

WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER EDITION • 2025



Dear Leadership Teams,

The new fiscal year opened with a [balanced state budget signed June 27](#), which preserved core workforce and student success investments for California Community Colleges despite a tighter economic outlook. And there is good reason for that. California's community colleges are at the forefront of economic mobility, and to show the progress we have made in the last 12 months, we released the first WEDD Annual Report, which you can access and read in this newsletter.

Although I wasn't expecting it, this newsletter highlights a common healthcare theme. It features a recap of two events hosted by United Domestic Workers (UDW) — one of our Vision 2030 Demonstration Project partners — including a summit at Irvine Valley College and a spring UDW event at North Orange Continuing Education (NOCE). Additionally, the Chancellor's Office joined WestEd and Bay Area stakeholders for thoughtful discussions about the future of California's health workforce during a Healthcare Workforce Forum. Rounding out this month's healthcare focus, the Chancellor's Office also executed a statewide Direct Care Workforce Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California Department of Aging and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

Finally, teams from across the system also rolled up their sleeves at Vision 2030 Regional Convenings across California and our new Emergency & Disaster Readiness Caregiver training recently celebrated a major milestone in meeting critical community needs. We also welcomed a new dean, Erin Larson, to the WEDD team in August.

The articles that follow detail these initiatives and outline ways colleges and regional partners can engage in the months ahead. Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to advancing opportunities for our students.

Thank you,

Anthony Cordova

Anthony Cordova
Vice Chancellor, Workforce and Economic Development

OUR TEAM

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WEDD PROGRAM UPDATES

Access the latest monthly insights, news and progress reports regarding Workforce and Economic Development on the [Program Updates and Newsletters](#) page.



California Community Colleges

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

MECHATRONICS TRAINING – SIERRA COLLEGE & JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT (K12 Pathways)

Sierra College has partnered with the Roseville Joint Union High School District to launch a dual-enrollment mechatronics pathway that starts in two newly funded labs at Oakmont and Antelope High Schools. This program mirrors the rigor of the college’s soon-to-be-modernized Applied Technology Center and is backed by \$2.2 million in district grants and additional college staffing.

The Mechatronics Training program will let students earn transferable college credit while still in high school, with a goal of moving 150 graduates into Sacramento State’s mechanical-engineering pipeline within three years.

For community college students, the initiative tackles several pressing issues: it expands physical lab capacity so Sierra College can meet surging demand for mechatronics technicians in California’s 1.2 million-job manufacturing sector; it gives disproportionately impacted student groups earlier, no-cost access to college-level STEM coursework; and it aligns training directly to employer-specified equipment and skills, which strengthens job placement and supply-chain resilience.

By bridging K-12 and community college around industry-grade labs and shared faculty development, the model addresses both equity and workforce gaps while lowering time-and-tuition barriers to advanced manufacturing careers. To learn more, read the [full article in Mechatronics Canada](#).



(PHOTO - Image sourced from the Greater Sacramento Economic Council / Sierra College)

UDW SUMMIT AT IRVINE VALLEY COLLEGE

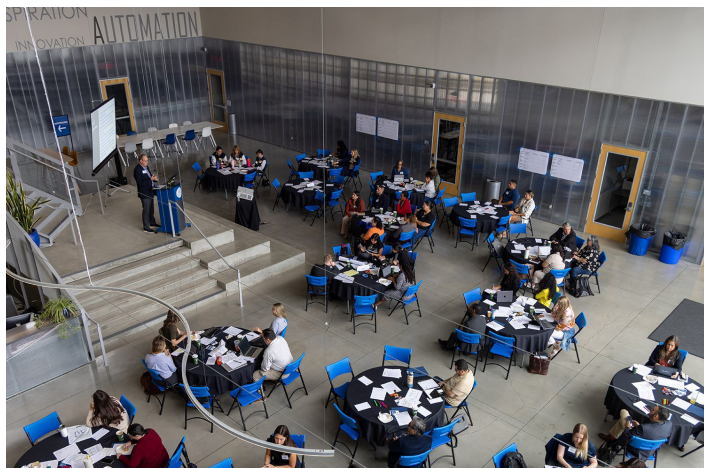


(PHOTOS - WEDD Team at the UDW Summit held at Irvine Valley College)

