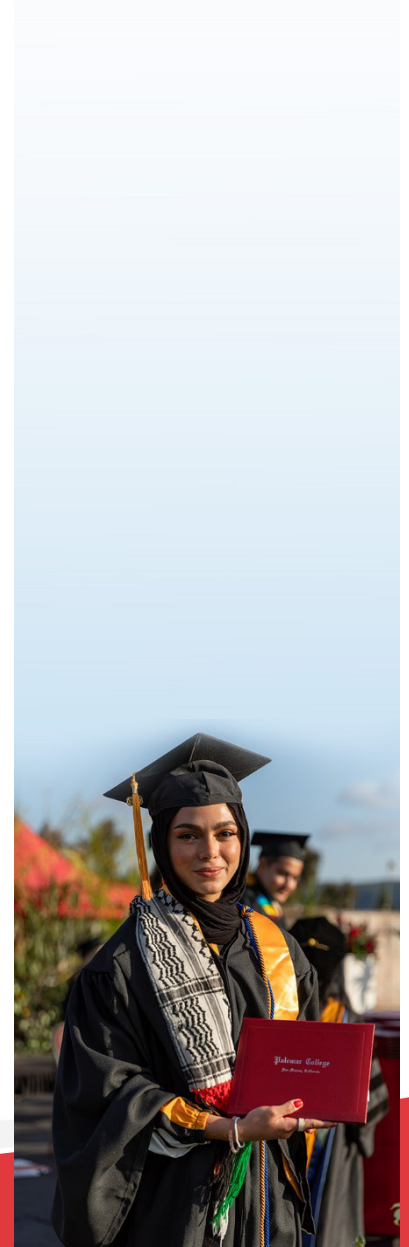


69th Fire Academy Graduates

Mahafali: A Celebration of Black Student Achievement



Mahafali: A Celebration of Black Student Achievement



Interior Design Portfolio Show



Interior Design student presenting her work

Architecture Review and Design Presentations

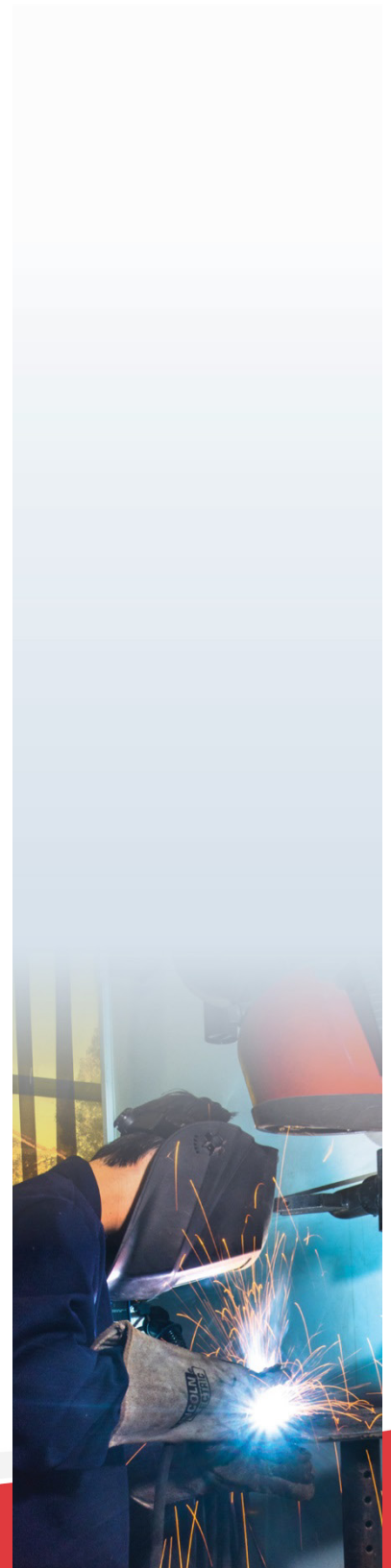


Architecture Design student displaying her work

MODA Fashion Show



Palomar College Fashion Design students and audience at the MODA Fashion Show



Nursing Pinning Ceremony



Group photo of Palomar College Nursing Students

Athletics Graduation Celebration



A group photo of student athletes at the 2026 Athletics Graduation Celebration

The ASG annual banquet, Cabinet and Furniture program showcase, faculty dance concert, Bravura gala, and the UMOJA Rights of Passage events were also held during the month.

Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony

On May 8, we celebrated the incredible talent and dedication of our employees at the annual recognition ceremony. Nearly 150 employees attended the event in person and via Zoom. We recognized years of service, retirements, and newly tenured faculty. Every employee is valued and deserves accolades. We offer special congratulations to the following award recipients:

- PAA Employee of the Year: Jeff Bennett
- CAST Employee of the Year: Steve Smith



CCE Employee of the Year: Carmelino Cruz
 2025-26 Distinguished Faculty Member of the Year: Holland Smith
 2025-26 Distinguished Part-Time Faculty Member of the Year: Shannon Mueller
 Palomar College Innovation and Creativity Award: Chris Norcross
 Palomar College DEIAA Award: Beth Pearson
 Palomar College Accessibility Award: Wendy Corbin
 Palomar College Teamwork Award: Monica Diego Schmidt
 Palomar Faculty Senate Margie Ruzich Gift of Time Award: Candace Rose and Mary Ellen Brooks
 Palomar College Faculty Senate Faculty Service Award: Marquesa Cook-Whearty
 Palomar College Faculty Senate Scholarly & Professional Achievement Award: Betsi Little
 CCE Unionist of the Year: Leti Murillo
 CCE Community Champion: Omar Mendoza
 Palomar Faculty Federation Union Supporter: Sherehe Hollins
 Palomar Faculty Federation Community Champion: Beth Pearson

