

APR 2025

RAMS

MONTHLY



SOLE PURPOSE: VVC Tours Skechers Hub, Steps Into Future of Logistics

Bridging the Gap Between Campus and Career



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Celebrating Black Student Success Week at VVC

Lift Up, Level Up: The Rise of Black Serving Institutions



By: Hakeem Croom

Victor Valley College is proud to join community colleges across California in celebrating Black Student Success Week (BSSW) from Monday, April 21 to Friday, April 25. This powerful week of programming is centered around elevating and empowering the voices, needs, and achievements of underserved students — including, but not limited to, Black and African American students.

What is Black Student Success Week?

Launched in 2020 by a passionate coalition within the California Community Colleges system, Black Student Success Week has become an annual call to action — highlighting how we, as institutions, can better serve students of color through equity-driven practices, intentional support systems, and meaningful conversations.

Now in its sixth year, BSSW 2025 embraces the theme:

“Lift Up, Level Up: The Rise of Black Serving Institutions.”

This year’s theme invites us to reflect on how colleges like VVC are transforming into spaces where Black student success is not just encouraged

— it’s expected.

What’s Happening at VVC?

We’ve got a jam-packed lineup of engaging events designed to celebrate culture, uplift community, and spark important dialogue:

Monday Kick-Off:

Join us for the BSU Black Expo in the VVC Event Center to launch the week with music, vendors, inspiration, and celebration!

#TheBlackHour Webinars:

Streaming Monday–Thursday from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM at various Student Engagement Centers:

Monday – HASS

Tuesday – PSIT

Wednesday – BLAR

Thursday – STEM

These powerful, daily webinars will explore real-world strategies for improving student success among underserved communities — and they’re

open to faculty, staff, administrators, and students alike. All attendees will receive BSSW/Umoja swag!

Talent Showcase – Discover the creative talents of our students in an inspiring night of performances!

High School Summit – Welcoming future Rams as we engage local high school students with the power of higher education and community.

Student vs. Faculty & Staff Basketball Game – In partnership with VVC Athletics, this game is sure to bring the energy, laughs, and campus unity!

Umoja-Uzima Village Grand Opening – Celebrate the unveiling of a new space designed to uplift and empower students through belonging and connection.

Black Royalty Met Gala – Close out the week in style with this elegant, cultural celebration of excellence and identity.

STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

April marks National Stress Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about stress, its impact, and how we can manage it—especially for college students, who are among the most affected.

According to the American College Health Association, more than 80% of college students report feeling overwhelmed by their responsibilities, and about 60% say stress has negatively affected their academic performance. Whether it's balancing school, work, relationships, or family commitments—stress is real, and it matters.

At Victor Valley College, we recognize how stress can affect your focus, energy, and overall well-being. That's why this month, we're encouraging every RAM to take a moment to check in with yourself and others. Here are a few ways you can get involved and manage your stress this April:

Visit the VVC Wellness Center – Free resources, counseling, and support groups.

Prioritize time management – Use a planner or calendar to break large tasks into smaller ones.

Get moving – Even a 10-minute walk between classes can ease tension and clear your head.

Connect with others – Talking it out helps. Visit a Student Engagement Center or join a club.

Rest matters – Lack of sleep increases stress. Try for 7–8 hours a night.

Stress might be part of college life—but it doesn't have to control it. You're not alone, RAMFam. Let's face stress together, one mindful moment at a time.



Sole Purpose: VVC Tours Skechers Hub, Steps Into Future of Logistics



Real estate developer Iddo Benzeevi leads Victor Valley College representatives on a tour of the state-of-the-art Skechers North American Logistics Center in Moreno Valley, offering insights into the future of automation, sustainability, and job growth in the Inland Empire.

[REVISED 4.25.2025]

By: Andrew Caravella

In a powerful step toward deepening ties between education and industry, representatives from Victor Valley College (VVC) recently toured the Skechers North American Logistics Center in Moreno Valley, one of the most advanced and sustainable distribution facilities in the country. The visit was hosted by real estate developer Iddo Benzeevi, who is also leading the development of the World Logistics Center—a 40.6 million-square-foot mega project that will reshape the Inland Empire's economic landscape.

Located in Moreno Valley, the existing 1.8 million-square-foot Skechers facility is a high-tech logistics hub featuring fully automated systems, a rooftop solar energy array, and LEED Gold certification for environmental efficiency. It represents the gold standard in large-scale warehousing and global supply chain logistics.

