Doña Ana Community College
2020-25 Strategic Plan
Final Plan – January 15, 2021
FINAL REPORT – August 2026



Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Enhance Student Success & Social Mobility

- Objective 1.1: Develop, implement, and support programs that help pre-college students cultivate skills and knowledge they need for successful entry into college.
- Objective 1.2: By identifying and addressing opportunity gaps, increase the number of students who successfully progress through programs of study including career technical education, general and transfer education, and adult education.
- Objective 1.3: Prepare students to become global citizens with the essential skills needed for the 21st century including the following: effective communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, personal and social responsibility, and information and digital literacy.
- Objective 1.4: Foster a culture of lifelong learning by developing opportunities for community members to develop skills and knowledge in support of personal, civic, social, and/or employment goals.
- Objective 1.5: Cultivate pride in DACC and the NMSU system.

Goal 2: Elevate Research & Creative Activity

- Objective 2.1: Cultivate a culture that supports research and creativity at DACC.
- Objective 2.2: Identify and engage with local and regional problems by doing research in classes, labs, and administrative units to develop practical solutions and applications.
- Objective 2.3: Engage in analysis of institutional data to address/redress inequities in institutional policies, procedures, and practices.

Goal 3: Amplify Services to Our Communities

- Objective 3.1: Cultivate a culture of civic responsibility.
- Objective 3.2: Foster community-wide awareness of, and support for workforce development.
- Objective 3.3: Support economic development activities in the community.

Goal 4: Build a Robust University System

- Objective 4.1: Embracing diversity as an asset, become a leader among community colleges in promotion and implementing programs that support diversity, equity, and inclusion for our students and communities.
- Objective 4.2: Acknowledge and continue to cultivate faculty and staff excellence.
- Objective 4.3: Establish operational excellence through a metric-driven, service-oriented approach.
- Objective 4.4: Incorporate quality technology to support DACC missions.
- Objective 4.5: Align budget priorities to institutional mission and goals.
- Objective 4.6: Identify challenges and mobilize resources to build a sustainable institution and community.

Executive Summary: A Framework for Institutional Transformation

The **2020–2025 Strategic Plan Final Report** marks a landmark period of progress, institutional resilience, and systemic growth for Doña Ana Community College (DACC). Launched amidst the unprecedented uncertainty and uncharted territory of a global pandemic, this five-year strategic roadmap served as a vital anchor, guiding the institution through complex operational shifts while reinforcing an unwavering commitment to our students and borderland community. Organized around four foundational pillars—**Enhancing Student Success & Social Mobility**, **Elevating Research & Creative Activity**, **Amplifying Services to Our Communities**, and **Building a Robust University System**—the college systematically turned crisis into opportunity. Through targeted investments in pre-college readiness, adult education, digital literacy, and high-demand career pathways, DACC closed opportunity gaps and prepared learners to thrive as 21st-century global citizens. Concurrently, the college deepened its regional impact by embedding course-based research, expanding workforce development

partnerships, cultivating civic responsibility, and advancing diversity, operational excellence, and technological equity across the institution. This report synthesizes the collective achievements, metric-driven outcomes, and transformative initiatives that have demonstrated DACC's adaptive strength and solidified its role as a resilient engine for educational access, social mobility, and economic prosperity within the New Mexico State University system.

Goal 1: Enhance Student Success & Social Mobility

To enhance student success and social mobility, DACC focused on a holistic educational pipeline that begins by preparing pre-college students for successful entry and systematically closing opportunity gaps to boost progression across career technical, transfer, and adult education programs. By equipping learners with essential 21st-century competencies—such as critical thinking, communication, digital literacy, and personal responsibility—the strategy prepares them to thrive as global citizens. DACC also extended this impact into the broader community by fostering a culture of lifelong learning aligned with civic, personal, and career advancement, all while cultivating an overarching pride in DACC and the NMSU system.

The major accomplishments for Goal 1 can be thematically placed in the following categories.

1. **Pre-College Outreach & Early Recruitment** (focused on building the pipeline by engaging K-12 students and introducing them to higher education and career pathways).
   - ENLACE Activities: Middle School College for a Day, Research Day for High School Students, and elementary school Career Day presentations.
   - Admissions & Recruitment: Middle and high school campus tours, high school College Day participation, and elementary career days.
2. **Transition, Academic Readiness & Placement** (focused on onboarding incoming students and providing the foundational academic support needed to succeed early on).
   - Title III Initiatives: Incoming Freshman Class programs, such as Math Bootcamp.
   - Curriculum & Placement Reform: Accelerated and integrated Math and English classes, alongside Multiple Measures Writing Placement.
   - Academic Support Services: Academic Readiness Center workshops and Virtual Learning & Instructional Technology support.
3. **Holistic Student Support & Lifecycle Retention** (focused on specialized academic hubs, financial stability, and basic needs that keep students enrolled and thriving).
   - Health Science Compass to Care Project: Mandatory online Pre-health orientation, holistic student support faculty training, and the Health Sciences Pre Health Hub.
   - Financial Aid & Accessibility: Expanded educational access through localized community outreach events, specialized FAFSA completion workshops, and a dedicated outreach role, alongside the successful navigation of complex federal regulatory changes to maximize annual student aid disbursements and scholarship opportunities.
   - Life Skills & Literacy: Career & Life Skills Academy, Financial Wellness Program, and Adult Education.
   - Basic Needs & Engagement: DACC Food Pantry support and THRIVE.
4. **Career Readiness, Experiential Learning & Partnerships** (focused directly on social mobility by connecting academic work to workforce entry, transfer pathways, and industry).
   - Career Exploration & Experience: Excelencia Career Service Expo, Internship/Co-Op Learning Experiences, and Small Business Development Center outreach/training.
   - Transfer Pathways: Advising Transfer Fairs held on campus with NMSU, UTEP, UNM, and others.
   - Industry & Community Growth: General Education implementation/assessment and building deep community and industry partnerships.
5. **Leadership, Institutional Pride & Alumni Engagement** (focused on student leadership, celebrating excellence, and maintaining long-term connection to the institution).

- Student Leadership & Clubs: DACC Student Government Association (SGA), SkillsUSA, other student organizations, and the Grow Your Own Leadership Academy.
- Recognition & Awards: Crimson Scholar lists on each campus, Stars of Excellence, and the A-Mountain Award.
- Institutional Culture & Alumni: Newsletter and announcements, DACC Swag, formation of the Alumni Association, and the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Following are some specific examples of activities and data from the categories listed above for **Goal 1: Enhance Student Success & Social Mobility**.

Cultivating Pre-College Skills and Knowledge for Seamless College Entry (FY23-25) – Objective 1.1
The Office of Admissions, Orientation, and Veteran Services at Doña Ana Community College (DACC) successfully achieved the strategic plan goal of developing, implementing, and supporting programs that help pre-college students cultivate the essential skills and knowledge required for successful entry into higher education. Over a five-year period, the office significantly expanded college accessibility across southern New Mexico and beyond by participating in more than 500 outreach events—including high school visits, in-school application days, career fairs, campus tours, parent information sessions, and application workshops—directly engaging over 12,000 prospective students, families, and community members. These targeted initiatives minimized barriers, simplified the admissions process, and fostered lasting institutional relationships with area high school counselors, students, and families. This robust recruitment framework was sustained by growing annual activity, with the total number of presentations, events, and tours rising from 212 during the 2023–2024 academic year to 300 during 2024–2025, alongside an increase in Veteran Affairs (VA) outreach events from 4 to 13 to support military-connected student transitions.

