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We are San Diego State University, a global community of students, faculty, and staff

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deeply committed to the public good. And our future is bright, as our university is becoming

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a national model for social mobility and public value, and is accelerating economic and workforce

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impact.

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We are an academic and research powerhouse devoted to discovery.

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We are entering the second year of our strategic plan, which is putting SDSU research on a

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significant growth trajectory. Researchers are leading projects to develop better batteries

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for electric cars, reduce disease among the Latinx community, combat climate change, and

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improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and so much more. Support

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for HSI programs doubled, and we launched several new centers, including the Center

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for Human Rights. The Big Ideas Initiative is also leveraging our distinctive research

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strengths for the betterment of the world. And we are combating COVID-19 head on with

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more than 50 research projects funded by more than \$10 million, with projects often in San

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Diego's most vulnerable communities. The impact our faculty and staff experts have

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had on curbing the spread of COVID-19 and increasing vaccine uptake is remarkable.

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It was also an outstanding year for faculty accomplishments. SDSU engineers Reza Akhavian,

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Sean Park and Junfei Xie each received the prestigious NSF CAREER award and, overall,

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five researchers received NIH's competitive career award.

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Also...SDSU continues to expand student support and degree access, to include efforts at SDSU

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Imperial Valley, SDSU Global Campus and through new microsites with local community colleges.

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What is now the Department of Women's Studies -- the first of its kind when it launched

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in the 70s -- just celebrated its 50-year anniversary.

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The School of Public Health, a pillar of San Diego's health care network -- providing

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more than 75% of the region's health care workforce -- celebrated its 40th anniversary.

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And donors continue to give at record rates. Last year, \$133 million was raised in support

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of SDSU faculty, staff and students.

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We are building for sustainability and for a lasting future.

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In July, SDSU and Clark Construction Group hosted a ceremony where the final steel beam

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for Aztec Stadium was put into place. More than 6,000 new jobs will support the project,

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and stadium construction is on schedule for completion in fall 2022.

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We are closer than ever to realizing SDSU Mission Valley, including its Innovation District.

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With the retail, hotel, and housing, the project is poised to grow SDSU's already strong

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economic impact by adding another \$3 billion annually to the region.

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SDSU Mission Valley buildings will be designed to achieve or exceed LEED Silver. Meanwhile,

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our newest residential community, Huaxyacac, earned another LEED Gold Certification.

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We are a community for all, and we find meaningful opportunities to

honor our diversity and achievements.

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We made new investments in our library holdings and special collections, to include an expanded

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focus on the histories, cultures, and languages of diverse communities. A new partnership

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with libraries across Oaxaca, Mexico, is preserving and digitizing indigenous texts and language

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teaching resources from across the centuries.

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Just this year, SDSU was recognized both as a First-Gen Forward Advisory Institution and

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an Age-Friendly University, designations that collectively recognize our commitment to serving

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individuals throughout one's lifespan.

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And we honored 2020 and 2021 graduates in a first-ever commencement at Petco Park and

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a CARmencement at SDSU Imperial Valley. These in person events were all the more touching

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after 14 months of predominantly virtual instruction.

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We have much more to celebrate, and our future is bright.

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This season, the men's basketball team won its second consecutive outright Mountain West

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regular-season title and was ranked 16th in the final AP Top 25 poll.

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The Aztecs Rock Hunger fundraiser collected nearly 345,000 pounds of food, benefitting

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a local food bank and an on-campus pantry.

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And SDSU alumni are achieving greatness: Destin Daniel Cretton is directing Marvel's Shang-Chi,

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a Marvel movie; Xander Schauffele won Olympic gold; and County of San Diego Public Health

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Officer Dr. Wilma Wooten was named San Diegan of the Year.

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Looking forward...we will welcome about 35,000 students this fall,

along with nearly 50 new

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faculty members, a record 20 new academic advisors and 8 new mental health counselors.

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And our students are poised for success. SDSU's 6-year graduation rate increased to 79%, with

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several colleges well exceeding 80% each year. SDSU is on track to fully eliminate many equity

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gaps by 2025.

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Next year, we will celebrate our 125th anniversary -- the same year the football team takes on

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the University of Arizona Wildcats on September 3, 2022 in the new Aztec Stadium.

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Our global SDSU community has and continues to be successful because of our curiosity,

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our creativity, our courage and our commitment to one another. No matter where we are, we

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are one.