

00:00

Good morning! Welcome to the 2021 San Diego State All-University

00:09

Convocation. I'm Brittany Santos-Derieg, President de

00:15

la Torre's Chief of Staff. I could not be more excited to start today's

00:23

program, and we have so much good news to share throughout the hour.

00:28

But first, it is my pleasure to introduce SDSU's Tribal Liaison, Mr. Jacob Alvarado

00:35

Waipuk who will provide the Kumeyaay land acknowledgement.

01:10

We stand upon a land that carries the footsteps

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of millennia of Kumeyaay people. They are a people whose traditional lifeways intertwine

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with a worldview of earth and sky in a community of living beings.

This land is part of a relationship

01:32

that has nourished, healed, protected and embraced the Kumeyaay people to the present

01:36

day. It is part of a world view founded in the harmony of the cycles of the sky and balance

01:41

in the forces of life. For the Kumeyaay, red and black represent the balance of those forces

01:47

that provide for harmony within our bodies as well as the world around us.

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As students, faculty, staff and alumni of San Diego State University we acknowledge

01:55

this legacy from the Kumeyaay. We promote this balance in life as understanding. We

02:01

find inspiration in the Kumeyaay spirit to open our minds and hearts.

It is the legacy

02:05

of the red and black. It is the land of the Kumeyaay.

02:09

Eyay e'Hunn My heart is good.

02:12

Thank you, Jacob.

02:21

I would now like to welcome again our guests joining us today in person, and also virtually.

02:26

No matter where you are, thank you for being a part of our Aztec family.

02:31

I would also like to recognize our new faculty and staff. We are pleased to welcome you to

02:35

our San Diego State University family, and to see many of you..in-person!...for the first

02:45

time this year.

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SDSU is a wonderful and exciting place to work, to learn, to teach and to do research.

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We look forward to the leadership, creativity and energy you will bring to our campus community.

03:00

Our wish is that your years at San Diego State will be both productive and rewarding. We

03:08

extend our most sincere welcome to you all!

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I would now like to acknowledge some of our university leaders and distinguished guests.

03:25

Members of the Council of Vice Presidents, Academic Deans Council and our Associated

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Students Executive Officers. Could you all please rise and be acknowledged?

03:44

Thank you for joining us.

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I would also like to acknowledge our other guests joining us on stage:

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Librarian and University Senate Chair, Wil Weston

03:57

President of Associated Students, Ashley Tejada, President of the SDSU Alumni Board of Directors,

04:10

Charlotte Ochiqui, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Salvador Hector

04:20

Ochoa, President Adela de la Torre and the eight recipients of the SDSU Alumni Distinguished

04:37

Faculty Award and the inaugural recipient of the SDSU Staff Lifetime Achievement Award.

04:45

Please join me in welcoming them.

04:59

Last year was a year of achievement for our SDSU community. We will now share a short

05:04

video that celebrates some of these moments, before President de la Torre provides her

05:08

convocation address.

05:10

And now please welcome San Diego State University's President, Dr. Adela de la Torre.

05:21

Buenos Dias, and Good Morning! Bienvenidos and welcome to our 2021 Convocation!

05:25

It is incredible for me to believe that I am entering my fourth year as your president...

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Time has rapidly passed by... Yet, it has certainly felt for many of us...

05:36

like decades ...given these last 18 months.

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Nonetheless my enthusiasm for SDSU's aspirations and possibilities have not waned...

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As another school year begins, my HOPE is that we launch with even more excitement for

05:48

our future...

05:49

It is WONDERFUL to be here together... face-to-face, heart-to-heart... and...in person... back

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on our beautiful campus, despite the ebb and flow of uncertainty... and the questions that

06:03

have plagued us during these last few months.

06:06

The pandemic is not over. We all know that.

06:11

But we are vaccinated at high rates. And we are wiser about avoiding the risks.

06:18

Our thoughtful actions make a difference.