To ensure pre-college knowledge effectively translated into long-term student success, DACC deployed comprehensive orientation and onboarding frameworks designed to prepare students for academic expectations and resource mobilization before classes began. During the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 terms, the college engaged a total of 2,147 student sign-ups, resulting in 1,939 orientation completions across hybrid online and in-person sessions. The department further modernized its pre-college pipeline during the 2024–2025 academic year by piloting the *Orientation Kickstart* program, which directly prepared 48 students from Organ Mountain High School for an earlier, successful transition into higher education. This proactive approach was amplified in Fall 2024, attracting 1,913 student sign-ups and achieving 1,727 completions through the streamlined Comevo online platform and specialized pre-health modules. Additionally, DACC hosted annual multi-campus *Welcome Back Bash* events across the Sunland Park, Espina, East Mesa, and Gadsden locations, welcoming hundreds of students and families to encourage immediate engagement with campus departments and reinforce a sustainable culture of civic responsibility and academic readiness.

Closing Opportunity Gaps and Accelerating Pre-College Transitions Through Adult Education – Objectives 1.1, 1.2, & 1.4
The adult education program has emerged as a powerful engine for advancing the college's strategic goals of student success and social mobility, driven by a pivotal shift in student processing. By overhauling its identification and assessment strategy for High School Equivalency (HSE) candidates in FY25, the program unlocked massive growth, immediately yielding a 62% surge in overall enrollment that sustained into FY26. This foundational change directly translated into dramatic improvements in student completion: after hovering between 13 and 25 completers from FY21 through FY24, graduation numbers skyrocketed to 63 in FY25 and reached a peak of 84 in FY26—a staggering 236% increase in graduates in just two years. Furthermore, the program successfully expanded its reach to vulnerable, transitional demographics, steadily increasing the number of young adults (ages 16–24) served from 178 in FY24 to 235 in FY26. By rapidly scaling both its student baseline and completion rates, the adult education initiative has significantly broadened access and provided historically underserved individuals with the credentials necessary to accelerate their upward social mobility.

Realizing Student Success and Social Mobility by Addressing Opportunity Gaps in Financial Aid – Objective 1.2
The Office of Financial Aid took on the challenge of enhancing student success and social mobility by systematically dismantling the financial barriers that frequently restrict access to higher education. Recognizing that financial aid is often the primary pivot point for college enrollment and persistence, the office proactively reallocated its internal resources to establish a dedicated, full-time Outreach Coordinator position. This strategic investment powered an aggressive community engagement campaign over the past five years, resulting in the execution of more than 218 outreach events that directly connected with over 7,937 students and their families across the service area. This institutional push is clearly reflected in the steady growth of outreach engagement; the total number of financial aid workshops and promotional events grew from 71 in the 2022–23 academic year to 83 by 2024–25, which expanded the number of students directly served through these tracking initiatives from 237 to 4,739 annually. Through targeted campus-based FAFSA completion workshops, localized high school presentations, and deeply individualized, one-on-one counseling sessions, the financial aid team transitioned from a traditional processing unit into a proactive hub of advocacy. By expanding awareness of federal, state, institutional, and scholarship opportunities—which helped drive annual scholarship applications up to a peak of 1,774 in the 2024–25 cycle—these efforts successfully reduced enrollment uncertainty and established robust pathways for historically underserved populations to achieve upward mobility.

This impact was further underscored by the office's exceptional agility in navigating an unprecedented period of nationwide institutional disruption. Over the five-year cycle, the financial aid staff successfully managed a volatile regulatory environment marked by pandemic-related emergency relief distributions, consecutive legislative updates, and the complex operational rollout of the federally redesigned Simplified FAFSA. Despite systemic processing delays, shifting federal criteria, and widespread public uncertainty, staff members dedicated countless hours to specialized professional development and flexible policy implementation to guarantee accurate, timely distributions. As a direct result of these efforts, the grand total of financial aid disbursed to students grew substantially over the strategic plan period, rising from $18,082,658.22 across 9,151 individual awards in the 2020–21 academic year to an impactful $27,064,102.37 in the 2024–25 academic year. This expanded funding portfolio included a climb in total grant distributions to $16,840,643.00 and an increase in total scholarship funding to $7,132,419.09 by the end of the reporting cycle. Acting as critical problem-solvers and student advocates, the team successfully mitigated disruptions to the enrollment pipeline, directly enabling thousands of students to secure vital resources. These measurable outcomes affirm that the Office of Financial Aid significantly assisted in ensuring that financial complexity did not hinder student persistence, graduation, or long-term socio-economic advancement.

Enhancing Student Success: Integrating Digital Literacy and 21st-Century Core Competencies (FY23-25) – Objective 1.3
During the 2020–2025 strategic planning cycle, the Virtual Learning & Instructional Technology (VLIT) unit directly advanced student success, social mobility, and global citizenship by systematically removing digital equity barriers and building essential 21st-century fluencies. Working alongside roughly 12 institutional departments as the primary student-facing partner for the XCITE initiative, VLIT coordinated campus-wide hardware distribution events and provided multi-channel wraparound support—including 24/7 digital guides and multi-campus technology orientations—to ensure students could seamlessly navigate foundational platforms like Canvas, Microsoft 365, Outlook, and Zoom. The unit rapidly scaled its educational programming to translate physical technology into academic achievement, expanding from 15 workshops in 2023–2024 to 48 sessions in 2024–2025 across eight distinct topics, ranging from iPad productivity to cybersecurity, digital safety, and ethical artificial intelligence.

Central to this digital readiness framework was VLIT's flagship self-paced Canvas Student Training program, which instilled personal accountability and organizational discipline while turning technical proficiency into portable, career-ready skills. Student completions for the program surged from 189 in 2023–2024 to 278 in 2024–2025,

reaching a peak of 549 completions in FY26—reflecting a 190.5% overall growth metric driven by widespread student demand. With participating students reporting a 99% preparedness rate and a 95% recommendation rate, this structured onboarding allowed learners from diverse backgrounds to bypass technical troubleshooting and focus directly on course content, critical thinking, and degree persistence. By blending hardware access, AI literacy, and foundational platform training, VLIT successfully empowered students to become responsible digital citizens equipped for higher education and modern workforce integration.

Fostering Social Mobility and Lifelong Learning Through Community-Centered K–12 Pathways (FY23–25) – Objectives 1.2 & 1.4

The ENLACE program played a key role in helping DACC realize it's strategic plan goal of enhancing student success and social mobility. Through the innovative project-based learning curriculum, a comprehensive pipeline is built that empowers K-12 students with identity exploration, self-advocacy, linguistic discovery, and essential human skills. During the 2024–2025 academic year, the initiative delivered direct instructional service to 452 students across high school (253), middle school (183), and elementary (16) cohorts, while generating an astonishing 3,172 indirect student and 92 adult touches through expansive community interventions. These indirect services featured immersive higher education exposures—including 200 combined admissions presentations for DACC and NMSU, campus tours, FAFSA workshops, and visits to Western New Mexico University and Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine —alongside large-scale community initiatives like the ENLACE Action Research Conference (325 students), a Mad City financial simulation (250 students), and the ENLACE Health and Wellness Day (452 students).

