



Newsletter February 2026

Dear Friends,

It's Scholarship season! The Foundation is excited to announce our annual scholarship application window opens on February 9th, the first day of the 2026 spring semester.

This year, 205 scholarships will be offered, up from 193 last year, totaling more than \$142,000 in awards. It is our goal to increase the number of students who apply to our scholarship program this year.

As always, we are grateful to our scholarship donors, both new and returning, who donate so generously so that we can continue to reward LAVC students who excel academically. Thank you in particular to our Board members who support scholarships: Board Chair Tony Quiroga, Secretary Sharon J. Udkoff, Elaine Baylor, Rickey Gelb, and Richard Miller via the [Rotary Club of Greater Van Nuys](#). We could not do this without you!

You can learn more about the impact of LAVC Scholarships in the infographic below. If you are interested in supporting an LAVC Scholarship, please visit our website [here](#), or email the Foundation's Development Officer Ronya Waters at watersre@lavc.edu.

Thank you to all of the donors who make this possible!

Sincerely,

Andrea Schmitt
Executive Director

Featured Faculty: Media Arts Chair Chad Sustin



Chad Sustin, Chair of LAVC Media Arts Department

Chad Sustin is very familiar with Valley Glen. He attended nursery school across the street from Los Angeles Valley College and attended Grant High School next door.

Professor Sustin's love for film began in 1983 when he watched E.T. in a theater with his mother, and felt so deeply moved that he knew he wanted to help others feel that kind of emotion through art. He began making movies with his sister and friends on his Fisher Price PXL 2000 camera, continued making films with friends through high school, then went on to college, working in production and development, with most of his experience in postproduction. Before becoming a full-time professor, he taught part-time while working at Technicolor on Sunset and Gower as a broadcast producer, helping complete the finishing process for television shows. Even while putting fifty or sixty hours a week in the industry, his mind kept returning to his classes, always thinking about how to bring what he did on professional projects into the classroom. He was later introduced to then Media Arts Chair Eric Swelstad, and their shared love of film and vision for the program made it clear that LAVC was where he wanted to be. He started as

a Project MATCH intern in 2010, then taught as an adjunct until 2016 when he joined the department full time.

Today, Professor Sustin is very proud of LAVC's Media Arts program. It offers a strong foundation in filmmaking and introduces students to various career pathways including cinematography, editing and color grading, producing, directing, screenwriting, visual effects, sound design, and its newest area of focus, virtual production. Due to significant growth, student showcases have increased from one event a year to three, as there are simply too many films to share in one night.

Looking ahead, Professor Sustin is both grateful and ambitious. His next dream is to see industry partners bring their productions into the college's new [Valley Academic and Cultural Center](#), rent stages and labs, and work alongside Valley students, so that they can gain direct experience follow their dreams into Hollywood.

Estate Planning Seminar

[New York Life](#) Financial Specialists Ashley Gaynor and Rosemary Laughrin joined [Oak Crest Law Group](#) Managing Attorney Edward Cainglit for the Foundation's second annual Estate Planning seminar on January 22nd. The lively discussion covered wills, trusts, probate, life insurance policies, annuities and much more. Thank you to all who attended!



2025 Scholarships at a Glance

LAVC FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Student Impact at a Glance | 2025



114 Students Surveyed

78% Received a Foundation Scholarship

"Supporting Access, Equity and Student Success at Los Angeles Valley College."

How Much Students Received:

44%
\$500 - \$999

39%
\$1000 - \$1,999

13%
\$100 - \$499

3% Over \$2,000

Academic Expenses:

- Books — 27%
- Supplies — 26%
- Tuition & Fees — 23%
- Equipment — 17%

Living Expenses:

- Transportation — 26%
- Food — 22%
- Rent — 21%
- Utilities — 19%
- Childcare — 6%

Scholarships Support the Whole Student!

Student Experience:

- 82% Easy to Apply
- 76% Enough Time to Complete
- 72% Info Easy to Find

"Without this scholarship..."

54% Could not continue their education



Your Support Creates Opportunity



Your Support Creates Opportunity

- ✓ Empowers First-Generation Students
- ✓ Helps Students Stay Enrolled
- ✓ Funds Education & Basic Needs
- ✓ Builds Pathway to CSU & UC Transfers



LOS ANGELES
VALLEY COLLEGE

February Ribbon Cuttings

Valley Academic Hall



Join Los Angeles Community College President Dr. Barry Gibbons, LAVC Faculty and Staff as we celebrate the opening of Valley Academic Hall on Friday, February 6th! This building is the new home of the Business Administration, CSIS, Emergency Services, Math, Psychology, and Sociology/Ethnic Studies departments. [The link to RSVP is here.](#)

Valley Academic and Cultural Center



Join Los Angeles Community College Chancellor Dr. Alberto Roman, Los Angeles Valley College President Dr. Barry Gribbons, and Media Arts & Design leadership and staff as we celebrate the opening of the Valley Academic and Cultural Center on Thursday, February 19th! The building will serve as an arts hub for the LAVC and greater community.

[The link to RSVP is 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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