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Moreover, I marvel at the great capacity of our staff, faculty and students to nimbly

06:24

respond when we are forced to alter a course of action for the sake of the community's

06:28

collective good... Because of all this... our university community is stronger and more

06:34

resilient than ever...

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This period has shown us something we already knew...we can succeed...and we can flourish

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no matter the obstacles... Because in the 124-year history of this great university community, we have done it again...and again.

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06:47

The start of another academic year is a time to imagine new possibilities and adventures...

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First and foremost: we are THE Transborder University of the region, of the state and

06:56

of the nation.

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No other U.S. University can claim stewardship of

07:07

the complete border region of the state. From the Pacific to the Imperial Valley, our campus

07:14

creates the intellectual hub for learning, research and community engagement.

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Our regional impact through our Georgian programs similarly spans and impacts the entire country

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and its global border region. Our strong programs and groundbreaking research are only as limited

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as our imaginations and appetite for hard work.

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So... we welcome the 2021-22 academic year with tremendous enthusiasm.

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We look forward: To what we can achieve together...

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To what we can learn from one another... And to how we can impact the lives of each

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other, the region and the world...

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When I reflect on the last year and a half, I can honestly say that our willingness to

08:02

collectively break down barriers in teaching and research, allowed us to survive and thrive

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during this period...

08:09

We embraced new ways to collaborate and support each other...

08:14

We were fluid as we came together through ever changing environments...

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And we transformed work and teaching in ways we could not have imagined before the pandemic...

08:24

Consider, for a moment, the extraordinary partnership our 40-year-old School of Public

08:26

Health forged with the San Diego County Department of Health and Human Services... and the broader

08:32

community to fight this pandemic.

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They advanced contact tracing for tens of thousands, with a particular emphasis on San

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Diego County's under-served communities.... That collaboration directly helped our university

08:47

and the region make real progress against the virus, and Save Lives.

08:51

Donors to San Diego State University also worked to ENHANCE lives this year, giving

08:57

\$133M to our students and faculty, and marking an all-time annual record for the university.

09:02

And more than \$5M of this giving came from our own faculty and staff.

09:10

Today, each one of us is still out in the community...

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Active, fully engaged, and making a difference... SDSU has those values deeply embedded in our

09:22

mission...

09:23

Without a doubt, SDSU is deeply embedded in the San Diego community... and although this

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may be a common refrain for us ...it is unique within the context of a nationally recognized

09:37

Public Research University....

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And during the past 18 months, this purpose became crystal clear...

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Our health is our community's health... Our assets are the community's assets...

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While each of us may pursue our individual goals and accomplishments....

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We also come to understand that our greatest satisfaction and reward comes in the service

10:01

of something bigger...and greater...than ourselves...

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I have been in higher education for over 30 years. We have all seen universities obsess

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over ratings, rankings and "best of" lists.

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Certainly, we enjoy strong state and national rankings at SDSU. But more than that, we value

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people... and the tangible, positive change we are creating...

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We can be the world's model for a public, transborder university....

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Many UCs, CSUs, and public universities in Arizona and elsewhere... have individual projects

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or programs focused on border issues, but few have regional prominence and faculty expertise

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like SDSU, which can create the synergistic elements needed to leverage these relationships

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for sustainable and integrated impact on shared issues and problems...

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It is distinct. And it is defining.

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Moreover, our faculty, staff, and alumni strive to make the world a better place in tangible

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ways every day.

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We work to see every student who steps onto our campus graduate with

the passion, motivation

11:27

and skills they will need to compete today and in the future....

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And we accomplish all that when we break down barriers, when we connect with one another,

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and when we avoid remaining in our own silos.

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It is human nature to connect with others. To be in community, and foster community in

11:48

others. If we had any doubt about that before the pandemic, we have no doubt about it now.

