



2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**SOUTH MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SMCC Main Campus

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Phoenix, AZ 85042

Guadalupe Center

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**MARICOPA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

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**SOUTH MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FOCUSING ON STUDENT SUCCESS

Our Vision

South Mountain Community College educates minds, transforms lives, touches hearts, and builds community.

Our Mission

South Mountain Community College provides quality higher education for our diverse community. We create a caring teaching and learning environment that fosters student development and supports productive citizenship in an increasingly global and technological society.

Our purpose is to meet these needs by offering:

- General education courses
- Transfer programs
- Occupational education and career development
- Continuing education
- Developmental studies and English as a second language
- Cultural, civic, and social events
- Academic support and student services

Our Values

Collaboration

We are inclusive in our relationships with colleagues, departments and community, and respectful of their ideas.

Community

We serve our community by recognizing our inter-dependence, celebrating our history, honoring our diverse cultures, and building our future.

Excellence

We model exemplary teaching, learning, service and leadership through continuous improvement, creativity and innovation.

Integrity

We are accountable to the communities we serve and are truthful, sincere, transparent and responsible for our actions.

Wellbeing

We are a college community that encourages and develops social, physical, career, community and financial wellbeing.



A Message from SMCC President Dr. Richard Daniel

During my first year as President of South Mountain Community College, I set out on what I called at the time a “listening tour” of the campus. This was an effort to talk with our stakeholders, including students, employees, educational and business partners, and, of course, the surrounding community. I wanted to ensure that we begin to move forward in a deliberate, strategic way to overcome any obstacles that might be in our path, and to move the college from surviving to thriving.

Student success must be at the center of everything we do, and as I’m sure you will see in the pages of this Annual Report, we strive to live up to that goal every day. From the way we communicate with students, to how we engage with them during the admissions process, to the programs we

offer, and even the modalities we offer them in – all of it plays a part in ensuring an experience that leads to completion and success. Retention is also vital to this success, from the advising we provide, to the resources that are available, to student life experiences and activities, and especially to whether a student can complete their program of study entirely on campus.

We are also hard at work reestablishing SMCC as a true destination for graduates from our local high schools. We have embedded advisors at our primary feeder schools – Cesar Chavez, Betty Fairfax, the Academies at South Mountain and Arizona Agribusiness & Equine Center (AAEC) – who are working on a daily basis to introduce students to everything the college has to offer.

We also continue to expand our own outreach into other local high schools, including alternative high schools, charter schools, and more, as well as providing academic summer camps for students in middle and high schools. This allows students to get a glimpse of what the college experience has to offer.

We have begun a See Yourself in STEM Conference, where we host hundreds of high school students on campus in our Science Complex, and have them explore the vast opportunities that exist in the STEM fields.

This is how a college – a community college – should operate, as a place the community can support and be supported; be entertained and educated; and find services and resources that are available to all.

One of the key things I also discovered this first year was the absolute dedication of the faculty and staff at SMCC. These are people who love this college and this community and are working tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of the students we serve.

I am honored to be their president, here at SMCC, and I am thrilled to invite the community on our journey!

Adelante!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Richard Daniel
President, South Mountain Community College

JUST THE FACTS

FISCAL YEAR
2022-2023

STUDENTS



HEADCOUNT | 5,283



FULL TIME | 21.76%

PART TIME | 78.24%

STUDENT POPULATION 2022-2023

GENDER

Female	43.9%
Male	31.3%
Other / Undefined	23.8%
Genderqueer/ Non-Conforming	0.7%
Trans male	0.2%
Trans female	0.1%



RACE

Hispanic / Latino	55.0%
White	18.8%
Black / African American	12.8%
Two or more races	4.4%
Asian	3.5%
American Indian	3.3%
Other / Undeclared	2.1%
Native Hawaiian	0.1%



AGE

13-19	42.67%
20-24	26.88%
25-29	10.04%
30-39	11.25%
40-49	5.25%
50-59	2.56%
60+	1.35%



FIRST GENERATION*

First Generation	61.7%
Non-First Generation	38.3%

*a student whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) did not graduate from college



GRADUATES AND AWARDS

Fall 2022 | Spring 2023 | Summer 2023

TOTAL UNDUPLICATED GRADUATES: 384

TOTAL AWARDS: 816

SMCC EMPLOYEES

190 Full-time Faculty,
Staff, Administration

Part-time Staff
(Includes Adjunct Faculty, Temporary Employees,
Student-Workers and College Work-Study)

