

FEB 2025

RAMS MONTHLY



VVC Becomes '25 Bellwether Award Finalist

Connect2Success Center at VVC One of Best in Nation



STORIES OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND LEARNING AT VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE

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VVC's Connect2Success Center Announced as '25 Bellwether Finalist

2025 BELLWETHER AWARD FINALIST

Planning, Governance & Finance

VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE

Revolutionizing Student Support:
How Connect2Success Can
Transform Your College



Victor Valley College (VVC) has always been committed to enhancing student success and community engagement. Recognizing the challenges students and the public faced in reaching key college services, VVC took a transformative step by developing the Connect2Success Center, a state-of-the-art call center designed to streamline communication and improve overall accessibility.

Identifying the Need for Change

Many students and community members encountered frustration when calling the college, often being met with an automated phone tree that led to voicemail. This lack of direct assistance frequently forced individuals to visit the campus in person, which was not always practical. Understanding the urgency of addressing this communication barrier, VVC implemented a solution that not only simplified access but also

enhanced the overall experience.

Building the Connect2Success Center

The initiative began with a clear goal: every caller and email inquiry should receive a five-star customer experience. VVC opted for a single phone number and email as the primary communication channels, eliminating confusion and inefficiencies. To ensure success, the college took the following strategic steps:

Hiring Skilled Personnel: VVC recruited individuals with backgrounds in call center operations and customer service to lead the project. These experts played a crucial role in defining the center's services and operational framework.

Determining Staffing Needs: Based on student enrollment data and projected call volume, the college identified the necessary staffing levels to

maintain efficiency without long wait times.

Allocating Resources: A budget was established for personnel, technology, office space, equipment, and anticipated operational costs to ensure long-term sustainability.

Selecting the Right Technology: The Sangoma (Neffortris) communication platform was chosen to facilitate seamless call tracking and performance analysis through key metrics such as caller satisfaction, first-call resolution, and overall calls answered.

A Collaborative Approach

The successful implementation of the Connect2Success Center required the collaboration of multiple departments:

College Administration & Management Staff:

Designed, implemented, and continuously improved operations.

Technical Support Teams: Ensured the functionality of the call tracking system and software setup.

Third-Party Vendor (Latest Solutions): Enhanced the Ivanti Service Desk ticketing system, which allows unresolved inquiries to be forwarded to department managers for resolution within 48 hours—with automatic escalation to the Executive Vice President of Instruction, Innovation, and Student Success if necessary.

Impact and Lessons Learned

Since its launch, the Connect2Success Center has dramatically improved VVC's ability to serve students and the community. The highest call volume departments—Admissions, Counseling, and Financial Aid—have been able to focus more

on in-person services and application processing, leading to greater efficiency and satisfaction.

Lessons learned throughout the development process emphasize the importance of intentional planning, flexibility, and continuous assessment. Establishing a well-defined scope, maintaining a "can-do" attitude, and adapting to evolving needs have been key factors in the center's success.

Moreover, with VVC's enrollment growing by 50% over the past two years, the call center has scaled operations to maintain the originally envisioned five-star customer service experience.

A Model for Success

Victor Valley College's innovative approach to student and community support through the Connect2Success Center exemplifies best practices in higher education communication strategies. By prioritizing accessibility, efficiency, and quality service, VVC has set a new standard for institutional support.

As the college awaits consideration for the 2025 Bellwether Award, the Connect2Success Center stands as a testament to proactive problem-solving and student-first innovation, demonstrating a replicable model for institutions nationwide.

The More You Know!



The Bellwether Award is a prestigious national recognition presented annually by the Community College Futures Assembly to institutions that demonstrate innovative and replicable practices in higher education. The award highlights outstanding programs that address critical challenges in community colleges, serving as a benchmark for best practices across the nation. Colleges that receive the Bellwether Award are acknowledged as pioneers in institutional transformation, making a lasting impact on student success, workforce development, and administrative leadership.

The award is divided into three categories: Instructional Programs & Services, which recognizes cutting-edge approaches to teaching and learning; Workforce Development, which honors initiatives that effectively prepare students for employment; and Planning, Governance & Finance, which acknowledges exceptional strategies in college operations and resource management. As a highly competitive recognition, the Bellwether Award requires institutions to present evidence-based results and demonstrate the scalability of their initiatives, ensuring they can serve as models for other colleges nationwide.