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A month ago, just as many of us were returning to campus for the first time in 17 months...we

12:01

had a ceremony at SDSU Mission Valley. Community members, construction workers, engineers...many

12:08

of whom are SDSU Alumni...came together to celebrate placement of the final steel beam

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on top of the new multi-purpose stadium rising from the ground.

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This building... and the campus expansion it unlocks... represents the economic engine

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that will propel us into a dynamic new future...rich with opportunities.

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With the revenues these amenities will generate, we are freeing ourselves from the ups and

12:26

downs of the state funding cycle...and opening the door to a state-of-the-art mixed-use campus

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expansion...

12:32

To innovation, new housing, more students, enhanced research, thousands of jobs and more

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than \$3 billion a year in NEW economic activity...

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As I watched people gather for that live event, I was struck by how happy they were to see

12:47

each other again. People wanted to linger and talk. They yearned to reconnect after

12:53

being apart for so long.

12:56

Those social instincts are part of our human character.

13:00

At San Diego State University, we are committed to this work of breaking down barriers and

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making connections. It is in our DNA as a transborder university. We know in our hearts

13:16

and minds the importance of bridging divides and bringing people and ideas together for

13:22

the greater good.

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And we must...we MUST continue pushing these boundaries.

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We MUST integrate across departments...across borders...

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We MUST be transdisciplinary...and prepare our students to be transdisciplinary...because

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today's workforce demands it... Our region demands it...

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The problems of today, and tomorrow, demand it.

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The monumental challenges of our age—climate change, homelessness, racial and social inequity,

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health disparities—can not be solved by innovating in one area...

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Nor can they be solved by one community, one department, one university, one system or

13:52

one country alone...

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Our chance for success only increases when we move away from the model that says "the

14:02

individual is king" toward a more integrative and transborder model of community, collaboration

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and cooperation.

14:09

We see this need across our nation. America is deeply divided. We limit ourselves EVERY

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DAY by our stubborn devotion to separateness and isolating one group from another...

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By creating a separate hierarchy of privilege and need when we can truly become more empowered

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and successful by fusing these needs...

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When we come together without walls that separate us, we are a force to be reckoned with...

14:38

And we discover that we are more connected, and more in touch with the admirable aspects

14:43

of our character.

14:44

The development in Mission Valley and our expansion in Imperial Valley underscores what

14:49

I mean.

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In Mission Valley, our vision for the land that we purchased from the city... just one

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year ago... was not handed down from on high. That inspired vision came UP from the community.

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It was a citizen's initiative first.

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And so it was the region's will...as a collective... that lifted that final steel beam last month...

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when no one expected this much progress so quickly.

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And it will be the collective will of the San Diego State community that makes the next

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phase of Mission Valley a flagship for entrepreneurial partnerships...and for integrative research

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and learning.

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I am delighted to say that this project is moving forward in record time because when

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you have the collaboration, coordination and will of the community behind you.. glorious

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things can happen.

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Our vision in Imperial Valley is also unmatched. We WILL grow our capacity and start graduating

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the engineers and professionals that the regional workforce demands. I have met with local leaders,

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business and industry innovators, and all are clear: a professional, highly skilled

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LOCAL workforce is needed by all, and will dramatically accelerate economic growth and

16:22

minimize income inequality.

16:24

And by creating this more dynamic workforce, it is possible to accelerate new industries,

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which diversifies the economy of the Valley.

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As the only 4 year public institution in the region we not only have the potential, we

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also have the responsibility.

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And, recently, we have started to make good on this:

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Just last year our faculty introduced the first STEM major in Mathematics...

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We added new graduate programs starting this Fall...

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And in collaboration with our College of Engineering, we are pursuing ideas for the build out of

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200 acres of land in Brawley, connected with the d web crawler Brawleydevelopment of an

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innovation district and the untapped potential of renewable and alternative energy, and its

17:02

connections with climate change and the Salton Sea.

