College suffers declining numbers

BY YAHIR IBARRA
Staff Writer

Southwestern College took an enrollment hit in 2020-21 due to the coronavirus, but so did the rest of California’s 116 community colleges.

College leaders say they are hoping for a spring rebound.

SC saw a one-year decline of about 13 percent in Fall 2020, a drop of 2,674 students from Fall 2019. Spring 2021 measured a 14 percent plunge from Spring 2020, with a decrease of enrollment of 2,758. Community colleges statewide enrollment dropped about 9 percent, according to data provided by the Community College Chancellor’s Office in Los Angeles.

Southwestern administrators said they are taking the downturn seriously, but are not panicked. SC had enjoyed steady enrollment growth for years and is still held in high regard

Pandemic fuels a 14 percent plunge in spring enrollment

Haitians flood Tijuana, seek asylum in U.S. and Canada

BY CAMILA GONZALEZ
Editor-in-Chief

In what would be a major paradigm shift, Southwestern College officials plan to explore the possibility of creating housing for students and young professors who move to the region. SC recently applied for five planning grants totaling about $2 million to study options for student and faculty housing in an increasingly expensive corner of the United States. Grants were recently made available by the California Community College Chancellor’s office, which has created a $250 million pool to encourage study of affordable housing options that would be managed by regional campuses.

Funded grants will allow colleges to hire architects and conduct environmental, financial, and engineering studies. Housing options may include dormitories, tiny homes, and combined housing, which is often apartments on the second and third floors of commercial buildings.

SC President Dr. Mark Sanchez said the college ought to have an answer by spring.

“We’ll know if we have the funds by March,” he said. “If we get the funding, then we’ll be able to bring in architects and housing representatives to help us begin conceptualizing student and potentially staff and faculty housing at our (satellite campuses).”

College leaders’ new willingness to study student housing options represents a substantial change in thinking, about seven years ago previous suggestions to college leaders partnership with Point Loma Nazarene University troubles members of the LGBTQ community. Special Section

Haitians flood Tijuana, seek asylum in U.S. and Canada

BY CAMILA GONZALEZ
Editor-in-Chief

ZIONA RIO, TIJUANA — When Christopher Columbus set foot on the island of Hispaniola in 1492, he kicked open the Gates of Hell.

For 529 years on the tropical land that is now Haiti, humanity has demonstrated inhumanity at its sadistic worst. Genocide, extermination, slavery, rape, disease, torture, brutality, assassination, kidnapping, mayhem and murder have defined the rule of Spaniards, French, Americans, dictators, generals and despots.

Southwestern College is rich with Black success stories and role models. Special Section

Xiomara Villarreal-Gerardo, an SC alumnus who is now a junior at SDSU, was named one of 25 San Diego County Remarkable Teenagers for her outstanding achievements in journalism. Villarreal-Gerardo was Editor-in-Chief of El Sol Magazine, named the nation’s best by the College Media Association of New York, as well as the region’s best by the San Diego Press Club and Society of Professional Journalists. She has already earned more than a dozen individual awards for writing, photography, graphic design and leadership. In September Villarreal-Gerardo was crowned Miss Chula Vista 2021-22. Photo Courtesy Xiomara Villarreal-Gerardo

REMARKABLE TEEN

College explores student housing

SC will apply for $2 million planning grant to hire architects and consider sites

BY NICOLETTE MONIQUE LUNA
News Editor

Pandemic fuels a 14 percent plunge in spring enrollment

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BLACK HISTORY ALL YEAR

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The California Community College Chancellor’s office created a $250 million pool to encourage colleges to study affordable housing options, managed by regional campuses.
HOPELESS IN HAITI

Haiti’s Gross Domestic Product of $1,938 and average daily earnings of $1.95 make it the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. A series of corrupt, kleptocratic governments have stripped off what little wealth remained. Haitians rarely have the opportunity to become educated and most have no reliable way to earn a living. Like Central American refugees, the Haitians bought train tickets if they could earn a little money otherwise. They surreptitiously hopped the trains, including southern Mexico’s notorious La Bestia (The Beast), which has sheered the hands, arms and legs off countless refugees — even before the coup d’etats, assassinations and kleptocracy of the 20th century, Haiti was marinated in brutality and tragedy. Whitened by the Spanish and the French, the colony of former slaves and their descendants revolted against French rule in 1801 and fought a bloody war until 1824. France engaged in a scorched earth campaign: ~100,000 people were killed in Haiti.