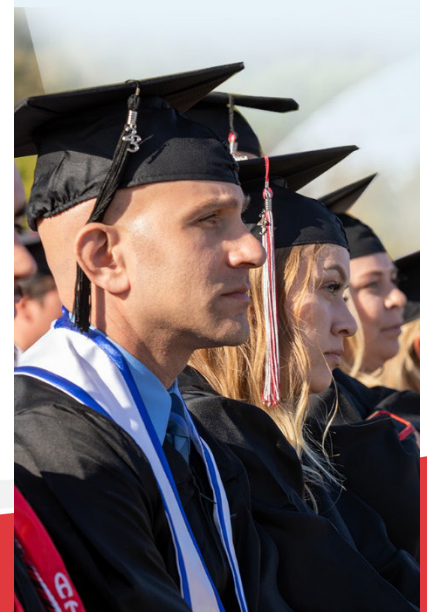


Governing Board Trustee Roberto Rodriguez, Professor Sherehe Hollins, Professor Holland Smith, Academic Department Assistant Omar Mendoza, Tutoring Center Coordinator Leti Murillo, Professor Marquesa Cook-Whearty, Part-Time Faculty Mary Ellen Brooks, Professor Beth Pearson, Academic Technology Systems Administrator Chris Norcross, Building Services Supervisor Steve Smith, Facilities Maintenance Manager Jeff Bennett, Part-Time Faculty Shannon Mueller, and Governing Board President Dr. Holly Hamilton-Bleakley

Veterans Memorial Day Observance



2026 Veterans Memorial Day Observance



An Amazing Finish to the Palomar Comet Softball Season

The state championship victory by the Palomar College softball team on May 17 against Saddleback College was the perfect end to an amazing Comet softball season. This was the sixth state championship in program history and the first since the 2015 season. Earlier in the season, Alexis Huey was named the All-Pacific Coast Athletic Conference (PCAC) Player of the Year and Kiara Flaviani was named Pitcher of the Year as the two sophomores led the Comets to a fourth straight undefeated conference season. In addition, Coach Lacey Craft earned PCAC Coach of the Year accolades for the second consecutive year. Congratulations – Go Comets!



The 2026 State Championship Palomar College Comet Softball team.

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION

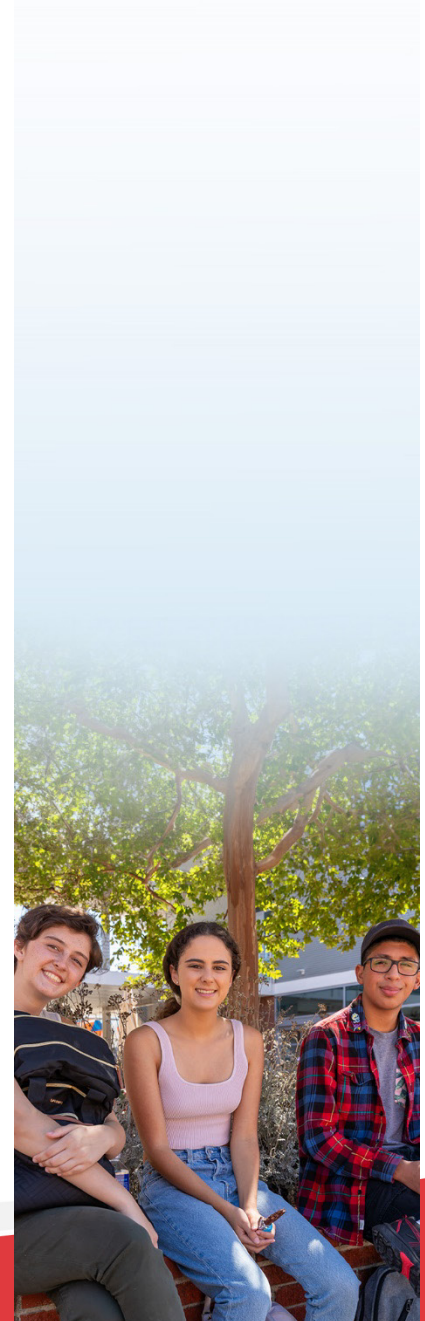
It has been an exciting and busy end of the semester, with celebrations across the Instructional Services Division showcasing the remarkable talent of our students and faculty. Interim Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction attended the graduation of Fire Academy 69, where two academy recruits were badged at the ceremony, joining fire departments in Valley Center and Escondido. With these graduates stepping immediately into careers of service to our communities, it is a testament to the high quality instruction and training offered at Palomar College.

The arts were on full display this season as well. The Honors Recital, featuring a hugely talented group of nine musicians alongside their collaborative pianist and applied music coordinator, Professor Ruth Weber was fantastic. Following the recital, over \$10,000 in scholarships were awarded to our music students. The stirring performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 of 110 musicians and vocalists, presented by the Palomar Symphony Orchestra, Palomar Chamber Singers, MiraCosta Chamber Choir, and distinguished soloists was also a highlight of the month.

Finally, the MODA Fashion Show at the Rancho Bernardo Education Center, where students transformed the outdoor quad into an exciting runway experience exemplified their amazing talent and passion for their chosen field. That same evening, Interior Design and Architecture students presented their portfolios to community members and employers. There was a tremendous amount of talent on display.

Math, Science and Engineering Division

On May 21, the Nursing department hosted a pinning ceremony for its 113th graduating class at the Escondido Charter High School auditorium. Thirty-four nursing students were pinned and are now eligible to sit for the RN licensure exam. Both the faculty and students



appreciate Governing Board President Dr. Holly Hamilton-Bleakley, Governing Board Trustee Roberto Rodriguez, and Interim Superintendent/President Dr. Tina Recalde for attending the ceremony.



Governing Board Trustee Roberto Rodriguez, Governing Board President Dr. Holly Hamilton-Bleakley, Interim Superintendent/President Dr. Tina Recalde, and Interim Dean of Math, Science and Engineering Fari Towfiq at the 113th Nursing program Pinning ceremony

Social and Behavioral Sciences Division

Two professors within the Social and Behavioral Sciences division were recognized during the 2026 Disability Resource Center year-end celebration. Alcohol and Other Drug Studies Professor Dr. Jim Fent received an Exceptional Faculty Award and History Professor Travis Ritt was a nominee for the award. Congratulations to both Professor Dr. Fent and Professor Ritt on this recognition.

