

From: Mesa President's Office <MesaPresidentsOffice@sdccd.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2026 1:59 PM
Subject: Weekly Update from Prez Hands - Week of February 23, 2026



Hello Mesa College Community!

Weekly Update from Prez Hands provides a brief overview of the exciting efforts taking place within our community. The updates are also a great way to tell our collective story of success, and to document our journey of becoming the Leading College of Equity and Excellence. Enjoy!

OFFICE OF THE *President*



Good Afternoon SDCCD Community,

Yesterday, Mexican security forces apprehended Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes (commonly referred to as “El Mencho”), leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, in the town of Tapalpa. News reports suggest Cartel forces opened fire on the government agents and in the violence, Cervantes was killed.

In the immediate aftermath of Cervantes’ killing, members of the cartel have apparently retaliated by attacking security forces in at least a dozen different states, blocking highways, and setting fire to supermarkets, banks, and vehicles. Reports and images of the violence and destruction are deeply troubling. The violence has led to shelter in place orders across the country. At this time, the U.S. Embassy in Mexico has advised people to shelter in Jalisco State (including Puerto Vallarta, Chapala, and Guadalajara); Baja California State (including Tijuana, Tecate, and Ensenada); Nayarit State (including the Nuevo Nayarit/Nuevo Vallarta area near Puerto Vallarta); and areas of Colima, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Estado de Mexico, Michoacan, Nuevo Leon, Oaxaca, Puebla, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi, Veracruz, and Zacatecas states.

We can expect many students to be impacted by these events. In particular, students living in and around Tijuana and commuting to our colleges may not be able to attend classes this week, potentially longer depending on how the situation evolves. We encourage everyone to be as flexible as possible in supporting our students’ ability to continue to participate in and complete their coursework as they manage their personal and family needs and the many stresses of these events. Every effort we make to extend grace, compassion, and flexibility to support impacted students is a significant investment in their belonging and inclusion. Separate communications will be sent to students encouraging them to reach out to their professors if they are impacted and to remind them of available campus support resources.

Many faculty, classified professionals, supervisors, and managers in our District have family, friends, and professional colleagues living in Mexico and/or are directly impacted by these events. Please be understanding and supportive as members of our community experience the anxieties, fears, anger, and sadness resulting from the violence in so many communities across Mexico. The strength of our community is founded on the compassion and empathy we extend to each other in the such moments.

Thank you for your service to our communities,
Gregory Smith, Chancellor
Dr. Ricky Shabazz, President, City College
Dr. Ashanti Hands, President, Mesa College
Dr. Wes Lundburg, President, Miramar College
Dr. Tina King, President, College of Continuing Education



Join Us for an Accreditation Celebration!

Mesa College's accreditation has been reaffirmed and that is something truly worth celebrating. This milestone reflects the heart of Mesa, our dedicated faculty, classified professionals, administrators, and students who show up every day in support of student success and excellence across our campus.

Please join us on Thursday, February 26, from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. in the President's Office, A-104, for a come and go celebration with colleagues. Stop by to enjoy sweet treats, take a commemorative photo, pick up a few fun goodies, and help us honor this shared accomplishment together.

Event details:

Mesa College Accreditation Celebration

Thursday, February 26, 2026

12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Mesa College President's Office, A-104



Trailblazer in Higher Education: Mesa College President Dr. Ashanti Hands

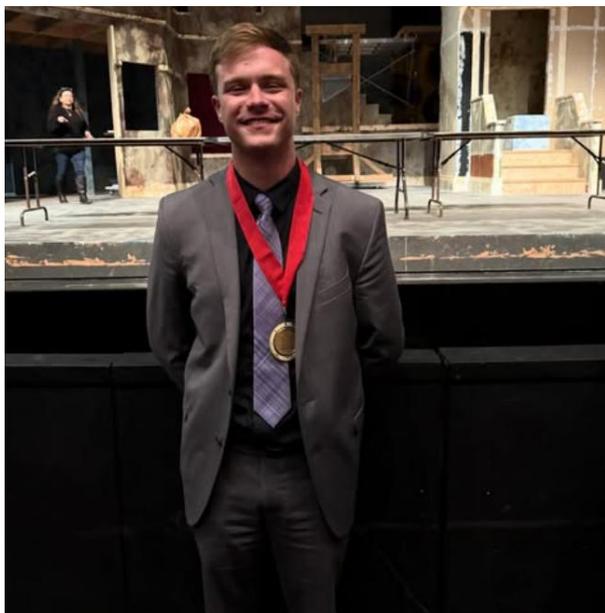
In a recent conversation with KPBS-FM, Mesa College President Dr. Ashanti Hands shared insights on her leadership journey and the vision driving Mesa College forward. As a champion for student success and equity in