Following the coup in 1963, 200,000 people fled to the West Indies. Many Haitians left Haiti in search of work and a better life, but those who remained in Haiti were subjected to violence, poverty, and oppression.

We are setting students on a pathway to their personal career or transfer goals.

Dr. Mark Sanchez, SC Superintendent/President

ENROLLMENT: Southern Western College decline hits percent versus 9 percent statewide

“We’re hoping that this will help us strengthen our enrollment. It will help us to ensure that we have full classes, and that we can offer additional classes. Ultimately, we are setting students on a pathway to their personal career or transfer goals.”

Dr. Mark Sanchez, SC Superintendent/President

by the community, according to a college spokesperson. Marketing offers for next year include up, totaling banners on traffic thoroughfares surrounding the college.

Enrollment troubles began March 23, 2022, the day SC officially went on a one-week spring break. On April 1 a former president Dr. Kindred Murillo announced the college would not reopen during the spring semester. That triggered record drops in the number of willing workers is providing job opportunities for college-age students and young adults. Typically community college enrollment rises during economic downturns when more people are out of work. Enrollment ebbs when the economy is strong and jobs are plentiful.

Enrollment for Spring 2023 has opened. Students may enroll on the SC website or in person in the Cesar Chavez Student Center. Persons entering campus must be fully vaccinated and must wear approved medical grade masks inside buildings.

Nicole Montague Luna contributed to this story.
earth campaign that demobilized plantations and infrastructure.

Haiti won a pyrrhic victory. In exchange for diplomatic recognition, the new nation was forced to pay ransom payments to France, which it did from 1825 to 1947. This caused Haiti to seek loans with high interest rates from American, German and French banks that sank the economy into further debt.

Haiti has never been close to digging out. Historians and political scientists generally seem to agree that Haiti is the Western Hemisphere's most dysfunctional and least-sociable society.

Martinez said he has lost all hope for his homeland.

“The crisis in my country is enormous, and the oil is never, ever ending,”

Mexico, he said, is much better.

Camped by the wretched-inducing smell of the sunbaked sewage churning the Tijuana River, Haitians are at the bottom of Mexico’s racist caste system based on skin color. Light-skinned Mexicans like the blond, green-eyed rubia models shimmering on billboards make up the ruling class. Black Haitians are the new punching bags of the frontier, and Martinez has his bruises.

“No one here likes Haitians,” he said.

Jason, a Haitian refugee who uses just one name, agreed.

“There is a lot of violence and pain in Tijuana,” he said. “(Mexicans) do not do anything to help Haitians. People in Mexico are afraid of black people. They (Mexicans) avoid walking on the same sidewalk.”

His job as an Uber driver is barely keeping him alive, Jason said, because the pay is so low. He always asks to be paid in U.S. dollars because that is what the landlord demands.

Like so many Haitians, Jason said his dream destination is not the United States, but Canada.

The bilingual province of Quebec has become cities like Montreal, Quebec City, Laval and Longueuil that tend to be accepting of French-speaking Haitians.

“They would likely be better (in Canada),” he said.

Remy also said he would like to find a way to Canada, though so far he has gotten much more than 60 miles from the border with Mexico. His French has a Haitian lilt, part Cajun Creole but all Caribbean.

“Quebec has French-speaking brothers and the Canadians are nicer to Haitians than Mexicans or Americans,” he said. “Some Haitians speak enough Spanish to fake it, but Tijuana and San Diego say they only speak French here.”

Working as a day laborer is rough, he said, and sometimes workers told him he was not allowed to be stiffed. Still, he added, he would rather sleep in a San Diego canyon than anywhere else.

Along the border in Tijuana.

Emmanuel Philippe Augusto said he arrived in Tijuana at the end of October after a hemisphere-spanning trek from Chile where he and his wife lived for four years following the Rio Olympics.

“When you are living on the streets you realize the world is not so kind and does not have your best interests,” he said. “There is no help for Haitians in Tijuana.”

Augusto and his wife left their children behind in Haiti, he said, and they have not seen them in six years. Guarded and quiet, he looked genuinely-stumped when asked what he hoped for in the years ahead.

After an uncomfortable and fitful night in the San Diego civic plaza, he sighed and cast his eyes upward.

“I would like to live somewhere where I am (considered) legal,” he said. “I just want to take care of my family.”