17:06

And our SDSU Global campus is expanding access to working students throughout the region

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and the world through many of our programs... such as our microsites at community colleges.

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This was not done in a vacuum, nor from the perspective of one institution, one program,

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or one individual... all of these strategies amplify access and were the

direct result

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of consultation, collaboration, and new partnerships.. ACROSS systems ...that forged our capacity

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to meet the needs from the shared perspectives of all...

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Simply put, what we are doing is not just about inclusion, it is about true PARTICIPATION

17:44

and a fusion of ideas across systems and constituencies. This is what makes our one San Diego State

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University special, and is included in our strategic plan—where we are Transcending

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Borders and Transforming Lives.

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When we launched the plan last fall, we were in the midst of the global pandemic and reeling

18:01

from the devastating economic downturn that came with it.

18:04

It was May 2020. And our strategic planning committee faced

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a decision: can we still launch and live this plan?

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Can we still push forward when the future is so uncertain?

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Like everyone else, we were distracted by the public health crisis.

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But the principles we identified together... and which are reflected in our strategic plan...

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are more resilient than any disruption. Even a disruption of pandemic magnitude.

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They reflect the core principles of our 124-year university community, and the voices of thousands.

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They represent the hopes and aspirations of all those who have called SDSU home, and who

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see themselves in its future.

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I believed wholeheartedly in the strength of that plan when we completed it. And I believe

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in it even more TODAY.

18:53

Our strategic plan will steer us toward our North Star: Becoming the world's best transnational

19:00

university that is VALUE DRIVEN, and which is expansive, inclusive and dynamic.

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As a great public research institution, how we build for the future must incorporate what

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we have learned these past months...

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Indeed... as I have stated earlier, we cannot lose this capacity to remain nimble, thoughtful,

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and innovative to meet the pressing challenge of accelerating access and equity ...

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Because of that...the words of Michael Crow, the president of Arizona State University...

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ring true to the future of how we engage our mission at SDSU..

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President Crow recently wrote: "We know now the world is much more complicated

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than we thought. The globalization of the planet to eight billion people in highly urbanized

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settings is creating all kinds of complexities. Historic institutions that are non-adaptive

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are going to have difficulty adjusting to these kinds of high-speed changes. We need

19:58

to instill the ability to adjust and keep performing our mission as a core part of what

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we do."

20:04

At SDSU, we all get what he is saying. The ability to adjust, succeed, integrate, and

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connect our community infuses our strategic plan. It is all about:

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Becoming a premier public research university focused on access, excellence and impact.

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Being resilient enough to flourish no matter how we are challenged.

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Expanding our global impact through a common mission and identity that

unites all our campuses

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and communities, Promoting equity and inclusion in everything

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we do and by embracing our identity as a defining transborder Hispanic Serving Institution,

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And cultivating a university culture and infrastructure that supports a truly student-centered campus....

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As we usher in this new academic year with enthusiasm and hope, and as we stay connected

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and committed to the greater good, I have no doubt our San Diego State University community

20:53

will continue to thrive.

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Thank you all so very much for who you are, and for what you do in service to our community.

21:01

Thank you, President de la Torre. It is now my privilege to recognize the recipients

21:06

of this year's Presidential Staff Excellence Award. If you don't already know these fine

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individuals, I encourage you to greet them and get to know them. They are a wonderful

21:17

group who collectively represent what is best about San Diego State University.

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Today, our awardees are joining us both in-person and virtually. For those of you in the room

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with us, please stand when I call your name. Let's hold our applause until they are all

21:33

introduced.

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This year's Team Effort award is the group behind the Virtual Faculty Instruction Technology

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Center, FIT, which launched in March 2020 as we found ourselves forced almost overnight

21:43

into virtual instruction. We recognize: Chris Clements,

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Sean Hauze, Z.Leo Lopez, Michelle Peterson

21:49

and Aurora Velasco.