ABC 10 News: Mesa College Named Black Serving Institution

10news came on campus to learn more about our recent Black-Serving Institution designation and how that impacts our Black students.

higher education, Dr. Hands discussed the College's commitment to creating inclusive learning environments where every student can thrive. Her thoughtful perspectives highlight Mesa's bold mission and the intentional efforts underway to expand opportunity and support for all learners. Tune in to hear more from Dr. Hands on how Mesa College continues to lead with purpose and impact.

To hear from President Hands and Associated Student senator Ramiyah Wilson, click the video above



San Diego Mesa College student Joshua Lewis has earned a remarkable honor in the world of collegiate speech and debate. After winning the PSCFA Spring Championship Tournament, Lewis will represent Southern California at the prestigious Interstate Oratory competition this April in Florida.

Interstate Oratory is the oldest speech tournament in the United States. Each year, every state sends its top two persuasive speakers to compete on the national stage — making qualification an extraordinary achievement.

This milestone marks the first time in 20 years that San Diego Mesa College will send a student to the competition, underscoring both the difficulty of the accomplishment and the strength of Mesa's speech and debate program.

Lewis' award-winning speech focuses on the mental health of veterans, bringing attention to an issue of national importance. Mesa College is proud to have a student representing California at this historic tournament and looks forward to cheering him on in April.

DEIA @ Mesa – Celebrating Black History Month

The latest edition of DEIA @ Mesa honors Black History Month and commemorates *"A Century of Black History Commemorations."* This special issue highlights campus events, the Black History Month display at the LRC, reflections from our Mesa community, and opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue.

Explore the stories, scholarship, and celebrations that continue to shape belonging and community at Mesa College.



Read. Reflect. Engage. Scan the QR code to the right, or visit <https://bit.ly/DEIAMESA-FEB26>

Non-Participation in Immigration Enforcement Activities

Please remember that our district has an official immigration policy, [AP 3415](#). This policy directs all inquiries regarding immigration enforcement to the District Chancellor and District General Counsel. If you receive a confirmed report of immigration enforcement on campus, please contact:

- SDCCD Chancellor's Office (Greg Smith): 619-388-6957 | chancellor@sdccd.edu
- SDCCD General Counsel (Ljubisa Kostic): 619-388-6589 | lkostic@sdccd.edu

You are not expected to engage with immigration enforcement or place yourself or others at risk. If approached by immigration officials, you may respond: "I am not authorized to speak with you, answer your questions, or provide access to any people or facilities per SDCCD policy. Only the District Chancellor and General Counsel have authority to assist you." To stay informed and prepared:

- Update your emergency contact information in the [MySDCCD portal](#)
- Download the [SDCCDsafe App](#)
- Refer to the [District's Immigration Resources page](#)
- Continue to read campus emails and official updates

San Diego Mesa College has a clear, coordinated Immigration Enforcement Response Plan centered on our Emergency Management Response Team, led by the President and including College Communications, Vice Presidents, Facilities and Operations, OEHS, and the Campus Community Emergency Response Team, in coordination with SDCCD Police. Recognizing that every incident is unique, this structure ensures we are prepared to act quickly and compassionately with clear communication, coordinated safety measures, and robust support for students and employees should an incident occur.



Chancellor's Spring Forum

Tuesday, March 24th, 2026

2:30–4 p.m. | Mesa College, Room MC 211 A/B
College Flex # 31704

Join Chancellor Smith for a unique opportunity to engage on matters of interest and importance to you, and to share your ideas to help shape the future of our District.

OFFICE OF *Instruction*

Professor Wendell Kling featured at the San Diego International Airport

We're proud to share that Professor Wendell Kling, is featured through the San Diego International Airport Arts Program. Professor Kling's interdisciplinary work blends sculpture, light, sound, and immersive installation to transform public spaces into reflective and interactive experiences.