Jason said his dream destination is not the United States, but Canada.

The bilingual province of Quebec has become cities like Montreal, Quebec City, Laval and Longueuil that tend to be accepting of French-speaking Haitians.

UNWELCOMED EVERYWHERE — Dark-skinned, French-speaking Haitians have an even more difficult time in Mexico than other mistrusted refugees, according to UNESCO and American human rights organizations.

The men pictured above is one of the very fortunate few to find work in a city where they are not welcomed.

Photo: Adriana Helds/ Voice of San Diego

LAND IN TURMOL

Haiti, one of the world’s poorest nations, is just 675 miles from California. Once blessed with the same beauty and natural resources of its conjoined neighbors in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti’s history on the island of Hispaniola is markedly different.

A few facts about the land of *“L’espace et Fraternité”*:

- Haiti was the second nation of the Americas to gain independence following the United States.
- Haiti fought a revolution against France from 1791-1804 when self-liberated slaves drove off colonial rule.
- Haiti is the world’s oldest Black republic.
- The poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, Haitians earn just an average of 25 cents a day and have a GDP of only $3,538.
- Haiti has been occupied by Spain, France and the United States. The American occupation lasted from 1793-1803.
- Notorious strongman Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier
devoted his reign to the destruction of terror from 1957-1971.
- In 2010 a magnitude 7.0 earthquake killed more than 200,000 people and injured at least 300,000. More than 5 million people were homeless.
- Nearly 4,000 schools were damaged or destroyed by the quake, many of which have not been replaced.
- Haiti’s last legally elected president, Jovenel Moise, was assassinated on July 7.


LAND IN TURMOL

An estimated 5,000 to 10,000 Haitians have found themselves in Tijuana at some point since around 2015, according to the Haitian Bridge Alliance (HBA), a Southern California nonprofit that advocates for Haitian migrants in the U.S. and Mexico. Source: Time

HARING: College eyeing possible student, faculty housing sites in National City, Chula Vista

administrators to consider student housing options were soundly rejected.

Sanchez and his team have different ideas on the topics, according to VP of Financial Services Dr. Kelly Hall.

“We know from a recent survey that approximately 20 percent of our students have experienced some kind of housing insecurity within the last 10 months,” she said. “This housing (ought by the college) is going to be low income housing. This is going to be housing for students to go to school to stay, to pursue their financial needs, not to be there for the remaining of their lives. National City may offer the best opportunities to create available student and faculty housing, according to college PIO Lillian Leopold.

College officials and National City staff have identified the former Trophy Lounge building as a possible redevelopment site.

“The city of National City is very interested in the college taking over that property and putting in student housing and housing for the community in general,” she said.

“The bottom floor could also be used for commercial space so the district could generate rent to help pay for the cost of that building or to maintain that building for students.”

Leopold said the college is also interested in the AME building on Elsmar Street just across Otay Lakes Road from the main campus. The building used to house a Chula Vista Fire Department substation.

“We’ve seen more and more of the economic insecurity that our students are facing — both housing insecurity and food insecurity,” she said. “So the overall mission is to educate our students, but if they don’t have a place to live or if they’re hungry, they’re not going to really be learning.”

Hall said college demographics and students’ socio-economic status make housing relief important.

“Students have low economic resources are disproportionately students of color,” she said. “They are the ones (added with) the burden of all of these responsibilities and the high cost of rent in Southern California.”

SC and other SoCal colleges and universities are increasingly having trouble recruiting and hiring young faculty from other less-expansive parts of the country. Many American universities offer scholarships for young teachers for a year or two to allow them to get on their feet financially.

“Moving here can be a killer because the cost of living is so high,” Leopold said.

SC has taken over and expanded many student relief programs originally started by concerned faculty and staff, such as efforts to reduce or eliminate textbook costs as well as efforts to help some students with child care, transportation and medical issues.
Chicano Park on Dia de los Muertos is a festival of color, food, drink, art and la raza magica. Honored dead are serenaded, toasted and served wondrous plates with chilled tequila.

About 125 to the east nearly 1,000 forgotten bodies with no names bake under the rust tinted dirt of the Terrace Park Cemetery in lonely Holtville. A gathering at festive Chicano Park prays for them, too. Then they visit.

