



SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGES FOUNDATION

Friday, May 30, 2025

The Foundation Newsletter

Student Spotlight

Tiffany Cauyong Champions Justice System-Impacted Youth



Since beginning her journey at College of San Mateo in the summer of 2024, Tiffany has quickly become a passionate leader and advocate for justice system-impacted youth, both on campus and in the broader community.

Majoring in Administration of Justice, Tiffany's dedication to social justice and transformative change is not just academic—it is personal, lived, and deeply urgent. With every presentation, meeting, and act of service, she reclaims her story and helps others do the same. Her presence at CSM is a powerful reminder that leadership is born not just from achievement, but from empathy, courage, and the refusal to give up.

A member of Project Change, EOPS, the Katipunan Learning Community,

and Mana, the Foundation, and its community partners, is honored to award her the *George Floyd Social Justice, Kurian Family Trust, Project Change, and William & Cora Saperstein Foundation* scholarships this year. All are well deserved!

Support Student Scholarships

Donor Impact

Margaret Gerlinger and Susan Duckworth's Legacies



The *Margaret S. Gerlinger Nurses and Susan Duckworth Memorial Scholarship Funds* were created to support nursing and health science education, respectively. This year, the Foundation decided to try something new. Rather than limit the scholarships to a small group of deserving nursing students, it chose to help the entire incoming RN class with what they need most: a nursing school book bundle and the NCLEX testing fee.

This gift of support is doing so much more than simply covering these necessary costs. It is giving our future RNs a vote of confidence that their community is behind them and believes they will complete their degrees.

As we celebrate the CSM Nursing Class of 2025, we extend our utmost gratitude to Margaret and Susan, who had the foresight to understand the importance of nurses in their estates, especially now, in the aftermath of the pandemic. We cannot wait to see the impact of our support on the class of 2027 and thank them in advance for choosing a career of service and being there when we need them most.

[Learn About Creating Student Scholarships](#)

Alumni & Staff Spotlight

Dino's Full Circle from Student to Educator to Scholarship Donor



Dionicio “Dino” Garcia grew up in South San Francisco in a predominantly Mexican-American neighborhood where few of his friends survived beyond high school. When he decided to attend Skyline College as a first-generation college student, few role models understood him. This started him on his path of using his lived experience, including Lowriding, to improve the educational experience of students of color.

After earning a Bachelor’s degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management and a Master’s in Counseling with a specialization in Career Counseling, both from San Francisco State University, Dino returned to the San Mateo County Community College District. Initially, he co-developed and

implemented Brothers Empowering Brothers, a Men of Color initiative at College of San Mateo aimed at closing equity gaps. Now, at Skyline College, he supports students through the Promise Scholars Program, with a primary focus on first-generation Latino youth in the Puente and Los Hermanos programs. Recently, he developed the R.I.D.E. (Realize Our True Potential. Identify Our Goals. Develop a Plan. Explore.) Conference that spotlights Lowrider culture, traditions, and practices through academic and community-based discourse and draws college and high school students from throughout the area.

Dino also uses the [R.I.D.E. Conference](#) to raise money for the Cruising into the Future Scholarship Fund. Having received scholarships while at Skyline College, he knows their value and personally contributes his time and money every year to “give forward.” Created in September 2017, the *Cruising into the Future Scholarship Fund* supports dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, and currently returning students with a minimum 2.0 GPA. In addition, all students enrolled in SMCCCD learning communities are eligible to apply. So far, 14 students have benefited from the scholarship, and Dino has no plan of stopping anytime soon. He is just getting started!

“Skyline College gave me more than an education—it gave me comunidad. It reminded me that lowriding, like learning, is about moving with intention, staying grounded in cultura, and lifting others as we cruise through life together.”

Foundation Spotlight

2025 Scholarship Program Success



People often ask why our scholarships are so specific. While the Foundation makes every effort to meet our students where they are, we do not choose the criteria. Our donors do that. Often, their gifts are in honor of a loved one, to help someone pursue a favored career, or to make it possible for a student to attend one of our colleges.

Karen Chadwick (top right), our Donor Relations Manager, is the person who accomplishes the complicated process of matching our donors' wishes with the available applicants. This year, she did just that with impressive results.

We had more applicants (1596), more reviewers (65), offered more scholarships, and awarded more money than ever before. This means **1332 students of all ages, disciplines, and lived experiences received scholarships.**

In total, the Foundation will award **\$1.8 million** with the support of our donors and community partners. Because of the Free College program, 100% of the award gets into the hands of students to cover the costs that often prevent them from completing their degrees and certificates- transportation, housing, food, equipment, childcare, etc.

Also, this year, more awardees attended one of our three scholarship award ceremonies. There, they shook the hand of their college president, met their donors, and internalized the message, "We believe in you. You have got this!"

We cannot express enough gratitude to our donors who made this possible, especially those who contributed to the Finish Line Scholarship Fund. They allowed students to walk the stage who would not receive a scholarship otherwise. It was exhilarating to see them believe in themselves and their capabilities, possibly for the first time.

As we finish the school year, Karen is already looking to next year. When asked who was missing from the applicant pool, she immediately responded, "Our career education students." She is already planning how to engage them, revamp the review process, and, most importantly, raise more money for the Finish Line Fund. "With the help of our community, I am committed to touching even more students and awarding more scholarships next year."

And she will.

Provide Scholarships Through the Finish Line Fund

Scholarship Fast Facts



TOTAL APPLICANTS: 1596, 28% increase over 2024

TOTAL REVIEWERS: 65

TOTAL STUDENTS AWARDED: 1332, 38% increase over 2024

CSM: 685, +34%
Skyline College: 385, +56%

TOTAL AWARDED: \$1,800,000

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS: 203

SIZE OF SCHOLARSHIPS = \$400-\$10,000

AVERAGE AGE OF SMCCCD STUDENTS: 65% under 24

Cañada College: 262, +28%

**TOTAL AWARD CEREMONY
ATTENDEES: +/-1500**

**SMCCCD STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE
FINANCIAL AID: 38%**

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Thank you for reading and for being part of our mission to support students and transform lives.



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