His creative practice exemplifies the innovation and artistic excellence happening right here at Mesa. We celebrate



Professor Kling's continued contributions to both our campus and the broader San Diego arts community.

ENROLLMENT *update*

We have experienced a slight increase in FTES and headcount since last week. We have 21,296 students accounting for 5,996 FTES. At the same point in the Spring 2025 semester, we were at 5,865 FTES and a headcount of 20,828. With 12-week classes starting next week and second 8-week session starting later in March, we will be monitoring enrollment drops and addressing any needs to possibly open additional sections for the second 8-week session. At this point into the semester, we are confident that we will continue to exceed our enrollment goals for Spring 2026.

Career Education Advocacy & Paid Internship Expansion Efforts

Mesa College is actively engaged in two important statewide efforts aligned with our commitment to Career Education, Strong Workforce sustainability, and equitable access to paid internships.

Career Education Advocacy & Paid Internship Expansion Efforts

Mesa College recently engaged in two important statewide efforts aligned with our commitment to Career Education, Strong Workforce sustainability, and equitable access to paid internships.

At a letter signing on February 23, Mesa supported our statewide Career Education association, the California Community College Association for Occupational Education, in a coordinated legislative advocacy effort to restore the \$60 million reduction to Strong Workforce funding. For Mesa, this reduction represented an estimated annual impact of approximately \$300,000–\$400,000.

A drop-in letter-signing session was hosted in the Business & Technology Dean's Conference Room, with both in-person and electronic opportunities provided to review and sign the advocacy letter. The District also developed a similar letter that was presented to the Chancellor and others for signature.

California Community Colleges Board of Governors – Paid Internship Agenda Item

At the February 24 meeting of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors in Coronado, a full agenda item focused on expanding paid internships to all Career Technical Education (CTE) students across the system. The Board received information through a panel discussion highlighting the role of internships and experiential learning in advancing student success, workforce readiness, and equitable access to paid work-based learning opportunities across the California Community Colleges.

This discussion aligned directly with Mesa's vision and the future direction of the Mesa Impactship Program (MIP). The MIP team invited alumni to participate virtually in the public comment process to elevate their lived experiences and demonstrate the value of paid internships at scale. The meeting marked an important opportunity to reinforce the importance of equitable access to compensated experiential learning statewide.

These efforts reflected Mesa's proactive leadership in Career Education policy conversations and our continued commitment to expanding equitable, paid experiential learning opportunities for students.

Recap | Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) 50th Conference (February 18-20, 2026)

The [Association of California Community College Administrators \(ACCCA\)](#) hosted its 50th Annual Conference in Long Beach, CA, bringing together administrators from across California. The conference featured workshops highlighting promising practices in community college leadership, along with inspiring keynote speakers from across the state and country.

Mesa College was proudly represented by Leticia Diaz (Dean of Student Success and Equity), and Leland Simpliciano (AANAPISI & Interim HSI Director). Both were selected into the ACCCA Mentorship Program. We congratulate Leticia on completing her mentorship program and are proud to see Mesa represented in this year's cohort through Leland's participation.



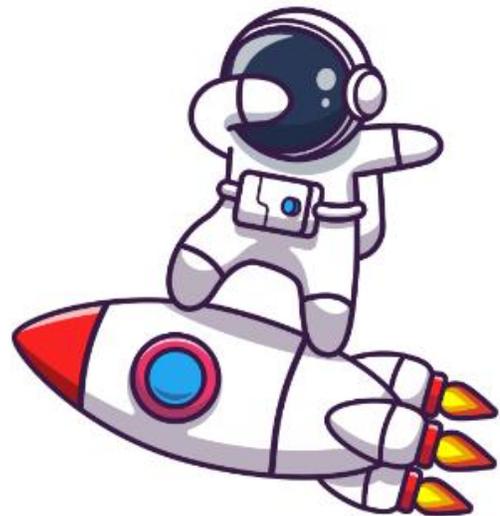
OFFICE OF *Student Services*

New Issue
Alert

[Click here for the latest Mesa Journeys Newsletter!](#)

The Mesa Journeys newsletter gives a more in-depth look at all the great things that are happening on our campus. We encourage all faculty and staff to pass this along to our students, and also to sign up to receive these newsletters straight to their inboxes! Click below to sign up and for more information about Mesa Journeys:

<https://linktr.ee/mesajourneys>



Financial Aid News

Last week Financial Aid Disbursed a total of **\$6,856,653**, including \$5.2M in Pell Grant and \$1.3M in Cal Grant funds

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

JUMPSTART YOUR SUCCESS AT SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Dear Campus Community,

We are thrilled to present Jumpstart Your Success on Saturday, March 14, 2026! This is a time that we invite prospective students to our campus and showcase what we have to offer, and how great we do it! The program will include student support services, academics, department resources, clubs, and the lively community feel we all create at Mesa.