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Our honoree for community service is Dominiko Villa, an outreach specialist in the confidantOffice

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of Educational Opportunity Programs & Ethnic Affairs. Niko works closely with Morse, Lincoln

22:00

and San Diego high schools, which all serve heavily underrepresented areas, and where

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-- because of his work -- we're seeing an increase in applications to SDSU.

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Our honoree for service to the university is Cathy Chavez --- administrative support

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coordinator for the School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences. Cathy played an essential

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role in the planning for the extensive environment improvements in the ENS labs, a vital part

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of the school's research and teaching missions, and other workspace.

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In the auxiliary support category, we have Peter Delaney, IT security and operations

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manager for the SDSU Research Foundation. At the outset of the pandemic his planning

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led to an easy transition to work-from-home. Peter has been a resource across campus, especially

22:47

on critical matters of security, helping to fend off IT breaches and fraud.

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In the innovation category, we recognize Greg Elliott --- director of mass spectrometry

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and major equipment for the chemistry and biochemistry department.

Greg led a realignment

23:03

of the department in response to COVID-19 and watched over critical equipment that needed

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regular attention to remain functional. He has also worked to ensure remote access to

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instruments by students during the pandemic.

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And our final honorees are for Manager of the Year. We are fortunate to have two recipients

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this year. Both recipients received multiple nominations from their colleagues and it is

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easy to see why.

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Libby Skiles became a name known to everyone across campus as director of Student

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Health Services, standing at the frontline of the battle against an evolving and deadly

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pathogen just eight months after coming to SDSU. Every day she works to keep the campus

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aware and informed about this continuing threat and, most importantly, how to protect ourselves.

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Now we recognize our second award winner for Manager of the Year.

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Shareka White is associate director of Educational Opportunity Programs and Ethnic Affairs, and

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it's in this position that she presents a welcoming and supportive face of SDSU both

24:01

to prospective and admitted students. Last year, Shareka launched the Harold K. Brown

24:05

Knowledge, Education and Empowerment Program to support Black students at SDSU, her own

24:10

alma mater. She oversees a long list of additional engagement, outreach, recruitment and retention

24:14

programs.

24:15

Once again, please join me in a round of applause for all of our 2021 Presidential Staff Excellence

24:20

awardees. Congratulations!

24:21

It's now my pleasure to introduce University Senate Chair Dr. Wil Weston.

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Thank you, Brittany ... and good morning to everyone.

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On behalf of the faculty, staff, students, and administrators who serve in the University

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Senate – along with my fellow Officers (Vice Chair Nola Butler-Byrd, Secretary Jose Preciado,

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Treasurer Amanda Fuller, and Parliamentarian Bill Eadie) – it is my pleasure, as Senate

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Chair, to welcome you to our 124th Academic year.

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I am also pleased to welcome our new faculty and staff – and welcome everyone else back

24:54

to campus as we thoughtfully and carefully return to campus after a year and a half of

25:06

working remotely through the Covid-19 health crisis -- together but apart.

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This past year and a half has been especially challenging for the nation, SDSU, and each

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of us individually. Issues of diversity and equity have been a focal point for the nation

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and SDSU. The murder of George Floyd; the undermining of voting rights, white supremacy,

25:32

continued attacks on the equal rights for women and LGBTQIA people, rising nationalism,

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and a political dialog defined by intolerant, illiberal, and undemocratic discourse – all

25:52

while we lived, struggled, and worked resolutely through a Global Pandemic. Additionally, this

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year we have begun to experience some of the most dramatic impacts to our environment,

26:00

our economy, and our health due to human-made climate change. The destruction of Lytton

26:06

in British Columbia, forest fires raging in Siberia, record high temperatures across North

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America, record-breaking fires in the American West, another active Atlantic hurricane season,

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and increased economic and state instability worldwide as we adapt to our increasingly

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volatile environmental and economic reality --- all of these challenges have created new

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pressing uncertainties. And -- as we face these new uncertainties, they will be reflected

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in how we teach, research, learn, work, solve problems, socialize, and build community.