360





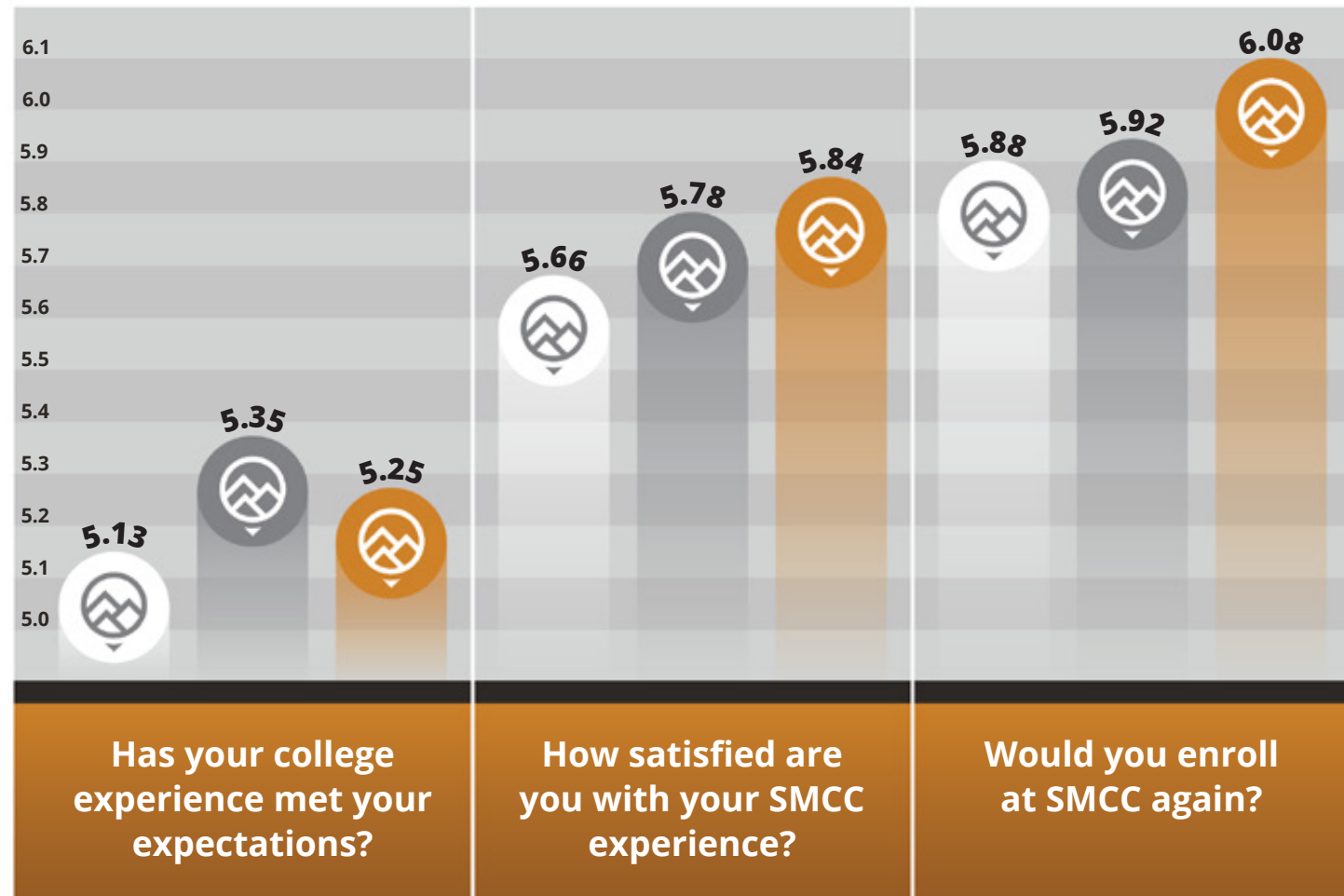
STUDENTS RATE THEIR EXPERIENCE AT SMCC



In 2022, SMCC students completed the national Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) survey to rate their college satisfaction. The survey results showed SMCC students are more likely to have their expectations met and more likely to re-enroll when compared to students at other two-year institutions.

Student satisfaction assessments are a key indicator of the current institutional environment. The data from the Noel -Levitz Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) provides direction for improving the quality of student life and learning in the areas that are most important to our students.

The survey measures student satisfaction and importance, showing both how satisfied students are in their college experience and what experiences are important to them. The results support institutional efforts by identifying potential next steps the college can implement to effectively respond to student concerns.



2016 2019 2022

*Students respond to these questions using a 1 to 7 scale. Summary report represents the average scores.
**Source Noel-Levitz 2022

HOW SATISFIED ARE SMCC STUDENTS?

The 12 student satisfaction categories provide a broad perspective of students' perceptions and priority of the overall areas of college. Survey results reflect a comparison of SMCC through the years 2016, 2019 and 2022.

The survey found SMCC performed above average in the majority of the categories in comparison to MCCC and the national average and has continuously improved.

SATISFACTION SCALE	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6
Academic Advising / Counseling	5.33																
	5.67																
	6.04																
Academic Services	5.70																
	5.87																
	6.28																
Administration and Financial Aid	5.41																
	5.70																
	6.10																
Campus Climate	5.54																
	5.74																
	6.07																
Campus Support Services	5.20																
	5.48																
	6.02																
Concern for Individual	5.41																
	5.66																
	6.02																
Instructional Effectiveness	5.58																
	5.74																
	6.06																
Registration Effectiveness	5.62																
	5.81																
	6.12																
Safety and Security	5.52																
	5.77																
	6.26																
Service Excellence	5.53																
	5.70																
	6.10																
Student Centeredness	5.63																
	5.81																
	6.17																

*Source Noel-Levitz 2016, 2019 and 2022

2016 2019 2022

COUGAR ATHLETICS 2022-2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

MEN'S BASEBALL

- Finished 43-15 overall and 27-11 in ACCAC action
- Hosted Region I Division I Tournament Series against Pima CC
- Jaxon Jelkin was selected in the 14th round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Los Angeles Dodgers, but elected to transfer to the University of Houston
- Sam Christiansen earned First Team All-ACCAC and All-Region I Division I honors and will return for the 2024 season.
- Dominic Chacon earned First Team All-ACCAC and All-Region I Division I honors and will return for the 2024 season.
- Core Jackson earned Second Team All-ACCAC honors and transferred to the University of Utah.