As usual, we encourage you to host a table for your department or service area so that you can provide information, share a demonstration, make connections with prospective students, and showcase what your department offers. See the online form for more details about the resource fair.

[Follow this link to the online registration form](#), which is due on **Friday, February 27, 2026!**

Let us know if you have any questions (email to: clee@sdccd.edu), we hope you will spread the word and join the fun!

--Mesa Student Affairs Team



PANCAKE SOCIAL FUNDRAISER



pre-order
now!!!

FROM
8-10AM

10TH
MAR

PLATE
\$8

PRE-ORDER ONLINE
USING
THE TOAST APP
STARTING 2/19/26.

WE'LL ALSO DELIVER IF
YOU'RE ON CAMPUS!



Join us on Tuesday, March 10th as we bring back our annual Pancake Social where all proceeds go to our **Veterans Emergency Fund!**

\$8 = Pancakes, Sausage (pork or chicken), & home potatoes! Add Orange Juice or Coffee for \$2.

Contact Jordan Agricola at jagricola@sdccd.edu for more information.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II updates apply to all public colleges and universities and requires equal access to programs, services, and activities including online courses, websites, videos, digital tools and digital marketing materials such as flyers and emails used to promote events and services.

Accessibility is a shared, institutional responsibility and applies regardless of whether a student with a disability is currently enrolled.

If you have any questions about the California Community College Chancellor's Office visit to help us build our accessibility roadmap using the [Accessibility Capability Maturity Model \(ACMM\)](#), please contact Leticia Diaz at Ldiaz@sdccd.edu.

Accessibility workshops are provided to promote inclusive design and support ongoing accessibility efforts, to learn more visit the [Accessibility Resource Hub](#).

Accessible Flyers: How to Ensure your Message Reaches Everyone | Thursday, February 26th, 12:00-1:00pm

Flyers are everywhere, but are yours reaching everyone? We will cover why that gorgeous Canva flyer might not be working for all readers and how to ensure it does. Leave ready to create materials that look great and work for everyone.

[Accessibility Workshops Zoom Room](#)

Click on the flyer to enlarge

CSUSM DAY

SEE WHERE YOUR FUTURE CAN TAKE YOU



MARCH 3, 2026
10:00-1:00
MESA CAMPUS QUAD



Register Here

Connect with CSUSM campus departments and programs at over 25 tables including **Financial Aid, Housing and Faculty!**

GRAB YOUR FREE BOBA WHEN YOU CHECK IN AT THE EVENT
Provided by CSUSM APIDA to the first 50 students



Conscious Spending Clinic

A place where we casually and consciously chat about money.
Grow your knowledge and financial confidence exploring different money topics with faculty member Brian Lesson!

Location: BT 218

Time: 1-2pm

Dates:
Thurs Feb 26, 2026 *Debt
Thurs March 26, 2026 *Budget
Thurs April 23, 2026 *Credit



SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE
EOPS

Requests for disability related accommodations should be made no later than 5 (five) working days prior to the event at 619-388-2774

HeART Circles

Express yourself and support your mental health in guided group creative activities.

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE
Mental Health Services



All Students Welcome!

Art Focus

Location: K105
Time: 12-2pm
Dates:
Tues Feb 24, 2026 *Collage
Tues March 24, 2026 *Weaving
Tues April 21, 2026 *Foil Sculpture

Open Studio

Location: K105
Time: 12-2pm
Dates:
Thurs Feb 12, 2026
Thurs March 12, 2026
Thurs April 9, 2026

★ Each month we will spend time exploring a new art modality to grow our arthul toolbox!

