

Beyond the Press Release

Developing Digital Stories
for Community Colleges





Hello!

My name is Ernesto.



erivera2@swccd.edu



[@ernestorivera](https://twitter.com/ernestorivera)

The background is a solid dark red color. It features several semi-transparent, lighter red geometric shapes, primarily rectangles and parallelograms, which are tilted at various angles. These shapes are layered to create a sense of depth and movement. A sharp white diagonal line runs from the bottom left corner towards the middle right of the frame.

Who are you?

We are storytellers

Tasked with our college's stories

Classic press release strategy



Press release



Distribution list



Media platform (TV stations, newspapers, news websites)

Classic press release strategy

Why this doesn't always work...



- Your story can die in inboxes
- Your true message doesn't always get across
- You're letting other companies control your college's story
- Your online presence is built only by outside websites

Decline of traditional media

Newspapers

↓ 11%

Daily circulation

Local TV

↓ 15%

Morning news
audience

↓ 7%

Evening news
audience

2017 vs. 2016

Source: Pew Research Center

“Education reporters”

Latest stories by our local daily education reporter . . .

- “San Diego will be warm Monday, but then will quickly cool off”
- “UCSD will try to teach computers to recognize sarcasm”
- “Chelsea Clinton to speak at Women in Leadership forum at UCSD”
- “SDSU temporarily closes classroom building that’s been emitting noxious odor”

Last community college story . . .

- “Voters choose trustees, governors to run San Diego County’s community college boards”
[Published Nov. 7, 2018](#)

Rise of online audience

93%

Nine-in-ten adults
consume media online

In the U.S., 2018
Source: Pew Research Center

Do our stories still matter?

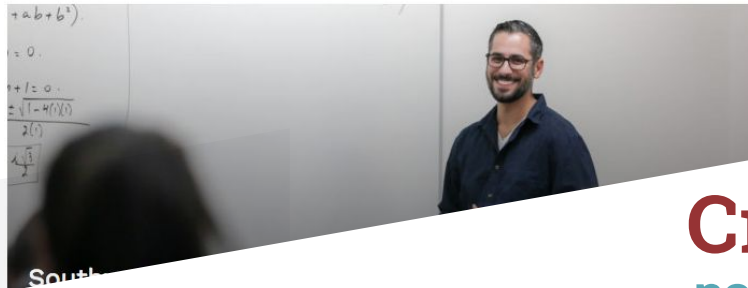
How do we evolve as storytellers?





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2,502 Followers

FOLLOW



4,524

Create a news center!
news.swccd.edu

Developing a media center

Yes, you have to work with your IT department.



Build a microsite

- A single or collection of web pages that exist outside the main website
- Their own domains (news.swccd.edu)
- Sometimes referred to as a “subdomain”
- Incredibly popular in marketing often created for specific campaigns
- **You don't have to do it this way.**

Build a microsite



Build a microsite

Conversation with your IT department

- Purchase hosting
- Install a content management system (Wordpress)
- Find a theme, customize to your brand
- Work with your IT department to connect your new hosting to your subdomain
- Budget time for content management training

Before . . .

RSS



Phi Theta Kappa Car Show is Fun for the Whole Family

The Sixth Annual Phi Theta Kappa Car Show rolls into Southwestern College this March and will bring free family fun while raising money for the college's Phi Theta Kappa

chapter.

Community College AlumniFest: A ticket to celebrate

If you're one of the vast numbers of community college alum in San Diego and Imperial counties, mark your calendar for an event tailor-made for you: the first-ever Community College AlumniFest set for Friday, March 11, featuring Gulls hockey and a pre-game bash for just \$10.



Hundreds of Dirt Trucks to Descend Upon Southwestern College

Contractors will haul 12,000 cubic yards of fill dirt onto the vacant corner lot of Southwestern College over the next two weeks as work quickly progresses on the

new Wellness and Aquatic Complex.

Southwestern College Forging Ahead with New Initiatives, New Programs and New Classroom Buildings

Southwestern College, South County's largest public higher education system, continues to break new ground in expanding opportunities for student success with construction of three major classroom buildings getting under way this spring and the hiring of several new leaders to forge ahead with new initiatives.



[VIEW ALL NEWS](#) ►

Our stories today

Press releases, feature stories, blogs, multimedia



Southwestern College Gives Donovan Inmates an Early Start on Second Chances

By Ernesto Rivera · October 11, 2018



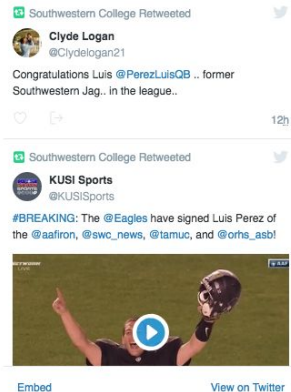
The Second Chance Pell cohort inside their classroom at Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility with (center, left to right) Donovan education coordinator Jason Hicks, English Professor John Rieder and Restorative Justice Director Patrice Milkovich.