A caravan of cars makes a two-hour trek over the mountains, across the desert and almost to Arizona. Caretaker Chuck Jernigan cranks apart the dusty lock and swings open the gate with the No Trespassing sign. Activists from Gente Unida solemnly file in. Windswept Terrace Park is where dreams come to die. Most died badly. America’s largest non-military graveyard of the unidentified spreads flat as a quiet lake of pulverized brick with no headstones and not one blade of grass. A tilted smattering of pale handmade crosses twist out of the desiccated earth, the only acknowledgment that this is sacred ground.

“You are not forgotten,” murmured Gente Unida founder Enrique Morones. “No olvidamos.”

Morones has led the annual visitation for nearly two decades and he expressed sadness that so little has changed.

“Not one of the persons buried here thought they were going to die. They came here to work or to reunite with family. No one ever thinks they will end up dead and buried without a name in a pauper’s grave.”

America’s antiquated immigration system is to blame, Morones said, along with predatory American and Canadian business and agricultural practices that have impoverished millions of Mexicans and Central Americans.

“Conservatives like to say migrants need to get in line so they can enter through the border crossings, but that’s not possible,” he said. “There is no line. Do you really think so many desperate people would drown in rivers, die in deserts and freeze to death in mountains if there was a line?”

Iranian refugee Ari Honarvar, vice president of Gente Unida, recited a verse of poetry in memory of the immigrants.

“We are from the great beyond and to the great beyond we shall return,” she read. “We are from the ocean and to the ocean we make our way. We are not from here or there. We are from a placeless place, and to that we journey.”

Chaplin Frank Modic had special messengers to carry the prayers to Heaven. Radiant monarch butterflies lent lightness and hope.

“We use butterflies to celebrate somebody who has passed away,” Modic said to the hushed gathering. “The butterfly is a metaphor, a theological metaphor for transformation, renewed life and being set free.”

Terrace Park’s silent graves are relentlessly permanent, Modic said as the butterflies pranced in the warm morning sky, but the spirits of the dead buried there are free and one with the eternal. Morones said the deceased can only rest when the living help those who come after to avoid their fate.

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Enrique Morones

GENTE UNIDA
WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Chicano leaders call for the Texas Rangers baseball team to reject namesake’s violent history

BY CAMILA GONZALEZ | Editor-in-Chief

The Porvenir Massacre was just one of many perpetrated by the Texas Rangers, according to historians. Formed in the 1860s as a private army for a corrupt governor who wanted to rid Texas of Native Americans, the Rangers grew in numbers in the early years after the Civil War to resist settlements by freed Black slaves and Mexican-Americans. They have been described by academics, historians and Latino leaders as America’s Gestapo, “the Nazis of Texas” and “the Lone Star Ku Klux Klan.” Many Rangers, in fact, were active members of the KKK.

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Gente Unida founder Enrique Morones said he does not understand why a Major League Baseball team would name itself for “a gun slinging, racist, terrorist organization.” He is calling for the Texas Rangers baseball team to change its name.

“A name like the Texas Rangers is a mockery to the Mexican people and to all Mexican-Americans,” Morones said. “Glorifying a hyper-violent private vigilante army that brutally murdered, raped and expelled people of Mexican ancestry from their own lands was an American genocide. The Texas Rangers have been portrayed as heroic cowboys guarding the range, but they are actually lawless thugs.”

Morones, a former vice president with the San Diego Padres, said he is heartened by recent decisions by the Cleveland Indians and Washington NFL franchise to change their names after years of pressure.

“We want Major League Baseball to accept its responsibility and remove the name of Texas Rangers from its Arlington, Texas franchise,” he said. “The league should no longer profit off the suffering inflicted on our people. Neither should MLB confuse the players’ popularity with acceptance of the Texas Rangers’ namesake nor what those hired guns did to tens of thousands of Americans of Mexican ancestry.”

Attorney Sheryl Ring said the Texas Rangers is an inappropriate nickname and mascot.

Murder at La Matanza — Historians say Texas Rangers killed hundreds, possibly thousands, of Mexicans and Tejanos in South Texas from 1915-19, calling the victims “bandits.” They were actually legal landowners, ranchers, farmworkers or Latino Texans traveling in their home state. This photo was taken in October 1935 by Texas Rangers proud of their work. Courtesy Dolph Briscoe Center for American History/University of Texas at Austin

MUSSELS CONTROVERSY

College dropped Apaches in 2000

Southwestern College was founded in 1916 and in 2000 the school dropped the Apache name. An accompanying mascot was a leather-faced profile of a Native American man much like the image on a worn buffalo nickel.