The UDW Adult Learner Vision 2030 Demonstration Project launched in June 2024 with 20 colleges across five counties, focusing on improving outcomes for adult learners through innovative, cross-sector strategies. Since then, enrollment has grown from 145 learners to 581 as of spring 2025.

We thank Irvine Valley College for hosting the two-day convening, which was organized by the Chancellor’s Office, WestEd, and our UDW partners. The event gathered leaders from workforce development, industry, and community colleges to collaborate on strategies that advance adult economic mobility.

Aligning educational programs with workforce demands and community priorities is essential to the student success our system strives to achieve.



(PHOTOS -UDW Summit held at Irvine Valley College)

NORTH ORANGE CONTINUING EDUCATION (NOCE) SPRING UDW CELEBRATION

In June, Valentina Purtell, NOCE President, welcomed guests and members of our team to celebrate UDW workers and learn more about available programs in the region. North Orange Continuing Education (NOCE) offers no-tuition adult education across Anaheim, Cypress, and Fullerton - it delivers open-entry, workforce-aligned instruction in adult basic skills, high-school diploma/GED prep, English-as-a-Second-Language and U.S. citizenship, parenting and older-adult enrichment, alongside short-term career certificates ranging from bookkeeping and medical assisting to electrical technology, pharmacy technician and Google IT Support.

Attendees at the Anaheim event heard from Arturo Vasquez, Associate Director of the California Community Colleges for the URC, as well as student, Minerva Marin, who is a UDW Member. Guests also heard from Stacy Webb about NOCE Career Resources and ended the day with details about NOCE and UDW Fast-Track Orientation and Fall Registration updates.

We appreciate all the incredible work being done by [North Orange Continuing Education](#).



(PHOTO -North Orange Continuing Education Spring Celebration)

VISION 2030 UPDATES

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors recently adopted [Vision 2030 – The July 2025 Edition](#), a refreshed roadmap for equity, innovation, and bold systemwide transformation. It's not a change in direction, it is a renewed commitment to our shared three goals—Equity in Access, Equity in Success, and Equity in Support, while incorporating what we have learned over the past 18 months, and expanding our plan to incorporate the challenges and opportunities emerging across our system, our state, our nation, and the world. Review the report to find updated information on WED [Workplans](#) and Demonstration Projects.

Additionally, the recent Vision 2030 Regional Convenings we have been attending across the State over the last few months have also been rewarding and inspirational.

(continued on page 4...)

Welcome NEW DEAN



The Workforce and Economic Development Division (WEDD) is excited to welcome Erin Larson, our new dean!

Erin Larson is the new Dean in Workforce and Economic Development overseeing the Strong Workforce Program, Strong Workforce K-12, and Economic and Workforce Development. She has spent the last 16 years in the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office administering academic and workforce programs and initiatives that helped provide access and support to students on their post-secondary educational journey. She managed the statewide implementation of innovative teaching and learning programs direct assessment competency-based education and community college baccalaureate degrees. In the early days of the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act, she reviewed and approved hundreds of Associate Degrees for Transfer that provided students with a transfer guarantee to a California State University. She launched the zero-textbook cost program that incorporated open educational resources for students. During the pandemic, she coordinated resources to help colleges make the vital transition to distance education.

Prior to the Chancellor's Office, Erin served as an analyst in the Governor's Office of Planning and research where she provided statutory, regulatory, and policy guidance for land use and environmental issues. She attributes her resilience and adaptability to her proud "army brat" upbringing. Erin earned her Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from California State University, Sacramento and her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles.

