



**Colleagues:**

Welcome back! As we begin the new academic year, Convocation offers a unique opportunity for all of us in the Palo Alto College community to celebrate our college's past and present while charting our future. As we prepare for the academic year, we are assured the work done every day at Palo Alto College remains a testament to our continued goal to provide quality access and education for our community.

I am honored to be rejoining the Palo Alto College family and to pursue our mission "to inspire, empower, and educate our community for leadership and success." As Dr. Mike Flores prepares for his new role as incoming chancellor of the Alamo Colleges District, we both look forward to the College's continued journey of performance excellence. I also want to take this opportunity to thank you for the privilege to serve our students and community as we begin another academic year.

This past Friday, I joined our newest colleagues on a New Faculty and Staff Bus Tour of our community to include: CAST STEM (located at Southwest Legacy High School), Toyota Motor Manufacturing North America, S.T.E.M. Early College High School (Harlandale ISD), and Mission Concepción. Following our tour, we were joined by our

vice presidents and deans for lunch at a south side staple – Don Pedro Mexican Restaurant.

To continue providing a high-quality experience at Palo Alto College, we have added 30 new full-time employees across Academic Success, College Services, and Student Success. Each of these new faces has a direct impact on our students' experience at Palo Alto College and are imperative additions to our teams.

Today (Monday, Aug. 20), we'll kick off our [Fall 2018 Convocation](#) agenda by joining our Alamo Colleges District colleagues at the annual District Convocation at San Antonio College's McAllister Auditorium. The theme will be **Level Up: Elevating Our Students to Excel in the 21st Century World**. The focus on this year's convocation will be on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Palo Alto College has much to celebrate, including being named one of the top 10 community colleges in the nation by the Aspen Institute. This recognition is a successful achievement for Palo Alto College and exemplifies the collaboration between our students, employees, partners, and entire community. To celebrate the beginning of the new academic year and highlight Palo Alto College's recent accomplishments, I look forward to joining you all at the Celebrate and Share PAC Excellence Luncheon on Monday, Aug. 20, beginning at noon in the Gymnasium.

On Tuesday, Aug. 21, we'll begin the day with breakfast with colleagues served from 8 – 9 a.m. in the Performing Arts Center Lobby, immediately followed by a Welcome and Incoming President's Meet & Greet from 9 – 10 a.m. As we begin to write a new chapter together, I want to be sure Palo Alto College remains a place of innovation and collaboration, so that we can continue to provide students with the best possible experience during their time with us.

And last, but certainly not least, we'll welcome, motivate, and engage with our newest students during New Palomino Family Day (formerly New Palomino Convocation) on Saturday, Aug. 25, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. in the Gymnasium/Botanical Garden. Join us as we welcome our Class of 2020 as the newest members of the Palo Alto College

community.

I look forward to working with each one of you as we come together with our continued commitment to keeping our students first.

In service,

Robert Garza, Ph.D.

Incoming President of Palo Alto College



ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT  
**Palo Alto College**

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