The profound impact of this structured support network on long-term student success and generational mobility is underscored by exceptional longitudinal academic outcomes. Among high school participants in grades 9–11, ENLACE achieved a remarkable 99% program retention rate (148/149 students) and an 88% grade-to-grade matriculation rate (132/149 students). Most significantly, the program demonstrated its capacity to break systemic barriers to higher education as 95% of its high school seniors graduated (99/104), with 88% of those graduates (91/104) successfully completing the transition to higher education or the military after earning admission to NMSU and DACC. By equipping historically underserved students with both the refined human skills and practical academic milestones needed to navigate complex social landscapes, ENLACE firmly established an equitable, replicable framework for community-wide advancement.

Promoting Progression Through Transfer Pathways (FY23-25) – Objectives 1.2 & 1.3

To support student transition and address equity gaps, DACC Academic Advising utilized targeted outreach events alongside intensive casework to drive student momentum and institutional persistence. To create a clear pathway toward baccalaureate education, the department hosted the annual spring DACC Transfer Fair, which saw student attendance grow from 51 students February 2024, to 76 students on February 2025; both events connected internally and Crimson Connect-marketed students to multiple institutions, including NMSU, UTEP, UNM, WNMU, ENMU, NM Highlands, and Grand Canyon University. Additionally, the fall NMSU Discovery Series provided focused program explorations for DACC students through internal emails and Navigate messaging, drawing 65 students and parents for the Criminal Justice Program in September 2023, and 7 students and employees for the Food Science Program in September 2024. Crucially, the department's opportunity gap work focuses on students with GPAs lower than 2.0 through mandatory academic advising holds, guiding them to regain good standing by repeating classes, altering majors, or utilizing NMSU's Adjusted Credit Option GPA reset program. For those facing academic suspension, the specialized Suspension Reentry Program provides direct appeal guidance to systematically identify and address personal barriers, allowing students to return with a manageable credit load of 7 credits or less as they work to successfully progress toward their academic goals.

Instilling Pride in DACC and the NMSU System Through the Alumni Network – Objective 1.5

DACC cultivated pride in the college and the NMSU system by establishing a dedicated Alumni Network in March 2023 to foster a lifelong sense of pride, belonging, and community connection. The network actively unites

former students—defined as anyone who completed a single class, certificate, or degree—alongside current faculty and staff, implementing seamless onboarding pipelines such as graduation program QR codes and welcome letters. This targeted outreach drove consistent institutional engagement, with network membership growing steadily from 143 members in its inaugural year to 178 in 2024, and reaching 231 members in 2025. This expanding network serves as a pillar of institutional pride by honoring Distinguished Alumni, nominated by college deans for their professional achievements and community service, at the annual DACC Block Party—a signature community event that celebrates the college's impact and strengthens relationships across generations of the DACC family. Complemented by a biannual alumni newsletter that spotlights student success and institutional milestone updates, these strategic engagement efforts consistently reinforce a lasting culture of institutional pride, celebrate graduate excellence, and deepen the collective bond within the broader NMSU system.

Empowering Diverse Learners: Advancing Personal Growth and Career Readiness Through Inclusive Community Frameworks – Objectives 1.2 & 1.4

The Career & Life Skills Academy (CLSA) directly exemplifies how the college fosters a culture of lifelong learning and social mobility by creating inclusive educational pathways tailored to personal, social, and employment goals. Established out of a direct community need highlighted by a local mother and daughter, the program evolved through the Inspire Coalition—a dedicated two-year collaborative framework of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), family members, public schools, state agencies, and local nonprofits like the Beloved Community. By offering a rigorous three-semester curriculum that integrates industry-recognized micro-credentials, direct soft-skills training, and critical life skills like money management and self-advocacy, the Academy systematically dismantles traditional employment barriers for historically underserved students. The program's impact is reflected in its steady enrollment growth—rising from six students during its 2021–2022 pilot phase to ten students in the 2023–2024 academic year—as well as its built-in work-based learning internships and civic engagement opportunities. Bolstered by continuous participant feedback and iterative assessments, the college expanded this successful model in 2025 into the highly inclusive Personal & Career Discovery Program, widening its reach to support an even broader demographic of community members facing systemic barriers to employment.

Elevating Professional Leadership: Equipping Career and Technical Students with Competitive 21st-Century Core Competencies – Objective 1.3

During the planning period, DACC helped prepare students become global citizens by leveraging the SkillsUSA program to cultivate 21st-century global citizenship and essential professional skills across ten diverse Career Technical Education (CTE) disciplines. Serving as a critical bridge between classroom theory and career readiness, the program explicitly targeted core competencies by training students in public speaking for effective communication, customer service for personal and social responsibility, and job interviewing to confidently market their expertise. This targeted development of soft skills alongside digital and technical mastery successfully transformed participants into well-rounded, career-ready leaders. The initiative demonstrated remarkable resilience during this timeframe, executing a robust post-pandemic recovery that expanded student participation from a low of 2 members in the 2020/2021 academic year to 35 members in the 2024/2025 academic year. Throughout this five-year period, DACC students validated their technical and critical thinking skills on competitive stages, sending 26 qualifiers to the National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC) and earning 47 state medals alongside 2 national medals, proving their ability to succeed and lead within the modern global workforce.

Goal 2: Elevate Research & Creative Activity

Through this goal, DACC aimed to cultivate a supportive culture that actively encouraged innovation and creativity across the college. This strategy focused on translating academic inquiry into practical, real-world impact by engaging students and staff in classroom, laboratory, and administrative research aimed at solving

local and regional challenges. Additionally, the institution leveraged research internally, using rigorous data analysis to identify and dismantle institutional inequities within its own policies, procedures, and practices.

The major accomplishments for Goal 2 can be thematically placed in the following categories.