- Jacob Beltran earned Second Team All-ACCAC honors and transferred to Utah Valley University.
- Matthew Martinez earned Second Team All-ACCAC honors and transferred to the University of Arizona.
- The Cougars had 10 more student-athletes transfer to continue their intercollegiate baseball career, including nine that went to NCAA Division I programs.



MEN'S BASKETBALL

- Finished year 14-16 overall and 6-16 in ACCAC competition.
- Jaylen Wesley was named ACCAC Division II Freshman of the Year and returns for the 2023-24 season.
- Darien Allen earned Third Team All-ACCAC honors for the second-straight year.



MEN'S GOLF



- Finished tied for third at the NJCAA Division II National Championships
- Named Golf Coaches Association of America Academic National Champions
- Won seven straight spring tournaments, including the Region I Division II Championships.
- Damon Vilkauskas received 2023 NJCAA Division II and PING First Team All-American honors, finished second at the NJCAA DII National Championships, and transferred to the University of Wyoming.
- Ethan Klose earned 2023 NJCAA Division II PING First Team All-American and All-West Region honors and transferred to New Mexico State University.

- Zachary Erskine earned 2023 NJCAA Division II Second Team All-American and PING Second Team All-American honors and transferred to Utah Valley University.
- Cole Finch earned 2023 NJCAA Division II PING Honorable Mention All-American, All-West Region and GCAA Division II All-Freshmen Team honors.
- Vilkauskas, Klose, and Erskine earned 2023 GCAA All-America Scholar honors.



MEN'S SOCCER

- Returned to competition for the first time since 2019.
- Defeated Gateway CC 3-2 in double overtime in the season finale.



- Marco Amador earned Second Team All-ACCAC and All-Region I Division II honors.

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

- Finished year with 2-9 overall record.
- Posted first win in program history on Feb. 22, 2023 vs. Park-Gilbert (Win, 3-2)



- Defeated Park-Gilbert on Mar. 6, 2023 (Win 3-1)



COUGAR ATHLETICS 2022-2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

- Finished year 9-20 overall and 3-19 in ACCAC competition.
- Genesis Adams earned Third Team All-ACCAC and Second Team All-Region I Division II honors.
- Myla Lee transferred to NCAA Division II Claflin University.
- Andrea Willeto transferred to NAIA Benedictine-Mesa.



WOMEN'S BEACH VOLLEYBALL

- Finished year with 13-15 overall record.
- Finished fourth at inaugural NJCAA National Championships.
- Emily Wilson transferred to the NAIA University of St. Katherine.

- Kristine Garcia transferred to NCAA Division II Colorado Mesa University.



WOMEN'S GOLF

- Finished seventh at the NJCAA Southwest District Championships.
- Won the Coyote Classic in March 2023 to post the first team win in program history.
- Kylie Rehberger and Angelina Borg-Malec qualified for the NJCAA Women's National Championships.
- Rehberger earned First Team All-ACCAC honors and transferred to Arkansas Tech.
- Borg-Malec earned First Team All-ACCAC honors and returns for the 2023-24 season.

- Trixie Sabulao transferred to Tennessee State University.
- Raquel Pargas earned Second Team All-ACCAC honors.



WOMEN'S SOCCER



- Returned to competition for the first time since 2019.
- Posted a pair of wins over Glendale CC, including a 5-0 home victory.



- Recorded a 2-2 draw with Gateway CC in the season finale.

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

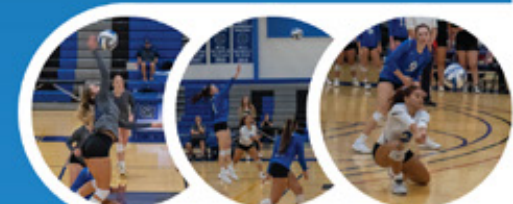
- Won the ACCAC Conference Championship and Region I Division II Tournament
- Advanced to the NJCAA Division II World Series in Spartanburg, S.C.
- Finished 54-10 overall and 43-5 in ACCAC play, setting new school records for wins and conference wins
- Makaiya Gomez earned ACCAC Player of the Year honors, NJCAA and NFCA First Team All-American honors, and transferred to Grand Canyon University
- Brianna Gomez earned NJCAA and NFCA First Team All-American honors and transferred to the University of Texas-El Paso.



- Anisa Reynolds earned NFCA Second Team All-American honors and transferred to CSU Bakersfield.
- Halle Hogan earned NJCAA Second Team All-American honors and transferred to the University of Texas-El Paso.
- Rebecca Miller earned Second Team All-ACCAC honors.
- Brittney Matta received ACCAC Coach of the Year honors.

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

- Finished year 8-20 overall and 5-10 in ACCAC competition.
- Qualified for Region I Division II Tournament.
- Madison Cadden earned Second Team All-ACCAC and All-Region Division II honors.
- Cadden was 2023 SMCC Valedictorian.