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However, even though we have so many challenges ahead of us, I want to still offer a message

27:00

of optimism. Your very presence, your attendance, the work you do, the community that you build

27:07

here at SDSU is a testament to our shared resilience and commitment to a cause, a mission,

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much larger than ourselves.

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SDSU is an important, amazing, and unique academic community--composed of our campus

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here on the Mesa, campuses in the Imperial Valley, in the Republic of Georgia and, now,

27:38

our NEW campus in Mission Valley. I hope you become as proud as I am to be a part of SDSU

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and a part of our ambitious enterprise -- of learning, knowledge creation, and cultivating

27:57

social-justice.

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Optimism -- persistent, tireless, hopeful optimism has defined our character as an institution

28:01

for generations -- and inspired us to come together, as a community, as engaged and compassionate

28:06

global citizens. Our faculty are recognized around the world for their innovative research,

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scholarship, creative activity, and clinical practices. Our dedicated staff who work tirelessly

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to keep the university and university infrastructure functioning for us all. Our students, who

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join our faculty and staff in this work, will go on to help shape our future. Together,

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as a unique community, defined by our diversity, our commitment to inclusivity, our demonstrated

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resilience, our tremendous human compassion, and

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our unflagging optimism, we will meet all of these challenges.

29:04

In closing, I want to recognize that our SDSU campuses are on Kumeyaay land. In our SDSU

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land acknowledgement we say that "For the Kumeyaay, red and black represent the balance

29:17

of those forces that provide for harmony within our bodies as well as the world around us."

29:23

So, as we pursue our goals of knowledge and learning -- we should honor the wisdom of

29:31

the Kumeyaay and do so harmoniously, respectfully, and honestly.

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Welcome! Welcome to San Diego State University!

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Finally, one of the great benefits of my position is the opportunity to work with student leaders;

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I am so impressed by their dedication to SDSU and their eagerness to engage their student

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colleagues and the larger community. It is this unrelenting motivation that helps them

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balance their academics with their duties as officers.

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I now have the good fortune to introduce one of those student leaders: Ashley Tejada, President

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of Associated Students. Ashley is a postsecondary educational leadership graduate student who

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recently graduated from SDSU with a bachelor's degree in English and a minor in leadership.

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Please join me in welcoming Ashley Tejada.

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Thank you, Dr. Weston. Good morning and welcome.

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It is an honor and privilege to be speaking today as Associated Students President and

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on behalf of our SDSU students.

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We are entering a time of uncertainty, a time of adjustment, and a time of adversity coming

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back onto this campus, but more than anything, we are entering a time of limitless potential.

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We have shown that throughout our students, our staff, our faculty, and our administration,

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we have grown to have more experiences in common than we ever would have thought. I'm

31:44

not referring to Zoom exhaustion, to social disconnect, or to the struggle of unstable

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environments-- although all of those may be true. I am referring to the adaptability,

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perseverance, heart, and passion that brought us all back here today.

Together, we do not

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just aim for a smooth return, but we strive to return even better than before.

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Associated Students is empowered by this concept. Not just rising above all of the trauma, burden,

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and obstruction this last year and a half has caused, but utilizing these times and

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experiences to create a momentum when moving forward, and a big one at that. San Diego

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State University is impossible to duplicate. A large reason being that students, faculty,

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staff and administration collaborate constantly in order to accomplish more. This has never

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been more evident than in this moment, where we are surrounded by one another where 6 months

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ago it never seemed possible. Which is why this year, Associated Students

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is excited to introduce the Year of CommUNITY. Now, the UNITY ending is in uppercase. Because

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we know that stepping back onto campus, progress, change, advocacy, and pride is best achieved

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when we are all united. From our students, to faculty, to staff, to administration, this

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year is here to be embraced.