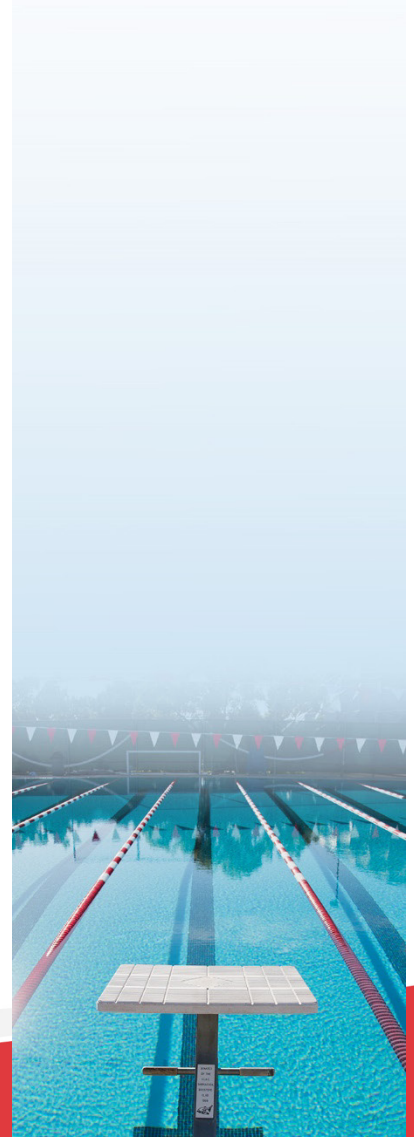
On May 18, Valley Center High School students visited Palomar College. Those interested in Child Development toured the Early Childhood Education Lab School and met with faculty to learn about the program's new certificates and degree pathways. This was followed by Child Development and Education Department Chair Gina Wilson's visit to Mission Hills High School, where she presented to four Child Development classes. Her presentations highlighted the department's new certificates and degrees and provided guidance on enrolling and succeeding at Palomar College.

A cohort of students from our Paraeducator Partnership Program with Escondido Union School District (EUSD) celebrated the completion of their first year of the program and earned a Child Development School Age Assistant certificates.

Arts, Media, and Business Administration

IMPACT Magazine staff and faculty advisor Erin Hiro celebrated 15 years of student publishing within the Palomar College Journalism program during an event held at the Student Union on May 14. The celebration highlighted the program's legacy of student-led journalism, with current staff distributing the latest edition of the independent, student-run news magazine—released earlier in the week—alongside archived issues spanning its history. The event also featured a large birthday cake, commemorating the publication's milestone anniversary.

On May 7, the Art department hosted its annual open house alongside the Fresh Student Art Exhibition, welcoming visitors to an evening reception celebrating both faculty and student



work. The event drew a steady stream of attendees eager to explore the department’s diverse artistic offerings. Guests experienced live demonstrations across several disciplines, including glassblowing, ceramics, and bronze casting. These engaging, hands-on presentations offered a unique glimpse into the creative process and captured significant interest for their craftsmanship and visual appeal.

The Performing Arts Theatre program concluded its season with a bold and unconventional production, *DRACULA: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really*. Described by organizers as both timely and electrifying, the play offers a fresh reinterpretation of the classic vampire tale, blending dark humor with pointed social commentary. The production brought renewed energy to the stage, engaging both performers and audiences with a distinctive voice and contemporary perspective. Praised for its intensity and relevance, the performance was dynamic, thought-provoking, and visually compelling. With its provocative themes and modern edge, the production invited reflection while captivating audiences throughout.



Collage of images from the performance of DRACULA: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really

Languages and Literature Division

Two members of the Speech discipline were recently honored with awards. Dr. Marquesa Cook-Whearty received the Faculty Senate Service Award, and Professor Holland Smith was named 2025-26 Distinguished Faculty Award for full-time faculty.

English as a Second Language students recently participated in a visit to the Palomar College Arboretum. The students enjoyed exploring and learning about the features and plant species throughout the Arboretum.



Spanish AA-Transfer degree and certificate earners and faculty at a year-end celebration

Students in several Spanish classes celebrated earning their Spanish AA-T degree or certificate with a special in-class fiesta. The World Languages department hosted another



successful Café International event on April 28 in the Student Union. This year’s theme, “Soccer Around the World,” gave students the opportunity to experience the food and cultural traditions of various countries.



Students and faculty enjoying the spring 2026 Café International event

English Professor Dr. Rocco Versaci received the 2026 Disability Resource Center Exceptional Faculty Award at the year-end celebration. This award recognizes faculty for their dedication and support of students throughout the academic year.



English Professor Dr. Rocco Versaci and Disability Resource Center Director Adam Kasarda



Workforce, Community and Continuing Education

Students in the Water Technology program participated in several action-packed tours of the Carlsbad Desalination Plant and the Olivenhain Municipal Water District. On the tours, students saw the infrastructure that brings safe drinking water to north county communities and takes used water from homes and businesses, treating it to be safe for reuse or discharge into the environment. These tours were supported by a National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education grant awarded to Palomar College last year. The students also received invaluable career tips from seasoned plant operators, many of whom attended Palomar College and many of whom had gone through the San Diego County Water Authority's regional internship program. In post-tour feedback, 96% of responding students said that the tour improved their knowledge of the industry and made them more interested in pursuing a career as water/wastewater system operator.

The Palomar College Career Center hosted a successful All Majors Job Expo on May 6, welcoming 36 employer partners, 64 employee representatives, and 132 students for a day of networking and career exploration. Students connected with organizations across a wide range of industries, gaining valuable insights and access to job and internship opportunities. Employers from healthcare, education, government, nonprofits, hospitality, retail, construction, manufacturing, and STEM fields - including organizations such as Kaiser Permanente, the County of San Diego, YMCA of San Diego County, Dr. Bronner's, Aramark, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, and Zeni Aerospace - came together to connect with students and share career opportunities. The event reinforced the importance of the Career Center's commitment to career readiness and community partnership.

Professional Learning

The Professional Learning team in collaboration with Human Resources produced the Annual Employee Recognition Celebration on May 8. Joined by nearly 150 colleagues in person and via Zoom, the event included a reception and time to gather and network.

