

Sports

Remarkable Leadership

Players and coaches look up to soccer captain Gialli Francisco who led the effort to save women's basketball.



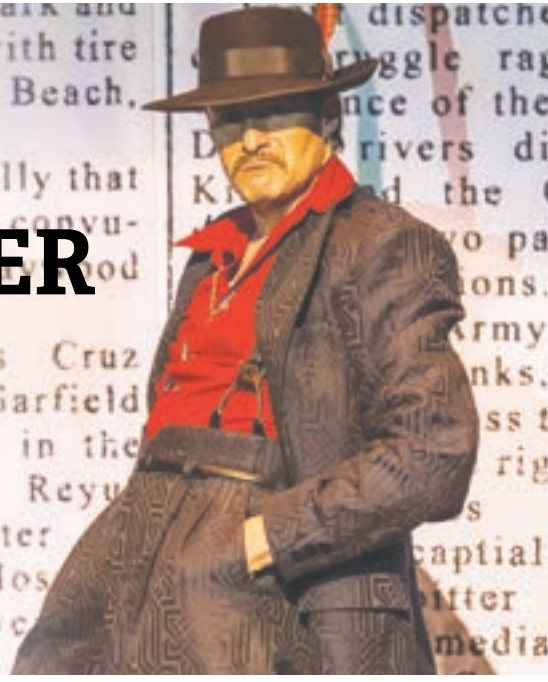
Story Page 11

Arts

GODFATHER OF CHICANO THEATER

Groundbreaking playwright and film director Luis Valdez wants a new generation to pick up his torch.

Read the full story, Page 10



Campus

Debate Team Talk of U.S.

Transfronterizos lead the way to a national title. Story Page 8



NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT UNION SHEDS LIGHT ON MISSING WOMEN, STORY PAGE 8

THE SUN

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE

AN ACP HALL OF FAME NEWSPAPER

MAY 31, 2024 / ISSUE 5

A NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD NEWSPAPER

EDUCATION LIBERATES DONOVAN PRISON INMATES

BY CAMILA A. GONZALES, JOSE GUZMAN AND HOLDEN AMES

DONOVAN STATE PRISON, OTAY MESA—

Shawn Khalifa's life was essentially over.

A life sentence in prison eliminates hope and exterminates dreams.

Education, he found, can reanimate both.

The Southwestern College Restorative Justice program has restored lives, said Khalifa, and shown people who made bad choices as youth that a college degree can open doors.

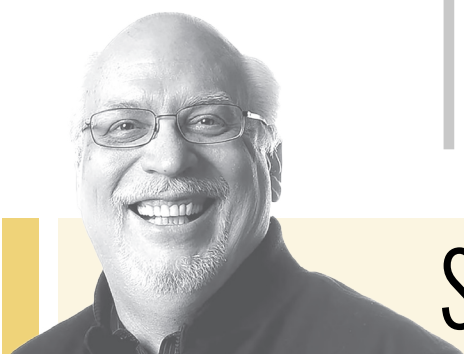
Including doors with iron bars. More than 2 million people in the United States are incarcerated, including about 90,000 in California. Several hundred are locked up in Donovan State Prison in Otay Mesa, a pitiless maximum security facility that houses some notorious felons, including Sirhan Sirhan, the assassin of Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

From the bleak grey walls light can shine. Patrice Milkovich and Raquel Fuentes lit a lantern of learning that has burned there since 2016.

Taking learning into a gritty state prison is the ultimate win-win, said Milkovich. For decades research has consistently shown that illiteracy is a leading predictor of criminal behavior and incarceration. Poorly educated members of society too often feel shut out of the economic structure and turn to crime, according to studies. Providing prisoners with educational opportunities is the most effective way to prevent recidivism.

"Education is the greatest form of rehabilitation," said Milkovich. "It changes the perception of a

RESTORATIVE • PG 3



HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT

Retired ESL Professor Angelina Stuart was president of the Academic Senate during a crisis in 2010-11 that threatened the college's accreditation. Stuart led a team of faculty and administrators who restored accreditation and kept the college operating. She was recognized at commencement as the 2024 recipient of the Southwestern College Honorary Degree.



Photo Courtesy of Ko Inouye

WALKING THE WALK—More than 800 students who earned Associate's degrees or certificates were honored during the 2024 commencement in DeVore Stadium.

¡ORALE!



PHOTO BY YANELLI Z. ROBLES

HEAR ME ROAR!—Scores of students modified their mortar boards with art or inspiring statements.

Record numbers of students celebrate commencement

Success has outgrown the football stadium. With more than 800 students walking at this year's commencement celebration, college officials for the second straight year decided to hold morning and afternoon ceremonies in order to fit all the spectators. It was a good call. The morning event filled about half the stadium while the p.m. ceremony was about 75 percent full.

A separate ceremony was held in Tijuana for transfronterizo students and their families. There was also, for the first time ever, a special Raza Graduation for Chicano students that was held on the main campus. MEChA students had lobbied for the raza ceremony for several years.

"It is lovely to see so many wonderful students celebrating this special day," said Honorary Degree recipient Professor Angelina Stuart. "So many bright futures awaiting them."

ANALYSIS

DIZZYING TURNOVER CRIPPLES COLLEGE

Long careers in the top rungs of college leadership are becoming increasingly unusual in America

BY ALEXA LUNA AND BLANCA ESTHELA CASTAÑEDA GARCÍA

As the average length of time community college presidents serve grows shorter and shorter, the list of problems generated by "Churn" grows longer and longer.

Data is alarming.

Lifelong careers at one college have been replaced by careerism with ambitious or incompetent administrators skipping around the state (or the nation). Dizzying turnover rates have kept the revolving door spinning like a desk fan.

Academic journals like the Chronicle of Higher Education have begun to focus more attention on the problem of churn. Southwestern College is, unfortunately, a textbook case. Southwestern is 60 years old and has had 14 presidents. In the last 22 years it has had 11 presidents. By comparison Palomar College has had 14 presidents in 78 years. During one 30-year stretch Palomar had just two presidents. San Diego Mesa College, according to its website, has had just five presidents since opening in 1964 (serving an average of 12 years).

Presidencies have grown shorter with time, according to studies by the Community College League of California and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Lengthy presidencies at a single college like Dr. George Boggs (20 years) and Dr. Robert Deegan (10 years) at Palomar College, and Dr. Constance Carroll (11 years president of Mesa College, 17 years as chancellor of the San Diego Community College District) and Chester DeVore (17 years at Southwestern) seem to be a thing of the past. San Diego County longevity

CHURN • PG 2

Southwestern College has had 11 presidents in the past 22 years, all of whom were fired or quit without finishing their contracts. Vice presidents turn over at an even faster rate leaving senior leadership in a near constant state of churn.

SOUTHWESTERN SUPERMAN

Super writer J. Michael Straczynski is one of America's greatest science-fiction authors and a beloved Southwestern alumnus. B Section