



# SSCCC Connect

AN OPEN INVITATION  
to Connect

## June 2025



June Leadership

## Important Dates

### Board of Directors

July 18 - 20, 205  
(Sacramento - Region II)

### Board of Directors

August 22 - 24, 2025  
(Sacramento - Region II)

### Board of Directors

September 12 - 14,  
2025  
(Southern California)

Other region meetings  
and events are on our  
website calendar [here](#).

## President's Update

Dear Student Senate Family,

As I sit down to write this final newsletter, I find myself filled with emotion, both gratitude for this journey and a sense of bittersweet closure. This marks the end of one of the most transformative chapters of my life, and I would like to take a moment to reflect, celebrate, and bid farewell - not just as your President, but as someone who has grown deeply alongside each of you.

If you had told me years ago that I would serve as President of the largest system of higher education in the entire country, I wouldn't have believed you. After all, I am a first-generation, low-income, cancer survivor and English learner. Statistically, I wasn't supposed to be here. But somehow, I found my way, and more importantly, I found you: people who believed in me, who saw something in me, and who reminded me of the power of voice and the change we can create together.

Serving as your President this year has been the greatest honor of my life. We represented over 2 million students, advocated on the steps of the Capitol, collaborated with system partners, and brought student voices to national stages like [HACU](#), [EWA](#), and [NCORE](#). We traveled across the state, hosted powerful board meetings, and organized transformative events like the Advocacy Academy and the General Assembly. We laughed, cried, challenged each other, and celebrated victories big and small.

And yet, it hasn't always been easy. We faced challenging moments: internal conflicts, difficult decisions, and public scrutiny. We navigated long hours, packed agendas, and moments when we questioned whether we...

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## Accomplishments

Thanks to student-led advocacy, several key investments were secured in the state budget:

- \$20 million (one-time) for flexible emergency aid, including support for mixed-status students
- \$15 million (one-time) to support Dream Resource Liaisons
- Full funding for Cal Grant, including increases to accommodate growing student caseloads
- \$52 million restored for CalFresh student support, directly benefiting Basic Needs Centers
- \$15 million (one-time) and \$5 million (ongoing) for Credit for Prior Learning initiatives

These critical wins are the result of the SSSCC's persistent advocacy through coalition partnerships, public comment, and delegate-driven resolutions that elevate student priorities in state policy.

could keep going. But we did. And not just that. We did it with heart, with courage, and with unwavering belief in the mission.

**To my board:** you were not just colleagues; you were my home away from home. Each of you brought passion, resilience, and dedication to our shared vision. Thank you for supporting one another and for supporting me.

**To Dr. Adams:** It's been a privilege to work alongside someone who has dedicated her life to student advocacy. You are fierce, compassionate, and deeply respected by the students you serve. May your final year with SSSCC be filled with the same impact and love you've poured into us.

**To our incredible SSSCC staff** —De'ja, Sage, Fionna, Mikala, Jessica, Trinity —and all of our outstanding interns: *thank you*. You have helped us elevate the voices of our students across the state, and for that, I commend you. Your support, guidance, and dedication have been the quiet force behind so many of our successes. Thank you for being part of this unforgettable chapter.

**To the incoming board:** remember, you stand on the shoulders of student leaders who gave their everything to this organization. Lead with humility, purpose, and boldness. Your voice matters. Your leadership matters. And the students of California are counting on you.

As we each turn the page to our next chapter - whether it's transferring, graduating, or stepping into new roles - I want to remind you of something important: sometimes, the dream isn't just yours, it belongs to those who see themselves in you.

Carry that truth with you. Let it ground you in purpose and remind you that the work never ends, it just evolves. The Student Senate for California Community Colleges is more than an organization. It is a movement. And I am forever grateful to have been part of it.

As this chapter closes, another begins, filled with new adventures, new hopes, and new opportunities to grow. For all we've shared and accomplished, it fills me with joy and pride to say that the 2024-2025 SSSCC season has officially come to an end.

May we meet again, in advocacy, in community, or wherever life's next chapter takes us.

With pride, love, and deepest respect,



Ivan Hernandez  
President, Student Senate for California Community Colleges  
president@ssccc.org



## Prioritize your mental health this summer!

Summer is an ideal time to rest, recharge, and prioritize your well-being. As you take a break from the busy academic year, don't forget to take care of your mental health as well. To help you stay balanced, we invite you to try out the 5-Day Self-Care Challenge! A simple way to incorporate wellness into your summer routine.

1. **Nature Day** – Spend 30 minutes outdoors, whether it's a walk, a hike, or time at the beach or park.
2. **Digital Detox** – Take a full day off from social media and screen time to give your mind a break.
3. **Treat Yourself Tuesday** – Do something just for you: enjoy your favorite meal, read a new book, or take a mindful break.
4. **Move Your Body** – Engage in physical activity that you enjoy, such as dancing, stretching, or going for a bike ride.
5. **Gratitude Check-In** – Reflect and write down three things you're grateful for.

This challenge is a great way to stay grounded, even during time off from school.

Looking for additional support?

Visit [ccstudentmentalhealth.org](https://ccstudentmentalhealth.org), a mental health resource specifically designed for you. It offers access to wellness tools, on-campus services, and immediate support options.



## Legislative Updates

### Student Voices in Action

The SSCCC is proud to share that many of our sponsored and cosponsored bills have successfully passed their first house and are now moving through the second. Our advocacy doesn't stop here, though we're actively engaging in committee hearings to ensure that the student voice is amplified at every step.