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It's the VVC
Universe in
your pocket!
info@vvc.edu



VVC Students Unite with Peers at ABC Conference to Shape Bold Futures

Victor Valley College's Umoja Program was honored to participate in the 2025 African Black Coalition (ABC) Conference, which took place last month during MLK Jr. weekend at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. This year's event marked a historic moment as the ABC Conference was hosted for the first time at this campus, a significant milestone in the ongoing expansion of the movement for Black excellence and empowerment.

The ABC Conference, which has been held annually since 2003, brings together over 800 Afrikan and Black students from across the state of California to address social and political issues facing their communities. The conference includes peer and professional workshops, keynote speakers, and social activities designed to foster unity, promote academic success, and inspire political and cultural education. As one of the largest and most influential statewide events for Black students, it provides a platform for students to connect, share experiences, and work together toward solutions for challenges in academic policy, campus climate, and life after college.

The theme of this year's conference, The Power to Imagine, the Strength to Build Black Power, called on participants to envision bold futures for themselves and their communities while equipping them with the tools necessary to turn these visions into reality. VVC student Julien Rocafort, who attended the conference, reflected on the impact of the event, saying, "I now fully understand the importance of networking and I will continue to improve on that skill to ensure my success in the future." His experience underscored the power of building meaningful connections with like-minded peers and professionals. Julien was particularly inspired by the workshop on LinkedIn, where attendees shared stories of securing internships and job opportunities simply by initiating connections.



The conference also featured powerful sessions focused on building leadership skills and fostering unity. Dr. Ruha Benjamin's discussion on creativity left a lasting impression on many, including Julien, who shared, "Seeing creativity as a form of intelligence makes sense because it goes hand in hand with problem solving. If you can imagine the problem, you can also try and imagine a solution." This perspective on creativity as a tool for problem-solving resonated deeply with students, inspiring them to think outside the box when addressing challenges in their communities and beyond.

In addition to professional development, the conference emphasized the importance of collective action. Julien expressed this sentiment in his reflection, saying, "We are stronger together than we are apart. We are truly a force to be reckoned with when we come together on one accord for the mission of uplifting our people." This theme of unity was woven throughout the conference, encouraging students to build solidarity not only across campuses but also within their own communities.

The ABC Conference continues to serve as a critical space for Black students to develop leadership skills, share resources, and connect with others who share their passion for justice and progress. VVC's Umoja Program participants returned from this transformative event energized and ready to continue advocating for Black students and fostering unity on campus. Their experience at the

ABC Conference is a reminder of the power of collaboration, the importance of community, and the necessity of envisioning and building a better future for all.

As Julien put it, "If I have learned anything on this trip, it is that petty issues and gossip are not worth isolating ourselves from the potential greatness that can come from us joining forces." With this renewed sense of purpose, VVC's Umoja Program members are committed to leading the charge for unity and empowerment, both on and off their campus.



FAR RIGHT: JULIEN ROCAFORT IS THE BSU PRESIDENT AT VVC; A STUDENT CHAMPION FOR THE UMOJA-UZIMA SCHOLARS PROGRAM

FINANCIAL AID AWARENESS MONTH

February is Financial Aid Awareness Month, a time dedicated to helping students and families understand the financial resources available to make higher education more accessible. At Victor Valley College, we encourage all students to take advantage of grants, scholarships, work-study programs, and low-interest loans designed to ease the cost of college. One of the most important steps in securing financial aid is completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA). These applications determine eligibility for federal and state aid, including the Pell Grant, Cal Grant, and institutional scholarships that do not need to be repaid. The earlier students apply, the better their chances of receiving the maximum aid available, making it essential to stay ahead of key deadlines.

To support students in navigating the financial aid process, VVC's Financial Aid Office offers workshops, informational sessions, and one-on-one assistance to help ensure applications are completed correctly and on time. Understanding financial aid can feel overwhelming, but with the right resources, students can make informed decisions about funding their education. Whether you're a first-time college student, a returning learner, or transferring to a four-year university, now is the time to take advantage of the opportunities available. Investing in your education is one of the most important decisions you can make—let VVC help you take the next step. Visit the VVC Financial Aid Office or our website today to learn more and get started!



