

# SDSU

## NewsCenter



SDSU President Adela de la Torre with students

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# Dear San Diego Community

The following appeared as a letter to the San Diego community in The San Diego Union-Tribune on Oct. 28.

By **President Adela de la Torre**

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“SDSU Mission Valley isn’t simply a business transaction. It is a family legacy project, a blueprint for long-term growth that deepens the 121-year partnership between the university and the community.”

Growing up, I heard my grandmother say, “Dime con quién andas y te diré quien eres.” (Tell me who you hang out with and I will tell you who you are). I believe she would be proud of the company I’m keeping in this community we call home.

I fell in love with San Diego State University and San Diego even before I submitted my application to become president. And every day I am here, my love grows stronger for SDSU and for the phenomenal city which we serve through our graduates, faculty, staff, and students.

Just over 100 days ago, I arrived to begin my tenure as the ninth president of San Diego State University. I showed up with a promise to begin a listening tour that would inform my decisions moving forward.

Hundreds of conversations with students, faculty, staff, alums, and community members later, what resonates with me are the stories about SDSU’s 121-year legacy as part of San Diego’s family. I have heard about the groundbreaking teaching, research, and creative activities taking place on our campus and in all parts of this community. And I have sensed in the DNA of our faculty and staff that our San Diego State University community is ready to imagine greater contributions to San Diego over the next 121 years.

What surprised me the most, unlike anything I’ve seen in my 35 years in higher education, is that 61 percent of SDSU graduates choose to stay in San Diego and put their degrees to work in this community. Everywhere I go, I meet someone who is connected to the university. Alums who are now leading industries or companies in San Diego. Elected officials who represent and lead our city, county, and region. Innovative small business owners who make a difference in every corner of the region. Entrepreneurs, scientists, journalists, inventors, artists,

military officers, healthcare professionals, engineers, and teachers—to name a few.

At the end of the day, San Diego State University is a crucial and strategic partner to the region, especially since the state projects a shortage of more than one million college graduates entering the workforce by 2030. Last year alone, we received over 93,000 applications from highly qualified students, but we could admit only a fraction of them.

As we think about the next chapter of San Diego State University, I want us to honor this legacy. But I also want us to do more as we look toward the next chapter of our community's continued growth and development. I want us to address the shortage of leaders and professionals our region will face in the next two decades. To meet future demands for an educated workforce, we must increase our capacity to serve more students and recruit more faculty and staff.

Inevitably, our desire to serve the public good in this region more comprehensively, combined with our capacity to do so, brings us back to our plan for SDSU Mission Valley.

**SDSU Mission Valley** isn't simply a business transaction. It is a family legacy project, a blueprint for long-term growth that deepens the 121-year partnership between the university and the community. My hope is that by the time my next 100 days as president conclude, SDSU and San Diego community members will be busy working together to begin executing on a vision all San Diegans can be proud of for generations to come.