You can reach Dean Larson at elarson@cccco.edu

VISION 2030 REGIONAL CONVENINGS

(continued from page 3...)

Regional convenings turn Vision 2030 goals into practical, place-based work plans. By bringing college teams, K-12 partners, employers, and the Chancellor's Office together in specific regions, we can align strategies to the local economy and student population.

BAY AREA REGIONAL WORKSHOP

The Bay Area Vision 2030 Regional Convening was held on April 16-17. During this convening, we discussed aligning district, region, and state plans while also leading with equity, access, and success. We discussed partnership opportunities, embracing AI, optimizing classrooms, and the blueprint for current and emerging jobs.

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL WORKSHOP

The South Central Coast Vision 2030 Regional Convening was held on May 27-28. We looked at ways to align regional strategic plans with the systemwide Vision 2030 metrics, discussed ways to support veterans, build partnerships, and provide equity in access, support, and success for our students among other regional strategies and plans.

View the [full agenda](#) here.



(PHOTO - Bay Area Regional Workshop)



(PHOTO - South Central Coast Regional Workshop)

APPRENTICESHIPS

The WEDD team is partnering with the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FoundationCCC) as our Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) to support colleges, faculty, and partners in building and scaling high-quality apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.



VISION RESOURCE CENTER

There is a new [Apprenticeship Community](#) on the [Vision Resource Center](#) to support faculty, staff, and administrators as they develop and scale apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs across California community colleges. This community provides members the opportunity to connect with each other, the WEDD Apprenticeship team, and the FoundationCCC TAP team to ask questions, access resources, and receive important real-time information about opportunities and events related to new and innovative apprenticeship programs.

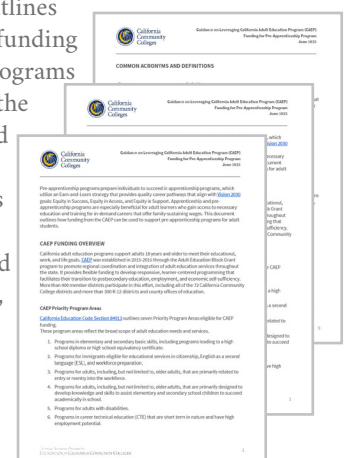
The WEDD Apprenticeship team holds twice-monthly [Virtual Office Hours](#), on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 2:00 - 3:00pm. Beginning in August, some of these Office Hours will be focused around a specific topic – providing an overview, addressing frequently asked questions, and then answering participant questions. Upcoming dates and topics through the end of the year are included along the righthand side.

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS TOPICS

Aug 12	Focused: Apprenticeship Planning and Implementation
Aug 26	Focused: RSI and FTES
Sept 9	General
Sept 23	Focused: CAI Grant Administration
Oct 14	General
Oct 28	General
Nov 11	Cancelled (Veteran's Day)
Dec 9	Focused: Employer Engagement
Dec 23	General

CAEP FUNDING FOR PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

The [Guidance Document on Leveraging CAEP Funding for Pre-Apprenticeship Programs](#) outlines the opportunity for using CAEP funding to support pre-apprenticeship programs for adult learners and highlights the value of collaboration, equity, and regional labor market alignment. The document includes examples and actionable next steps for building pathways into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs), helping adult learners access career opportunities in high-demand industries.



APPRENTICESHIPS AT WORK

As of December 2024, WEDD has supported the creation of approximately 37 new Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and 864 enrolled apprentices through the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI). We hope to see these numbers continue to grow through our ongoing efforts.

[MiraCosta College](#) is pioneering workforce development in biotechnology through a unique partnership with the Open BioPharma Research and Training Institute. The program is supporting six Research Associate II Registered Apprentices who are on track to earn industry-recognized certifications from both the U.S. Department of Labor and California's Department of Apprenticeship Standards in Summer 2025. This success demonstrates the power of cross-sector collaboration to create equitable, industry-aligned career pathways.