On a cloudy Wednesday afternoon last spring, 20 Southwestern College students were waiting in line to enter their classroom. These students held copies of "A Place to Stand" and "A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America" along with plastic folders with the Southwestern College logo.


These students didn't come from Chula Vista, San Ysidro or even Tijuana to wait in line to enter their classrooms. They came from their cells in the A-Yard of the

SWC on Twitter

Tweets by @swc_news



SWC on Instagram

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Established in 1961, Southwestern College is the only institution of higher education in south San Diego County. Tag your shots with #SWCpov.



Feature story

Paramedic Program Celebrates 30 Years of Training First-Responders

By **Ernesto Rivera** · December 13, 2018



Paramedic student Michelle Bostrom works with other students and her professor on cardiac patient assessment.

It's a busy day for students of the Southwestern College Paramedic Program at the Higher Education Center at Otay Mesa. They're on a strict schedule, and four Southwestern College paramedic professors and staff members are leading them through real-world scenarios and workshops they'll encounter on the field as paramedics.

In one classroom, designed to simulate a common living room, students are learning cardiac patient assessment. In another area of the classroom, students are leading readings of electrocardiography recognition, which is a way to record the heart. In yet another classroom, students are learning about the various machines they'll find inside an ambulance.

SWC on Twitter

Tweets by [@swc_news](#)

Southwestern College Retweeted



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[@ClydeLogan21](#)

Congratulations Luis [@PerezLuisQB](#) .. former Southwestern Jag.. in the league..



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KUSI Sports
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#BREAKING: The [@Eagles](#) have signed Luis Perez of the [@aafiron](#), [@swc_news](#), [@tamuc](#), and [@orfs_astl](#)!



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Feature story

Student Workers, Volunteers Integral to Food Pantry's Success

By **Ernesto Rivera** • April 26, 2018



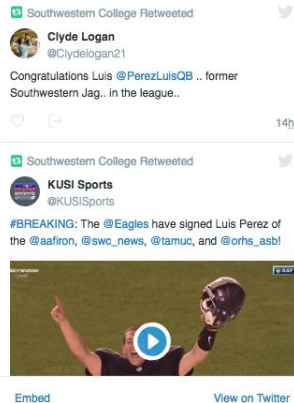
Jag Kitchen coordinator Jenny Sabas (center) with Jag Kitchen student workers and volunteers (left to right) Andrea Muñoz, Joanna Fontenot, Sakurako Altson and Elaine Banks.

In March, more than 620 individual students walked into the [Jag Kitchen Food Pantry](#) to get something to eat. That same month the pantry served more than 2,180 meals, with some students attending the pantry every single day.


Waiting for them when they enter Room 554 on the Chula Vista campus, was a group of dedicated students who are committed and dedicated to doing anything they can to make sure their fellow Jaguars don't go hungry.

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Feature story

Chula Vista Veteran of the Year is Proud Southwestern College Graduate

By Ernesto Rivera · December 6, 2018



Southwestern College alumnus Chris Lawrence has been recognized as Chula Vista's Veteran of the Year. Lawrence is a Purple Heart recipient, a police officer with the Chula Vista Police Department and a graduate of Southwestern College's Police Academy.

In 2007, Chris Lawrence had been in about his fifth month of deployment in the Al Anbar province of Iraq when an enemy improvised explosive device went off and destroyed the bridge he and his squad of about 14 soldiers were walking over.

"I was at the center of the bridge and the bomb basically went off right underneath my feet," Lawrence said. "The next thing I remember is waking up at the Navy hospital in Washington, D.C."

