



LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE  
**FOUNDATION**

## Newsletter December 2025

Dear Friends,

It's the season of giving. We would like to thank the donors who contributed to LAVC's Basic Needs Food Pantry last month. **Because of you, more than \$1,500 was raised in emergency funding to support food insecurity for our students on campus.** That is a tremendous accomplishment, and we are grateful that our LAVC community stepped forward to help so many in need. Unfortunately, this need will carry over into next year as uncertainty around SNAP benefits continues for many Californians.

I would like to also take a moment to thank the dedicated faculty, support staff, counselors, coaches and so many more individuals who go above and beyond to ensure our students have the best collegiate experience possible at LAVC. Your efforts make a huge difference to our students on a daily basis.

Last but not least, the LAVC Foundation Board remains committed to ensuring the college has the resources it needs in continuing to serve our students. If you are interested in serving on the Board or a committee, please let us know!

If you are in a position to give this December, please consider the LAVC Foundation. [We are now able to receive gifts of stock and payments directly from Donor Advised Funds.](#) Your donations benefit not only our students, but our greater community as they enter the workforce or seek further educational opportunities.

**As you may know, there are significant upcoming changes to the Federal Tax code that begin on January 1st.** [This link from Carnegie Investment Counsel](#) provides a clear summary of these changes, with examples of what to do in 2025 vs 2026 and beyond.

From all of us at the LAVC Foundation, we want to express gratitude for your continued support of us this year, and we wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,

Andrea Schmitt  
Executive Director

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## Featured Faculty: Communications Chair Joshua Miller



**Joshua Miller, Communication Studies Department Chair**

Joshua Miller never saw himself as a strong student before eventually landing at Pierce College without a clear plan. Everything changed the day he helped a friend register for classes at Valley College. A chance encounter with a professor who invited him to join a public speaking course held in Bungalow 55 became the turning point in his life. Under then Professor Marty Taras's mentorship, Joshua joined the speech team, began competing, and within two years became one of the top speakers in the nation. What began as curiosity grew into purpose, taking him from Valley to UC Berkeley, then to USC as a debate coach, and ultimately back to Valley as a professor in 2002, where he has taught ever since.

Throughout his career, Joshua has watched students transform through communication in ways that go far beyond competition. He recalls one

student who struggled with addiction and self-harm but, after earning several gold medals, told him she no longer felt defined by her past. Another former student now lives in Zimbabwe, helping build community infrastructure and using the speaking and storytelling skills she learned at Valley to advocate for local projects. Today, more than two decades after that first invitation to Bungalow 55, Joshua remains deeply connected to the Valley College community he calls home. He describes it as a place filled with kindness, energy, and people who genuinely care, a place where students' lives are changed every day.

If you are interested in learning more about LAVC's Speech and Debate team, [please visit this page.](#)

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## LAVC Journalism students honored



Los Angeles  
**PRESS CLUB**

On Sunday night, two LAVC students attended the [Los Angeles Press Club's](#) National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards as nominees. Valley Star editor Kaia Mann's story "[Nearly \\$1 billion of construction inches toward the finish line](#)" was nominated as a finalist for Best Arts or Entertainment News Story. Photographer Jeremy Ruiz's photos from the [\[Spring 2025\] Crown](#) magazine's "Paint, Steel, and Subversion" story were selected as a finalist in the Best Arts or Entertainment Photo category and earned 3rd place.

Mann and Ruiz's work competed in the Student Journalism category alongside entries from USC (Annenberg Media), UCLA, Cal State Long Beach, Loyola Marymount University, Cal State Northridge, Cal State L.A., and other local colleges. Congratulations to both, and to LAVC's [Journalism Department](#) for continued excellence!

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Congratulations to LAVC Foundation Board member Richard Miller for being recognized as an ARS Distinguished Advocate by the [San Fernando Valley Bar Association](#) at their annual gala!

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## Thank you to our Sponsor



Thank you to Raising Cane's for their continued sponsorship of LAVC's Football Program! Sponsorships to LAVC Athletic Teams helps to support equipment maintenance, uniform purchases, and food for athletes. From all of us, we are grateful for your continued support. Go Monarchs!

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## Upcoming Events



# Jazz Combos Concert

19  
DEC

NINE BANDS INCLUDING VOCAL  
11:00 AM TO 1:30 PM  
M112 IN THE MUSIC BUILDING



Learn more at: [lavc.edu/campus-life/events](http://lavc.edu/campus-life/events)



Women's Basketball will host the LAVC Buddy's All-Star Classic Tournament on **December 11-13 beginning at 3 pm**. The following teams will play in the tournament: Los Angeles Valley College, Ventura College, CC San Francisco, Mt. Sac Community College, Long Beach City College, San Diego Mesa College, and Orange Coast College. Come out and support our Lady Monarchs! [All games are held in the South Gym.](#)



Students in the Musical Theater Repertoire class, directed by Dr. Christian Nova, will present an evening of Broadway selections from a variety of shows, musical revues, and films.

The event occurs on **Tuesday, December 16 at 7 pm** in the [Music Recital Hall - Music 106](#). There will be a reception immediately following the performance. Tickets are free.

[To access the LAVC Events Calendar, please go here.](#)

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## Estate Planning Seminar



OAK CREST LAW GROUP

ESTATE PLANNING, TRUST & PROBATE

Back by popular demand! Our second annual **Estate Planning Seminar** will be held on Wednesday, January 22, 2026 at 12:30 pm at Los Angeles Valley College. Join us for this complimentary seminar and learn how to create a personal plan that will protect your family's future. The event will include lunch. Special bonus opportunities: Learn how Life Insurance can help your financial planning needs and protect your family with a special post-lunch session with New York Life.

[To Register for the seminar and a planning session, please go here.](#)



**Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC)** is a two-year community college in Valley Glen, CA and part of the nine-college Los Angeles Community College District. It serves a student body of over 18,000 students each year from some of the most disenfranchised communities in the San Fernando Valley. **The Los Angeles Valley College Foundation's** mission is to enhance the education of its students through community involvement and to provide additional financial resources to Los Angeles Valley College.

**Donate to the LAVC  
Foundation**

**It's now easier than ever to support the Foundation  
with a gift of stock or via a Donor Advised Fund!**

**[For more information, please click here.](#)**

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**Thank you to our President's Circle Member:**

**Mr. Howard J. Levine**

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**[www.lavcfoundation.org](http://www.lavcfoundation.org) | (818) 947-2619**

**Stay connected with LAVC Foundation! Get the latest news, upcoming events, and Foundation highlights by following us on social media.**



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