May marked the culmination of the AI Book Club, with its final meeting (in a series of 4) on May 8. This final AI Book Club session provided an opportunity for faculty and staff to step back from individual AI tools and strategies and engage in a broader, forward-looking conversation about the role of artificial intelligence in education. Participants explored questions related to how AI may reshape teaching, faculty work, student support, and higher education overall, while also considering the implications for academic integrity, privacy, equity, and human-centered learning. The discussion encouraged participants to reflect on where AI should be embraced, where caution may be necessary, and how intentional, value-driven integration can support meaningful learning experiences. The session was highly interactive and discussion-based, allowing participants to share perspectives, raise concerns, and collaboratively consider how educators can help shape the future of AI in education.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Life & Leadership

The Student Life and Leadership team is grateful to the commencement committee, as well as all of the support staff, and every team involved in making this year's commencement ceremony a success. The 2026 commencement was planned over the course of an entire year (since last summer) and is the result of the collaboration and dedication demonstrated throughout the process. This year, a new ticketing system designed to ensure more equitable access for guests was successfully launched and event security was enhanced to better support the safety and experience of all attendees. These updates were implemented smoothly, contributing to a successful celebration. The ceremony marked a record number of graduates, making this year's commencement particularly meaningful.



Palomar Promise

The Palomar Promise program, in collaboration with the Transfer Center, successfully hosted college tours to San Diego State University and UC San Diego. The visits included a guided campus tour, an informative presentation on transfer pathways and student support resources, and lunch at campus dining services. Students also had the opportunity to enjoy time at Belmont Park and the San Diego Zoo. Feedback collected through a post-trip survey was overwhelmingly positive, with students rating the experience 5/5. A consistent theme in responses highlighted the importance of building connections and forming new friendships, contributing to a strong sense of belonging. During the UC San Diego visit, students also connected with former Palomar College and Promise students who have successfully transferred, providing meaningful peer insight and inspiration.

The next college tour is scheduled for May 29. Students will first explore the campus of California State University, Long Beach. Following the university visit, the group will head out for an exciting whale-watching excursion.

Rising Scholars

This spring, Rising Scholars celebrated the graduation of over 30 formerly incarcerated students, including the Palomar College 2026 valedictorian, Terra White. Many students are transferring to Cal State San Marcos, joining Project Rebound for continued support while others will attend UC Berkeley, San Diego State University, and other top universities.

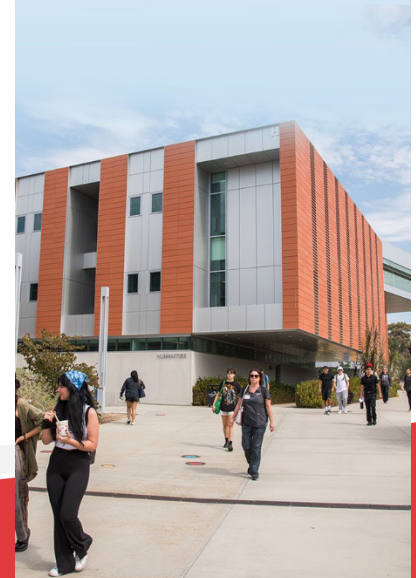


Interim Superintendent/President Dr. Tina Recalde, 2026 Valedictorian Terra White, and Interim Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction Justin Smiley

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Fiscal Services

The cashier's office is actively helping students to enroll in payment plans, while engaging students onsite and through phone and email communications regarding the summer and fall term. The budget office is completing the FY 26-27 Tentative Budget. The fiscal and accounting office is working with external auditors on the mid-term audit scheduled to be finished by mid-June. Payroll is working on Employee Self Services to allow employees to view their paystubs electronically.



Business Services

Business Services has been working diligently to process the large influx of end-of-year purchasing and contact requests, including many year-end events, celebrations, and activities in support of our students. The Purchasing team has been working with the Career Technical and Extended Education division to develop a bid for a CNC Router and training for the Cabinet and Furniture Technology program. The lowest responsible responsive bid is anticipated to be presented at the July Board meeting for approval. Business Services held a surplus auction that closed on May 18. The full list of items sold will be presented at the Governing Board meeting in July. Another surplus auction will be scheduled in the summer to include the saleable items from the first floor of the LL building, in addition to the customary surplus items.

Facilities Operations

Jeff Bennett, Facilities Maintenance Manager, was awarded the Administrative Association Employee of the Year for his dedication, integrity, and proactive leadership in ensuring campus facilities function smoothly to support learning and campus activities. Steve Smith, Building Services Supervisor, was awarded the CAST Employee of the Year award for his unwavering leadership that takes maintenance and repair services to the next level, giving students a safe and comfortable learning environment. David Vasquez, Custodial Services Supervisor and Robert Rebar, Custodian II were nominated for their reliability and dedication to the college.

Construction & Facilities Planning

The Fallbrook 40 project continues to progress. The exterior wall finishes are being installed, and exterior building identification signage has started. Interior wall finishing is ongoing, and interior painting is in progress on the 2nd floor. Glass and glazing are being installed, and the photovoltaic panel installation is nearly complete. The Athletics Phase 2 also continues as planned with the completion of the main building metal roofing. The main power has been brought into the building and is connected.

Custodial Services

During the month of May, the Custodial department continued supporting dozens of campus events and operations across the district. These events required extensive coordination, setup modifications, cleaning support, and post-event restoration to ensure campus facilities remained welcoming and operational for students, staff, and guests. In addition, the installation of accessible dispensers within the Student Union restrooms to better serve the campus community was completed. The continued efforts of our custodial staff play an essential role in supporting the student experience and campus operations districtwide.

Building and Ground Services

Building Services replaced HVAC server racks in the main server room at the A-building, replaced the HVAC system supporting the O-building Women's Locker Room, installed a new HVAC system in C-15, and cleaned out the second and third floor of the LL-building. Grounds Services facilitated a major mulching project on the San Marcos campus, supported commencement set-up and breakdown, and utilized the Palomar Wildlife Club to help with clean up, planting, and mulching in the Arboretum.