SMCC SOFTBALL WINS REGION I DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIP AND EARN THEIR SPOT AT THE NJCAA DII WORLD SERIES



The South Mountain Community College (SMCC) softball team's 2023 season was nothing short of historic. The Cougars embarked on a remarkable journey, marked by championship moments and thrilling victories, ultimately earning them a coveted spot in the NJCAA Division II World Series in Spartanburg, S.C.

With an impressive record of 52-8, the SMCC Softball team won all three of their games at the Region I Division II Tournament, securing the Region Championship and a ticket to the NJCAA Division II World Series held at Tyger River Park in Spartanburg, SC.

The Cougars concluded the season with an outstanding record of 54-10, setting a new school record for wins. They not only claimed the ACCAC Title outright but also made history by hosting the Region I Division II Tournament for the first time.

As the season wrapped up, the program announced the transfers of six talented student-athletes to four-year universities, further showcasing the team's commitment to player development. Additionally, Head Coach Matta accepted the Associate Head Coach position at the University of Texas-El Paso, marking a significant transition for the program.

The 2023 SMCC softball season was a testament to the team's unwavering dedication and resilience, leaving an indelible mark on the program's history. The Cougars have not only celebrated victory on the field but also paved the way for their future success.

MADISON CADDEN NAMED SMCC CLASS OF 2023 VALEDICTORIAN



Madison Cadden has been on the volleyball court since she was a 12-year-old fourth grader, and throughout her elementary, high school, and college education, Cadden thrived as both an athlete and a student who is focused and willing to go beyond.

Originally from the East Valley in Queen Creek and Gilbert, Arizona, she first became interested in sports when she saw her mom as both a coach and referee. After choosing volleyball as her sport, her athletic career took her on a journey of competition, friendship, and discipline.

A high school graduate of Mesquite High, her love of sciences and connection with the volleyball coaches and staff helped her choose South Mountain Community College for her college education.

"I saw my coaches as mentors," Cadden said. "They supported me and advisor, supported me and my priorities as a student while still helping me succeed on the volleyball court."

Becoming an athlete and a pre-nursing major was a challenge, requiring her to be disciplined and dedicated to succeeding in all aspects of her career.

"It was a challenge to choose a career as demanding as pre-nursing as well as being a college athlete; I had to learn time management quickly," Cadden said. "My career path has always been to help others and becoming a Nurse Practitioner felt like the right choice for me at the time."

In the Fall of 2022, Cadden earned Second Team All-AACCAC honors and received a place on the All-Region I Division II Team. She was also an Honors Program student and a recipient of the President's Honor Scholarship, covering her full-time tuition, and earned an athletic scholarship that helped her cover books and additional college costs. Cadden was also a Phi Theta Kappa member during her time at SMCC. All programs she was part of required her to maintain a high GPA.

Cadden was an outstanding student who dedicated herself to her team, her studies and supporting other students. She was a math tutor in the Learning Resource Center, helping students pass their classes. She also accomplished all of this while holding a job in a clinic as part of her clinical experience.

This Spring of 2023, Cadden decided to change her career path altogether, surprising her coaches, teammates, and family. After spending most of her college education following a pre-nursing path, she chose to pursue a career with Allegiant Airlines to become a pilot.

"I went to a Women in Aviation meeting that inspired me to join," Cadden shared. "There aren't many women who are pilots, and after I researched and learned about the career, I went on my trial flight and fell in love with it."

The Allegiant Pilot Pathway Program is approximately three years, during which she will spend training to fly, instruct new pilots, and then co-pilot.

"I assessed the pros and cons when I was making my decision, and now I'm just super excited to make an impact as a woman in a male-dominated field," Cadden said. "Everything I experienced here, from tutoring to being a disciplined athlete and student, has prepared me for this. I know communication will be key in succeeding as a pilot."

Cadden graduated on May 11 during Commencement with an Associate of Arts in General Studies. She is proud to be the Class of 2023 Valedictorian after she believed her chances were lower after changing her major and choosing to not pursue a university degree right after community college.

Her parents and five sisters, teammates and coaches are proud to see her dedication paid off. After graduation, she began her flying training in August, 2023 along with her sister in Colorado.

"My change came very sudden, but after learning more about the career, I am focused and ready for this new journey," Cadden said.

She hopes to be an example for her graduating class by inspiring others to follow their dreams.

"Don't settle; the sky is the limit," Cadden said. "Literally for me."

STUDENT LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

During the 2022-23 academic year, the Office of Student Life and Leadership played a key role in fostering the growth of student leaders. Through various initiatives, the office supported the development and enhancement of essential skills, including adaptability, teamwork, and resiliency among its student leaders. Their commitment to cultivating these qualities has been evident throughout the year, contributing to a vibrant and thriving student community.

2022-23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Student Governance and Academic Achievements

- The 2022/23 Student Governance Board (SGB) members completed their leadership year with an impressive cumulative GPA of 3.496.