1. **Undergraduate Research, CUREs & Student Showcases** (focused on embedding research directly into the student curriculum to drive academic persistence and transfer success).
    - Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs): Science, Engineering, & Mathematics Division data analysis showing over 85% student persistence and a 65%+ transfer rate to NMSU following CURE participation.
    - Annual Science Showcases: Event featuring over 20 student presentations and hosting more than 100 attendees.
    - Bridge to Baccalaureate (B2B): Awarded a $1.5M NSF grant designed to assist and elevate students in STEM fields (later pulled by administration).
2. **Extramural Funding & Grant Procurement** (focused on securing major federal, state, and private investments to build institutional capacity for scientific, technical, and educational research).
    - Major Federal & State Grants: Over 50 grants secured, including the Title III EXITO grant ($5M), NSF S-STEM STAR Program ($1.9M), NSF ELSOL ($300K), and various NIH/NSF subawards (INBRE, ALRISE, STEP2NL).
    - Congressional Funding & State Endowments: proposals for Health Sciences expansions ($995K), the Sunland Park Endowment ($2.5M), the Nursing Director Endowment ($500K), among others.
3. **Faculty Scholarship, Professional Development & AI Innovation** (focused on supporting faculty-led research, publications, and professional development in cutting-edge pedagogical tools).
    - Publications & Presentations: Faculty/staff research and publications on regional issues, such as the COVID-19 impact research conducted by Dr. Elmer Gonzalez, Dr. Adelina Holguin, and Dr. Josefina Carmona.
    - AI & Technology Governance: Establishment of the AI Guiding Council and submission of congressional proposals for faculty training on AI in the classroom.
    - DACC Works & Action Research: Hosting annual professional development for faculty/staff and supporting formal Action Research initiatives.
4. **Instructional Innovation, Simulation & Technology** (focused on creative applications of technology, virtual spaces, and simulation to advance specialized academic fields).
    - Simulation Lab Investments: Heavy investment in Health Sciences simulation practices utilizing Carl Perkins and nursing expansion funding.
    - Online Quality Assurance (OQA): Creation of faculty open-source badges for completing OQA professional development and programmatic alignments via the Bridge Project.
    - Advanced Instructional Technology: Implementation of Nursing Hyflex Instruction utilizing Apple technology and Apple Cart investments.
5. **Institutional Research for Equity & Operational Practice** (focused on using data-driven, internal research to analyze, reform, and optimize institutional systems and spaces).
    - Policy Equity Evaluation: Comprehensive Health Sciences data evaluation and revamping of admissions and progression policies to eliminate hidden barriers and ensure equitable practice.
    - Data-Driven Assessment: Utilization of the ATD (Achieving the Dream) Data Gallery Walk and the Learning Resource Network to evaluate institutional outcomes.
    - Equity & Community Health Initiatives: The Equity Working Group (creating designated Equity Spaces on campuses) and the deployment of COVID-19 Vaccination POD Teams.

Following are some specific examples of activities and data from the categories listed above for **Goal 2: Elevate Research & Creative Activity**.

Cultivating a Culture of Research and Community Engagement Through Strategic Grant Funding (FY23–25) – Objectives 2.1 & 2.2

Doña Ana Community College (DACC) significantly advanced its strategic plan goal of elevating research and creative activity by securing substantial external funding for culturally reflective and community-centered scholarship. The institution distinguished itself by driving innovative, socially conscious academic inquiries, highlighted by the $15,650 initiative titled *"Water is Life" Climates of Inequality and the COVID Crisis: Building Leadership at Minority Serving Institutions*. This focus on regional heritage and humanities-driven creative output was further enriched by the $27,645.10 *Celebrating Sister Rivers—Past, present, future* project. Alongside these cultural and environmental explorations, DACC aggressively expanded its infrastructure for experiential and workforce-aligned scholarly research. This was underscored by the $291,659 *HSI Pilot Project: Experiential Learning STEM Opportunity for Latinos (ELSOL)* and the $500,000 *Louis Stokes B2B Alliance: New Mexico Bridge to the Baccalaureate (NMB2B)* grant, both of which directly facilitated undergraduate research opportunities and created equitable academic pathways for underrepresented populations within STEM disciplines.

In addition to pure academic research, DACC robustly addressed workforce equity and socioeconomic development through massive federal, state, and private grant procurement that elevated the institution's localized applied research capacity. Scholarly development in early childhood education saw remarkable progress through targeted interventions, including the $1,090,650 *Early Childhood Educator Student Success Grant* and the $48,000 initiative for *Advancing a Bilingual and Indigenous Early Childhood Workforce*. Furthermore, the institution pioneered community-centric studies into professional barriers, securing $300,000 for *Critical Community Engagement in Career Development & Workforce Equity* and a massive $1,798,566 for the *Excelencia Project*. By weaving these initiatives alongside multi-year, million-dollar investments in Adult Education, Carl Perkins foundational grants, and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) programming, DACC successfully transformed its institutional landscape into a dynamic hub where creative activity, pedagogical research, and economic equity intersect.

Furthermore, Doña Ana Community College secured significant philanthropic funding centered on applied regional research, technical innovation, and clinical community engagement during the plan period. The college fostered critical community-health research and clinical practice through multiple major awards dedicated to its free dental hygiene clinics—including a combined $80,000.00 from the Delta Dental Plan of New Mexico, $25,000.00 from Blue Cross & Blue Shield of New Mexico, and $7,500.00 from the Nusenda Foundation—which directly enabled student-led clinical interventions and community health data collection. Furthermore, DACC expanded its creative and applied technical research infrastructure through corporate and foundational partnerships, driving innovation in clean energy and vocational development with a $25,000.00 grant from the Electric Company Charitable Foundation for a charging port platform alongside $28,829.00 from El Paso Electric to support Electrical Worker Certification. This institutional capacity was further enriched by the Union Pacific Foundation's $25,000.00 contribution for the *All Aboard! Discover the Possibilities* project at Sunland Park, exploring workforce entry and equity in regional centers. Ultimately, bolstered by over $83,000.00 in Jon Wynne scholarship funding managed through the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, these targeted investments successfully transformed the college's academic divisions into active hubs for practical inquiry, technical creative design, and impactful community-engaged research.

Integrating Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) to Address Regional Challenges – Objective 2.2

DACC also integrated Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) across laboratory courses in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy as a way of elevating research and creative activity. Under faculty mentorship, students engaged in sophisticated research projects—ranging from evaluating biological controls for insect pests to designing rockets and analyzing astronomical data—while simultaneously sharpening their scientific communication skills through major presentations at the DACC Student Showcase, New Mexico State University's Research and Creativity Week, and national platforms like the SACNAS National

Diversity in STEM Conference. Tracking data from a foundational cohort of 213 students demonstrated that over 85% persisted into the next semester or transferred to NMSU, with more than 65% successfully enrolled at NMSU after two semesters. Furthermore, comparative institutional assessments highlighted that CURE participants radically outperformed their peers in key upward mobility metrics: during the 2023–2024 academic year, CURE students achieved an 83.50% persistence rate and a staggering 58.80% transfer rate, vastly eclipsing the 64.80% persistence and 8.30% transfer rates of SEM Non-CURE students, as well as the baseline 71.40% persistence and 3.70% transfer rates of the general DACC population. This standard of excellence sustained into the 2024–2025 academic year, where CURE participants maintained a 79.60% persistence rate and a 45.40% transfer rate, proving that these embedded research opportunities serve as a powerful, equitable catalyst for academic advancement and baccalaureate transition.

Complementing these classroom research experiences, DACC drastically reduced financial barriers and accelerated career mobility through the NSF S-STEM funded STAR Program (award #1930535). From Fall 2020 through Fall 2025, this initiative awarded $559,227 in scholarships to 73 DACC engineering students. A Spring 2024 survey of these scholars underscored the program's profound socioeconomic and psychological impact: 88% of respondents were able to reduce their external work hours, 73% successfully paid off student loans, and a unanimous 100% reported increased confidence and intent to persist in their engineering majors. Furthermore, the program fundamentally reshaped how students viewed themselves within the profession, with 71% reporting heightened professional recognition as engineers and 69% noting increased technical competence. This long-term growth is further demonstrated by multi-year longitudinal data captured each spring since Spring 2021, revealing that 84% of participating students recorded steady, positive gains in their "agree" or "strongly agree" responses on the formalized Engineering Identity Scale.