Environmental Health & Safety / Risk Management

The Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) amendment for the Athletics Phase II Project was certified and submitted to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. The amendment updated best management practices, site controls, and storm water compliance measures to reflect changing site conditions during construction activities. The emergency operations guides, emergency procedures posters, and evacuation maps for all five campus locations were finalized. Associated materials are scheduled for district-wide



printing and distribution to support standardized emergency response procedures, improve emergency preparedness awareness, and enhance campus safety communications.

HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES (HRS)

Human Resources extended its appreciation to the campus community for its continued recognition of our employees and for supporting efforts that highlight their contributions. Classified Appreciation Week, held the week of June 1, was a meaningful opportunity to celebrate the dedication and impact of classified professionals across campus. This year's theme, "Classified Strong: Supporting Every Student, Powering Every Department," emphasized the vital role classified staff play in advancing student success and sustaining district operations. Throughout the week, the campus community came together to honor employees through a variety of activities, including professional workshops, a hosted breakfast and lunch, and department-level recognition efforts. These events fostered connection, expressed appreciation, and highlighted the many ways classified professionals contribute to our shared mission.

As we move into the summer months, Human Resources is preparing a range of professional development opportunities focused on leadership, engagement, and continued employee growth. These efforts are designed to strengthen skills, support career development, and encourage ongoing connections to the college's mission and values.

Human Resources also continues its efforts to review and improve processes to better meet the evolving needs of the campus. This work includes simplifying procedures where possible and identifying more efficient approaches to operations.

Benefits

Full-time employee health insurance open enrollment will take place August 1-28. The district will mail open enrollment postcards to all benefit eligible employees and retirees at the end of June.

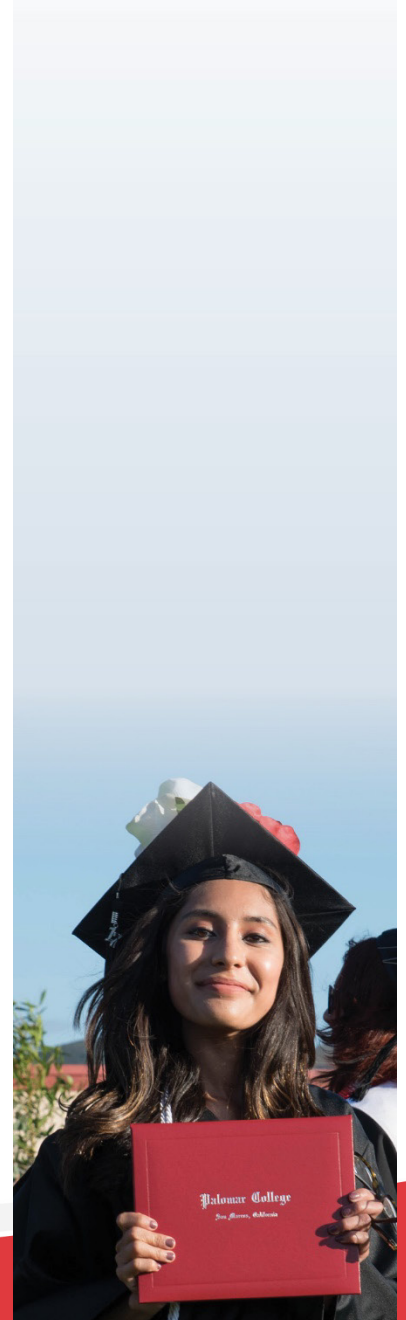
On April 28, onsite free biometric screenings were provided to 42 district employees and/or their covered dependents. The benefits office will begin planning an onsite flu shot clinic for all employees during September.

We encourage everyone to celebrate the beginning of summer by focusing on their wellness and practicing inclusivity. The Anthem Employee Assistance Program (EAP) allows all employees to access corporate "Perks at Work" discounts on activities, travel, and everyday necessities. Visit the [Anthem Employee Assistance Program website](#) and select "Work-life Resources" followed by "Savings Center" to get started. Employees will have to select "New Users - click here to register for the savings center" and use the company name and company code "Anthem." As a result, an email will be sent to set up a Perks at Work profile.

CalSTRS.com Financial Basics webpage offers a one-stop shop for members looking for resources to achieve their short-term and long-term financial goals. The CalPERS Member Education webpage has information about in-person classes, virtual classes, and recorded videos as well.

Recruitment

Recruitment remains a top priority as we move through the summer months, with a continued focus on filling critical positions. In addition, the district has posted an



announcement on its website highlighting the upcoming presidential search as part of a joint effort to elevate this important leadership opportunity.

Recruitment figures as of May 26, 2026:

- 52 permanent recruitments in progress
 - 10 – Admin/CAST
 - 31 – Classified
 - 11 – Faculty
- 66 part-time faculty recruitments in progress
15 additional part-time faculty postings have closed, and departments are still hiring from those application pools

CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICE

Achievement Celebrations

In early May, the Association of Latinos and Allies for Student Success (ALASS) affinity group hosted the annual La Raza Scholars Achievement Celebration including over 50 students and their families and friends. Each graduate was presented with a sarape stole and a certificate of achievement. This celebration, as well as the others hosted by Palomar affinity groups, are supported in collaboration with Student Services (Student Equity and Achievement Program) and the Chief Diversity Office.

The Asian Pacific Alliance in Higher Education (APAHE) affinity group hosted the 4th Annual Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Graduates Celebration. Students were presented with a graduation stole to symbolize the strength of their Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander culture in helping them achieve this achievement.

The Palomar Black Faculty and Staff Association (PBFSA) affinity group hosted the Mahafali - A Celebration of Black Student Achievement. Palomar celebrates Mahafali—Kiswahili for “graduation”—as more than a ceremony. It’s a tribute to the strength, culture, and legacy of African American excellence. Students were presented with Kente graduation stoles to wear with their regalia at the main commencement ceremony.

