



Foundation

Cuesta College Foundation Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Regular Committee Meeting

Monday, October 6, 2025 | 3 p.m.

Cuesta College North County Campus

- Dallons Hall, Building N3100/N3200 in Room N3201

Zoom Meeting: [https://cuesta-](https://cuesta-edu.zoom.us/j/3625264384?pwd=FcyMUpXhhqw1NYyyVNmZPcsjbKqSoo.l&omn=82097363881)

<https://cuesta-edu.zoom.us/j/3625264384?pwd=FcyMUpXhhqw1NYyyVNmZPcsjbKqSoo.l&omn=82097363881>

A. Call To Order

Foundation President Craig Darnell called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

B. Roll Call: Establishment of Quorum

Board Members

Present:

Executive Committee

Craig Darnell, Chair

Jim Anderson

Stuart Campbell

Jeff Darnton (Late)

Janice Fong Wolf

Grigger Jones

Scott Lathrop (Zoom)

Debbie Perrault (Late)

Jill Stearns, Ph.D.

Mary Strobridge

Board Members

Michael Boyer

Andrea Devitt

Susan Dressler, Ph.D.

Cyndee Edwards

Erica Flores Baltodano

Rob Garcia

Patricia Gordon, Ph.D.

(Zoom)

Eric Holmen

Mary E. Howell

Robyn Letters

Steve McGrath

George Pudlo

John Rolph

Lisa Rubio-Castillo

(Zoom)

Cheryl Vines (Zoom)

Marcy Woolpert Rourke

Barbara Martinez

Pragna Patel-Mueller

Isaac Pummil

Foundation Staff

Present:

Rick Camarillo

Andrea Horvath

Katie Osman

Jessica Strano

Guests Present:

Mia Ruiz, Dean, Student

Success and Support

Programs, North County

Campus

Wes Martin, Director,

Continuing &

Community Education

Board Members

Absent:

Ryan Ashlock

Elizabeth Coria, Ph.D.



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C. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve as presented: **Jones/Strobridge** – Passed by a majority vote of the Foundation Board of Directors and unanimously by those members present to approve the Foundation Board of Directors agenda for the Monday, Oct. 6, 2025, meeting as presented.

- **Yes** – (26) Jim Anderson, Michael Boyer, Stuart Campbell, Craig Darnell, Jeff Darnton, Andrea Devitt, Susan Dressler, Cyndee Edwards, Erica Flores Baltodano, Janice Fong Wolf, Rob Garcia, Patricia Gordon, Eric Holmen, Mary E. Howell, Grigger Jones, Scott Lathrop, Robyn Letters, Steve McGrath, Debbie Perrault, George Pudlo, John Rolph, Lisa Rubio-Castillo, Jill Stearns, Mary Strobridge, Marcy Woolpert Rourke, Cheryl Vines
- **No** – (0) None to report.
- **Absent** – (5) Rick Ashlock, Elizabeth Coria, Barbara Martinez, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Isaac Pummill
- **Abstention** – (0) None to report.

D. Public Comment

No public comment.

E. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from Aug. 4, 2025, as presented: **Garcia/Boyer** – Motion passed unanimously by all members present.

- **Yes** – (26) Jim Anderson, Michael Boyer, Stuart Campbell, Craig Darnell, Jeff Darnton, Andrea Devitt, Susan Dressler, Cyndee Edwards, Erica Flores Baltodano, Janice Fong Wolf, Rob Garcia, Patricia Gordon, Eric Holmen, Mary E. Howell, Grigger Jones, Scott Lathrop, Robyn Letters, Steve McGrath, Debbie Perrault, George Pudlo, John Rolph, Lisa Rubio-Castillo, Jill Stearns, Mary Strobridge, Marcy Woolpert Rourke, Cheryl Vines
- **No** – (0) None to report.
- **Absent** – (5) Rick Ashlock, Elizabeth Coria, Barbara Martinez, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Isaac Pummill
- **Abstention** – (0) None to report.