Campus Engagement and Collaboration

- The office collaborated with the Student Governance Board to share information on Constitution Day 2022 with the campus community.
- In partnership with the SMCC Diversity Advisory Committee, the office presented the Hispanic Heritage Month Kahoot, sharing Hispanic heritage facts.
- Monthly SNAP opportunities for students were shared by the office in collaboration with the MCCCCD.
- The Lunar New Year 2022, "Year of the Rabbit," was presented by the office in partnership with the SMCC Diversity Advisory Committee.
- The office, along with the Student Governance Board, led the way in organizing SMCC Club Day.
- A Work Study Job Fair was created by the office in partnership with the Financial Aid Department to address the employee shortage on campus and connect students with employment opportunities.



Cultural Awareness and Community Outreach

- The Black History Month event, "Disrupting Racism Through the Lens of the Arts," featuring Dr. Ronald McCurdy, was presented by the office in partnership with the SMCC Diversity Advisory Committee.
- In honor of Black History Month, the office collaborated with The American Red Cross to sponsor a Blood Drive, raising awareness about Sickle Cell Disease in the community.
- The office, in partnership with the SMCC Diversity Advisory Committee, organized a Minority Women in Higher Education Leadership Roles Panel.



Campus Events

- The office actively participated in the Spring Student Town Halls with Chancellor Gonzales.
- A Student Resources Fair was organized to provide valuable information and resources to students.
- A Dementia Friends - Memory Cafe Presentation was conducted to raise awareness and support for individuals affected by dementia.
- A Women's Softball Watch Party was organized to engage the campus community in supporting the women's softball team.
- The Village was awarded \$2,000 through the Maricopa Foundation as part of the Fry's Kroger's Grant. The money was used to purchase and then distribute, free of charge, personal hygienic supplies for students shopping in The Village.

South Mountain Community College serves The Village through two different programs: Shopping at SMCC • Gabriel's Pantry

The newly reimagined space created Shopping at SMCC, where students and staff can access food. SMCC recognized that addressing students' nutritional needs will assist not only in retaining them, but helping them complete their career and educational goals.



Shopping at SMCC

- Total served:**
- Distributed 97,900 pounds of food
 - Served 1,200 households (duplicated)
 - Included 2,415 individuals within those households (duplicated)

Gabriel's Pantry

- Total served:**
- 4,000 snack items





SMCC proudly introduced the Behavioral Health Sciences Bachelor's Degree Program in Fall 2023!

Arizona community colleges are entering a new era as Senate Bill 1453, signed into law by former Governor Doug Ducey, granted them the authority to offer four-year baccalaureate degrees. This groundbreaking decision aims to enhance access, affordability, and educational opportunities in Arizona, marking a historic moment for students and their families.

In a historic decision announced by Dr. Steven Gonzalez, Chancellor for the Maricopa County Community Colleges District (MCCCD), SMCC was selected as one of the colleges to offer a four-year degree program. SMCC was selected to offer a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Behavioral Sciences. This initiative, authorized by the MCCCD Governing Board, represents a significant leap forward in higher education.

The launch of the Bachelor of Science in Behavioral Sciences at SMCC has been an overwhelming success, with students showing remarkable enthusiasm and dedication. The program's unique blend of high-quality education and a strong focus on practical applications has resonated with aspiring professionals in this field.

As a result, the college is delighted to announce that for Fall 2023, the program is currently at full capacity, a testament to the demand and popularity in our community.



SMCC Founding President Dr. Raúl Cárdenas Inducted into the HACU Hall of Champions

Dr. Raúl Cárdenas, the founding President of South Mountain Community College (SMCC), achieved a remarkable milestone as he was inducted into the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Hall of Champions during its 2022 Annual Conference on October 9-10, 2022.

Dr. Cárdenas, who has been a lifelong advocate for higher education access, was honored alongside US Senator Robert Menendez. His dedication to the field is exemplified not only by his role at SMCC but also by his leadership at Paradise Valley Community College and within the Maricopa County Community College District. Dr. Cárdenas's significant contributions have earned him a national reputation for excellence in higher education and positions of leadership in various influential associations, including HACU and the National Community College Hispanic Council. His legacy continues to shape the landscape of higher education in Arizona and beyond.



Arizona Supreme Court at SMCC



On November 17, 2022, SMCC welcomed the Arizona Supreme Court Justices to the campus. Students got a chance to hear real cases and learn from the process.

In attendance was SMCC President Dr. Richard Daniel, Governing Board Member Dr. Tom Nerini and Administration of Justice Faculty, Sonya Tatum who organized the event.

SMCC also hosted a brief reception after the oral arguments, giving community members, students and staff the opportunity to connect with the Judges.

SMCC's Dr. Sian Proctor Inspires Students at The Academies of South Mountain

Astronaut, artist, writer, and SMCC professor Dr. Sian Proctor recently shared her remarkable journey with over 600 students at The Academies at South Mountain in February 2023.

Dr. Proctor, who made history as the first African American woman to pilot the all-civilian mission to space, Inspiration4, emphasized how she achieved her dream through art. Her visit was facilitated by SMCC's Trio program and was met with enthusiasm from both students and staff. Dr. Proctor's Space2Inspire presentation encouraged students to pursue their dreams creatively.

The event showcased the power of collaboration between SMCC and The Academies at South Mountain, offering exposure to inspirational leaders and opportunities for the students.





