



# President's Report to the PCCD Board of Trustees



October 11, 2022

Acting President Dr. Diana Bajrami

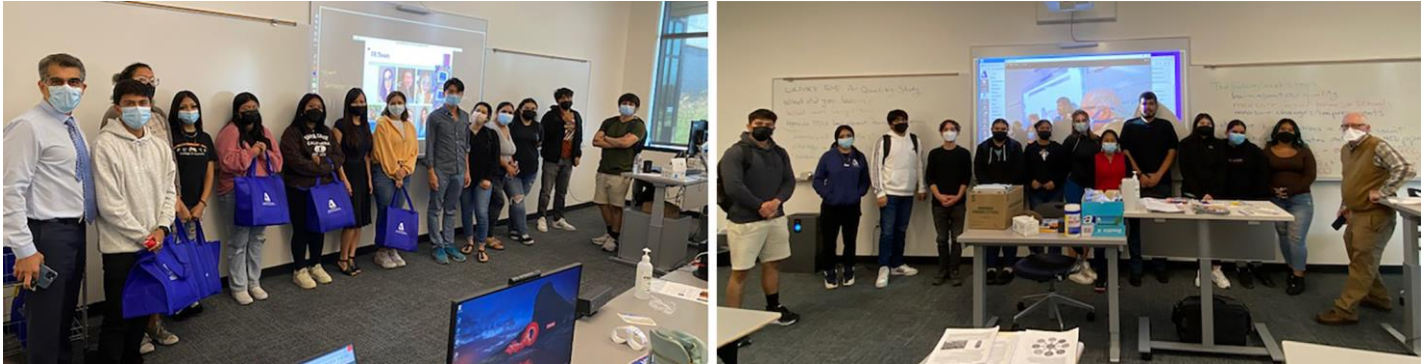


Photo left: MESA Connect students at orientation. Photo right: MESA Connect students first day of Fall 2022 Semester classes.

## MESA Connect Project Welcomes Its First Cohort

In October 2019, CoA received a United States Department of Education Title V Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) Grant becoming PCCD's first HSI college. In Fall Semester 2021, College of Alameda's MESA Connect Project received additional grant funding from the [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#) to improve academic outcomes for LatinX students enrolled at HSIs.

The NSF grant supports projects, like CoA's MESA Connect, that are designed to increase recruitment, persistence, graduation, and transfer rates for Latinx STEM students through cohort-based learning enriched by culturally informed Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs). Intended outcomes include: broadening participation of students that are historically underrepresented in STEM, expanding students' pathways to continued STEM education, and integration into the STEM workforce.

With the support of administrators, faculty, and classified professionals, CoA's MESA Connect team held its first student orientation on August 15, 2022. A wide variety of services and workshops were offered at the orientation, including admissions assistance, counseling services, and financial aid information, followed by a campus tour. The cohort started classes on September 13, 2022, and were enrolled in Transition into Community College (LRNRE 505) and College Success (COUN 024).

The NSF grant will fund the College's MESA Connect team for two years. MESA Connect is a collaboration between CoA and California State University, East Bay (CSUEB).



## CoA All Peer Mentor Training

On Friday, September 16, 2022, College of Alameda's Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Learning Resource Center (LRC), and ACCESO Program, hosted a full-day training for all peer mentors at College of Alameda. Nearly 20 peer mentors from EOPS, ACCESO, and the LRC participated in this training. Students learned about the peer mentor role, including effective mentoring, boundaries, and success strategies to share with their mentees. Additionally, peer mentors were joined by **Sandra Arias**, academic success counselor with the Educational Opportunity Program at University of California, Berkeley, who presented a workshop on strategies for building meaningful relationship with mentees. Moreover, Financial Aid Officer **Jackie Vo** provided a training on completing the FAFSA/Dream Act, resolving Financial Aid issues, and SAP appeals.

Peer mentors heard from CoA Health Services Intern **Reynaldo Vargas**, who presented a workshop on the importance of mental health and wellness, what to look for when working with mentees, and mental health resources and services available to CoA students.

The peer mentor component in each respective program (LRC, EOPS, and ACCESO) is intended to support student retention, persistence, and academic success.



## College of Alameda Celebrates Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month

In honor of [Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month](#), the Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month Planning Committee, CoA Ethnic Studies, and the Office of the President have invited students and colleagues to enjoy the [activities and celebrations](#) of the culture, achievements, traditions, contributions, and struggles of Latinx/Hispanic people in the U.S. and beyond. The theme this year is *De Corazón a Corazón* (From Heart to Heart).

*The mission of the College of Alameda is to serve the educational needs of its diverse community by providing comprehensive and flexible programs and resources to empower students to achieve their goals.*

Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month events started on Thursday, September 15, 2022, with La Bienvenida!: ACCESO Welcome. Students, staff, faculty, and administrators joined in networking activities, enjoyed pan dulce (sweet bread) and hot chocolate, and won raffle prizes.

On Tuesday, September 20, 2022, CoA's Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month activities continued with an Educational Journeys Panel where the College's Latinx staff and faculty shared their unique perspectives about their educational and career journeys followed by a discussion about the Latinx student experience. Over forty students, staff, faculty, and administrators listened to the inspiring and heartfelt stories of perseverance and resiliency from the panelists.

The series continued with a free Guatemalan Textile Weaving Workshop on September 27, 2022, and a Repujado Making Workshop on October 4, 2022. "Repujado" is the craft of pushing, working, or making a relief (three dimensional) in metal to give it an embossed look. It dates back to the 12th century and is a commonly practiced craft in Latin America.

The final Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month event, the State of Higher Education for Latinx in California, will take place remotely by Zoom, on Thursday, October 13, 2022, from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., at [bit.ly/latinxhighered](https://bit.ly/latinxhighered). This workshop will be presented by the Campaign for College Opportunity and will cover the preparation, enrollment, and success in college for Latinx Californians.



## Tasty Tuesdays Will Provide Free Meals, Resources, and Activities this Fall

The College's new Tasty Tuesdays program will connect CoA students to free lunch, resources, and educational activities on campus—including the Free Produce Market, special cultural events, and Cougar Closet.

Tasty Tuesdays will be held every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The first free lunch was offered in partnership with Latinx Heritage Month activities.

Food for Tasty Tuesdays is made possible by CoA's Basic Needs funds.