

## **SBVC partnership with Pacific High school leads to new career opportunities for high school students**



The San Bernardino community gathered in front of the new Transportation & Advanced Technology Center at Pacific High School for its ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 9, 2023. The 20,060 square foot building is the first of its kind in California. Since 2016, the SBVC Applied Technology, Transportation, and Culinary Arts Department has partnered with Pacific High School 1 to create guided pathways for high school students. SBVC Professor Berchman ‘Kenny’ Melancon and social studies teacher CJ Eastwood spearheaded the project. “It started with 15 students that we actually bussed to San Bernardino Valley College,” recalls Pacific High School principal Dr. Natalie Raymundo. Funding for the center came to fruition in 2018 and was a “long time in the making” with delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. SBVC offers dual enrollment and has articulation agreements that allow high school students to take courses during the day and receive college credit. With the new state-of-the-art facility, SBVC will bring some of its courses and instructors directly to the students. Students can receive certification as early as their high school graduation and enter high wage and high demand careers in the transportation industry.

“It gives them a fast-track to a career in the industry,” said Dr. Vanessa Thomas, Dean of Applied Technology, Transportation, and Culinary Arts at SBVC. “These students can start earning a living wage, they can support their families financially and contribute to the local economy.” The Heavy/Medium Duty Truck program prepares students to repair commercial diesel vehicles, but as Dr. Raymundo stated in her remarks at the ceremony, “this building is of the present and future. It’s already outfitted and ready to house future programs such as Commercial Electric Vehicles.”