Elevating Creative Pedagogy and Equity Through Institutional Data and Online Quality Assurance – Objectives 2.1 & 2.3

The institutional commitment to cultivating a culture that supports pedagogical research and creative course design is clearly reflected in the number of Online Quality Assurance (OQA) milestones across our academic divisions. Faculty members have actively transitioned from basic digital literacy to advanced instructional design, laying a robust foundation for scholarly exploration in online learning environments. Across all five divisions—Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (AHSS), Advanced Technologies (AT), Business and Public Services (BPS), Health Sciences (HS), and Science, Engineering, and Math (SEM)—faculty have demonstrated high engagement with rigorous training pathways. Notably, foundational Level 1 Canvas workshop completion reached as high as 95% in AHSS and 81% in BPS, while advanced instructional strategies saw exceptional engagement, with Level 2 strategies attracting 85% participation in Health Sciences and Level 3 Advanced workshops drawing 64% in the same division. This widespread participation has resulted in high numbers of Certified Online Instructors system-wide, including 68% of AHSS faculty and 45% of Health Sciences faculty achieving this distinction. By mastering these advanced tools, our educators are moving beyond standard lecturing to design creative, interactive digital learning environments that actively foster critical thinking and student engagement.

This foundational expertise has directly translated into measurable, high-level creative outputs through formal course design certifications. Faculty are increasingly dedicating time to the scholarship of teaching and learning, as evidenced by their participation in intensive, peer-reviewed quality frameworks. Across DACC, faculty have successfully navigated rigorous validation processes to secure 78 internal OQA Course Certifications and 28 nationally recognized Quality Matters (QM) Course Certifications. Leading the way in these creative milestones are the SEM and Health Sciences divisions, yielding 25 and 23 OQA Certified Courses respectively, alongside substantial QM certifications. Furthermore, specialized certifications—such as the Certified Shortened Academic Term (SAT) Designers, which reached 9% in Health Sciences—demonstrate that our faculty creatively adapted complex curricula to fit alternative, high-yield formats. By treating the digital classroom as a site for creative experimentation and structural innovation, these certified educators have become vital institutional resources,

elevating academic excellence and modeling evidence-based teaching practices across the entire university system.

Developing Practical Solutions: Responding to Public Health Situations Through Community-Engaged Research – Objective 2.2

In alignment with the institutional commitment to identify and address regional challenges, Doña Ana Community College (DACC) demonstrated exceptional community leadership through its critical role in the regional public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in February 2021, DACC entered into a vital multi-agency partnership with New Mexico State University (NMSU), the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH), the Doña Ana Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the New Mexico Medical Reserve Corps (NMMRC), and the National Guard to host a series of Points of Distribution (POD) for vaccine delivery. Orchestrated internally by a dedicated vaccination coordination team under the DACC COVID-19 Safety Council—which brought together a diverse cross-section of institutional deans, directors, faculty, and facilities staff—the college successfully mobilized and managed a robust volunteer workforce vetted through the NMMRC. This coordinated effort deployed 22 medically trained professionals, 36 non-medical support personnel, and 12 law enforcement officers, who seamlessly executed complex operations ranging from clinical vaccine preparation and delivery to logistics, traffic security, check-in registration, and post-inoculation monitoring.

Beyond immediate frontline logistics, DACC successfully bridged community crisis response with academic scholarship and actionable research to better understand local institutional impacts. Leveraging the unique stressors of the pandemic era, three DACC faculty members conducted a comprehensive study titled *"Faculty and Students' Coping Strategies in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Mixed Methods Design,"* which was subsequently published in the *International Journal of Social Sciences: Current and Future Research Trends* (Volume 14, Issue 1). By systematically investigating the specific coping mechanisms utilized by faculty and students, as well as identifying the secondary intersecting stressors influencing the academic community, this research provides a data-driven framework for developing practical mental health and operational support solutions. Collectively, these collaborative operational initiatives and scholarly contributions underscore DACC's capacity to not only engage deeply with pressing regional issues but also to generate real-world, scalable applications that strengthen community resilience.

Cultivating Institutional Capacity for Research and Creativity Through Congressional Funding – Objective 2.1

It is evident that DACC supports research and creativity through the targeted deployment of substantial legislative appropriations across multiple fiscal years. Financial support for specialized RPSP initiatives grew dynamically from a subtotal of $563,500 in FY2020–2021 to $1,357,900 in FY2023–2024, ultimately reaching $1,486,400 in FY2024–2025. This growth was driven by consistent enhancements to core institutional programs, with the Nursing Expansion project receiving a sustained $928,900 annually in the final two fiscal years, while funding for the Dental Hygiene Program progressively scaled from an initial $287,600 to a peak of $557,500 in FY2024–2025. DACC further solidified its commitment to innovation and creative scholarly work by capturing a $1,000,000 Teacher Preparation Endowment special appropriation in FY2023–2024 alongside a dedicated $500,000 Capital Outlay for the Creative Media Technology Center in FY2024–2025. Supported additionally by extensive capital and infrastructure investments—ranging from $1,860,000 in FY2020–2021 to a $1,575,000 GOB allocation for the Gadsden Center in FY2024–2025—these targeted multi-million-dollar state funding packages successfully advanced DACC's capacity for academic inquiry and technological expression.

Goal 3: Amplify Services to Our Communities

This strategic goal focused on driving regional growth and engagement by cultivating a deep culture of civic responsibility among its students, faculty, and staff. This commitment is paired with efforts to foster community-wide awareness and support for robust workforce development pipelines. By aligning educational initiatives with

local economic needs, DACC acted as a vital partner in supporting and accelerating economic development activities across the region.

The major accomplishments for Goal 3 can be thematically placed in the following categories.