### Our 2025 Sponsored Legislation:

- **AB 409 (Arambula)**
- The SSCCC is excited to share that AB 409, which sought to extend teleconferencing exemptions outlined in AB 1855 (Arambula) through January 2030, is in the process of being amended and rolled into **SB 707 (Durazo)**.
- This strategic move strengthens advocacy efforts statewide by aligning with a broader legislative effort that ensures equitable access to public meetings

### Co-Sponsored Legislation:

- **SB 98: (Perez)**
- **SB 271 (Reyes)**
- **AB 323 (Fong)**
- **SB 323 (Pérez)**
- **AB 537 (Ahrens)**

Please click on the links for each bill to review the language, status, recent analysis and more!

### SSCCC Joins Forces for Higher Ed Advocacy:

In a strong show of solidarity, SSCCC joined our partners at UCSA and CSSA in student-led advocacy meetings with the Assembly Higher Education Committee to champion our shared priorities as the official student bodies representing UC, CSU, and CCC students.

We're also continuing our budget advocacy through powerful coalition work and it's paying off. Thanks to these efforts, we've helped secure key wins for California Community College students in the 2025 state budget. Please see our press release [here](#).

## EMPOWERING STUDENT VOICES: UPCOMING ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

In a time when higher education is facing unprecedented challenges, it is more crucial than ever for students to be equipped with the tools to advocate for and protect their access to education. The SSSCC is proud to host two powerful events designed to prepare California Community College students to engage effectively in public policy at both the state and federal levels.

The Advocacy Academy (December 5–7, 2025, in Riverside) and the Federal Advocacy Academy (March 1–3, 2026, in Washington, D.C.) will offer in-depth training in advocacy, public speaking, and civic engagement. These student-led events are designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to advocate for themselves and their peers in local, state, and national discussions.

**Now more than ever, the student voice is essential—and these academies will ensure that voice is informed, empowered, and heard.**

Read more information below.

### Advocacy Academy

Each fall, the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) hosts a Leadership Development Conference, similar in format to the General Assembly but without the presentation or debate of resolutions. This event provides a focused space for student leaders across the California Community Colleges system to deepen their understanding of advocacy, expand their networks, and develop essential leadership skills.

The next Advocacy Academy will take place on December 5–7, 2025, at the Riverside Convention Center in Riverside, CA.

This student-focused event will:

- Strengthen participants' skills in public speaking, organizing, and legislative advocacy
- Provide workshops and sessions led by student leaders, SSSCC alumni, and policy experts
- Highlight key statewide and federal issues impacting community college students
- Prepare students to speak confidently with decision-makers, both locally and nationally

The Advocacy Academy serves as a cornerstone of SSSCC's mission to empower students through education and civic engagement. Whether you're a new advocate or a seasoned student leader, this event is designed to help you elevate your voice and create meaningful change.

Registration is now open—secure your spot today!

### Federal Advocacy

#### **Registration Now Open: 2026 SSSCC Federal Advocacy Academy**

The Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) is proud to host the 2026 Federal Advocacy Academy, a student-led event taking place in Washington, D.C., from March 1–3, 2026, while Congress is in session. This immersive experience is designed to prepare student leaders to be powerful advocates at the national level and connect directly with federal policymakers on pressing student issues.

Throughout the multi-day program, participants will engage in:

- Interactive workshops on storytelling, financial aid policy, immigration, and federal vs. state legislative processes
- Panels with congressional staff, reporters, and higher education advocates
- Keynotes and roundtables with Members of Congress and/or national education leaders
- Congressional visits to meet with representatives from each attendee's home district and key California leaders
- Networking opportunities and a closing dinner to reflect and build lasting connections

Registration and hotel booking are now open! Visit our website at [this link](#) to start the registration process and secure your spot.

For questions, please contact Dr. Julie Adams, SSSCC Executive Director, at [jadams@ssccc.org](mailto:jadams@ssccc.org).

## Happy Pride Month from SSSCC!

At SSSCC, we proudly stand with ALL LGBTQ+ students, not just during Pride Month, but every month. We actively support and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights across California community colleges.

Our Queer Caucus brings students together to build community, connect with peers, and raise their voices for LGBTQ+ equity. Additionally, our Board of Directors developed the Chapter 5 Anti-Racism Action Plan, which highlights the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ students and guides ongoing advocacy efforts.

Exciting news: our LGBTQ+ Advocacy Toolkit, filled with resources to help you advocate for LGBTQ+ students on your campus, is now available! We encourage you to also visit the SSSCC website to learn more about the Queer Caucus and how you can get involved.



## Congratulations to Our Board Members Transferring!

We're proud to celebrate our incredible SSSCC Board Members who are transferring to four-year universities this year! Thank you for your leadership, dedication, and the significant impact you have made. You've left your mark, and we can't wait to see what you do next. Good luck on your new journey!

Where they're headed:

- Region I - Lawrence Ortiz → Cal Poly Humboldt
- Region II - Alisha Nagpal → Sacramento State
- Region III - Brandon Maskey → UC Berkeley
- Region V - Jerry Reyes → Sacramento State
- Region V - Dejalía White → Fresno State
- Region VI - Sanjana Sudhir → UCLA
- Region VI - Tara Pai → UC Irvine
- Region VIII - Sophie Gieng → UC Irvine
- Region IX - Joia Miller → UC San Diego
- Region IX - Brandon Cooley → Cal Poly Pomona
- Region X - Brandon Quandt → UC Berkeley
- Executive - Alexis Bravo → Gallaudet University and Rochester Institute of Technology



## Follow us!

Let's build collective power together!