★ Choose from a variety of art activities or bring your own project! Open studio is a place to relax and get lost in creativity

Requests for disability related accommodations should be made no later than 5 (five) working days prior to the event at 619-388-2774

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

The Black Faculty Counselor Collaborative

Spring 2026 Counseling Drop-In Appointments

Take the opportunity to meet with a Counselor for...

- Educational/Class Planning
- Transfer to a university
- Exploring Majors/Careers
- Petitions/Appeals/Academic Renewal



Kimberly Williams-Kee
Tuesdays
11:00AM-12:00PM



Terrence Hale
Wednesdays
1:00PM-2:00PM



Jordan Nash
Fridays
10:00AM-11:00AM



Sign-up for a 30-min session by visiting:
bit.ly/BFCCounselingSignUp
or using the QR code.

*Counselor availability may change without notice
For questions or more information, please contact
sdmeafollowup@gmail.com or 619-388-2672.



HELP WITH VA DISABILITY CLAIMS

SPR 26

EVERY MONTH

**FEB
17TH**

TUESDAY, FEB 17

1 hr long appointment sessions from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM in the Veterans Success Center K-103

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

1 hr long appointment sessions from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM in the Veterans Success Center K-103

**MAR
17TH**

**APR
21ST**

TUESDAY, APR 21

1 HR LONG APPOINTMENT SESSIONS FROM 8:00 AM TO 2:30 PM IN THE VETERANS SUCCESS CENTER K-103

TUESDAY, MAY 19

1 hr long appointment sessions from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM in the Veterans Success Center K-103

**MAY
19TH**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

DMOORE002@SDCCD.EDU

SPRING 2026

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

CARE • CalWORKs • The Stand
Mental Health Services



STUDENT PARENT HEALING CIRCLE

The healing circle focuses on creating a safe space for student parents. Children are always welcome!

Food will be provided!

For Information & Accommodations
Grace.Aumoeualogo@gaumoeualogo@sdccd.edu

DATES THURSDAYS

February 19
March 19
April 16
May 21

Time 3:00pm - 4:30pm

LOCATION
Family Resource Center
LRC, 1st Floor, R113

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE 

CARE · CalWORKs · The Stand

Parent Cafe

SPRING 2026

TIME 11:00AM-12:30PM

WEDNESDAYS

February 4 • 11 • 18
 March 4 • 11 • 18
 April 8 • 15 • 22
 May 6 • 13

LOCATION

Family Resource Center (FRC) Room 113

Zoom: 825 6491 8782 Password: SPRING2026

For more information or accommodations contact Mesa CalWORKs

SDMesaCalWORKs@sdccd.edu
 (619) 388-2709

To join more Student Parent workshops & events Follow us on Instagram @sdmesacare @sdmesacalworks @sdmesastand

Connect with Student Parents to share experiences, build community, and discover helpful resources. From wellness to cultural reflection to academic support, every workshop offers something different and meaningful. Brunch is provided, and children are always welcome in our safe, child-friendly space on Mesa's campus.



SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE 

Spring 2026

Financial Literacy Workshops

Facilitated by Cal Coast Credit Union
 Brought to you by Rising Scholars, MESA Program, EOPS, CARE, Next Up, FAST Scholars, STAR TRIO, Dreamer Resource Center, and CalWORKs.

Financial Tips for Students

Learn essential budgeting, saving, and investing strategies for college students.

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
 Room BT 218

Proper Credit Card Spending

Learn how to use a credit card wisely, build credit, and avoid unnecessary debt.

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
 Room I4-207

Savvy Savings

Learn how to save for emergencies, retirement, and personal goals.

Wednesday, April 29, 2026
 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
 Room MS 120

All students are welcome. Food will be provided.

For questions or accommodation requests, please contact, MesaRisingScholars@sdccd.edu or (619) 388-5107



Free Food Distribution 2026!

Available to Mesa Community
 Recommend bringing your own reusable bags

1st Monday of each month 1pm-2pm Mesa Quad	3rd Thursday of each month 11am-1pm Mesa Commons Breezeway
February 2nd	February 19th
March 2nd	March 19th
April 6th	April 16th
May 4th	May 21st
June 1st	June 18th
July 6th	July 16th
August 3rd	August 27th (4th Thursday)
September 8th (Tuesday)	September 17th
October 5th	October 15th
November 2nd	November 19th
December 7th	December 17th

Attention: STUDENTS!
 Connect your CSID card to your San Diego Food Bank ID card. Inquire at the food distribution.