1. **Workforce Pipelines & Career Academies** (focused on structured, short-term career training and early-career pathways designed to meet localized industry demands).
   - Industrial Career Academies: Union Pacific Industrial Careers Academy (Sunland Park/Santa Teresa) and the Junior Industrial Careers Academy for recent high school graduates.
   - Middle School Exploration: Union Pacific "All Aboard" grant focusing on early career exploration.
   - Targeted Industry Infrastructure: Development of Cholla Hall for film industry expansion, alongside specialized partnerships/internships in high-demand fields like electrical line worker and water technology.
2. **Expanded Non-Credit, Adult, & Continuing Education** (focused on accessible, low-barrier educational services that directly prepare adult learners for the regional workforce).
   - Adult Education Workforce Integration: Career and workforce preparation embedded into Adult Education classes, serving 1,200 to 1,500 students annually.
   - Regional Expansion: Launching non-credit offerings at the Sunland Park Center, including Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training and Fundamentals of Welding.
   - Eliminating Barriers: Providing no-cost GED/HiSET testing and preparation for adult education learners.
3. **Community Health, Civic Engagement, & Support Services** (focused on deploying institutional resources to directly support public health, civic duties, and essential community needs).
   - Clinical & Public Health Outreach: Student-led civic and service-learning operations, including Dental Clinics, Vaccination Campaigns, and community healthcare initiatives across Dental, Public Health, Social Work, Nursing, and Allied Health (EKG) programs.
   - Crisis Response & Civic Duty: The COVID-19 Taskforce, alongside serving as community voting sites across campuses (East Mesa, Sunland Park, Chaparral).
   - Civic Education: Utilizing an Adult Education grant to integrate civic responsibility modules directly into English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.
4. **Economic Development, Paid Internships, & Business Support** (focused on supporting local businesses and boosting social mobility through funded career experiences and employer tools).
   - Paid Experiential Learning: The Exito program providing $100,000 in funded internships across regional STEM industries.
   - Small Business & Regional Employer Tools: Bi-monthly trainings and workshops hosted by the Small Business Development Center, and the activation of the Career Coach Job Board connecting local employers with area talent.
   - Municipal Partnership Projects: Joint workforce development initiatives in technology, personal growth, and career discovery created in tandem with the City of Las Cruces.
5. **Strategic Alliances, Wraparound Support, & Public Awareness** (focused on broad community coalitions, holistic safety nets, and public-facing informational campaigns).
   - Regional Coalition Leadership: Active participation on the Southwest Workforce Development Board and regional employer tables (MVEDA, BIA), alongside community coalitions like the Doña Ana County (DAC) Resilience Leaders, NGAGE Success Network, Sunland Park Coalition, and the Workforce Talent Collaborative.
   - Holistic Support & Resource Drives: THRIVE wrap-around services, Resource Fairs, and cross-departmental Community Support Drives (AVANZA, Financial Aid, Admissions).
   - Public Information & Student Excellence: Routine promotional campaigns across diverse media channels (news, video, social, DACC app), and sponsoring SkillsUSA students representing Las Cruces and New Mexico at state and national competitive levels.

Following are some specific examples of activities and data from the categories listed above for **Goal 3: Amplify Services to Our Communities**.

Supporting Workforce and Economic Development Through the Small Business Development Center (FY23-25) – Objectives 3.2 & 3.3

To systematically meet the strategic plan goal of fostering a culture of lifelong learning, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) continuously expanded educational opportunities, enabling community members to develop critical skills in support of their personal, civic, and employment goals. In close partnership with the City of Las Cruces (CLC), the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), and local Chambers of Commerce, the SBDC delivered vital training, business literacy workshops, and one-on-one technical assistance to entrepreneurs, veterans, and childcare providers across the region. These target initiatives included the *Reaching for the Stars* childcare accelerator program—which equipped ten providers with advanced management and licensing skills—as well as specialized *Plugged In for Life* sustainability sessions, veteran entrepreneurship conferences, and targeted gross receipts tax (GRT) and financial literacy workshops. This robust framework of lifelong learning directly translated into measurable community and workforce impact: between 2023 and 2025, the SBDC successfully guided 81 unique business starts, provided personalized advising to 898 unique clients, and hosted educational workshops reaching 400 total attendees. By empowering individuals with actionable skills to start, grow, and sustain their enterprises, these efforts not only enhanced regional economic resilience but also drove substantial workforce retention, ultimately resulting in 523 jobs created or saved over the three-year period.

Preparing Adult Learners to Take Next Steps in Their Journey – Objective 3.2

Doña Ana Community College significantly advanced its strategic goal of amplifying services to surrounding communities by dramatically expanding access to GED/HiSET testing. Between 2020 and 2025, the testing centers at the East Mesa Campus and Gadsden Center served as critical community hubs, showing a profound trajectory of growth in both exam administration and credential completion. The total number of individual GED and HiSET exams administered annually more than doubled, rising from 586 in 2020 to an impressive 1,361 in 2025. This expanded testing volume directly correlated with a surge in community milestones; the number of individuals who successfully completed their HSE credentials grew from 78 in 2020 to a peak of 164 in 2024, finishing the strategic cycle with 134 completions in 2025. By concentrating these testing resources strategically at the East Mesa and Gadsden locations, the institution successfully met regional demands and provided tangible pathways toward higher education and better economic opportunities for local residents.

In tandem with these quantitative gains, the institution effectively cultivated a culture of civic responsibility through targeted outreach, flexible programming, and accessible community collaborations. Since 2022, staff members have worked closely with the UNM High School Equivalency Program (HEP) to specifically facilitate HiSET testing for individuals living in vulnerable migrant and seasonal farm worker communities. To ensure services remained highly responsive to shifting regional dynamics, the Gadsden Center adaptively pivoted its operations in September 2025 by transitioning from HiSET to GED proctoring. This adjustment maintained steady testing volumes by welcoming an influx of testers from nearby El Paso who benefit from accessible testing policies requiring only a valid ID without strict residency restrictions. Furthermore, testing center staff reinforced institutional inclusivity by maintaining open lines of communication with Adult Education instructors. This close collaboration ensured that students requiring specific testing accommodations—such as private side-rooms or late arrival scheduling—were seamlessly integrated, ensuring that the college's expanded services remained equitable, supportive, and accessible to all members of the community.

Cultivating a Culture of Civic Responsibility Through Voting Convenience Centers (FY23-25) – Objective 3.1

The strategic utilization of our DACC campuses as designated Voting Convenience Centers highlights a powerful commitment to amplifying services and building deeper connections with the diverse communities we serve. By transforming our facilities into high-traffic civic hubs, the college has successfully removed barriers to civic participation, offering residents a familiar, accessible, and trusted environment to cast their ballots. The

community's response has been overwhelming, particularly during the 2024 General Election cycle, when the East Mesa campus saw a massive voter turnout of 9,084 early voters (EV) and 1,379 election day (ED) participants, while the Sunland Park center provided vital regional access to 3,267 early voters and 956 election day voters. This sustained engagement extended into local government and primary cycles; the 2025 Regular Local Election (RLE) drew 1,903 early and 1,561 election day voters to East Mesa, alongside 525 early and 440 election day participants at Sunland Park. Even during mid-year primary cycles, locations like Chaparral demonstrated consistent community reliance, growing from 63 early voters in the 2024 Primary to 129 in the 2026 Primary, complemented by 146 election day voters. By opening our doors to support the foundational democratic process across multiple voting cycles, the institution effectively redefines the role of a two-year college—serving not only as an engine for academic advancement but as a vital, permanent anchor for regional community empowerment and public service.

Amplifying Services to Our Communities Through the AVANZA Program (FY23-25) – Goal 3
Efforts during this plan period focused on the targeted expansion of DACC AVANZA's collaborative networks. By partnering with campus departments and regional organizations, AVANZA directly identified and dismantled critical barriers to enrollment, persistence, and completion by addressing core student needs like food security, financial assistance, housing, and healthcare. To champion civic engagement and institutional sustainability, the program scaled its total recorded student engagements from 1,917 in the 2023–2024 academic year to 2,327 in 2024–2025. This high-impact outreach was driven by expanding attendance at Community Resource Fairs from 575 to 820 participants, growing First & Second Day Tabling initiatives from 625 to 928 participants, and increasing attendance at *Budgets & Burritos* financial literacy workshops to 109 participants. Supported additionally by cross-departmental *Pop-In* events, wellness fairs, and *First-Generation Celebrations*, AVANZA has effectively integrated essential campus resources into a cohesive network that demystifies seeking help, enhances community resilience, and fosters long-term civic connection.