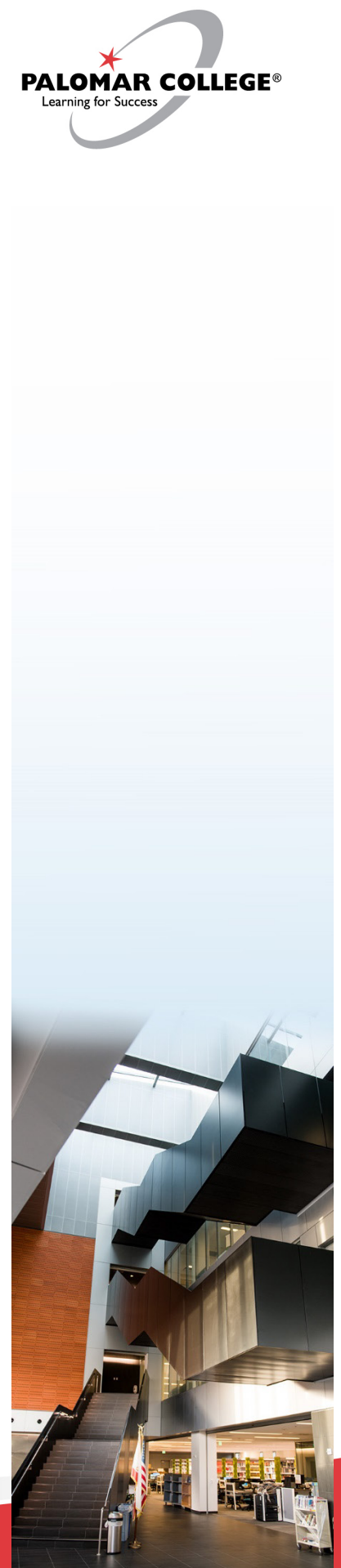
Accessibility

The California Community Colleges Accessibility Center hosted its annual Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) workshop. This year’s theme, "Raising the Floor: Building a Culture of Access and Equity," focused on moving from compliance to commitment and strengthening sustainable accessibility practices across our campuses. The GAAD workshop featured presentations from higher education leaders across California and highlighted accessibility efforts throughout the state.

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, PLANNING & GRANTS (IRPG)

Accreditation

The annual report to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) was submitted prior to the May 15 deadline. As noted in previous updates, the report includes institutional data on overall and credit program enrollment, distance education enrollment, and student outcomes, including course success rates, completion counts, and transfer counts. In addition, three substantive change proposals related to apprenticeship programs offered at offsite locations were submitted. ACCJC approval is



required when more than 50% of a program is offered at a location other than the main campus. All three proposals were approved by the Commission.



The Accreditation Writing Leadership Team (AWLT) in partnership with ACCJC held an Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) kick-off workshop on May 6. More than 25 Palomar faculty, staff, and administrators participated in the workshop. During the session, the liaison reviewed the required report components, discussed the 2024 accreditation standards and ACCJC rubrics. Our liaison also facilitated a sample standards review activity in which participants examined areas of alignment with the ACCJC rubrics and identified opportunities for further development and improvement.

Finally, AWLT has developed the ISER timeline. The ISER is due to the Commission in August 2028. While that due date may appear distant, the development process involves evaluating institutional practices and outcomes against the standards, developing, and organizing supporting evidence, preparing multiple drafts of the report, and completing governance review prior to submission. As a result, the AWLT anticipates completing the report by the end of Fall 2027 so it can move through governance review and approval during the Spring 2028 term.

Integrated Planning

The Program Review and Resource Allocation Committee completed its work for the semester by finalizing a draft of funding recommendations resulting from this year's program review cycle. IRP&G staff also continue to update enrollment reports to align with the new standardized attendance accounting method while maintaining regular enrollment reporting for Executive Team meetings.

Institutional Research

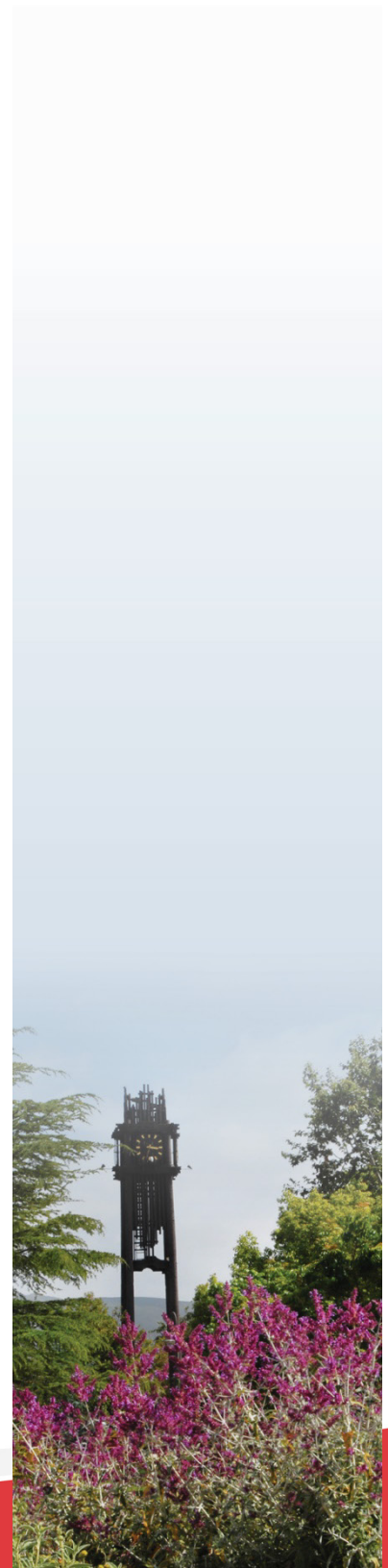
Institutional Research staff are wrapping up several spring projects, including review of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) for Perkins funding, finalization of the Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey report, and completion of the Dental Assisting Outcomes Survey, among other projects.

Grants

The district's application to the U.S. Department of Education for FY 2026 designation as an Eligible Institution under Section 312 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, was approved. This designation allows the College to apply for certain Higher Education Act grant programs, including Title III, and to request non-federal cost-share waivers where permitted.

The Career Technical Extended Education division received a new award from the California Community College Chancellor's Office Workforce and Economic Development Division through the California Apprenticeship Initiative – New and Innovative (Implementation) grant program. The three-year \$1.5 million award will support development of a Training and Development Specialist Apprenticeship Program for active-duty Marines and U.S. Marine Corps-employed personnel. The program is designed to align military training with civilian academic and workforce standards, allowing participants to earn college credit and certificates of achievement at no cost while preparing for civilian careers as Training and Development Specialists.