STUDENT SUCCESS - EUNICE WORREL-SANTOS



(PHOTO - Eunice Worrel-Santos)

Thanks to the California Community College Chancellor's Office and its partnership with United Domestic Workers union, Eunice Worrel-Santos, 58, is enrolled in adult-education bookkeeping classes that figure to boost her income by thousands of dollars a year.

"Hopefully we'll be able to save more and be able to invest more, so in the future we will have a better way to enjoy our retirement," she says about herself and her husband. "In the short term, we should be able to pay off the mortgage, and then we'll be able to take vacations from time to time."

The program is part of the California Community Colleges' (CCC) Vision 2030, a collaborative action plan aimed at increasing student success and closing equity gaps in education by improving access, affordability, and support. One of the goals is to boost the income of the state's working poor by helping 70 percent of them obtain post-secondary degrees or certificates by 2030. Toward that goal, the Chancellor's Office last year formed a partnership with the UDW, a union serving 171,000 home care workers.

Worrel-Santos has been caring for her 88-year-old

mother and 90-year-old father since 2015, for which she is employed by the state's In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program. Her husband is a professional locksmith, and they own their own home in Anaheim. But the mortgage, the food bills, health care, gasoline, utilities and taxes leaves them tight in the wallet almost every month.

Through the UDW, Worrel-Santos learned of its partnership with California Community Colleges and enrolled in the bookkeeping courses at the Anaheim campus of North Orange Continuing Education (NOCE).

"The basics of the accounting system, including payroll," she responds when asked about what she is learning. "The basics of business management. Simple accounting systems. QuickBooks software. If you at a later time own a business or work in a business, you'd know what an accountant does, how they enter books, how they do financial statements."

When Worrel-Santos completes the program, she hopes to be up and running as an independent tax preparer, working at home while she continues to provide care for her mom and dad.

Meanwhile, she's enrolled her parents in NOCE art and brain-health classes to sharpen their minds and memories.

Her bookkeeping studies, the care she provides for her parents, their enrollment in classes that have improved their quality of life—it all has Worrel-Santos feeling pretty good about things.

[Learn more about the partnership with the UDW, and Vision 2030.](#)

[Find out more information about UDW.](#)

LEADERSHIP UPDATES

Recently, the WEDD Leadership team has made some organizational adjustments to some of our program assignments. Below is a breakdown of the programs, initiatives, and Vision 2030 Demonstration projects that fall under the purview of each of our Deans in the Workforce and Economic Development Division.



Gary W Adams, Dean

Programs & Initiatives

Apprenticeships
Adult Education
Contract Education
EWDAC (Co-Lead)
California Firefighter Joint
Apprenticeship Committee (CAL-JAC)

**Vision 2030 Demonstration
Projects**

Apprenticeship Pathways



Linda Bermudez, Ed.D, Dean

Programs & Initiatives

Strategic Operations
WEDD Vendor Management
WEDD Strategic Partnerships
EWDAC (Co-Lead)
Career Passport
Healthy Food Pathways

**Vision 2030 Demonstration
Projects**

United Domestic Workers (UDW)
United Health Workers (UHH)



Chèri Fortin, Dean

Programs & Initiatives

Perkins
Nursing & Allied Health Retention
RNI
Fire and Forestry Grant (Cal FIRE)
Lake Tahoe Public Safety Complex
Grant

**Vision 2030 Demonstration
Projects**

Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)
ECE/Education



Erin Larson, Dean

Programs & Initiatives

Strong Workforce Program
K12 Strong Workforce Program
Economic and Workforce Development Program: Centers of Excellence,
Employer Engagement, and Industry Driven Regional Collaborations
Ability to Benefit Workforceability

Vision 2030 Demonstration Projects

Behavioral & Mental Health Workforce Development
Agricultural Technology (AgTec)