"Our goal was to learn about the future of advanced logistics and how we, as a community college, can support workforce training efforts," said Dr. Mackenzie Tarango, VVC's Associate Vice President of Instruction. "We left with far more than we anticipated. It was both inspiring and reaffirming to hear your emphasis on foundational skills such as English language, literature, and philosophy, and their essential connection to critical thinking and the articulation of ideas."

The visit came at a critical moment for the region. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and local economic development reports, the Inland Empire is now one of the fastest-growing logistics hubs in the nation, fueled by its proximity to major ports, highway corridors, and affordable industrial space. Between 2011 and 2023, employment in the transportation and warehousing sector grew by over 100%, with more than 230,000 jobs now

directly tied to logistics, distribution, and supply chain management.

Projects like the World Logistics Center are expected to continue that trend. Once completed, the new campus is projected to bring over 33,000 new jobs to the region—many requiring skills in warehouse automation, data systems, logistics coordination, and more.

Economic Opportunities—and Challenges—for the Region

For Inland Empire residents, the logistics boom represents both opportunity and complexity. Entry-level logistics coordinators in the region can expect median salaries starting around \$50,000 annually, while more technical roles in automation and data systems may offer even higher earning potential. Yet, the surge in employment is expected to place additional demands on the region's housing market, infrastructure, and transportation corridors like the I-10, I-215, and SR-60 freeways—raising concerns about congestion and rising living costs.

City officials and economic developers are working to ensure that growth is balanced by new investments in affordable housing, public transit, and environmental protections. The Inland Empire's future as a logistics powerhouse depends not only on business success but on maintaining a high quality of life for local communities.

Environmental Commitments and Community Dialogue

While the Skechers facility's LEED Gold certification signals a commitment to environmental responsibility, the broader logistics expansion has sparked ongoing conversations about air quality, traffic impacts, and green space preservation. Advocates are urging developers to incorporate

stronger sustainability measures, including electric vehicle (EV) fleets, zero-emissions warehouses, and expanded tree canopies to offset environmental strain.

Education as the Gateway to Future Careers

For Victor Valley College, this growth presents a unique opportunity—and a responsibility—to ensure students have direct pathways into these high-demand industries. Plans are already underway at VVC to expand certificate programs in warehouse automation, supply chain management, and logistics technology to meet future workforce needs. The college is also exploring fast-track workforce readiness programs to help adult learners and first-generation college students tap into these new career avenues.

With more than 30% of logistics sector jobs projected to require postsecondary training but not necessarily a four-year degree, community colleges like VVC are poised to play a crucial role in driving economic mobility for local residents.

A National Stage for Regional Growth

Today, the Inland Empire ranks alongside Dallas-Fort Worth and Atlanta as one of the top logistics hubs in America, handling a substantial share of the nation's imports and exports. As the global economy evolves and e-commerce demand accelerates, the Inland Empire's ability to produce a skilled, adaptable workforce will be key to sustaining its growth.

As logistics continues to shape the region's economy, Victor Valley College is committed to being part of the movement—training the next generation of professionals who will power the Inland Empire's future.

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VVC-MUN Crunches the Competition in the Big Apple

Global challenges, local champions—VVC-MUN leads with heart, strategy, and grit in NYC.



By: Tim Adell

On April 10, the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations erupted with applause as the Victor Valley College Model United Nations team received the Outstanding Delegation Award at the National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN). The Outstanding Delegation Award designates the top ten delegations at one of the most prestigious conferences in the world. This year, NMUN brought to New York more than 3,000 students from 174 graduate institutions, universities, and community colleges from across the United States, South and Central America, and Europe. VVC finished in the top ten of all that.

Even more impressively, less than half the VVC team had competed in multi-day conferences before—and NMUN is the mother of all conferences. It runs for four grueling days, including “Melt-down Tuesday,” the day when the work gets done, the papers get written, and the awards are won.

Representing Poland, VVC students pushed through this grind. Mariah Washington and Ashly Smith won the delegate award from their peers in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Chelsea Villegas and Avery Porter impressed in General Assembly (GA) 1; William Tate and Abigail

Acosta ran their blocs in GA 2; and Tess Bonacio did the work of two delegates in GA 3. Melanie Alvarado, also a lone delegate, worked tirelessly in a committee of more than 300 delegates in the UN Environment Assembly. Kimberly and Angelica Acosta spoke powerfully and impressed their blocs in the UN High Commission for Refugees. Maria Abbott and Roque Real made Poland a force to reckon with in the UN Economic Commission for Europe. Leo Maldonado was at the center of every debate in the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons committee. And Grace Hickey and Josh Martinez navigated several unpeaceable power grabs to succeed in the Peacebuilding Commission.

