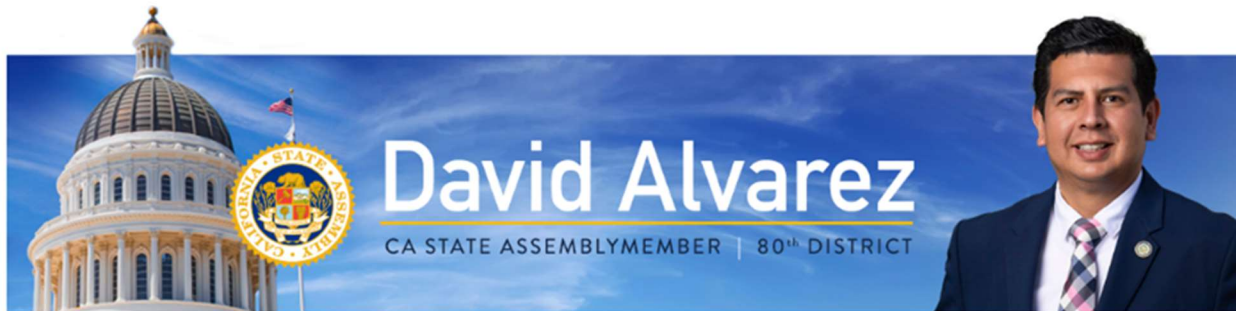




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Assemblymember Alvarez Celebrates Historic Agreement Between UC San Diego and Southwestern College to Launch First Public Health Degree Program in South Bay

Chula Vista, CA — Assemblymember David Alvarez (D-San Diego) today joined local officials and leaders from the University of California San Diego and Southwestern College to celebrate the signing of a shared intention that will establish a joint Bachelor of Science in public health degree program in the South Bay.

“A university campus is coming, a university education is here,” said Assemblymember Alvarez. “Today’s agreement is a huge milestone for South County students and families. By offering UC San Diego’s public health degree at Southwestern College, we are making world-class education more accessible in South Bay and giving students the opportunity to pursue their goals while staying connected to their families and community.”

The public health program, supported by \$5 million in state funding secured by Assemblymember Alvarez, will allow Southwestern College students to transfer seamlessly to UC San Diego and complete their upper-division coursework on the South Bay campus. UC San Diego faculty will teach directly at Southwestern College, ensuring students in the region can access a UC-quality education while remaining in their community.

“Expanding Public Health bachelor’s degree program to the SWC University Center is about more than education, it’s about creating direct pathways to high-demand careers,” said Dr. Mark Sanchez, Superintendent/President, Southwestern College. “This partnership with UC San Diego ensures our students have access to the skills and credentials needed to thrive in the public health workforce, while strengthening the economic vitality of our region.”

The South Bay, home to nearly 500,000 residents, has long lacked access to four-year bachelor degree programs. With this new agreement, students will no longer face the barrier of long commutes to access upper-division courses.

“UC San Diego is committed to serving Californians by expanding access to a world-class education and ensuring that geography is never a barrier to opportunity,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “This new B.S. in public health program, created in partnership with Southwestern College, reflects our dedication to making higher education more accessible in the South Bay while advancing teaching and research that address the unique needs of this vibrant and diverse region.”

This announcement is part of the broader University Now Initiative, which is focused on providing academic programs that align with regional workforce needs. The UC San Diego–Southwestern College partnership complements previously announced agreements with San Diego State University and CSU San Marcos, together broadening the range of degree pathways available to South County students and ensuring they have access to the educational opportunities that prepare them for in-demand careers.

UC San Diego faculty are expected to begin teaching at Southwestern College as soon as fall 2026.

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The 80th Assembly District includes the communities of Barrio Logan, Logan Heights, Sherman Heights, Lincoln Acres, Bonita, Otay Mesa and San Ysidro, along with the cities of Chula Vista, National City and Imperial Beach.