VVC Hosts College Tour Kickoff for Award-Winning Ice-T Film on Gun Violence

Filmmaker Terry C. Carney, Sr. says this powerful documentary delves into the critical intersections of mental health and gun violence

Victor Valley College (VVC) will host a special screening of the award-winning documentary *Put the Guns Down: A World Epidemic* on Wednesday, February 26th, 2025, from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the VVC Performing Arts Center. This powerful event is presented in partnership with the DVL (Dreamers, Visionaries & Leaders) Project and VVC's Umoja program. The screening will be followed by a panel discussion aimed at sparking critical conversations on the ongoing gun violence epidemic and its societal impact.

The documentary, *Put the Guns Down: A World Epidemic*, has earned over 46 awards for its poignant exploration of the devastating effects of gun violence. The film features real-life testimonies from families and communities impacted by gun violence and emphasizes the importance of mental health awareness and community action.

Following the screening, a panel discussion will take place, led by Platinum City Golden West Entertainment & Films (PCGW). The panel will feature key cast members of the film, including Cortlyn Bridges, Donna Johnson, Justified, CJ Taylor, and Cornell Ward. Terry C. Carney Sr., the film's creator, writer, and director, will also join the discussion to share insights and reflections on the project.

"We jumped at the opportunity to bring this impactful documentary to the High Desert community in partnership with Victor Valley College's Umoja Program," said Regina Weatherspoon-Bell, Founder and CEO of the

DVL Project. "This free public event is part of our ongoing mission to empower communities through education and collaboration."

Hakeem Croom, Program Manager of the Umoja-Uzima Scholars Program, also expressed the event's significance. "We are excited to partner with DVL to bring this timely and critical conversation to our community," Croom said. "Our goal is to inform the High Desert about the urgent issue of gun violence while inspiring those who attend to become agents of change."

Terry C. Carney Sr., the visionary behind the film, hopes the event will inspire action. "This film was created to ignite conversations, foster understanding, and encourage communities to come together to confront these issues head-on," Carney stated. "Events like this are crucial steps in building a safer, more united future for us all."

The event is free and open to the public, offering a unique opportunity to engage with thought-provoking material and contribute to the important conversation about the impact of gun violence on society.

Event Details

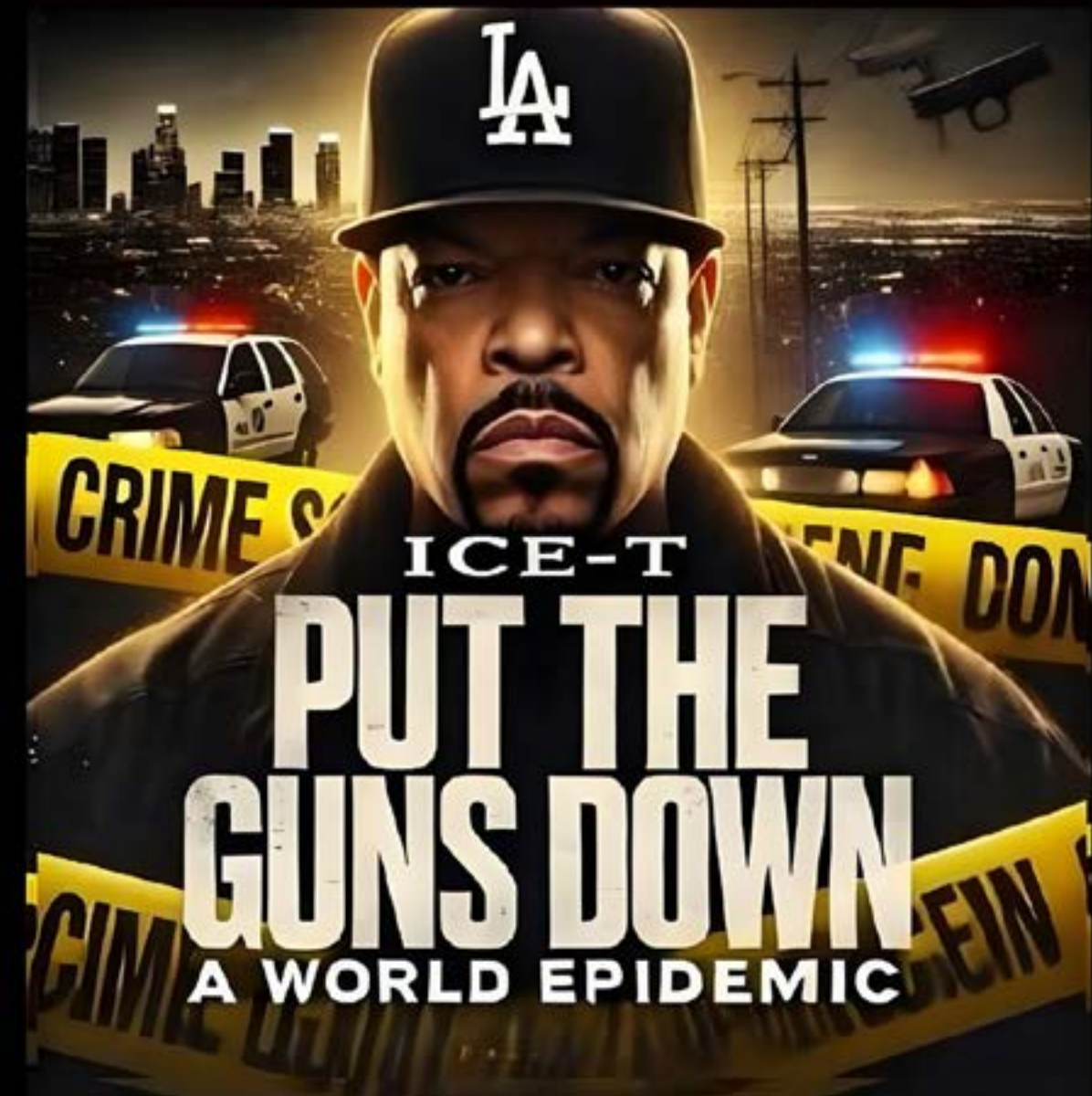
What: *Put the Guns Down: A World Epidemic* Documentary Screening and Panel Discussion
When: Wednesday, February 26th, 2025 | 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Where: Victor Valley College Performing Arts Center, 18422 Bear Valley Road, Victorville, CA 92395
Cost: Free and open to the public