F. Program

Our featured program highlighted the Commercial Truck Driving (CDL) Program at the Cuesta North County campus, presented by Mia Ruiz and Wes Martin. After two years of planning and collaboration with industry partners in



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North County, the program launched in April 2025. Mia worked closely with employers to develop a curriculum that meets regional workforce needs. The program, which has a long waitlist and admits students by lottery, includes orientation, preparation for knowledge tests to obtain a Commercial Learner's Permit, and hands-on behind-the-wheel training and DMV testing, totaling 32 hours of driving instruction. Wes provided an overview of the curriculum and labor market data showing high demand for CDL-trained workers. There are currently 28 students enrolled and 15 graduates. Program challenges include high demand with 220 individuals on the interest list, limited instructor availability, and increasing fuel and maintenance costs. Katie shared that the program recently received a \$5,000 sponsorship from Paso Robles Waste & Recycle in support of ongoing operations. Jill explained that the program was created in response to a community need for drivers, as communicated by the Workforce Development Board had been paying \$6,000 per student for private training. Mia turned this need into action by developing a no-cost program for students. The Board stepped out to the parking lot to meet the Program Director and see one of the trucks.

G. Business Agenda

1. The Biannual Gift Report

The Biannual Gift Report was presented by Katie, who provides this update to the Trustees twice a year in January and July. The report covers all donations to the Foundation over \$200 received between January 1 and June 30, 2025, totaling \$1.3 million, with an additional \$16,000 in gifts under \$200. This year, a new reporting methodology was used to reflect cumulative giving over the six-month period, incorporating faculty payroll deductions and pledges.

2. Budget Update

Rick reviewed Annual Fund giving from July 1 through August 31, 2025. Total gifts to date are nearly \$700,000, putting us at 33% of this year's goal. The General Fund stands at almost \$23,000, and Scholarship Accounts are up 72%. Excluding Board gifts, the General Fund goal is \$205,000, with current giving at nearly \$23,000 from 161 gifts.

H. Action Items

1. FY26 Budget Revision

Rick discussed reallocating the remaining Director of Philanthropy salary toward consulting services, resulting in a savings of \$50,000. Katie would like to



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first assess the Foundation's needs before filling the open position. Key areas identified for focused support include marketing and communications, event consulting, and database operations. The plan is to bridge the gap by engaging experts in these areas.

Motion to approve as presented: **Boyer/Fong Wolf** – Passed by a majority vote of the Foundation Board of Directors and unanimously by those members present to approve the FY26 Budget Revision, meeting as presented.

- **Yes** – (26) Jim Anderson, Michael Boyer, Stuart Campbell, Craig Darnell, Jeff Darnton, Andrea Devitt, Susan Dressler, Cyndee Edwards, Erica Flores Baltodano, Janice Fong Wolf, Rob Garcia, Patricia Gordon, Eric Holmen, Mary E. Howell, Grigger Jones, Scott Lathrop, Robyn Letters, Steve McGrath, Debbie Perrault, George Pudlo, John Rolph, Lisa Rubio-Castillo, Jill Stearns, Mary Strobridge, Marcy Woolpert Rourke, Cheryl Vines
- **No** – (0) None to report.
- **Absent** – (5) Rick Ashlock, Elizabeth Coria, Barbara Martinez, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Isaac Pummill
- **Abstention** – (0) None to report.

2. Resolution of Appreciation for Nella Girolo

As President, Craig Darnell read the resolution aloud to the Foundation Board. It will be framed for Nella and presented to her.

Motion to approve as presented: **Dressler/Jones** – Passed by a majority vote of the Foundation Board of Directors and unanimously by those members present to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for Nella Girolo, as presented.

- **Yes** – (21) Stuart Campbell, Craig Darnell, Jeff Darnton, Janice Fong Wolf, Grigger Jones, Debbie Perrault, Jill Stearns, Ph.D., Jim Anderson, Ryan Ashlock, Andrea Devitt, Erica Flores Baltodano, Rob Garcia, Eric Holmen, Mary E. Howell, Robyn Letters, Barbara Martinez, Steve McGrath, George Pudlo, Lisa Rubio Castillo, Marcy Woolpert Rourke, Cheryl Vines
- **No** – (0) There is none to report.
- **Absent** – (5) Rick Ashlock, Elizabeth Coria, Barbara Martinez, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Isaac Pummill
- **Abstention** – (0) none to report.