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Now the tagline is what I hold closest to my heart. "It Starts With Us." Because

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any one person can aim for unity with their entire being, but it takes multiple to actually

33:35

achieve it.

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I am proud to share our pillars this year that I genuinely believe can be adopted by

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every person on this campus and speak to this same standard of partnership:

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The first being ... Execute Shared Governance through proactive collaboration and communication

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opportunities.-- We take pride in being a CSU that strives for the student voice in

34:03

each and every setting.

34:05

The second ... Elevate the importance of mental health and overall healing. Throughout this

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pandemic, regardless of where you come from, where your passions lie, what your aspirations

34:19

are, we can all relate to one thing, and that is the challenge of mental health. This is

34:25

something we will be actively attending to this year, and working to highlight the strength

34:32

in vulnerability.

34:33

And third ... Re-establish unity throughout our diverse SDSU
community. Because There
34:39
is no one identity that makes up the meaning behind an SDSU student.
It is the different
34:46
cultures, identities, and walks of life that make the SDSU family all
that it is. But what
34:55
brings us all together is our sense of pride, a love for the school,
and a constant desire
35:02
to see it made better.
35:03
So Welcome Back! We appreciate all that has passed, are grateful for
this moment, and
35:09
look forward to all that is to come. Thank you.
35:14
It is now my pleasure to introduce Provost and Senior Vice President
for Academic Affairs
35:22
Dr. Salvador Hector Ochoa and Ms. Charlotte Ochiqui, President of the
SDSU Alumni Board
35:28
of Directors. Alumni Association Provost Ochoa joined SDSU in July
2019 as the university's
35:35
chief academic officer. He came to us from the University of New
Mexico and brings more
35:39
than 20 years of academic leadership experience.
35:41
Charlotte Ochiqui is Vice President of Programs, Planning and
Development for the Education,
35:46
Instruction, and Operations Department at the Neighborhood House
Association, San Diego's
35:50
largest private non-profit organization in San Diego County. Charlotte
graduated in 2000
35:56
with a Master of Arts degree in Public Administration from SDSU and
has been involved with SDSU
36:06
Alumni for 5 years. She is the current president of the SDSU Alumni
board of directors and
36:20
is a board member of The Campanile Foundation.
36:21

Please join me in welcoming Provost Ochoa and Ms. Charlotte Ochiqi.
36:25

Charlotte stands up and waves at her chair. Provost Ochoa approaches podium to emcee SDSU

36:30

Alumni Distinguished Faculty Awards. Provost's name/title appear in lower third

36:34

Provost Ochoa will introduce the video; at the conclusion of the video, the Awardee will

36:40

approach the podium to accept the statue from Provost Ochoa and then Charlotte will present

36:48

the honorarium check. The Provost remains at the podium and Charlotte sits down when

36:53

each video plays.

36:56

SDSU is an extraordinary university, in large part because of our extraordinary faculty.

37:06

Among them are masterful, inspirational teachers; phenomenal researchers; committed and engaged

37:13

citizens of our university community; passionate leaders of their scholarly disciplines (both

37:19

nationally and internationally); compassionate servants of our SDSU communities and many

37:23

who excel in all these areas of professional endeavor.

37:26

Because of the generous support of SDSU Alumni, each year we are able to honor one impressive

37:32

faculty member from each of our colleges with the SDSU Alumni Distinguished Faculty Award.

37:37

It is with great pleasure that I stand before you today, to recognize the remarkable achievements

37:42

of this year's recipients of the SDSU Alumni Distinguished Faculty Award.

37:46

Provost Ochoa says the college/campus name first and then the video is shown. Following

37:50

the video, Provost Ochoa says the name of the awardee and they come up to receive their

37:56

statue at the stage mark.

37:58

From the Fowler College of Business, Dr. Chamu Sundaramurthy.

38:01

From the College of Education, Dr. Marjorie Olney.

