

Santa Monica College PRO Awards (2026)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING | MAY 5, 2026

Awarded Annually by **CCPRO**
(Community College Public Relations Organization)



The **PRO awards** given by CCPRO honored the outstanding marketing and communication efforts of California's **116 community colleges and 73 districts** during the 2025 calendar year.



2026 PRO Awards*
included the following
recognitions for SMC:

**announced during the 2026 CCPRO Conference, held April 8-10 in Paso Robles, CA*

Gold Awards (2):

1. In the **News Release** category, for: *“SMC Architecture & Interior Architecture Students Place Third in Prestigious National Competition”*

(Written by Director of Public Information Grace Smith; special thanks to the Architecture & Interior Architecture Programs & proofreader extraordinaire, Rebecca Sprigg)



(Left to right): SMC Architecture and Interior Architectural Design students Beau Carter, Rico Santana, Jacob Presogna, Kaya Gips, Candice Sledd, River Jordan, Arya Rahmanian, Coco Martino, Prof. Michael Rocchio, Mia Carreto, Prof. Josephine Hao, Marilyn Palacios, Ornella Dubuche, Youxian Luo. The team's design won third place at the annual Barbara G. Laurie (BGL) Student Design Competition hosted by National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). SMC remains the only community college ever to reach the finals of this prestigious national competition; this is the second consecutive year the college's students advanced to the final round. The awards were announced during the NOMA conference held in Kansas City from Oct. 8-12, 2025.

[Santa Monica College](#) › [News](#) › [SMC Arc & IArc Students Place Third in Prestigious National Architecture Competition](#)

SMC Interior/Architecture Students Place Third at Prestigious National Architecture Competition

First Community College to Advance to Finals at The Barbara G. Laurie (BGL) Student Design Competition Hosted by National Organization of Minority Architects

Gold Award

In the **Internal Communications** category, for the Marketing department: The **“Where We Matter”** campaign

SMC Where We Matter Campaign - Print



Light Pole Banners



Indoor Banners



Outdoor Banners



Posters

SMC Where We Matter Campaign - Digital



Facebook, Bluesky, Instagram



Zoom Backgrounds



Campus TV Screens

Silver Award (1)

*Catalog/Class Schedule Cover, for the Marketing
Department: Summer 2025 academic schedule of classes*



**SUMMER
2025**

SANTA MONICA COLLEGE

Bronze Awards (2)

1. **Feature Story** category (Public Information Office):

For a Dec. 2025 SMC in Focus article, written by Director of Public Information Grace Smith, featuring IT staffer Matt Wong who is also a student in SMC's Barbering Program:
["From WongCo to WongCuts - Santa Monica College"](#)



Matt's second act as Barbering student



In action with Prof. Brandon Ceballos

Friends are the family we choose for ourselves—thus goes a saying, holding such truth the meaning often flies right over our heads. But not for **Matthew “Matt” Wong**—a Network Communications Technician II at **Santa Monica College**—who is now also a student, in SMC’s [nascent Barbering program](#), housed in the Cosmetology Department.

Growing up in **Boston**, the grandson of a **Chinese** immigrant who moved into an **Italian-Irish** neighborhood—“You’d think he’d go to **Chinatown!**” Matt remarks on his grandfather’s courage—Matt loved going to the barbershop with his grandfather. The same barber who cut his grandfather’s hair did so for his sons and his grandsons, too. Eventually, when this barber died, a female barber named **Kathy** came into Matt’s life. It was Kathy who planted the seed in Matthew’s mind, a seed that would come to life roughly four decades later.

Special thanks to Matt Wong, the Barbering Program & Cosmetology Department

Bronze Award:

Photography - Commencement Photo, for the Marketing Department: 2025 Black Graduating Students Celebration