Lawrence's both legs and his left arm had been shattered

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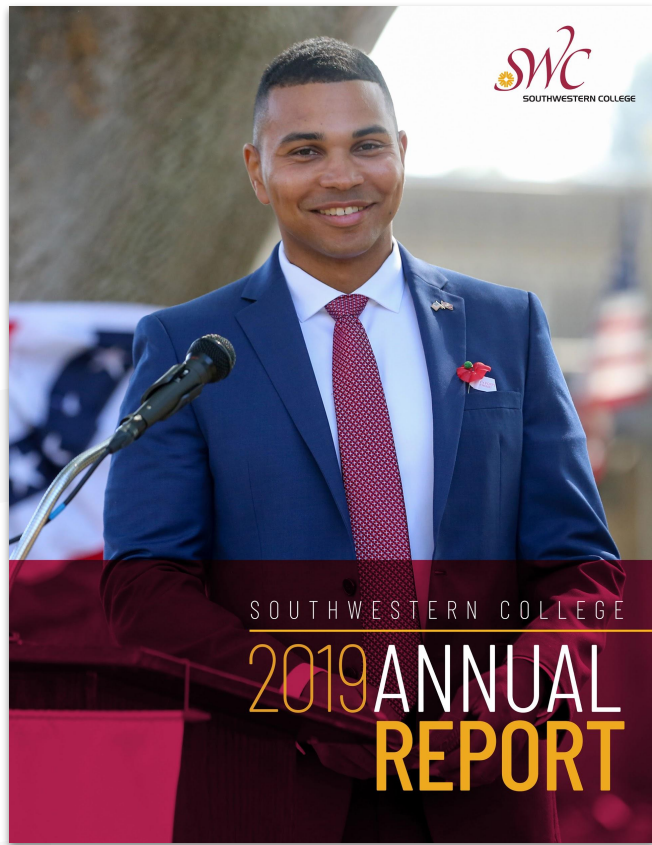


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Feature story



Draft annual report cover

5 Tips for Making Online Courses a Success

By **Rachel Perez** · January 17, 2019



Rachel Perez working on her online class at Grind House, a coffeshop on Third Avenue in Chula Vista.

With Southwestern College gearing up to spring into the new semester, you might be scrambling to find an extra class or two to add to your already packed schedule. Instead of rearranging your entire schedule to fit in another class, you might want to consider adding an online course instead.

I've heard a number of students say they avoid online courses like the plague. Having a hard time staying organized, procrastinating and difficulty staying on track without in-class instruction from the professor are all common struggles for many students. However, I am a huge fan of online courses. They allow you to learn at your own pace, set your own schedule and work from pretty much anywhere.

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Blog

Coming Soon: New Performing Arts Center

By **Rachel Perez** · September 20, 2018



A rendering of the new Performing Arts Center.

Students who love performing arts will soon have a new home at Southwestern College. Southwestern College's student-run Mariachi Garibaldi will have a new stage to perform their world-renowned music. The Dance Department will have brand new performance spaces. Student set designers will have a new space to build and design their sets.

The new Performance Arts Center, [which broke ground on Sept. 10](#), is set to be completed in the summer of 2020.

"The arts are not just about drawing, acting, dancing, or playing instruments. They are a critical component for brain development and..."

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Blog

International Student Spotlight: Mariana Silva-Gómez

By Rachel Perez · December 12, 2018



If you've attended campus events throughout the past year, such as the Mother's Day Celebration, Professors and Pizza or the Jag Kitchen pop-ups, you've probably seen Mariana Silva-Gómez helping lead them. As the Associated Student Organization Vice President of Outreach, Silva-Gómez has helped make Southwestern College a more exciting and interactive community by helping to bring events and engagement to Southwestern College students.

Silva-Gómez is one of Southwestern College's many international students who've come from across the world to study here. Southwestern College prides itself on the diversity of its students, faculty and staff and brings international students to campus to help

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Blog

Twitter Thread Sparks Intense Support, Admiration for Community Colleges

By **Ernesto Rivera** · March 19, 2019



Amid a myriad of bleak higher education news like increases in tuition and the recent college admissions scandals, freelance journalist [Yashar Ali delivered a welcome reprieve on Twitter](#) that celebrated community colleges across the country. After he called community colleges “the backbone of our secondary education system,” he tweeted: “Did you go to a community college? Quote tweet this and say which community college you attended and what you’re doing today.”

The thread quickly gained traction with thousands and thousands of responses. Many praised community colleges across the nation including the confidence it instilled in them as students, the direction it gave their academic careers, the open and affordable access community colleges give and the career trajectories it started for them.

Southwestern College was no stranger to the love being shared. We saw an outpouring of support from our alumni who have gone on to create incredible journeys for themselves. We collected a few of our favorites.



David-James Gonzales

@djgonzoPhD



I began my collegiate studies @swc_news & @MSJCedu. I'm now Asst. Professor of History @BYU.

Yashar Ali

@yashar

Did you go to a community college? Quote tweet this and say which community college you attended and what you're doing today. I'll retweet as many as I can. People who attend community colleges deserve to be as proud as people who attend Harvard.
[twitter.com/yashar/status/...](https://twitter.com/yashar/status/1106888888888888888)

13 7:02 PM · Mar 18, 2019

[See David-James Gonzales's replies](#)

Blog

Your Guide to the Fall 2018 Semester

By Ernesto Rivera - August 16, 2018



It's an exciting time for Southwestern College as we're getting ready to welcome approximately 20,000 students for the [fall semester](#) on Monday, Aug. 20. We know a brand new semester comes with a whole new batch of questions, so we've put together this guide to help you start strong.