I. Executive Reports

1. Foundation President

Since the previous full Board meeting, Craig was able to meet one of the



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potential consultants with Katie. Additionally, he shared his experience at the Scholarship Reception and highlighted key moments from the event. This year marked a record-breaking total of \$777,640 awarded in scholarships. The reception was packed with attendees, including overflow. Craig was particularly moved by the two student speakers and the challenges they overcame to pursue higher education, including a single mother and a first-generation college student.

2. Superintendent/President

As the guest speaker and host of their October meeting, Dr. Stearns was able to share with the Paso Robles Rotary the 27-year history of the North County Campus, highlighting the local philanthropy and vision that made the campus possible. She also provided an update on the new building currently under construction, which is the final planned addition to the campus at this time. The facility was intentionally designed to be flexible and serve multiple purposes. It will include semi-enclosed spaces to support heavy trades programs, an agricultural soils lab specifically designed for plant sciences, and dedicated areas for Movement, Health, and Wellness programs with shower facilities available. Dr. Stearns announced the purchase of the Arroyo Grande Rite Aid property and invited Mary Strobridge to provide the details.

3. Foundation Executive Director

This was Katie's second Board meeting since stepping into her role as Executive Director three months ago. She shared that the "Evening at the SLO Campus Center" event has been rescheduled, as construction at the center is still underway. The event is now planned for early January and will celebrate our three honored alumni. Katie and Assistant Marketing Director Ritchie Bermudez are producing a video highlighting the honorees to share with the community and premiere at the event. Looking ahead, The Foundation is planning a spring fundraising event honoring Clint and Connie Pearce for over a decade of volunteer leadership as Rodeo Club coaches and their impact on the Cuesta College Rodeo program. Proceeds will benefit the Clint and Connie Pearce Rodeo Endowment which will support access, competition, equipment, travel, and program sustainability. Katie is working with consultant George Boodrokas of Philanthropia Consulting to work on strategic planning. A survey of Board Members is being developed with results to be reviewed during the Board Retreats in January and February. Insights from the survey will inform the work of a strategic working group tasked with guiding future initiatives.



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J. Representative Reports

2. Board of Trustees (Strobridge)

The Board expressed great enthusiasm about the purchase of the Arroyo Grande Rite Aid property. The new location will be ideal for both current students and adults returning to school. It is conveniently situated within walking distance of restaurants and shops, and importantly, the property includes its own parking. Dr. Stearns shared that the new campus is expected to open in 2028. During the escrow period, Cuesta will have access to the property to begin preparations for the opening.

3. Faculty Report (Devitt)

Andrea attended the recent Scholarship Reception and shared her experience with colleagues. Inspired by the event, her department will establish a Counseling Department Scholarship. She noted that spring applications are now open and encouraged everyone to apply to Cuesta to see how the process has evolved. While the application is more complex due to fraud-prevention measures, support is available to assist applicants. She also shared that the Student Success Center recently hosted Study Jam sessions, two in North County and two in SLO, serving nearly 900 students and fostering collaboration among faculty, staff, and administrators during transfer season.

K. Committee Chair Reports

a. Alumni Relations Committee (Fong Wolf)

While we wait for the delayed *Evening at the SLO Campus Center* event in January, Janice encouraged the Board to look at the Cuesta Summer Magazine where our three Honored Alumni are featured.

b. Development Committee (Darnton)

Everything is trending upward, with funds coming in across all areas. Jeff encouraged the Board to make their Board Giving contributions to the Cuesta Fund before the end of the year, noting that this effort needs attention. A new analysis is underway to examine different donor segments and better understand where contributions are coming from and how they compare historically.

c. Finance Committee (Campbell)

