

JUNE 2025 | VOL. 1

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



**HARTNELL
COLLEGE**



HARTNELL COLLEGE CELEBRATES PRIDE MONTH WITH FLAG RAISING AND PRIDE LOUNGE MURAL UNVEILING



Hartnell College students, employees, and community members gathered today to commemorate LGBTQIA+ Pride Month with a flag-raising ceremony and unveiling of a new window mural wrapping the college's LGBTQIA+ Pride Lounge. The event celebrated visibility, belonging, and Hartnell's continued commitment to equity and inclusion.

Hosted by LGBTQIA+ Student Support Services and the Office of Equity Programs, the celebration began at the flagpole on Hartnell's Main Campus, where students raised the Progress Pride flag. After a brief dedication, attendees moved indoors to unveil the newly completed mural.

"Today's ceremony reaffirms our commitment to creating an inclusive campus where everyone is seen, valued, heard, and safe," said Michael Gutierrez, President/Superintendent of Hartnell College. "We are proud to stand with our LGBTQIA+ students and employees and to continue building a culture that centers belonging."

Established in 2024, the Hartnell College Pride Lounge provides a welcoming and affirming space for LGBTQIA+-identifying students and allies to connect, access resources, and build community. Serving hundreds of students each semester, the lounge continues to grow as a safe and inclusive space on campus.

The new window mural, shaped by student feedback, features design elements such as sunflowers, foliage, and silhouettes, each chosen to reflect the diversity, resilience, and joy within the LGBTQIA+ community.

"The design process was inclusive and thoughtful," stated Azul Carreon, Hartnell College student and contributor to the overall design. "We wanted to stay aware and respectful of everyone and where they are in their Queer journey."

Several other speakers addressed the celebration, including students, staff, and community leaders who reflected on the meaning of Pride Month and the ongoing need for visibility in educational spaces.

"Hartnell College is not just a place to learn, but a place where others can feel a sense of belonging," said Eric Mora, president of Salinas Valley Pride. "Thank you, Hartnell, for providing the space."

Visit the LGBTQIA+ Student Support Services at Hartnell College webpage at hartnell.edu/support/oep/lgbtqia to learn more.



*The Pride Lounge is a place of comfort after a tough class, a spot to meet others who share similar experiences, and a hub where we can grow in confidence, leadership, and community. **The Pride Lounge represents visibility, acceptance, and belonging**—things every student deserves to feel, no matter where they are on their journey."*

— Denise Reyes

Hartnell College Student & LGBTQIA+ Student Support Services Program Ambassador



HARTNELL COLLEGE HOSTS SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY DAY AND CAR SHOW

On June 8, 2025, Hartnell College's Alisal Campus welcomed nearly 500 guests for the Community Day and Car Show. With 90 vehicles on display, the event offered a mix of education and automotive culture.

The day highlighted Hartnell's programs and career pathways in automotive tech, welding, agriculture and mechatronics, giving the community a chance to explore campus resources in an engaging setting.





DAN TERESA RETIRES AFTER 35 YEARS AT HARTNELL

After 35 years at Hartnell College, Dan Teresa is retiring from his role as Dean of Athletics, Physical Education, and Kinesiology. A respected educator and community leader, Teresa has been instrumental in shaping the college's athletic programs and supporting generations of student-athletes.

Beyond Hartnell College's walls, Teresa's contributions were honored earlier this year with two major accolades: induction into the Salinas Valley Sports Hall of Fame, scheduled to take place on August 23, 2025, and recognition as Kinesiology Administrator of the Year by the California Community Colleges Physical Education, Kinesiology and Dance Association.

Congratulations on your retirement, Dan! Thank you for your contributions to Hartnell College and our students.

HARTNELL COLLEGE NAMED TOP 10 MILITARY FRIENDLY SCHOOL



Hartnell College has been recognized as one of the nation's Top 10 Military Friendly Schools for 2025-2026 by G.I. Jobs Magazine, earning the No. 8 spot among large community colleges. The announcement is part of the magazine's annual Military Friendly Schools list, a trusted resource that helps veterans and their families select institutions that best support their academic and career goals.

Published each year, the Military Friendly Schools Guide evaluates more than 1,800 institutions, using public data and proprietary survey responses. Key categories include student retention, graduation, job placement, loan repayment, persistence, and support services tailored to veterans. Schools must meet or exceed benchmarks in all areas to earn the designation.

Hartnell's Top 10 ranking reflects its deep and ongoing commitment to military-connected students, including active-duty service members, veterans and their families. Through its Veterans Services Office, Hartnell provides the following comprehensive range of services:

- Veterans Resource Center (VRC): A welcoming space offering academic advising, peer support and access to computers, printers and quiet study areas.
- Priority registration: Helping veterans create schedules that accommodate work and family commitments.
- VA education benefits assistance: Personalized support to navigate GI Bill and other military education benefits.

- Veteran-specific counseling and peer mentoring: Programs to support the transition from military to civilian academic life.
- Community partnerships: Collaborations with regional organizations that promote veteran career development and reintegration.