Find your classes

Now that you've finalized your schedule, you can spend the next couple of days familiarizing yourself with where exactly your classes are going to be by [browsing the brand new campus map](#). This new map includes all the new buildings on campus, current construction, the new parking lot and more.

Your Guide to the Spring 2019 Semester

By Ernesto Rivera - January 22, 2019



Southwestern College is getting ready to kick-off the new semester and welcome approximately 20,000 students to our campuses when the spring semester begins this Monday, Jan. 28. We know a brand new semester comes with a whole new batch of questions, so we've put together this guide to help you start strong.

[If you still have questions, look for the Associated Student Organization's "Ask Me" tables](#)

Blog

Philosophy Professor Peter Bolland: In Defense of Community College

By **Peter Bolland** · April 10, 2019



Peter Bolland is philosophy and humanities professor and department chair. To learn more about Bolland, visit <http://peterbolland.com>.

Say the words "community college" out loud. What gut reactions arise? Is "community college" a legitimate entry point to higher education or the punch line of a joke?

All of these college admissions scandals, where wealthy parents paid exorbitant bribes to grant their kids entrance to allegedly elite universities – there's nothing like a brand new scandal to have got me thinking about the differences between colleges and universities. At the end, does it matter what college or university you attend?

SWC on Twitter

Tweets by [@swc_news](#)

Southwestern College Retweeted



Malia
[@maliamarchel](#)

Sexual Assault Awareness Month at SWC begins with the ASO's T-shirt slogan campaign [@swc_news](#)



1h

Southwestern College Retweeted



Morgan Justice-Black
[@morgiejb](#)

How to be a Good Person at SWC: A Guide to...

[Embed](#)

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Blog

Step Inside the New \$78 Million Math and Science Building



Step inside the new Math and Science Building and explore the \$78 million facility's brand new labs, classrooms, lecture halls and more.

[Read more >](#)

Gallery

Southwestern College Celebrates Veterans Day 2018



Ernesto Rivera - November 8, 2018

Southwestern College celebrated its annual Veterans Day Ceremony Thursday, Nov. 8 with special guests and the Student Veteran Organization. Each year, we celebrate and honor our student veterans and veterans in the community. The year's guest speaker was Christopher Lawrence, Chula Vista Police Department...

[Read more >](#)

Gallery

The Southwestern College Sun Inducted Into the ACP Hall of Fame

By Southwestern College · March 6, 2019



Past and former members of The Sun, Southwestern College employees and The Sun's adviser, Dr. Max Branscomb, after The Sun was inducted into the Hall of Fame on March 2.

It was history in the making on Saturday, March 2 as The Southwestern College Sun was officially inducted into the Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) Hall of Fame. Former and current staff members of The Sun, Southwestern College employees and The Sun's adviser, Dr. Max Branscomb, accepted the award at ACP's Midwinter National College Journalism Convention in La Jolla.

A spot on the national Hall of Fame seals The Sun's status as one of the greatest student newspapers in the history of collegiate media and the only Southwestern College...

SWC on Twitter

Tweets by @swc_news

Southwestern College Retweeted



Morgan Justice-Black
@morgiejo

If you live in the South Bay of #SanDiego, & you're in need of #California - friendly plants at a bargain price, check out this sale happening this Saturday at @swc_news in @thinkchulavista! #SDGEGiving



18h

Southwestern College Retweeted



SWC Compliments
@ComplimentsSwc

"Half the room is crying over @SWCOutreach Sandy Calderon getting the employee of the quarter award at the @swc_news governing board meeting. Congratulations, Sandy!"



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News release

Wellness & Aquatic Complex Wins Prestigious Green Building Design Award

By **Southwestern College** · November 21, 2018



The Wellness & Aquatics Complex features Maya-inspired glyphs designed by Southwestern College professor Dr. Mark Van Stone.

Southwestern College has been awarded the City of Chula Vista's Green Building Design Award for the construction of the new Wellness & Aquatics Complex as part of its annual Ribbons & Shovels awards. The 12 awards highlight community projects that improve and enhance the appearance of Chula Vista and celebrate the best in art, architecture, landscape, historic preservation and environment.

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News releases

Southwestern College Superintendent/President Kindred Murillo Awarded Phi Theta Kappa's Paragon Award

By **Southwestern College** · February 7, 2019



Superintendent/President Kindred Murillo at Southwestern College's 57th birthday celebration in September.