The Finance Committee will be meeting with Mercer in the next week or so. Over the past year, returns are up more than 13 percent, exceeding the benchmarks. The Foundation is also exploring opportunities in the private equity market and is currently managing more than 53 million



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dollars in assets. We are operating on the upper echelon compared to the larger Community College community in terms of both the number of staff at the Foundation and the amount of funds we are managing.

d. Nominating Committee (Lathrop)

The committee is currently in a bit of a lull. In November and December, members will reconvene to discuss plans for the next round of nominations. The Foundation has created a process to flag potential Board candidates in our database, allowing Katie to add individuals she meets in the community that seem like they could be a great fit for the Board. She encouraged everyone to share names of prospective members so they can be included as well.

Comments by Staff

Debbie added that everyone worked very hard on the Scholarship Reception, and it showed in how successful the event was. She noted, however, that it can be difficult for some donors to attend in person. To help bridge that gap, Foundation staff developed a way for students to connect with donors by writing letters of appreciation.

L. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 4:30 p.m.



Foundation

ACTION ITEM

Department	Requestor	Contact Number
Foundation	Craig Darnell	(805) 459-0688

Action Title

Approval of the Monday, Oct. 6, 2025, Cuesta College Foundation Board of Directors meeting agenda.

Summary of Action

Craig Darnell requests approval of the agenda for the Foundation Board of Directors meeting on Monday, Oct. 6, 2025.

Recommended Action: Approve the agenda as presented.

Action Item Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/>	Motion First <u>Grigger Jones</u> Second <u>Mary Strobridge</u> Yes _____ No _____
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Darnell".

October 6, 2025

Foundation President or Designee

Date



Foundation

ACTION ITEM

Department	Requestor	Contact Number
Foundation	Craig Darnell	(805) 459-0688

Action Title

Approval of the unadopted minutes for the Monday, Aug. 4, 2025, Cuesta College Foundation Board of Directors meeting.

Summary of Action

Craig Darnell requests the approval of the unadopted minutes from the Foundation Board of Directors meeting held on Monday, Aug. 4, 2025.

Recommended Action: Approve the minutes as presented.

Action Item	Motion
Approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/>	First <u> </u> Rob Garcia Second <u> </u> Michael Boyer Yes <u> </u> X <u> </u> No <u> </u>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Darnell".

Oct. 6, 2025

Foundation President or Designee

Date



Foundation

ACTION ITEM

Department	Requestor	Contact Number
Foundation	Rick Camarillo	(805) 546-3279

Action Title

Personnel Update and FY26 Budget Revision

Summary of Action

Rick Camarillo presents a proposed adjustment to the FY26 operating budget in response to a current staff vacancy. The adjustment reallocates \$100,000 from the Salaries/Personnel line item to the Consultants budget to support continued operations and project delivery through contracted services. The Executive Director anticipates developing a revised job description and recruiting to permanently fill the position in FY27. The use of consultants is intended as a temporary solution to maintain continuity of work during this transitional period.

Recommended Action: Approve the Personnel Update and FY26 Budget Revision, as presented.

Action Item	Motion
Approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/>	First _____ Michael Boyer Second _____ Janice Fong Wolf Yes _____ No _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Camarillo".

Oct. 6, 2025

Foundation President or Designee

Date



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ACTION ITEM

Department	Requestor	Contact Number
Foundation	Craig Darnell	(805) 459-0688

Action Title

Approval of the Resolution Honoring Nella Girolo

Summary of Action

The Foundation Board of Directors is presented with a resolution honoring Nella Girolo for her exceptional dedication and service to the Cuesta College Foundation Board of Directors spanning over three decades. Throughout her tenure, Nella has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the mission of the Foundation and has made significant contributions to advancing student success and supporting the College community. This resolution recognizes her leadership, generosity, and lasting impact on the Foundation and Cuesta College.

Recommended Action: Approve the Resolution as presented.

Action Item	Motion
Approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/>	First _____ Susan Dressler Second _____ Grigger Jones Yes _____ No _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Darnell".

Oct. 6, 2025

Foundation President or Designee

Date