For generations, the name and mascot represented their vision of Native Americans who were brave and valorous warriors.

The school has now adopted the name of the sport teams were christened in 2000: the Brahmas.
**RANGERS: Latino leaders insist baseball glorifies violent vigilantes**

In 1966 the Texas Rangers were brought in to break up a strike by farmworkers in a rural area south of Crystal City in Zavala County, Gutierrez said. Mexican and Mexican-American farmworkers were beaten, kicked and shot. One laborer, Magdaleno Dimas, was killed.

Naming a baseball team for the Texas Rangers is an affront to Latinos, Gutierrez said.

“They’re laughing in our faces,” he said. “(The Texas Rangers commit atrocities) against Mexicans, and yet who goes to the baseball games? Mexicans! That is because we do not know our own history.”

Morones agreed. Latino players make up 10% of major league players, including many of its biggest stars.

Gutierrez said the education system in Texas and the United States is “Anglo-centric” and often over looks historic episodes of violence and mistreatment of minorities. Most Americans, he said, never heard of Porvenir, the destruction of the Black town Rosewood, Florida or the White riots of Tulsa, Oklahoma which burned a thriving Black business district to the ground.

The Texas Rangers, he said, got the media treatment.

“Everything written about the Rangers is glorious, fantastic, wonderful,” he said. “None of that is true. They are murderers of Mexicans and they have been for a long time.”

While working with the Padres in the 1990s, Morones had an opportunity to meet with the managing owner of the Texas Rangers Baseball Club, Texas governor and future U.S. President George W. Bush.

Morones pressed his case that his team should not be named for the Rangers. Bush, generally considered a moderate on race for a Republican, was not receptive.

“I got nothing but a blank stare,” he said. “Governor Bush wasn’t having it.”

Domingo Garcia said he likes baseball, but no fan of the Texas Rangers.

“Remember, the Anglos write the history books, however, paint the history.”

History books, however, paint the Tejanos as the bad guys and the Rangers as the good guys.

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History books, however, paint the Tejanos as the bad guys and the Rangers as the good guys.
Rangers as the noble heroes, Garcia said. “No baseball team should be named after a domestic terrorist organization,” he said.

Morones said naming a team the Texas Rangers is no different that naming a team after active terrorist organizations such as Isis, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram or the Paris Blondie. Legions of American Latinos of the Southwest are descendants of victims of vigilante crime, he said, and have violence embedded in their family histories.

“We will never erase that stain and we must never forget those innocent people killed or the women violated,” he said. “We must not forget families who were shot and their rights denied because of the color of their skin.”

Young Americans have begun to change their names and monuments around the nation that glorified the Confederacy, slave owners and people with histories of violence, Morones said. Many Texans are calling for the removal of Confederate statues at the state capital and on the grounds of the University of Texas. Cities and towns with statues and monuments to the Texas Rangers are also initiating discussions about their appropriateness. The Dallas Love Field Airport removed a notorious statue of Jay Banks, a Texas Ranger who recruited and trained Black children attempting to go to school.

That is a good start, Morones said, but even cosmopolitan, multicultural San Antonio has a racist statue.

“Be our downtown in Horton Plaza is a statue of Pete Wilson, the architect of Proposition 187, a racist, anti-Latino bill that did a lot of damage to Latinos all over the state,” he said. “Wilson is a symbol of hate and division, which has no place in a multicultural city like San Diego. Our city is one third Latino, but has a statue of a man who demoralized and demonized the Latino community for personal political gain.”

A hot, dusty wind drags through what remains of Poveren. Desolation reigns. The skeletons and ghosts have wandered a century, mostly forgotten.

Gutierrez said he will never forget and will not rest until the Texas Rangers join Cleveland in finding a new name. The Rangers, however, are playing hardball and have given no indication they will need new uniforms any time soon.

“While we may have originally taken our name from the law enforcement agency, since 1979 the Texas Rangers Baseball Club has forged its own, independent identity,” a 2020 statement from the team. “The Texas Rangers Baseball Club stands for equality. We condemn racism, bigotry, and discrimination in all forms.

Ring scoffed.

“Texas Rangers cannot reject bigotry in any form when they are named for an agency created for the purpose of exterminating Indigenous people, murdering Latinos, and attacking Black kids,” she said. “The law enforcement agency known as the Texas Rangers are a white supremacist institution.”