Theatre Program Thrives Under New Director Mario El Caponi Mendoza

SMCC's Theatre Program, under the guidance of its new director, Mario El Caponi Mendoza, has undergone a remarkable transformation, captivating new actors and eager audiences.

Since Mendoza's arrival, the program has witnessed a creative new phase for the local South Phoenix community and its performing arts scene. The latest productions include the deeply moving "I Will Hold You/When You Are Broken" by Charlie Meyers and the thought-provoking "TRICH" by Sarah Cho in 2022. In 2023, the program continued its momentum with the creative production of "The Designer."

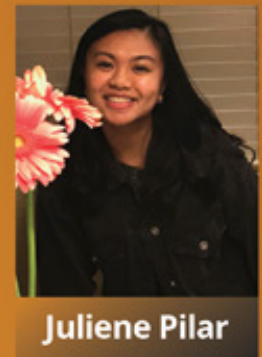
These performances left a lasting impact, setting the stage for the program's continued success. Visit southmountaincc.edu/theatre-arts to support future productions.



SMCC Students Shine at the Annual MCCC Foundation Scholarship Celebration

SMCC students Fang Wang and Juliene Pilar achieved remarkable recognition this year during the Annual MCCC Foundation Scholarship Celebration on April 10, 2023. Fang Wang was honored with a \$1,000 MCCC Foundation Scholarship for their exceptional motivation and academic excellence. Juliene Pilar received the coveted Chancellor's Award, which covers up to 18 credits in tuition and fees, a scholarship awarded to only one student per college annually.

These scholarships not only signify the dedication and hard work of SMCC students but also provide invaluable support in achieving their academic dreams. Fang and Juliene, both highly ambitious in their careers, are set to graduate in May 2024 and plan to continue their educational journey at a university in the fall of the same year. Their achievements are a testament to the outstanding quality of education and student commitment at SMCC.



Juliene Pilar

Fang Wang

SMCC DECA Team Shines at Arizona DECA's Career Development Conference

SMCC's DECA team demonstrated their exceptional skills and dedication at the Arizona DECA's Career Development Conference (ACDC) on February 23, 2023. Eight DECA members competed in ACDC's various events to qualify for the International Conference in April.

These students gave it their all in diverse areas, with an impressive five of them securing second or third place finishes.

Notable achievements include Jouselyn Lopez's third place in Travel and Tourism, Shemar Tomlinson's 2nd place in Restaurant and Food Service, Vanessa Martinez's Second place, and Tyrus Jones's Third place in Financial Accounting, and Jared Pointer's Third place in Corporate Finance.

Facing off against competitors from institutions like NAU, ASU, U of A, Grand Canyon University, and other community colleges, SMCC takes immense pride in the accomplishments of each team member.





SMCC CELEBRATES THE GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW SCIENCE COMPLEX



SMCC brought the community together to celebrate the grand opening of the 34,000 sq. ft state-of-the-art Science Complex on August 12, 2022.

The one-year long renovation and construction project led by McCarthy Building Companies Inc. and imagined by Gensler Design culminated in a new modern and contemporary complex for the Physical and Life Sciences program at SMCC.

For more than 40 years, SMCC has supported students pursuing STEM careers. This new addition ensures students receive a high-quality education on campus, coupled with the renovation of two existing buildings.

SMCC and Maricopa Community Colleges Leadership, MCCCDD Governing Board Members, McCarthy Building Companies, Gensler Design, elected officials, and community members joined the grand opening at the beginning of the Fall 2022 for a first look at the complex and its unique design.

SMCC and Maricopa Community Colleges Leadership, MCCCDD Governing Board Members, McCarthy Building Companies, Gensler Design, elected officials, and community members joined the grand opening in Fall 2022 for a first look at the complex and its unique design.

The new SMCC Science Complex features the latest classroom technology and labs, including a cadaver lab, supporting faculty and students in healthcare fields. It also fosters community with an integrated botanical garden and shared spaces.

Classes and special events began in the new Science Complex in the Spring 2023 semester.



SMCC Welcomes Hundreds to the Hermanas STEM Conference

More than 100 young women joined the annual Hermanas STEM Conference at SMCC.

The conference was created in partnership with Intel Corporation to increase the number of underrepresented women choosing to go to college and to inspire them to pursue careers in engineering or science. The Hermanas program gives high school girls the opportunity to explore careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math while building relationships with other strong women in the field and in other schools.

"The Hermanas STEM Conference is an opportunity to get hands-on experience in life sciences, engineering and coding," said Rosa Cota, Director of Early College at SMCC. "We hope the actual program, the speakers, and their experience on campus help spark the interest in STEM and college."

Hermanas translates to "sisters," a term chosen to emphasize sisterhood, in the experience of learning together and connecting with successful women in STEM fields.

The conference program exposed students to the college campus and the new SMCC Science Complex, where they toured and had a chance to join workshops for Encryption and Decoding, Geology with Crystal Investigation, Life Sciences with Eyes on the World of Science and Discovery, Math and a workshop in Engineering Duct Tape Design. The entire program gave an inside look at every field in STEM.

The conference also welcomed keynote speaker and SMCC Math Faculty member Dr. Dolores Urbietta, as well as SMCC President Dr. Richard Daniel



The SMCC "See Yourself in STEM" Conference Created Memorable Experiences for Hundreds of High School Students



SMCC welcomed more than 200 students to the college for the first See Yourself in STEM Conference on Friday, February 24.

