

# VIEWPOINTS

Editorials • Opinions • Letters to the Editor



The mission of the Southwestern College Sun is to serve its campuses and their communities by providing information, insights and stimulating discussions of news, activities and topics relevant to our readers. The staff strives to produce a newspaper that is timely, accurate, fair, interesting, visual and accessible to readers. Though The Sun is a student publication, staff members ascribe to the ethical and moral guidelines of professional journalists.

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## AWARDS/HONORS

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| <b>National College Newspaper Hall of Fame</b><br>Inducted 2018  | <b>California College Media Association Outstanding College/University Newspaper</b>  |
| <b>ACP Pacemaker 100 An Outstanding Student Publication of the Century</b><br>2022   | <b>San Diego County Multicultural Heritage Award</b>  |
| <b>Student Press Law Center National College Press Freedom Award</b><br>2011, 2018   | <b>California Newspaper Publishers Association California College Newspaper of the Year</b><br>2013, 2016, 2020, 2021, 2023<br><b>Student Newspaper General Excellence</b><br>2002-24 |
| <b>National Newspaper Association National College Newspaper of the Year</b><br>2004-2024  | <b>Society of Professional Journalists National Mark of Excellence</b><br>2001-24<br><b>First Amendment Award</b><br>2002, 2005   |
| <b>Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker Awards</b><br>2003-06, 2008, 2009, 2011-2017, 2019-2024<br><b>General Excellence</b><br>2001-24<br><b>Best of Show</b><br>2001-24 | <b>San Diego Press Club Excellence in Journalism</b><br>1999-2024   |
| <b>Columbia University Scholastic Press Association Gold Crown for Journalism Excellence</b><br>2012, 2023, 2025   | <b>Directors Award for Defense of Free Speech</b><br>2012   |
| <b>College Media Association National College Newspaper of the Year</b><br>2020, 22, 24  | <b>Journalism Association of Community Colleges Pacesetter Award</b><br>2001-18, 2022-24<br><b>Newspaper General Excellence</b><br>2000-2024  |
|  | <b>American Scholastic Press Association Community College Newspaper of the Year</b>  |



ILLUSTRATION BY CARLA LABTO / STAFF

## WE NEED GOV BOARD TO WORK TOGETHER

An open letter to Trustee Corina Soto and the Southwestern College Governing Board

Dear Trustee Soto and SWC Trustees, We, the Editorial Board of the Southwestern College Sun, think you are in so many ways a wonderful lady. You stick up for students and you celebrate our special moments with genuine enthusiasm. You actively look for ways for the college to serve us better. You are very smart and South Bay in your soul.

You can also be a pain in the ass. You let your temper get the better of you and you can't seem to move on from bad things in your past. You hold grudges for a very long time.

The thing is, we need you. We are asking you to be the Corina Soto in the first paragraph full time. How inspiring it would be if you could use your considerable intelligence and energy in a constructive way.

We know Dr. Sanchez was dismissive of you while you were a college employee. We know Don Dumas treated you poorly when you joined the board. We know you were censured and that Kris Galicia-Brown publicly read a ridiculous call for you to resign.

Ignore them. Better still, forgive them because they know not what they do.

Can you just let it go? For us? You are the only Latina on the board. You could be a role model and a warrior for young women of color. You could inspire tens of thousands of students. You could show us the way.

Right now you are focused on yourself instead of us. We know there is a loving person inside you with a big, beautiful heart. We've seen it. Can we have her for the next two years? That Corina could be amazing.

The rest of the board also needs to take a long look at itself and reset. Bickering and pettiness is not moving our college forward. Mr. Dumas and Mr. Moreno have the capacity to be really good guys. Ms. Galicia-Brown can be kind and empathetic. We don't know much about Mr. Segura yet other than he is an experienced school board member who may have good ideas to share.

You all have potential, but squander it when you are petty and vengeful. There are times you really embarrass us. Our board says it is here for students but does not listen to us. We are young and don't know everything, but we know way more than you do about what it is like to be a student here. That is actionable information good leaders should want to have. Yet the board is dismissive of our ASO and its talented president. Our student government is trying to help and has good information to share. So does this newspaper.

Here are three things we would like you to know: We are super frustrated by the severe shortage of counselors. We do not understand why we are hiring administrators to manage expensive, low-impact pet projects when we have a counselor-student ratio of 1,700:1.

We are sad and confused by our filthy classrooms and bathrooms. Other colleges and universities we visit have clean rooms and grounds. It seems our leaders do not think we are worth it because we are low-income minority kids.

We are fed up with bots stealing our classes and financial aid and our leadership's absolute failure to be honest about the scale of the problem or do anything meaningful to fix it. Dr. Sanchez's ill-informed statements in recent news accounts that the problem is limited to 500 bots and a few disenchanted professors make us wonder if he deserves to keep his job. Professors who have spoken up about the damage caused by bots are heroes, not villains.

We are also concerned about the racial and class ugliness in the isolation of Trustees Soto and Moreno by Trustees Dumas, Galicia-Brown and Segura. Soto and Moreno represent West Chula Vista and National City – the poorest and brownest parts of the college district. Many members of this newspaper live there. Cutting our area trustees out of decision making deprives us of representation. Voters approved district elections that were supposed to improve representation for low-income communities. That has not happened at SWCCD. Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.

Most of us are appalled by the immaturity, incivility and vengefulness of Donald Trump. We cannot afford to have our board behave that way. Grownup leaders need to be able to work in good faith with people they may not like.

Can our five elected leaders have a reset? Trustee Soto, can you do this for us? Show this Latina-run newspaper how a Latina office holder should lead. Trustee Moreno, please don't let the board marginalize OTNC 91950. Push your way into the conversation. Trustees Dumas, Galicia-Brown and Segura, please end the political apartheid and the 3-2 tyranny.

Joseph in the Old Testament forgave his brothers who sold him into slavery. Nelson Mandela forgave his apartheid oppressors who imprisoned him for 22 years. Eva Kor forgave the Nazis who treated her savagely at Auschwitz. Jesus forgave the men who tortured and crucified him.

Trustee Soto, can you forgive Mark Sanchez? Trustees Dumas, Galicia-Brown, Segura and Moreno can you forgive Trustee Soto?

Please. Our community is counting on you. Please. Do it for us.