IRP&G worked with Student Services to submit a new five-year Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) proposal to the U.S. Department of Education. If funded, the project would build on the current North County EOC by increasing the number of low-income and first-generation adults who earn a high school diploma or equivalent and pursue postsecondary



education. The program would provide need-based services such as academic advising, career exploration, and postsecondary pathway planning.

In addition, a proposal was submitted on behalf of the Arts, Media, and Business Administration division to the Foundation for California Community Colleges Real Estate Education Grant Program. The proposed project seeks to strengthen our real estate program by developing a sustainable cooperative education infrastructure and expanding employer partnerships to support student learning and workforce readiness.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Marketing/Advertising/Promotion

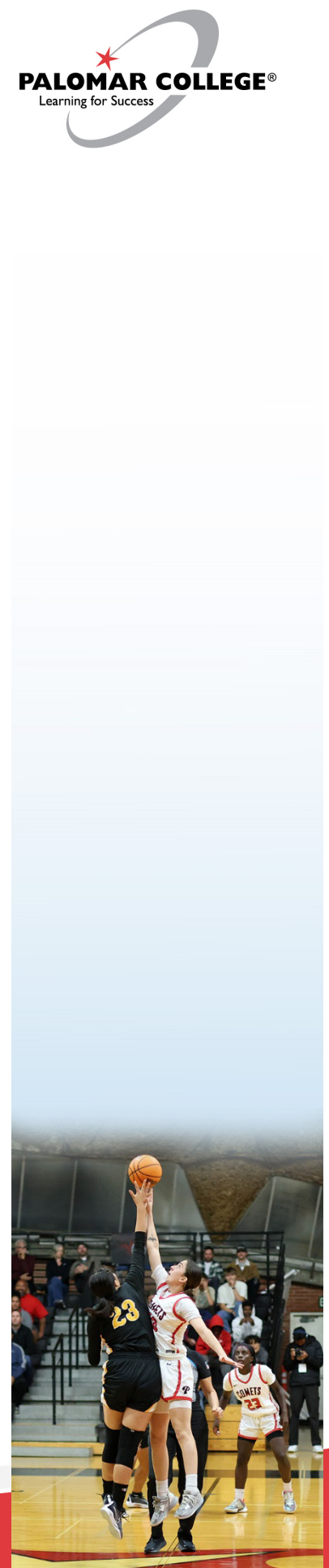
The integrated marketing campaign designed to support Summer and Fall enrollment goals and increase awareness among our target audiences continued throughout May. The campaign includes the Palomar Makes It Possible digital advertising strategy, inclusive of academic area advertising as well as brand-related enrollment-focused ads, generating over 774,207 impressions while remaining cost-efficient.

The comprehensive advertising campaign featured a diverse mix of placements, including a direct mail postcard to over 160,000 households, a digital bulletin along Interstate 15 and a billboard on highway 78. We also placed digital advertising on indoor digital billboard screens at various retail establishments within the district, digital web banner ads in the *UT Community Press*, digital transit shelter ads in the southern portion of the district, and a billboard in Fallbrook. A full-page ad in the North County Informador, accompanied by a web banner also ran. Additional placements included an email campaign to subscribers of Camp Pendleton news and a digital marquee display at the base. To support the Rancho Bernardo Education Center a cinema advertisement continued to run. A new web streaming campaign launched with iHeart Radio on May 18 and is designed to support summer and fall enrollment goals. The campaign features Palomar College alumnus and radio personality Jesse Lozano and includes over-the-top (OTT) video advertising targeted at platforms and programming of campaign audiences, all aimed at driving traffic to the palomar.edu website. In collaboration with the facilities department, signage promoting enrolling for summer and fall remain posted at the San Marcos campus.

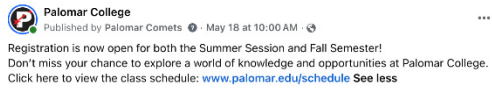
To further promote summer and fall enrollment opportunities, a new campaign designed to engage former students is planned for mid-June/early July. This digital marketing approach will utilize student data and social media platforms to re-connect with students. Students who engage with the campaign will be contacted through our new call center.

Compared to May 2025, new user traffic to the palomar.edu website increased by 70%. These results are positively impacted by the comprehensive advertising strategy implemented in May. Display advertising was the 4th ranked source of traffic generated to the website. Social media traffic was the 5th ranked source of traffic. TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram generated the majority of the social media traffic to Palomar.edu. The overall top channels of traffic to the website are direct traffic, organic search, and referral traffic.

A year-over-year performance comparison of growth within each of our social media platforms shows continuous improvement. Facebook followers increased by 4% and X followers increased by 1% compared to last May. Followers on LinkedIn grew 6% compared to May 2025. Compared to the previous May, both Instagram and our TikTok channel grew 20% and 17%, respectively.



Throughout May our social media posts focused on preparing for commencement, tutoring and study tips, student support services, workshops and activities, performing arts, and athletic achievements.



Sample Social Media Post



Social Media Post

Community and Media Relations

The media advisory on our 2026 Commencement ceremony generated news mentions both in community news sites and television morning news broadcasts. Palomar News stories posted in the month of May include an [award winning architecture design student](#), a story on [the 2025-26 Valedictorian](#) and a feature on our [championship softball team](#). This is in addition to a [press release](#) on the 2026 Commencement ceremony. These stories are made available on the [Palomar News website](#).

The Vista Magazine interview with Interim Superintendent/President Dr. Tina Recalde that was conducted last month, published in the middle of May. The story begins on [page 34 of the magazine](#).