Transforming Regional Workforce and Industry Partnerships Through Targeted Career Academies – Objectives 3.2 & 3.3
The creation of the high-impact expansion of the Union Pacific Industrial Careers Academy (UP-ICA) at the Sunland Park Center was a formidable step in amplifying services to DACC communities, especially in southern Doña Ana County. Established in 2022 with a foundational $350,000 contribution from the Union Pacific Foundation, the Academy has directly enriched the regional workforce by providing approximately 60 adult learners each year from 2023 through 2026 with rapid, short-term training in essential sectors like commercial driving, forklift operation, logistics, and safety. By integrating this career training with basic and English-language skills, DACC has empowered both entry-level and experienced local residents to earn industry-recognized credentials, secure family-supporting salaries, and achieve upward career mobility. The college further deepened its community footprint by maintaining vital industry connections through the NM Border Industrial Association (BIA) and actively extending its outreach to younger demographics; this was highlighted in the summer of 2025 by the launch of a "Junior" Industrial Careers Academy, which introduced 24 seniors from Desert Pride Academy to professional soft skills and high-demand trades such as welding, transportation, and additive manufacturing.

Inspiring Multi-Generational Career Awareness: Early Career Exploration and Community Outreach Pathways – Objective 3.2
Through the strategic execution of the Union Pacific "All Aboard" grants during the 2023–2024 ($25,000) and 2025–2026 ($15,000) academic cycles, Doña Ana Community College (DACC) was able to build robust, region-wide awareness and support for workforce development. By partnering directly with Gadsden Independent School District (GISD), the college engaged 18 educators in specialized professional development and provided district leadership—including the superintendent and cabinet—with targeted insights into postsecondary career pathways at the DACC Sunland Park Center. Across both grant cycles, 225 young students (grades 4–9) participated in immersive summer Career Exploration field trips covering high-demand industries like welding, CDL, nursing, forklift operation, and manufacturing; notably, 100% of participating students reported an interest

in pursuing community college after high school. Furthermore, the initiative bridged workforce awareness directly into local households through Family Nights serving around 150 community members, where students led their families on campus tours, prompting several parents to seek admissions guidance for themselves. Amplified by regional promotional efforts—such as Santa Teresa Middle School sharing the experience to its 1.2K social media followers—this initiative effectively established a multi-generational culture of workforce literacy and career exploration across the border region.

Goal 4: Build a Robust University System

To build a robust university system, DACC focused on strengthening internal infrastructure, culture, and operational foundation. Doing so by embracing diversity as a core asset to lead in equity and inclusion, while continuously cultivating faculty and staff excellence. Operational robustness is reinforced through a metric-driven, service-oriented approach, the integration of high-quality technology, and the strict alignment of budget priorities with the institutional mission. Ultimately, by proactively identifying challenges and strategically mobilizing resources, DACC aimed to secure long-term environmental, operational, and financial sustainability for both DACC and the broader community.

The major accomplishments for Goal 4 can be thematically placed in the following categories.

1. **Digital Infrastructure & Technological Integration** (focused on leveraging modern software, mobile applications, and technology platforms to streamline college operations and student access).
    - Enterprise Software & Platforms: Adoption of major operational and student-facing platforms including Comevo, CampusESP, EdSights, and the implementation of AI training and integration.
    - Mobile & Targeted Access: Creation of the DACC-specific phone application (our DACC App) for quick information retrieval, and the technology loaner programs managed through AVANZA.
2. **Facilities Modernization & Campus Environment Upgrades** (focused on physical campus improvements, safety, and creating student-centered spaces that enhance the campus experience).
    - Strategic Upgrades & Renovation: Routine classroom and laboratory updates, alongside substantial Wi-Fi infrastructure upgrades across the East Mesa, Espina, and Gadsden campuses.
    - Facility Data & Planning: Execution of the 2023 Facilities Conditions Assessment (FCI) for all buildings to strategically map and address future capital outlay and master plan project needs.
    - Student Common Spaces: Creation and updating of campus common spaces, hallway seating, and student leisure spaces, such as the Recreation Room at the Espina campus.
3. **Comprehensive Accessibility, Equity, & Student Well-Being** (focused on dismantling physical, financial, and physiological barriers to ensure equitable access and basic needs security for all learners).
    - Digital Accessibility & Compliance: Implementation of the Sensus Access Platform by Student Accessibility Services and extensive updates to the public-facing website to meet higher web accessibility standards.
    - Specialized Diagnostic Care: A formal agreement between Student Accessibility Services and the NMSU Department of Education to provide tailored learning assessment services for struggling students.
    - Physical & Mental Well-Being: Implementation of the TimelyCare telehealth application for all students, alongside the creation of the Comfort Casita food pantry (backed by a $250,000 First Light Federal Credit Union donation, employee payroll deductions, and a golf tournament fundraiser).
    - Inclusive Belonging: Establishing dedicated Equity Spaces on campuses.
4. **Leadership Cultivation & Professional Development** (focused on investing in human capital by training the college's current and future leaders and providing continuous staff education).
    - Institutional Leadership Pipelines: Professional development for over 50 DACC leaders via the Chair Academy and the successful graduation of the first cohort of the Grow Your Own leadership program.
    - Staff Empowerment: Securing dedicated funding for the Staff Council to sponsor ongoing, grass-roots professional development opportunities for institutional staff members.

5. **Institutional Effectiveness, Accountability, & Student Pathways** (focused on data-driven reviews, budget alignment, and structured academic pipelines that guide students seamlessly toward degrees).
    - Quality Assurance & Content Audits: Implementation of academic program assessments, college service review processes, and the establishment of an annual review protocol for all public-facing departmental content.
    - Fiscal Responsibility: Explicitly utilizing the institutional strategic plan to prioritize annual budget requests and inform master plan projects.
    - Structured Progress Pipelines: Creation of the AVANZA wrap-around services, the Excelencia Pathway program, and a pre-established transition pathway converting GED/Adult Education/ESL students into degree-seeking lines (supported by tutoring at Academic Readiness Centers).

Following are some specific examples of activities and data from the categories listed above for **Goal 4: Build a Robust University System**.

Championing Faculty Excellence and Achieving Technological Equity in Instruction – Objectives 4.2 & 4.4
To better incorporate quality technology in support of DACC's mission, the Xcite program expanded faculty tech-literacy and upgraded its digital infrastructure. Through the program, the college provided robust, self-paced, asynchronous professional development that allowed faculty across various campuses and teaching modalities to earn their Apple Teacher certification on flexible schedules. This program saw rising institutional engagement, growing from 21 faculty completers in the 2023–2024 academic year to 25 completers in 2024–2025. To ensure these tools translated directly into innovative classroom learning, DACC transitioned to personalized, division-based training and hosted Apple Education representatives in Fall 2024 to demonstrate emerging ecosystems, including Apple Intelligence, to all five major academic divisions: Advanced Technologies; Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences; Business & Public Services; Health Sciences; and Science, Engineering & Math. This comprehensive push for technological equity was further secured in Spring 2025 with the launch of a systematic equipment refresh cycle, replacing aging iPads originally deployed in 2017 to provide instructors with modern, reliable resources for productivity and student success.