Disclaimer: Mature Content Warning

The upcoming screening of *Put the Guns Down: A World Epidemic* and the subsequent panel discussion may contain content that some viewers may find distressing. This includes discussions of gun violence, real-life testimonies, and sensitive subject matter related to trauma, loss, and the impact of gun violence on individuals and communities. **Viewer discretion is advised.**

The film and panel discussion aim to raise awareness, foster critical dialogue, and inspire action around the issue of gun violence. Those interested in attending the event are encouraged to approach the material with respect and understanding of its emotional and psychological impact.

DOCUMENTARY & PANEL DISCUSSION
Hosted By DVL Project & VVC UMOJA Program



Created, Written and Directed By
Terry C. Carney Sr.



umojaja
community



PCGW
PLATINUM CITY
FILMS

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 3pm

Victor Valley College Performing Arts Theater
18422 Bear Valley Road, Victorville 92395

ADMISSION IS FREE- **EVERYONE WELCOME TO THE MOVEMENT**

Pinkerton Honored during VVC February Board Meeting at Event Center

Victor Valley College (VVC) proudly honored former Board of Trustees member Sharon Pinkerton during the February 11, 2025, board meeting at the Educational Event Center on lower campus. This special recognition celebrated her unwavering commitment to the college, its students, and the broader high desert community.

Sharon Pinkerton served on the VVC Board of Trustees from December 2020 to July 2024, leaving an inspiring legacy of leadership and advocacy. Her tenure was defined by a steadfast dedication to student success and inclusivity, as she tirelessly supported cultural events, student productions, and academic milestones. Whether attending concerts, student-led initiatives, or public safety graduations, Pinkerton's presence was a source of encouragement and inspiration to all.

A champion for a vibrant and inclusive campus, Pinkerton played an instrumental role in fostering an environment that celebrated the diverse student body at VVC. She participated in traditions such as the annual September 11 flag placement and summer ASB Leadership Retreats, further demonstrating her deep connection to the college and its mission.

After retiring from the board to spend more time with her children and seven grandchildren in Washington, D.C., and Texas, Pinkerton leaves behind a profound impact on VVC. Her advocacy and passion for student achievement will be remembered as a cornerstone of her service to the institution.

Officials from multiple entities joined VVC in presenting Pinkerton with a Certificate of



FMR. VVC BOARD OF TRUSTEE SHARON PINKERTON (LEFT) RECEIVES A DEDICATION PLAQUE FROM VVC ASB EXECUTIVE SENATOR STEVEN GUEVARA ON BEHALF OF THE COLLEGE DURING A FEBRUARY 11, 2025 BOARD MEETING AT VVC'S EDUCATIONAL EVENT CENTER.