VVC-MUN advisor Kevork Kazanjian exulted, “This was such an amazing win for VVC. What a great way to make a comeback—to go to New York and win VVC-MUN’s tenth Outstanding Delegation Award. To be recognized in the Grand Hall of the United Nations General Assembly Hall—that was just the greatest feeling in the world!”

The team had achieved some success earlier this school year, winning nine individual awards in three one-day conferences. Angelica Acosta won at her first conference ever, in the fall semester at RCC. Mariah Washington won at the Spring RCC Conference and the UC Riverside Conference.

Team leaders Leo Maldonado and Grace Hickey led the team through the preparations for New York, which entailed learning Poland’s positions on every major—and many minor—issues. They had to become Poland to succeed.

There were other obstacles to overcome. VVC-MUN had not participated in the National Model United Nations Conference since 2017, mostly because it is an expensive conference. Thanks to the support of the VVC Foundation, the Administration, ASB, and the campus community at large, the funding commitments were met. The team returned from New York, exhausted and triumphant.

Now, they can concentrate on midterms at VVC.



Cory Rose Wins OEC Player of the Year, Two Rams Make Regionals



By: Artie Allen

La Quinta, CA – April 16th, 2025 – The Victor Valley College (VVC) men's golf team has wrapped up a historic regular season at the Orange Empire Conference (OEC) finals, marking a significant milestone in the program's history. Under the expert guidance of Coach Derrick Williams, the Rams have shattered numerous records and set new benchmarks for excellence.

Cory Rose: A Season to Remember

Leading the charge for the Rams is Cory Rose, a standout golfer from Apple Valley High School. Cory's exceptional performance throughout the season has earned him the prestigious title of OEC Player of the Year. With an impressive average score of 70.3, Cory has consistently demonstrated his prowess on the golf course, securing five first-place finishes this season. His dedication and skill have not only brought him individual accolades but have also significantly contributed to the team's overall success.

Tyler Thomas: Rising Star

Joining Cory in advancing to the 3C2A State Regionals is Tyler Thomas, another talented golfer from the Rams' roster. Tyler's consistent performance and determination have earned him a spot alongside Cory, showcasing the depth of talent within the VVC men's golf team. Together, they will represent Victor Valley College at the regional playoffs, aiming to continue their winning streak and bring home more victories.

Coach Derrick Williams: Architect of Success

The remarkable turnaround of the Rams' golf team can be attributed to the strategic leadership of Coach Derrick Williams. Since taking the helm, Coach Williams has instilled a culture of excellence and resilience, guiding the team to break several records. Notably, the Rams have achieved the lowest score in a round for a VVC team ever, a record that has been broken multiple times this season. This achievement underscores the team's consistent improvement and dedication to pushing the boundaries of their performance.

Looking Ahead

As the Rams prepare for the 3C2A State Regionals, the entire Victor Valley College community stands behind them, celebrating their achievements and cheering them on for future successes. Cory Rose and Tyler Thomas have set a high standard, and their journey to the regionals promises to be an exciting chapter in the Rams' storied history.

Victor Valley College men's golf team has truly made its mark this season, and with the momentum they've built, the future looks bright for these talented athletes.

Athletics at Community Colleges: Opportunity, Access, and a Stepping Stone to Success

Athletics at two-year colleges—also known as community colleges—offer a more accessible and personalized experience compared to the high-profile, high-pressure environments of four-year universities. While fewer than 2% of high school athletes go on to compete at NCAA Division I schools, community colleges serve as a vital and inclusive platform, giving many more students the chance to extend their athletic careers beyond high school.

Community college athletic programs are typically smaller in scale but rich in opportunity. They often focus on regional and state-level competition, allowing student-athletes to sharpen their skills in a less intimidating, more developmentally supportive environment. These programs emphasize personal growth, teamwork, and academic achievement, helping students balance their passion for sports with their educational goals.

Many athletes use community college programs as a springboard—either to transfer to a four-year university, where they may continue playing at a higher level, or to gain exposure to scouts and recruiters they might not have otherwise encountered in high school. Coaches at the community college level often take a hands-on approach, mentoring students through both athletic and academic challenges and providing guidance on transfer opportunities and career planning.

Additionally, because of the lower tuition and often reduced cost of living, community colleges are a more affordable option, allowing student-athletes to pursue their dreams without the burden of overwhelming debt. The community-based nature of these programs also fosters tight-knit teams and strong support systems, creating an environment where students can thrive both on and off the field.