Southwestern College Superintendent/President Dr. Kindred Murillo has been honored by the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society with the Paragon Award for New Presidents. Murillo received the distinction because of her demonstrated support of student success and by recognizing academic achievement, leadership and service among high-achieving

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News releases

Southwestern College Breaks Ground on New Chula Vista Buildings

By Southwestern College · September 11, 2018



Southwestern College employees and students came together to break ground on the new Performing Arts Center and College Police Building. The buildings are funded by Proposition Z, a \$400 million bond passed by voters in November 2016.

Southwestern College broke ground on two new campus buildings, the Performing Arts Center and the College Police Building, Wednesday, Sept. 10. The ceremony, held on the site of the future Performing Arts Center, included performances by Southwestern College's mariachi, Mariachi Garibaldi, the Dance Department and theatre students.

The new Performing Arts Center will include a 500-seat auditorium, a 151-seat black box theatre, brand new classrooms, a stage construction lab and a new home for dance classes and performances. The 48,000 square-foot facility will be situated next to the new Wellness & Aquatics Complex, on the corner of Otay Lakes Road and H Street, and is set to be completed in Summer 2020.

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News releases

Other News Center benefits





Nora Vargas Named 80th Assembly District Woman of the Year

News Releases March 7, 2019

Southwestern College Governing Board Vice President has been named the Woman of the Year for the 80th Assembly District. In a ceremony on the floor...

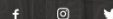


ABOUT US

Established in 1961, Southwestern College is one of 115 public community colleges in California and the only institute of higher education located in the southern portion of San Diego County. The Southwestern College News Center is managed by the Office of Communications, Community and Government Relations.

Contact us: cmr@swccd.edu

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Southwestern College Leaders Honored by Assemblywoman Shirley ...

Southwestern College News Center (press release) (blog) - Mar 22, 2019

Assemblywoman Dr. Shirley Weber honored three **Southwestern College** women ... **Southwestern College** Governing Board President Roberto ...

Southwestern College Baseball Erases Five-run Deficit To Defeat No ...

Victory Sports Network - Mar 27, 2019

WINFIELD, Kan. - The **Southwestern College** Builders Baseball was victorious against the No. 12 team in the nation, the University of Science ...

Southwestern College Plays Vital Role in Math Professor's Equation to ...

Southwestern College News Center (press release) (blog) - Mar 20, 2019

While Francis is now a passionate and popular tenured math professor at **Southwestern College**, he never would have pictured himself to be ...

Twitter Thread Sparks Intense Support, Admiration for Community ...

Southwestern College News Center (press release) (blog) - Mar 19, 2019

I went to **Southwestern College** and transferred to San Diego State. ... Took a while to get through southwestern, SDSU AND NATIONAL ...

Kansas State Soil Microbiology Professor to Speak at Southwestern ...

Newton Kansan - Mar 13, 2019

Southwestern College is a private liberal arts college, founded in 1885 by Methodists in south central Kansas. Today its Winfield campus is the ...



Spring Semester Fast-Track Classes Begin April 2

Southwestern College News Center (press release) (blog) - Mar 20, 2019

The end of spring break means the beginning of a whole new batch of classes at **Southwestern College**. On April 2, the Tuesday Southwestern ...



Standout bowling career helped Luis Perez excel at quarterback

247Sports - 3 hours ago

That all changed when Perez decided to ...
walked on at **Southwestern College**.
All ...

Indexed by Google



Plenty of pomp with a side of circumstance



It was a day of celebration as thousands of friends, family and community members filled DeVore Stadium to cheer on Southwestern College's largest graduating class in history. More than 900 students walked across that stage to receive their diplomas and celebrate the end of their journey as Southwestern College students.

"This graduation has already shown us how capable we all are of accomplishing our goals when we commit ourselves to them," said Kirstyn Smith, Associated Student Organization president. "As we all continue on into

Newsletters

Built for social media



Our numbers

74,695

News Center visits in 2018



Social media



Website feed



Email

Our most popular stories in 2018

- Ribbon Cutting for New Wellness & Aquatics Complex | [News Release](#)
- Record Number of Graduates Will Walk in Commencement Ceremony | [News Release](#)
- Your Guide to the Fall 2018 Semester | [Blog](#)
- Coming Soon: New Performing Arts Center | [Blog](#)
- Southwestern College Gives Donovan Inmates an Early Start on Second Chances | [Feature Story](#)

Stewards of storytelling



Thank you!

Any questions?



Ernesto Rivera

erivera2@swccd.edu



@ernestorivera