"We are honored to be recognized among the nation's most military-friendly institutions," said Michael Gutierrez, superintendent/president of Hartnell College. "Our veterans have given so much to our country. We are proud to serve them and their families by providing a welcoming, supportive environment where they can thrive academically and personally."

The college's impact is perhaps best expressed by its student veterans themselves.

"What makes this school great for veterans is the dedicated staff and the camaraderie among the other veterans here." — Corp. Shemar Joseph, Army veteran

"Hartnell College is an amazing place for veterans to attend. The Veterans Center makes students feel welcome, and the staff always helps with any trouble we have." — Sgt. Juan Guzman, Marine Corps veteran

"From my point of view as a veteran and student, Hartnell College stands out as one of the top military-friendly schools in the nation. It truly understands the transition from service to school — offering personalized support, credit for military experience, and career pathways that make me feel seen, supported, and set up for success." — Sgt. Jorge Morales, Army veteran ■



*My college truly goes above and beyond for military students. From helpful veteran student workers to making GI Bill matters easy to navigate, it's a welcoming place where veterans and active duty folks actually feel seen and supported. **They don't just talk about appreciation; they demonstrate it** with events, resources and real recognition all year long."*

— Petty Officer 3rd Class Timothy Velasquez, Navy Veteran

HARTNELL COLLEGE LEADERS NAMED ASPEN RISING PRESIDENTS FELLOWS

Dr. Gayle Pitman and Dr. Jackie Cruz of Hartnell College Selected for the Aspen Institute's Rising Presidents Fellowship

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program (Aspen) announced today that Dr. Gayle Pitman, Vice President of Institutional Equity, Effectiveness, and Success, and Dr. Jackie Cruz, Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the Hartnell College Foundation are two of 40 leaders selected for the 2025-26 Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship. Rigorously selected from among over 120 applicants, fellows will learn from—and apply to their own contexts—lessons from over a dozen years of Aspen research about how to lead an institution to higher and more equitable levels of student success.

Many sitting community college presidents plan to retire in the next decade, creating an opportunity for college trustees and system heads to select leaders who have the skills and knowledge to achieve better outcomes for students. Aspen Presidential Fellows represent the next generation of diverse college leaders, including by institution and geography, representing 19 states and ranging from small rural to large urban colleges. The fellows will work closely with highly accomplished community college presidents and thought leaders over ten months to learn from field-leading research, examine demographic and labor market conditions in their communities, assess student outcomes at their colleges, and advance a clear vision for excellent outcomes for all their students while in college and after they graduate.



Dr. Jackie Cruz



Dr. Gayle Pitman

"Our research on excellent colleges reveals that they have a few big things in common: They have presidents who focus on a few large-scale reforms that transcend enrollment and completion goals and centrally focus on whether graduates are set up to succeed in the next stage of their lives—either the world of work or at a university where they aim to earn a bachelor's degree," said Josh Wyner, executive director of the College Excellence Program. "This cohort of fellows is clearly committed to advancing student success and has the talent to lead transformational reforms. We are really looking forward to our year with them in the fellowship and bringing their talents into our alumni network."

Rising Presidents Fellows are chosen based on their commitment to student success, the extent to which they exhibit the characteristics of excellent presidents revealed in research, and interest in pursuing a college presidency within five years of completing the fellowship. As Aspen Presidential Fellows, they join a network of over 430 forward-thinking peers—197 of whom are sitting college presidents—who are applying concrete, grounded, and innovative strategies to meet student success challenges at their colleges.

The Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship is made possible by the generous support of the Burton Family Foundation, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, College Futures Foundation, and the Mellon Foundation. ■



"The application process is highly competitive, being selected reflects the visionary and equity-focused leadership both Dr. Pitman and Dr. Cruz embody, and highlights the transformative work underway at Hartnell College to improve outcomes for every student we serve. We are excited to see what positive work comes from this fellowship."

— Michael Gutierrez, Superintendent/President



HARTNELL COLLEGE HOSTS 5TH ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION: "FREEDOM IS BEAUTIFUL!"

Hartnell College was proud to host the 5th Annual Salinas Juneteenth Celebration, a community event presented by the Salinas Juneteenth Association in partnership with the City of Salinas. This year's theme, "Freedom is Beautiful," featured powerful storytelling, music, cultural expression, and joyful celebration.

Juneteenth is a significant moment in American history commemorating enslaved African Americans' emancipation. Now recognized as a federal holiday, Juneteenth invites people of all backgrounds to honor Black history, culture, food, and community.

Hundreds of attendees gathered to experience the day's festivities. Highlights include performances by local musicians, soul food vendors, and presentations by community leaders. The celebration also spotlighted a local visual artist whose work reflected the theme of freedom and acknowledged past donors and longstanding community partners who have supported the growth of this event.

Hartnell College remains committed to supporting diversity, equity, and cultural understanding, and this year's Juneteenth celebration was an example of the power of community coming together in unity and celebration.