Appreciation, acknowledging her extraordinary contributions. In attendance were Victorville Mayor Elizabeth Becerra; Corrine Mora representing Congressman Jay Obernolte, 23rd District; Thomas Moreno representing California Senator Suzette Martinez Valladares, 23rd District; Jaelen Spencer representing California Assemblyman Juan Carrillo, 39th District; VVC ASB representatives presented

a certificate from California Assemblyman Tom Lackey, 34th District, 1st District Supervisor Colonel (Ret.) Paul Cook, 3rd District Supervisor Dawn Rowe; Town of Apple Valley, City of Adelanto, and City of Hesperia.

While presenting a certificate from the City of Victorville, Mayor Liz Becerra touched on some of Pinkerton's traits while she served on the board stating her "leadership [and] unwavering support have created a vibrant and exclusive culture celebrating [and] uplifting the diverse student body and broader High Desert community."

Additional honors included a Victor Valley College Certificate, a VVC Plaque presented by VVC ASB Executive Senator Steven Guevara, and the Robert Sewell Memory Book, further cementing Pinkerton's lasting influence on the college and community.

Victor Valley College extends its deepest gratitude to Sharon Pinkerton for her years of service, dedication, and advocacy. Her legacy will serve as an enduring reminder of the power of leadership, compassion, and unwavering support for students.



FMR. VVC BOARD OF TRUSTEE SHARON PINKERTON (LEFT) RECEIVES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FROM VICTORVILLE CITY MAYOR LIZ BECERRA (RIGHT) DURING A FEBRUARY 11, 2025 BOARD MEETING AT VVC'S EDUCATIONAL EVENT CENTER.

**THIRD ANNUAL
THE BLACK EXPO**

HOSTED BY THE BLACK STUDENT UNION

- Black Owned Vendors
- Black History • Free Food
- Games • Performances

Wednesday, February 26 2025
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Victor Valley College Event Center:
18422 Bear Valley Rd, Victorville, CA 92395

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Questions? Contact:
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Victor Valley College Writing Center

Need help with an assignment? Want to strengthen a skill? Hope to gain confidence in your writing?

The VVC Writing Center is here to help. We guide and empower students, in any discipline, through the writing process via free in-person and online peer tutoring, Directed Learning Activities (DLAs), and interactive workshops. In addition to our tutoring services, we also offer a variety of reference materials and an open lab with computers and tables where students can work.

We look forward to seeing you!

Scan for access
to the Writing
Center's website:



Contact:
Phone: 760.245.4271 ext. 2607
E-mail: writingcentervvc@gmail.com

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH STUDENT ENGAGEMENT CENTER

FEBRUARY STEM EVENTS

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED!
BLDG 21
ROOM 177

12 FEB 2:30 PM **CAREER SPEAKER: CSUSB'S DR. KIMBERLY COUSINS**

19 FEB 11:00 AM **USC SUMMER INTERNSHIP WEBINAR- EARTHQUAKE SCIENCE**
+LIVE Q&A

19 FEB 1:00 PM **COLLEGE 101: HOW TO STUDY AND TAKE NOTES**

20 FEB 1:00 PM **MESA 101: PROGRAM INFO, REQUIREMENTS, BENEFITS**

25 FEB 11:00 AM **UCR: BOURNS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING WEBINAR**
+LIVE Q&A

25 FEB 1:00 PM **HOW TO AIM FOR BETTER GRADES BY COUNSELOR FRANKIE CHAVOYA**

26 FEB 11:00 AM **LINKED IN WORKSHOP BY COUNSELOR MARITZA ALANIS**

27 FEB 1:30 PM **SCHOLARSHIP DRIVE Q&A WITH PENNY DAVIS FROM THE VVC FOUNDATION!**

MESA = EVENT ATTENDANCE CAN COUNT TOWARDS YOUR MESA INVOLVEMENT, BUT OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS!

