

SBVC Honors API Heritage with Inclusive Curriculum & Events



Island Heritage Game Day featured multicultural performances on the football field during halftime.



Left to right Kai Matautia and Maya Matautia of local nonprofit The Young S.A.M.O.A. provided complimentary catering for SBVC's Island Heritage Game Day on November 11.

A new way of learning is coming to San Bernardino Valley College in Spring 2024. A cohort of up to 25 students will take two courses together, ENGL 101 and COMMST 100, taught through the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) lens.

The courses will be taught with culturally inclusive materials, spanning a wide range of API experiences. Students will read memoirs by Samoan, Hawaiian, Tongan, Filipino American (FilAm), and Fijian authors; explore FilAm storytelling; research culturally significant subjects from the perspective of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, and other API communities; and engage in poetry and oral history projects. The students taking the courses will tackle "exciting semester-long projects" together, "enhancing their cultural awareness and language proficiency," English Professor Dr. Rangel Zarate said. This learning community is called Taytayan, a Cebuano word that translates to "bridge." The name "beautifully encapsulates the vital role that mentorship, advocacy, community, and the cohort will play in the academic and personal journeys of San Bernardino Valley College students," Zarate said.

Though API Heritage Month is officially celebrated in May, The API community continues to create a cultural impact on campus by hosting API-centered events throughout October and November in honor of Filipino Heritage Month. The final home football game of the 2023 season was turned into a celebration for Island Heritage. Island Heritage Day, as it was coined, featured special half-time performances, food trucks and an opportunity to donate to the relief efforts of those impacted by the devastating fires that affected Maui this year.

Local nonprofit The Young S.A.M.O.A., which is helmed by local catering business Fire Knife Kitchen, provided complimentary food for attendees of Island Heritage Game Day. The Young S.A.M.O.A. is a community-based group in San Bernardino that works to serve at-risk & disadvantaged Inland Empire youth while raising better awareness and education of Samoan and Pacific Islander culture.