



**May 15, 2017**

**President's Waypoint: Commencement – Making History!**

I like the phrase “making history.” I particularly like it related to people’s lives, in that it acknowledges empowerment and a proactive attitude rather than a fatalistic perspective. We know that people, when given an opportunity, can change the trajectory of their lives and make their own beautiful history. You and I witness this every day in our students. We saw the culmination of this at SBCC’s commencement last Friday.

The La Playa stadium celebration marked the conclusion of the College’s academic year and a successful point along the educational journey of 1,526 graduating students. What a proud day it was. It was the best two hours spent the entire year, celebrating student success!! The students were all so happy and thrilled. I spoke with so many family members who were elated to see their son or daughter graduate from Santa Barbara City College. It was great to meet Steven Houseman, our most senior graduate at 72 years young! The whole event was truly a community affair with thousands in attendance.

While this was my 11th commencement as a president and my very first at SBCC, I can tell you, without hesitation, this commencement was the best organized, executed, and celebrated I have ever experienced! When you consider everyone involved, it takes about 100 people working as a team to plan and organized it, set it up, and orchestrate the event. The commencement team, led by Associate Dean Chris Johnson and Cindy Salazar, was outstanding. Dean Ben Partee and so many others from admissions, outreach, etc., working behind the scenes were excellent. All the facilities folks, including security, did an exceptional job. Dean Nevins jumped in at the last minute to deliver a fantastic message from the Academic Senate. He and Paul Jarrell also did an admirable job reading graduate names and doing so at a brisk but manageable pace. It was wonderful seeing all the faculty in their regalia turn out in celebration of their students! You looked marvelous!! I also appreciated the dedication and participation of our Board of Trustees in the ceremony. Thank you!

Finally, I have to say, the student speaker, Matthew Poulin, did a triumphant job with his speech. He was incredibly nervous, but he told me that through Professor Cameron Sublett’s guidance, he gained the confidence to pull it off! He certainly did with flying colors and grand applause! We were all proud of Matthew!

A commencement of this size and complexity is an amazing accomplishment of which our faculty, classified staff, and administration should be extremely proud. Santa Barbara City College is doing so many things really well, but last Friday, SBCC made history with a spectacular student celebration! Congratulations!!

Together forward!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anthony', written in a cursive style.