38:05

From the College of Engineering, Dr. Thais Alves.

38:09

From the College of Health and Human Services, Dr. Carol Mackersie.

38:13

From the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts, Professor Denitsa Bliznakova.

38:17

From the College of Sciences, Dr. Robert Zeller.

38:20

From SDSU Imperial Valley, Dr. Mark Wheeler

38:23

Please join me in congratulating all of our Faculty awardees!

38:28

And now I would like to welcome President de la Torre back to the podium.

38:37

Thank you, Provost Ochoa. It is now truly my honor to announce the recipient

38:46

of the inaugural SDSU Staff Lifetime Achievement

38:56

Award. This prestigious award was created to recognize an exemplary staff member who

39:01

has made significant contributions to the mission of the university throughout their

39:12

career.

39:13

In order to be eligible, nominated staff members must have served the university for a minimum

39:20

of fifteen years and received at least three letters of recommendation to accompany the

39:27

nomination.

39:28

We will now watch a special video highlighting this year's inaugural recipient.

39:36

What a wonderful tribute to Jim and his countless contributions to this university. Before I

39:46

invite Jim to accept his award, I wanted to share some words from those colleagues who

39:52

nominated him.

39:53

Jim's history and experience at SDSU are unparalleled. His boundless knowledge of dates,

39:58

events, traditions, and individuals from the university's storied past helps us grow

40:03

and build a stronger foundation for our future.

40:06

Without Jim's expertise, appreciation of how the university works, and endless connections,

40:11

we would not have been able to save any of the university's

40:17

eight historic murals, hold successful public events for the anniversaries of Aztec Bowl,

40:23

the President John F. Kennedy's 1963 visit to campus, and the Reverend Martin Luther

40:28

King, Jr.'s 1964 visit to campus, or plan for the university's impending 125th anniversary

40:37

in 2022-23.

40:39

I am not the first person to note that with Jim on your team, goals become attainable,

40:50

collaboration runs smoothly, and projects simply become far more fun.

40:55

Everyone who interacts with Jim is touched in a positive way. He knows how to bring light

41:03

to a dark situation with his humor, how to fix a problem when plans go sideways with

41:09

his clever way of thinking, how to read a crowd and interact with any type of personality,

41:18

and how to strategize to maximize time and resources in an efficient way to promote a

41:26

great outcome.

41:29

Jim's contributions to the university's Department of Athletics and SDSU Alumni, as

41:37

well as University Relations and Development, have provided the necessary foundation for

41:40

SDSU to grow, thrive and rise in stature and reputation in the ranks of higher education

42:20

nationally and internationally.

42:22

He has been integral in securing some of the most transformative gifts to the university,

42:47

is a committed partner to our SDSU veterans, connects Aztec Alumni across the country and

43:10

is the glue that keeps the morale of our entire division together.

43:22

One

43:39

of the qualities that makes Jim so special and, in my opinion, so effective is his willingness

43:56

(perhaps even eagerness) to share and outright give credit to others when it is truthfully

44:19

due him. He is a doer, not a self-promoter.

45:50

Finally, and most importantly, Jim is

46:17

our friend. In fact, he is a true friend to all who work at the university or are associated

46:48

with SDSU. He is fun, authentic in his joy, and through his leadership-by-example gives

47:10

permission for us all to enjoy what we do in our work and celebrate our achievements.

48:29

This is our opportunity to celebrate his many decades

48:43

of contributions to SDSU.

48:56

Congratulations Jim on this much deserved award!

49:07

Jim accepts the award from President de la Torre and then they are both seated.

49:44

Congratulations again to all of our award recipients!

51:09

A sincere thank you

51:45

for sharing your morning with us. We hope you enjoy the “grab and go” lunches that

55:26

will be distributed as

57:39

you walk down to Goldberg Courtyard.

58:22

Again, thank you for being here and best wishes for

65:08

a great year! Go Aztecs!