STEMSTUDENTENGAGEMENT@VVC.EDU (760) 245-4271 EXT. 2524

Tutoring & Academic Support Center

BY SUBJECT

SPRING 2025

All VVC Students Welcome

Walk-ins & Appointment Sessions Available

HASS Subjects	BLAR Subjects	STEM Subjects
ASL Elizabeth ASL 121-124	Business Admin. Rhonda BADM 50, 51, 103 & 142	Biology Bailey BIO 100, 201, 203, 211 & 221
Mon/Wed: 12:30PM-5PM Tues/Thurs: 12:30PM-3:30PM	Mon: 10:30AM-3:30PM Tues/Thurs: 2PM-5PM Wed: 1PM-5PM	Mon: 10:30AM-4:30PM Tues/Thurs: 10:30AM-12:30PM / 4PM-6:30PM
Psychology Anna PSYC 101, 109, 110, 204, 213, 215 & 217	NetTutor Online Find on Canvas Get free help 24/7 for all subjects in STEM / HASS / BLAR	Chemistry Bailey/Jacob CHEM 100, 201, 202, 281 & 282
Mon/Wed: 10:30AM-12:45PM Tues/Thurs: 10:30AM-2:15PM Fri: 10:30AM-1:30PM		Mon: 10:30AM-6:30PM Tues/Thurs: 10:30AM-12:30PM / 4PM-6:30PM Wed: 2:30PM-6:30PM Fri: 2:30PM-4:30PM
Political Sci. / History Jaron ALL SECTIONS		Computer Info. Systems Anna/Elizabeth CIS 101, 137 & 205
Tues/Thurs: 10:30AM-1PM / 5PM-6:30PM Fri: 10:30AM-6PM		Mon/Wed: 10:30AM-5PM Tues/Thurs: 10:30AM-3:30PM Fri: 10:30AM-1:30PM

Peer Tutoring Centers

Tutoring Centers are innovative spaces that support learning with peer tutors that increase course completion rates leading to certificates, associate degrees, and transfer options to reach career goals.



Location

Bldg 21 Mall Area
(by the stairs/elevator)



Scan QR code to book in-person or Zoom tutoring

Victor Valley College

Technology Center Mall

Computer Labs

Services Provided

- Students can access **computers**, the **internet**, **word processing programs**, navigate the **VVC website**, and check out **webcams and microphones** for appropriate classes to complete academic assignments.
- Instructional Lab Assistants can help students with proper use of technology and software in computer labs.
- Staff can answer questions and guide students to appropriate departments and programs.
- Instruction Team provides a quiet and safe environment for all VVC students.

Contact Info

Need assistance?
Come see us or contact us:

Susana Jimenez **ext. 2793**
Xochitl Morales **ext. 2397**

Location & Hours

Located in **Building 21**

Spring/Fall/Winter Hours

M-Th: 7:45am-9pm
Fridays: 7:45am-4pm

VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE COMMUNICATION CENTER

2025

WORKSHOPS | TUTORING | STUDY SPACES

- Speech presentation practice/critique
- Assistance with speech development & composition
- Appointments are encouraged to minimize wait time and ensure services needed are available
- Workshops are available daily at 10:45 AM and 1:45 PM on a variety of topics.

SPANISH TUTORING AVAILABLE

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 @VVCCOMMCENTER | (760) 245-4271 x2820

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Spring & Fall Hours

ATC: Room 145 & 146
 Mon- Thurs: 8:30am - 7:00pm
 Friday: 8:30 am -4:00pm

Summer

Mon.-Thurs:
 7:30am - 5:00pm

Winter

Mon.-Thurs:
 8:30am - 5:00pm
 Fri. 8:30am - 4:00pm

One on one appointments:

Students can make an appointment to meet one- on-one with any tutor



To access NetTutor online tutoring services:

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Click on "ACAD 101"

Click on "NetTutor"

Click on "Math or Statistics".

Click on "Drop in and Meet with a Live Tutor".

Please call the MSC (760) 245-4271 Ext. 2788 for more information.



MATH, ENGINEERING, SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT

MESA PROGRAM



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- SENSE OF COMMUNITY WITH LIKE-MINDED STUDENTS
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MESA IS WIDELY
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UNIVERSITIES!

PARTICIPATION IN MESA
LOOKS GOOD ON A RESUME

NETWORK AND GAIN EXPERIENCE!



APPLY HERE!

ELIGIBILITY: YOU MUST BE A

- CALCULUS-BASED STEM MAJOR

MATH & SCIENCE, PHYSICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, OR BIOLOGY

- FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT
- ELIGIBLE FOR FINANCIAL AID
- INTEND TO TRANSFER TO A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY



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