For many, athletics at a community college is not just a continuation of their sports journey—it's a launchpad to future success.





Rams on the Hill: VVC Students Push for Change

From campus to Congress — student leadership in action

By: **Andrew Caravella**

WASHINGTON D.C. - Victor Valley College's Associated Student Body (ASB) traveled to Washington, D.C., from March 15–18 to participate in the American Student Association of Community Colleges (ASACC) National Student Advocacy Conference.

Held at the Washington Plaza Hotel, the annual event is the nation's largest gathering of community college student leaders. More than 350 students from across the country attended this year's conference, which focused on federal policies affecting community college access, affordability and student success.

ASACC is the only national organization dedicated exclusively to community college student leadership. Through its conferences and programs, the nonprofit helps student government representatives develop skills in leadership, citizenship and advocacy. Participants also gain direct insight into federal policy issues such as Pell Grant funding, FAFSA simplification, student loan programs and reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

VVC's student leaders took part in two days of

workshops and presentations led by top education experts, followed by two days of scheduled meetings with members of Congress and their staff. During these visits, students shared their stories and advocated for the needs of their communities — including access to financial aid, educational equity and support for nontraditional learners.

Participation in national advocacy efforts like ASACC reinforces the importance of student leadership at the community college level. With nearly 40% of all U.S. undergraduates enrolled at a community college, according to the American Association of Community Colleges, these institutions play a critical role in higher education. Yet, the voices of their students are often underrepresented in policy discussions.

"Student leaders from community colleges bring an essential perspective to national conversations about higher education," said Dr. Daniel Walden, superintendent/president of Victor Valley College. "They know the challenges firsthand and are uniquely positioned to advocate for meaningful change."

Beyond policy engagement, experiences like ASACC also provide community college students with leadership development that

translates directly into success in the classroom, workplace and beyond. National studies show that students involved in leadership roles report higher GPAs, stronger communication skills and increased confidence in navigating academic and professional environments.

ASACC offers additional opportunities for students interested in continuing their development, including national board positions and certification through the organization's LEAPS program. It also provides year-round updates and resources to support student government advisors and college administrators.

Victor Valley College is proud to support ASB's involvement in ASACC and remains committed to fostering student leadership, civic engagement and advocacy — not only on campus, but on a national level.

BLACK STUDENT SUCCESS WEEK

STUDENT, FACULTY, AND STAFF

BASKETBALL

GAME

**UMOJA-UZIMA
SCHOLARS A**



**UMOJA-UZIMA
SCHOLARS B**

VVC ATHLETES



**FACULTY &
STAFF**

**APRIL 25, 2025
11:00 AM-1:00 PM
GYMNASIUM**

umojaja
community



Plant Sale!!

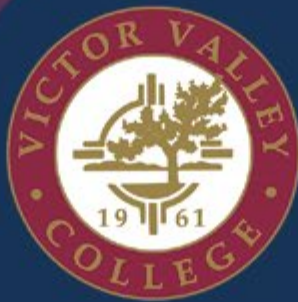
**Friday April 25 &
Saturday April 26, 2025**



9AM – 2 PM

VVC Lower Campus – Lot W

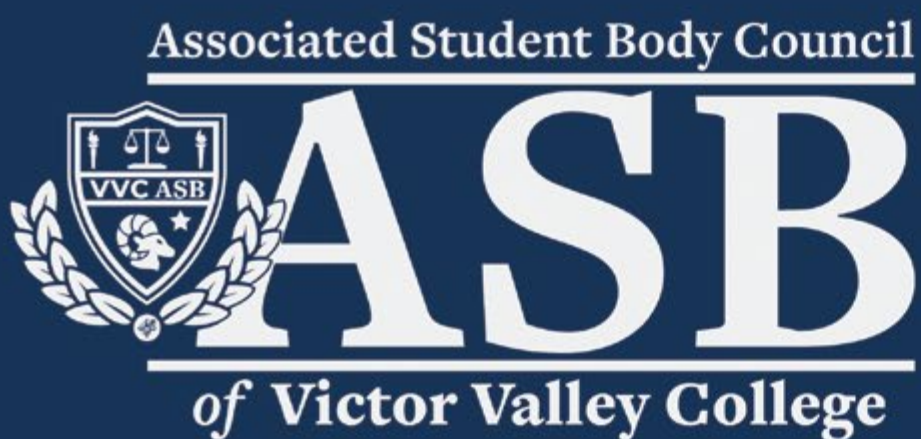
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