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Kennedy-King Scholars Honored

The 58th annual Kennedy-King Memorial College Scholarship Fund Awards dinner, held on May 15 at the Concord Hilton Hotel, honored 27 undergraduates and eight graduate students for their academic achievements.

With family and friends surrounding them, proud recipients shared their educational aspirations now made possible through their scholarship awards.

Speakers included Contra Costa College President **Dr. Kimberly Rogers**; Francisco Romero, DVC scholar recipient; Jakeya Butler, CCC scholar recipient; Natalia Longoria, LMC scholar recipient; and Christian Diaz-Galarza, 2017 undergraduate and 2026 graduate recipient.

Founded in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, the Kennedy-King Memorial Scholarship has granted nearly \$7.725 million in scholarships to more than 1,385 students since its founding in 1968. All scholars have completed at least two years of study at Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College, or Los Medanos College, and have been accepted at a four-year university to complete their undergraduate studies. Scholarships for graduate students are for students who previously received a Kennedy-King undergraduate scholarship.

For more information, please visit www.kennedyking.org.



District Employees Complete Leadership Program

Congratulations to the 25 employees who graduated May 1 from the 4CD Leadership Institute (4CDLI)!

The program, which was last offered in 2018, was relaunched in 2026 as an opportunity for District employees to participate in professional development that covered a variety of topics from campus culture and self-awareness to collective bargaining and navigating difficult conversations.

This cohort, which was comprised of faculty, classified professionals, and managers, attended five full days of classes over the course of five months and, on their own time, worked in small groups to research a districtwide challenge and develop a proposal to address the issue. The groups then presented their proposals to the Chancellor’s Cabinet. Each group’s findings were thoughtful and research-driven reflections with student-focused recommendations.

“I left with valuable tools I am finding I was eager to share with colleagues who were not able to attend,” said **Liz Esparza**, Disabled Students Programs & Services Assistant, Los Medanos College Brentwood Center.

Graduate	Location
Robert Bagany	CCC
Crystala Button	DVC
Penny Chuah	CCC
Carissa Craig-Huddleston	LMC
Dan Cueva	DST
Ihab Elmasry	DST
Elizabeth Esparza	BRT
Triveni Gorur	DST
Irma Gregory	LMC
Kelsie Johnson	CCC
Joshua Kas-Osoka	CCC
Angela Loera	CCC
Andrea Medina	DVC
Caitlin Mitchell	LMC
Noel Muniz	CCC
Randi Osburn	LMC
Anne Petersen	SRC
Sara Proctor	DVC
Lawrence Punsalang	LMC
Cristina Ramirez	DVC
Tanita Richardson	LMC
Lonnie Sampson	DVC
Jeanie Smith	DST
Irene Sukhu	LMC
Josue Vega	DVC

“I was able to help someone else by utilizing the tools and communication jewels I was given. I was paying it forward almost immediately and I felt empowered... I came out with strong bonds across 4CD, and I love that,” she said.

Stay tuned for information about when the District will host the next Leadership Institute.





4CD Celebrates College Graduations

On May 22, 5,096 students graduated from Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College, and Los Medanos College. 4CD students earned a combined 4,500+ associate degrees and 3,000+ certificates. Los Medanos College had its largest graduating class in its history with 1,623 students!

Click the links below to watch videos of each graduation:

[Contra Costa College](#)

[Diablo Valley College](#)

[Los Medanos College](#)



DVC Professor Selected as County Office of Education Teacher of the Year

Diablo Valley College Professor and Department Chair **Aaron Prater** has been selected as 4CD's representative for the Contra Costa County Office of Education's annual Teacher of the Year (TOY) award.

The Contra Costa County TOY program recognizes excellence in teaching within the County's public schools. Participating districts nominate individual teachers to receive this special recognition. Contra Costa County Office of Education also nominates one of its teachers to compete. The 54th annual Teachers of the Year Celebration will take place on Thursday, September 17, 2026.

Professor Prater's passion for culinary education, sustainability, and student success is evident in every class he teaches. From guiding students through the precision and technique behind classic dishes like consommé to preparing them for careers in today's evolving culinary industry, he brings real-world experience, mentorship, and dedication into the kitchen every day.

Read the [press release here](#).



DVC Hosts JobLinks Event for Classified Professionals

JobLinks 2026 set sail on May 28 as a lively, pirate-themed professional development event that brought classified professionals across the District to DVC's Pleasant Hill campus. Attendees participated in a wide range of workshops, exploring topics designed to support career growth, wellness, and workplace effectiveness. The day was coordinated by the JobLinks planning committee, led by **Jessica Martin**.

Beyond the workshops, the event fostered engagement through interactive elements including themed raffles and a student support donation drive benefiting Basic Needs and Career Closets across the District. With record participation, strong energy, and a spirit of collaboration throughout the day, JobLinks 2026 proved to be a successful and memorable voyage—bringing colleagues together to learn, give back, and strengthen connections across the District.



4CD Welcomes New Employees

Please welcome the following new employees who were approved by the Governing Board in May.

Contra Costa College

Faculty

Anthony Chon, Mathematics

Carl Sims, English

Diablo Valley College

Classified Professionals

Ariela Young, Admissions/Records Assistant II

Los Medanos College

Faculty

Daniel Peluso, Physics/Astronomy

Julianna Swent, Foreign Languages (Spanish)



Contra Costa Community College District
500 Court Street, Martinez, CA 94553

The News, 4CD Employee Newsletter

District publications are posted online at
<https://www.4cd.edu/crpa/the-news/index.html>

Your comments and suggestions are welcome.
E-mail the Communications and Community
Relations Office at info@4cd.edu.

Connect with us on social media!



Community News



Contra Costa Community College District is committed to equal opportunity in educational programs, employment, and campus life. The District does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, parental status, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in any access to and treatment in College programs, activities, and application for employment.