Students and teachers from high schools across South Phoenix, including The Academies at South Mountain, Betty Fairfax, Cesar E. Chavez High Schools, South Pointe, and AAEC, took part in a STEM experience in the only-of-its-kind Science Complex in the community.



The program included hands-on workshops in Anatomy and Physiology where students could see inside the new Cadaver Lab, play with DNA in Biology, see Physics in action with sound, and experience winds from our Wind Tunnel in the Engineering Lab.

"We are trying to expose students to careers in STEM," said Biology Faculty and Conference Organizer Dr. Yvette Espinosa. "We want students from our community to be the next doctors, scientists, and engineers."



SMCC has taken on various initiatives to support the STEM education pipeline. The See Yourself in STEM Conference was a memorable experience for students, where they had the opportunity to participate in workshops and hear from SMCC alumni Soyasha Pandey, an Aerospace Engineer, and Intel Engineers Frank Robles and Sheila Lopez.

SMCC plans to continue offering opportunities in STEM programs through the See Yourself in STEM Conference, summer camps, and any initiative that supports increasing the number of students of color in the workforce.

2022-2023 SMCC HIGHLIGHTS



SMCC Teams Up with ASU to Bring Advanced Math Opportunities to Students

SMCC Professor Bechir Amdouni and ASU Professor Dr. Malena Español joined forces to introduce higher level mathematics to a group of students from both institutions. The year-long endeavor culminated in a joint research presentation during the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) Southwestern Section Conference held in El Paso, TX. Through the Center for Undergraduate Reach in Mathematics (CURM) grant, each student earned \$3,000 for their contributions.



SMCC students Leslie Millan, Mariana Godinez Pedraza, and Fernando Robles, along with four ASU students, delved into mathematics concepts and expanded their knowledge in fields such as linear algebra, numerical linear algebra, programming (Matlab), and Latex. They embarked on joint research projects, including image deblurring for various scientific applications and enhancing the Thermal Emission Imaging System (THEMIS) on the Mars Odyssey spacecraft.

The collaborative team of seven students presented their research at the MAA conference in April 2023, showcasing their dedication and achievements. This remarkable opportunity exposed SMCC students to advanced math concepts, opening doors to exciting career prospects. Funded by the National Science Foundation, CURM grants provide invaluable support for undergraduate research groups, helping students overcome obstacles and pursue their academic aspirations.

SMCC and Heard Museum Team Up to Honor Native American Culture with Weaving Class

SMCC's American Indian Student Center partnered with the Heard Museum to offer a four-day weaving class, celebrating indigenous art and culture during the Summer 2023. This unique opportunity connected students, staff, and the community to traditional weaving skills, fostering intergenerational relationships and honoring ancient traditions.

Fifteen students of all ages gathered to learn and create, bridging the gap between generations. The week-long class immersed participants in Native American culture, equipping them with the skills to weave their own patterns using traditional tools and techniques.

This partnership aims to provide meaningful programs that celebrate culture, inspire learning, and strengthen the South Phoenix community.



PHI THETA KAPPA AT SMCC



SMCC 2023 All-Arizona Academic Team

SMCC is proud of the SMCC 2023 All-Arizona Academic Team for exemplifying excellence as both students and community members.

All-Arizona honorees must demonstrate academic excellence and intellectual tenacity, combined with a commitment to leadership and community service. Honorees must be working towards an associate's degree, maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher (4.0 scale) and take advantage of volunteer opportunities in their college campus and community.

Congratulations to SMCC students Fatima Abas and Toby Tuckness on being selected to this year's All-Arizona Academic Team!



FATIMA ABAS

Fatima graduated in Spring 2023 with an Associates in Arts in Political Science and transferred to Arizona State University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to earn a bachelor's degree in political science.

Fatima had been involved with Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society as an officer (vice president of fellowship and membership) and contributed to Phi Theta Kappa College Project and HIA and other chapter activities. She has also volunteered with Gathering Humanity with Changemaker Central and Feed My Starving Children.

College Honors: President's Honor List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member

Self-Descriptive Tweet: I am Sudanese. I am a highly motivated individual dedicated to making others better. My goal is to teach and inspire the community through leadership opportunities.

Toby earned a degree in Computer Science, and transferred to ASU in the Fall of 2023.

Toby is working towards beginning a career in tech entrepreneurship.

He is a STEM Train student and has been involved in Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society as Vice President of Service. Toby has also been involved in the Ctrl-Alt-Delete Computer Club as an officer and has been a STEM Club volunteer with OLOSA Upper Academy.

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, President's Honor List and Honors student

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Shoutout to everyone who has inspired my career dreams and positively impacted my goals!



TOBY TUCKNESS

FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS

SMCC Named 2023 Bellwether Award Finalist

The Bellwether College Consortium named South Mountain Community College (SMCC) as one of 30 finalists for its prestigious Bellwether Award for 2023! In February, SMCC President Dr. Richard Daniel, along with the dedicated team of Maria Bailey-Bensen and Brittany Castro competed for the top prize at the 29th Annual Community College Futures Assembly (CCFA), in February from 26 – 28, 2023 in San Antonio, TX.