The Stand • K105/106 • (619) 388-5726



OFFICE OF *Administrative Services*

Fiscal Year End Deadlines

To help everyone prepare for year-end, Business Services has provided key deadlines, guidance, and resources at the link below. Please take a moment to review and share with your teams to ensure a smooth and timely close.

[Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Year-End Deadlines](#)

Mesa Emergency Management Website



To help us maintain a safe, clean, and fully operational campus, please remember that all requests for Facilities support should be submitted through the [Facilities Work Order System](#). This system ensures your request is routed to the correct team and allows us to track progress and response times.

You may submit a work order for issues such as:

- Elevator outages
- Water leaks or plumbing concerns
- Broken glass or damaged fixtures

Cleaning needs (urgent or routine)
Heating/cooling concerns
Lighting or electrical issues
General repairs or maintenance

Thank you for helping us keep our campus environment safe and welcoming. If you have questions about the process, please feel free to contact the Facilities Services at 619.388.2814.

EVENTS AND OPERATIONS

When to Call Events/Operations vs Facilities

Events and Operations

- Event Requests
 - Room Reservations
 - Setups
 - Event Parking
- Parking
- Site Improvements
- Furniture Requests
- Office Relocations

Facilities

- HVAC
- Leaks
- Restrooms and related supplies
- Landscaping
- Minor Repairs

Facilities: 619-388-2814

Events & Ops: 619-388-5881

SAFETY

Workplace Campus Safety vs Public Safety

Workplace Safety

- Cal/OSHA
- Emergency Management
- C-CERT
- Facilities Inspections
- Permits
- Hazardous Waste
- Biohazardous Waste
- Training
- Ergonomics

Public Safety

- Public Disturbances
- Medical Emergencies
- Theft
- Threats
- Criminal Behavior
- Mental Health Issues
- Suspicious Circumstances
- Anything Requiring Immediate Response

Police Dispatch: 619-388-6405

[Click here](#) to learn which administrative areas are involved in managing our college operations.

OFFICE OF *Institutional Effectiveness*

New Resource: Data Element Dictionary & Acronym Glossary

The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Office has published a new [Data Element Dictionary & Acronym Glossary](#) on our website to support a shared understanding of the terminology used across Mesa College. Whether you're reviewing reports, navigating dashboards, or interpreting campus communications, this resource is designed to clarify common data definitions and acronyms in one central place. You can find it on the [IE website](#) under the **Data Dictionary & Acronym Glossary** section. We invite you to explore it and reach out to the IE Office with suggestions for new additions, updates, or corrections as we continue to build and refine this tool together. For feedback, please contact **Adriana Caetano** at acaetanofournier@sdccd.edu.

IE Office Hours – A Dedicated Time to Think Through Your Data Together

The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Office is launching weekly Office Hours to serve as a partner for your data questions and ideas. Whether you're exploring data for program review or accreditation, thinking through how to use our dashboards, or simply trying to make sense of what the data is telling you, we welcome the opportunity to work alongside you. During the Spring semester, **from January 20 (Flex Week) through June 1**, we will pilot these new office hours. Join us **Tuesdays from 12:30–1:30 p.m.** in the IE Office (A-109). We have a conference room for collaborative conversations—and yes, there's coffee too! We look forward to being your data thought partner.



FOUNDATION CORNER

A space to learn about our latest efforts to connect partners who share our passion for education with opportunities to give. See how fundraising can help you, our students, and Mesa's mission.

[Learn More](#)



Want to learn more about grant seeking?

View the flex workshop hosted by Dr. Michael Lettieri, who is leading grant writing efforts, and Krista Stellmacher, CFRE and Director in service to the Office of Resource Development and Foundation.

[View Recording](#)

Participatory Governance

To learn more about our Associated Students, Academic Senate, and Classified Senate, please visit the links below:

[Associated Students](#)

[Academic Senate](#)

[Classified Senate](#)

In The Know

For additional information on what is happening on campus and in our community - visit the links below:

[Mesa College Newsroom](#)

[Mesa College Events Calendar](#)

Ashanti Hands, Ed.D.

President | San Diego Mesa College

Creating conditions that matter for our students to succeed!

7250 Mesa College Drive, A-104, SD, CA 92111 | 619.388.2721