Amy Smith, Ed.D, Visiting Executive

Programs & Initiatives

Inter-Agency Collaboration
Education Sector

Vision 2030 Demonstration Projects

Early Childhood Education/Education Workforce

IMPACTFUL PROJECTS

NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE

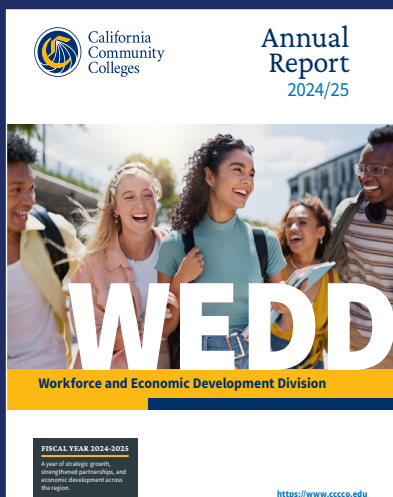
A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was recently signed with The California Community Colleges, the California Department of Aging, and the California Labor & Workforce Development Agency to launch a new statewide effort to support adult learners. This collaboration ensures older adults have access to higher education, job training, and opportunities to build new skills.

The MOU provides guidelines for how to work together with regional partners to establish career pathways for older adults. Whether going back to work or starting a new career, learners will have access to education and hands-on job training that opens new doors and builds a stronger workforce. Through this partnership, agencies are also expanding opportunities for caregivers by connecting them to health care career pathways and creating more job opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities, a key priority within the California Community College's strategic plan, Vision 2030.

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WEDD ANNUAL REPORT



Recently, WEDD released the first edition of our Annual Report. This report includes updates on the WEDD team, stories from Vision 2030 demonstration projects, and updates on new MOUs that we hope will provide a framework for success across all 116 colleges.

STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

Do you have a success story you would like to share with us? We would love to hear about it! Use this form to submit your story for our growing list of students who are making a difference and achieve greatness as they continue their journey after attending our incredible community colleges.

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

Use this [form](#) to submit your story to the story bank!

IMPACTFUL PROJECTS

(continued from page 6...)

Cooperation between the parties under this MOU are focused primarily on achieving the following shared goals:

- Expand the number of trained caregivers in the state's direct care workforce and improve their economic mobility through access to health care pathway programs.
- Increase equitable access to job training opportunities that result in living wages and have viable paths to completing a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's degree.
- Maximize employment opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities to support meaningful engagement, provide supplemental income for financial self-sufficiency, address the state's growing workforce needs, and contribute to the state's economy.

[Learn more about this partnership.](#)

EMERGENCY & DISASTER READINESS CAREGIVER TRAINING PROGRAM

Tony recently joined the Center for Caregiver Advancement, the California Workforce Development Board, SEIU Local 2015, and PASC LA to highlight the *Emergency & Disaster Readiness Caregiver* training program. In just 13 months, this pilot has equipped over 500 long-term care workers with critical climate and emergency response skills—training that proved vital during the devastating L.A. wildfires earlier this year.

At the event, Cynde Soto, consumer and advocate, and IHSS worker Dennisse Hernandez shared the impact this training program has had on them personally, bringing greater confidence and skills in times of emergencies.

The devastation of the L.A. wildfires in early 2025 confirmed the necessity for programs that teach skills in emergency preparedness to IHSS care workers to better assist consumers in their care and adapt to emergencies.

[Learn more about the EDR course.](#)



(PHOTO -East Bay Healthcare Event, June 2025)

STRENGTHENING THE HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE PIPELINE IN THE EAST BAY

In June, Linda Bermudez, Ed.D joined a WestEd facilitated event supporting industry, labor, and educators building pathways and career mobility for incumbent entry level healthcare workers. During this event, the WestEd team created fun, interactive fishbowl conversations between employers and union leaders, and community college leaders. Attendees also heard from Dave Regan, SEIU UHW President, and learned more about the important work of The Education Fund.

[For more information, view the presentation.](#)



California Community Colleges