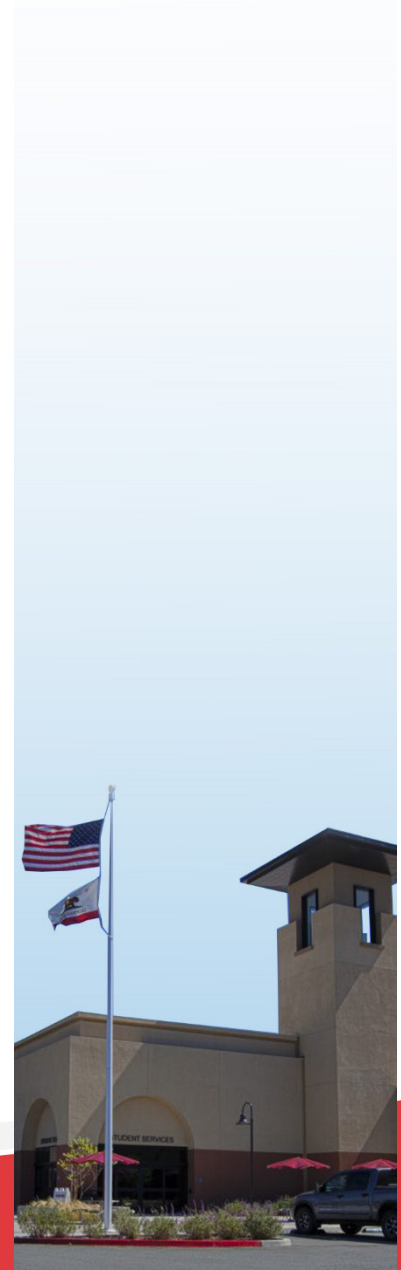
Palomar College received 326 media mentions in May, including mentions from local, regional, and online media organizations, with an overall publicity value of over \$771,000. A feature on the most recent Palomar College Woman of the Year, Dr. Cynthia Anfinson, is pending final approval and will post to Palomar News in June.

PIO Lanthier Bandy attended the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce board of directors meeting and served on the Chamber's Rising Stars Scholarship Evaluation Committee. She also presented an update on Palomar College to the Government Affairs Committee of the Poway Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Andrew Mertig, Interim Director of the Rancho Bernardo Education Center also attended the meeting. PIO Lanthier Bandy attended the half-day San Diego County Taxpayer's Association Best Practices Roundtable on general obligation bond initiatives for the education sector.

Internal/External Communications and Public Affairs

At the invitation of Director of Continuing Education Ute Maschke, PIO Lanthier Bandy attended the final presentations of marketing internship students. All of the students provided outstanding summaries of their mock marketing campaigns utilizing the brand guidelines and photography provided during a presentation to the students last month.

PIO Lanthier Bandy attended the government affairs meetings hosted by the Association of Community College Trustees, California Community College Chancellor's Office, and



Community College League of California (CCLC) and the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association (SDICCCA) monthly meeting. She also attended the Speech and Debate Showcase and the Transfer Recognition Ceremony.



FOUNDATION

Fundraising Activities

Scholarships

The Palomar College Foundation continues to expand opportunities for students through generous community support. Recent scholarship funding from our donors includes \$6,000 for the Cabinet Furniture Technology Scholarships, \$5,000 for the Carstarphen Scholarship, and \$5,000 for the Trades Champion Scholarship, helping students pursue their educational and career goals.

Grant Program

The Foundation is thrilled to share that we were awarded a highly competitive \$52,000 grant for the Veteran Mental Health Access & Campus Support Initiative from The Cushman Foundation's Phi Fest Project. The grant process included 127 applications, with only 17 organizations advancing as finalists and approximately half ultimately receiving funding. Following our presentation, the Cushman family made the rare and extraordinary decision to fund Palomar College Foundation on the spot. This transformational funding will expand behavioral health counseling services for veteran and military-affiliated students from one to three days per week and provide specialized training for faculty and staff who support these students. The investment strengthens the College's ability to provide trauma-informed care and critical mental health support for those who have served our country. In addition, the Foundation submitted a grant proposal to Sempra Foundation to purchase forestry hoses for the Palomar College Fire Academy.

Annual President's Golf Classic Invitational

Excitement is building for the annual President's Invitational Golf Classic, which has already raised \$28,000 to support student success and remove financial barriers for Palomar College students. The event takes place on October 19, but the volunteer committee is already engaged with soliciting sponsors.

Foundation Board, Community & Donor Engagement

Bravura Gala

On May 14, Palomar College Foundation Board Member Chris Spielmaker joined Executive Director Stacy Rungaitis at the Bravura Gala. The inspiring evening showcased incredible prose, poetry, and visual art created by current and former Palomar College students, and talented local high school students. Board member Spielmaker had the honor of presenting awards funded by a Foundation grant. The Foundation is proud to support the Bravura publication, helping elevate student voices and celebrate the power of artistic expression.



Foundation Executive Director Stacy Rungaitis, Professor Dr. Rocco Versaci, Professor Dr. Clare Rolens and Foundation Board Member Chris Spielmaker at the Bravura Gala



San Diego North Economic Development Summit
The Palomar College team was represented at the annual Economic Summit hosted by the San Diego North Economic Development Council. The event featured forecasts and discussions on regional and national economic conditions.

Fire Academy Graduation

The Palomar College Foundation was honored to attend the graduation of the 69th Basic Fire Fighter Academy cadets on May 15. This special milestone was particularly meaningful alongside one of our dedicated donors, Klaus Kirchhoff. Klaus believes in the importance of the Fire Academy and the power of education continues to change lives through his endowed scholarships. These graduates have committed to serving and protecting others, and, through their hard work, courage, and training, our community is in safe hands.



Interim Associate Dean Wendy Nelson, Dean of Career Technical Extended Education Dr. Nichol Roe, Development Officer Linda Moynan, Governing Board President Dr. Holly Hamilton-Bleakley, Employer Relations Liaison Angela Tilley-Ruiz, and Career Center Manager Michelle Tillman



Palomar College Adjunct Faculty member John Thompson and Palomar College Foundation donor Klaus Kirchhoff

Additional Community Engagement

Executive Director Stacy Rungaitis attended several year-end celebrations this month including the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANAHP) Celebration, Architecture and Interior Design Showcases, MODA Fashion Show and Commencement. She attended the community Grand Opening event of the San Marcos 222 North City complex on May 21. As part of serving on the Board of Directors for the Network of California Community College Foundations, Stacy also participated this month on the governance committee in the selection of new members for the board.