The nationally recognized and highly competitive Bellwether Award identifies and honors outstanding and innovative community college programs in three award categories. Only 10 submissions from community colleges across the country are selected to compete in each of the three categories, for a total of 30 nationwide submissions. The three Bellwether Award categories include: Instructional Programs and Services; Workforce Development; and Planning, Governance and Finance.



"The significance of the Bellwether Award is that the winning programs are replicable, scalable, equity-focused, and demonstrate evidence-based success," said Rose Martinez, Ph.D., director for the Bellwether College Consortium. "With the complexity of issues facing our community colleges today, these finalists are extraordinary examples of colleges providing scalable solutions to tough challenges."

SMCC's submission which earned a finalist nod was the college's Ultimate Technology Summer Camp, which was submitted in the Instructional Programs and Services category. This category recognizes programs and services that foster or support teaching and learning.

League for Innovation Excellence Award recipient:

Stephen Hustedde
Computer Information Systems Faculty



STARS Gala Raises More Than \$20,000 for Scholarships

The STARS came out in April, as the Fourth Annual 2023 STARS Gala took place at South Mountain Community College. Nearly 150 guests took part in the event, which raised over \$20,000 in support of the Students Transformed to Achieve Radiant Success (STARS) endowed scholarship for SMCC students.

Local community member Jeri Williams was celebrated as was SMCC alum and former STARS scholarship recipient Mikalya Castillo, who shared their stories of success.

A silent auction with some amazing items helped to raise funds, and the event featured live music, and an amazing dinner which took place in the SMCC Gymnasium.

Thanks to Dr. Jerome Garrison in his pursuit of success for this scholarship, as well as to the STARS Board as well as the planning team, and all the staff who took part in making this event a great success!



Verna McClain Fundraiser Continues to Support Student Emergency Fund



We're thrilled to share the success of the annual Verna McClain Student Emergency Fund fundraiser, raising over \$3,000, including a generous \$2,000 donation from the South Mountain Villages Festival committee. On Monday, December 12, 2022, SMCC brought together our community of faculty, staff, students, and residents to honor the legacy of Verna McClain, a driving force behind SMCC's creation.

The fund, named in her honor, provides swift assistance to students facing unexpected emergencies like car repairs, medical bills, and utilities. These funds ease the financial burden, enabling students to stay on their educational journey.

This yearly tradition not only pays tribute to a remarkable individual but also showcases our community's spirit and unity.



DONORS

• \$100,000 and Higher

• Individuals

- B. Jean Thomas

• Businesses/Organizations

- The Fleischer Foundation
- GE Capital Franchise Finance Corporation
- South Mountain Community College

• \$50,000 - \$99,999

• Individuals

- Jacqueline Marschel

• Businesses/Organizations

- Arizona Community Foundation
- General Motors Desert Proving Ground
- Goodrich Corporation
- Norwest Bank Arizona
- The Cowley Family Foundation
- Verizon Foundation

• \$25,000 - \$49,999

• Individuals

- Lorraine L. Calbow
- Shari L. Olson
- Sherri L. Thomas

• Businesses/Organizations

- The Benevity Community Impact Fund
- The Coleman Foundation, Inc.
- Ronnie Felix Memorial Scholarship Fund
- The Joyner-Walker Foundation Inc. Maricopa Community Colleges District Office
- McCarthy Holdings, Inc.

• \$10,000 - \$24,999

• Individuals

- Dolly D. Aguirre
- Esther M. Gaintner (DECEASED)
- Jacqueline Jaap
- Meekness LeCato
- Teresa Leyba Ruiz
- Ann B. Lindner
- Caroline Martens (DECEASED)
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• Businesses/Organizations

- Davidson Family Foundation
- Various/Unknown Donors
- First Interstate Bank Charitable Foundation
- General Dynamics
- The Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation
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• \$5,000 - \$9,000

• Individuals

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- Americrown International Speedway Corporation
- ARCO Foundation of CA
- Blackbaud Giving Fund by its agent, YourCause-Wells Far
- Intel Latina Outreach Group
- PMH Health Resource, Inc.
- Presidential Pools & Spas, LLC
- Salt River Project
- Tanner Chapel A.M.E. Church, Inc.
- Thunderbirds Foundation
- The Victoria Foundation
- YourCause, LLC Trustee for Wells Fargo Foundation

• \$2,500 - \$4,999

• Individuals

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- Regan A. Ferguson
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- Avant Datacomm Solutions, Inc.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, Inc
- Bright Funds Foundation
- The Chase Manhattan Foundation
- Extra Innings East Valley
- EY
- Fanniel ENT Fashions LLC
- Gila River Indian Community
- Haydon Building Corporation
- Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
- Honeywell Foundation
- Horizons Foundation
- Jones Studio
- Lyon Engineering & Lyon

- Custom Tees & Embroidery
- Motorsports Charities Inc.
- Mr. Goodcents Franchise Systems, Inc.
- QTS
- South Mountain Village Festivals
- T J Concrete Construction, Inc.
- TeamMulticom Inc
- Turner Construction Company
- Valley of the Sun United Way
- Walmart Store #4293

• \$1,000 - \$2,499

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