As American Latinos become wealthier and more powerful, racist marketing campaigns like the Frito Bandito, Taco Bell Chalupas and Burger King’s Trinidad Whoop are not tolerated and are not long for the air. As once deep-red Texas becomes younger, diverse and purple will the Texas Rangers finally get shot out of the saddle?

“We shouldn’t have to wait,” Morones said. “The Vigilante Texas Rangers were losers. The baseball Texas Rangers need to lose the name — now.”

High profile name changes

Schools and sports nicknames have been slowly evolving since the early 1970s, with dozens of professional and college teams moving away from the use of Native Americans as mascots.

Not fast enough for Native American advocates. Stephanie Cross, a University of Oklahoma doctoral candidate, and about 770 schools still have Indian-based names or mascots, including at least 100 that still use the derogatory size “redskin.”

“Schools across America are perpetuating the myth of Native Americans as aggressive, warlike and savages,” she said.

Cross and the makers of the 2017 documentary “More Than a Word” call for the Kansas City Chiefs, Chicago Black Hawks and Atlanta Braves to join the Cleveland Indians and Washington Redskins as defunct pursuits sanctioned that abandon Native American names and imagery.

Native American mascots are the most common among those drawing criticism in the United States, with few others. There is organized opposition to names and images that depict white settlers, Confederates and other white supremacists, Crusaders and names hostile to Muslims, and names that glory violence.

Now are some professional teams and universities that have abandoned Native American and white supremacist names or symbols:

1969 Philadelphia

Warriors move to San Francisco and become the Golden State Warriors. The team abandoned its mascot, a cheerful Indian caricature dribbling a basketball.

1972 Dickinson State University of North Dakota drops The Sages as its mascot and eventually settles on Blue Hawks.

1973 Eastern Washington

University discontinues The Saberwings to become the Eagles.

1974 Dartmouth College stops using The Indians and switches to The Big Green.

1979 St. Bonaventure University dumped The Brown Indians and The Brown Squaws to become The Bonnies.

1991 Eastern Michigan University stops on The Hurons and rebrands as The Eagles.

1994 New York’s St. John’s University rebranded The Redmen with The Red Storm.

1997 Miami University of Ohio abandoned The Redkites to become The Redhawks.

1999 Oklahoma University retirees The Chis and becomes The Stars.

2000 The College of William and Mary changed its nickname from The Indians to The Tribe, a name that has not entirely placated its community.

2006 University of Illinois drops its Indian face mascot and logo, but retains the name Illini.

2007 College of Idaho stops using blazing Chief Wahbo as its mascot. In 2023 the team announced it will change its name to The Guardians.

2008 Arkansas State University retires The Indians to become The Red Wolves.

2018 The Cleveland Indians stop using blushing Chief Wahoo as its mascot. In 2023 the team announced it will change its name and logo. A new name has yet to be announced.

2020 The Washington Redskins, under pressure from FedEx, which purchased naming rights, announced it will change its name and logo.

50 years of debate, but SDSU still the Aztecs

In 1973 the university renamed the mascot and gave it a new outfit that was supposed to be a mix of a beakface cheerleader and more in line with an Aztec warrior of the 15th century. The new version of the mascot first appeared in 2004 to mixed reviews. Commissioners were upset that Montezuma was sidelined and younger activists, along with a group of SDSU professors, argued that any Aztec mascot was inconsiderate.

Zuma the Jaguar was introduced in 2010 as a secondary mascot in an effort to test market an alternative. It was unsuccessful, and Zuma was quietly put out to pasture in 2014.

American Indian Studies Professor Ozzie Monge brought the issue to the public again in 2015 with a paper that argued against the name and the mascot. Monge decried that “stiff-savages” stereotype and said SDSU had reduced the Aztec people to “a good luck charm.”

In 2018 battle lines hardened. SDSU faculty and students organized an effort to do away with the Aztec, with more than 9,000 supporters of the mascot signed an online petition to “Save The Aztec.” In February 2021 President Dr. Sally Roush appointed a 17-member Aztec Identity Task Force to re-examine the issue. That May the committee recommended keeping the Aztec name, but was split on whether to retain the warrior mascot. Roush accepted the recommendations and the Aztec remains the moniker of the university.

The SDU President’s Office report Decision on Aztec Identity

Special section: What’s in a name?