Beyond individual classroom enrichment, the Xcite Program significantly strengthened system-wide capacity and forward-looking institutional frameworks to fulfill the goal of building a robust university system. DACC solidified its corporate and academic partnerships through a strategic faculty and staff visit to Apple Headquarters in Spring 2025, collaborating directly on administrative models to support students and educators in the evolving landscape of artificial intelligence and instructional technology. The strategic planning and collaborative visions established during this headquarters visit served as the foundational blueprint for a major system-wide initiative: the development and launch of the Bridge Institute for Faculty. Successfully executing its pilot year from Fall 2025 through Spring 2026, the Bridge Institute has established a sustainable, long-term framework for digital innovation, continuous pedagogical improvement, and system-wide collaborative excellence.

Establishing Operational Excellence Through Institutional Synergy and System-Wide Collaboration – Objectives 4.3 & 4.6
Student Ambassadors and the Student Government Association
Doña Ana Community College significantly advanced the strategic plan goal of building a robust university system by fostering deep, multi-campus structural connections and cross-departmental integration. During the 2024–2025 academic year, the DACC Ambassador/SEEN Program bridged institutional gaps by deploying student leaders across the East Mesa and Espina campuses and Sunland Park Center, ensuring that students at all major locations received uniform support, resource navigation, and community engagement opportunities. These student ambassadors collaborated directly with an array of internal entities—including Student Engagement, Excelencia, orientation teams, graduation staff, and campus event coordinators—which strengthened interdepartmental communication channels and created a seamless, interconnected service network. This system-wide alignment was further amplified by the Student Government Association (SGA), which responsibly

stewarded student fees to approve over $60,000 in expenditures. SGA's funding supported more than 20 diverse student organizations, academic programs, and campus departments, providing the financial infrastructure necessary to host major joint programming, promote student retention, and solidify a unified institutional identity across the NMSU system.

Academic Readiness Centers

To systematically ensure student success and fulfill the institutional strategic plan goal of building a robust university throughout the 2023–2025 cycle, DACC heavily invested in data-driven academic support networks that dramatically improved persistence, engagement, and course completion. During the 2025 academic year, the Academic Readiness Centers (ARCs) significantly expanded access by serving nearly 500 students each semester across four distinct campuses and centers by offering highly flexible modalities, including appointment-based, embedded, walk-in, and online tutoring alongside interactive workshops and extensive technology support. Crucially, empirical data compiled in collaboration with Institutional Analysis indicated that students who utilized ARC services returned and persisted at substantially higher rates than the general student population; for instance, in Fall 2024, 80.7% of ARC-supported students returned compared to 69.5% of the general DACC population, and in Spring 2024, ARC users returned at an impressive 74.0% rate compared to the general population's 63.2%.

Furthermore, metrics from the Spring 2025 semester demonstrate that ARC participants consistently achieved higher pass rates in critical foundational courses than non-users, including an 86.0% pass rate in ENGL 1110G (vs. 69.3% for non-users) and a 72.9% pass rate in MATH 1215 (vs. 63.6% for non-users). By removing digital, physical, and multilingual learning barriers through embedded technology—such as computer labs, digital resources, and TracCloud scheduling—and working directly alongside 17 math, English, and STEM faculty partners to facilitate early interventions, the ARCs have firmly established a comprehensive support network that cultivates independent learning habits. Finally, by combining these academic resources with professional development, the ARCs successfully trained 260 student tutors through a comprehensive Tutor Leadership Program, preparing these student employees for post-graduation career pathways via nationally recognized training programs that actively accelerate the wider student body toward graduation.

Health, Wellness, & Basic Needs

To systematically fulfill the institutional strategic plan goal of supporting student success and eliminating non-academic barriers to persistence, Doña Ana Community College heavily invested in integrated Health, Wellness, and Basic Needs Services throughout the strategic plan cycle. By synthesizing direct clinical support with peer-led advocacy through the Ambassador/SEEN Program, DACC expanded its holistic infrastructure—providing direct mental health counseling to 358 students and delivering non-academic wraparound services to 207 individuals to stabilize those facing mental health, academic, housing, and financial crises. Frontline promotional efforts significantly boosted mental health utilization, driving an 81% increase in TimelyCare virtual connections (from 58 students in 2025 to 105 in 2026), alongside an explosive rise in student engagement highlighted by EdSights digital interactions scaling from 18 to 261 and a 123% surge in Suicide Prevention Awareness 5K participation. Concurrently, preventative healthcare and basic needs initiatives addressed critical physical and domestic challenges: health screening participation grew 75% (from 44 to 77 individuals), 129 flu and COVID vaccinations were administered, and a newly established campus Diaper Bank collected over 5,000 diapers—distributing more than 1,500 to alleviate the financial strains of student parents while ambassadors organized local clothing closets. Through these robust community partnerships, telehealth resources, and targeted basic needs interventions, DACC successfully cultivated a resilient, equitable campus environment that empowers students to overcome personal obstacles and achieve their long-term educational goals.

Mobilizing Resources to Build a Sustainable Institution and Modernized Campus Environment – Objective 4.6

The comprehensive physical footprint modernization from FY22 through FY25 highlights a deliberate commitment to fostering diverse, equitable, and inclusive (DEI) environments for both students and the

surrounding community. By systematically upgrading standard classroom infrastructure with modern flooring, ergonomic furniture, new paint, and advanced lighting systems with AV controls, the institution has removed physical barriers to learning and enhanced accessibility across all campuses and centers. The early phases (FY22–FY23) established an equitable standard of learning by modernizing dozens of general and computer classrooms across the Las Cruces campuses (DACL, DAHL, DAEM) and regional centers (Sunland Park, Gadsden, and Chaparral). This was further extended in FY25 to include the Library and classrooms in the Academic Resource Building at East Mesa.

Complementing these instructional updates was a massive investment in core infrastructure—such as roof replacements spanning East Mesa (DAEM and DADM) and the south county (DASP and DAGC), and a highly efficient, redundant chiller plant upgrade at the Espina campus. By providing a structurally sound, climate-controlled, and acoustically optimized learning environment, the college guarantees that every student, regardless of their background or geographic location, walks into a reliable, high-quality educational environment.

Crucially, these physical transformations directly support inclusivity by elevating academic support resources, welcoming public-facing interfaces, and providing top-tier technical spaces for specialized populations. The physical environment serves as a powerful message of belonging, a principle clearly demonstrated by the comprehensive refresh of building entryways and hallways (spanning DAHL, DATS, DACL, DAEM, DADM, and DAAR) alongside the modernization of key workforce entry points and over a dozen high-traffic reception areas—including Health Sciences, Adult Education, Business and Public Services, and the Gadsden and Sunland Park centers. These welcoming, intuitive entry points demystify the campus layout for first-generation students and community members alike. Furthermore, the intentional modernization of the Academic Readiness Center (ARC in DASH 116) ensures that academic support services are housed in a dignified, supportive environment.

Equally vital to equity is the programmatic diversity of the laboratory renovations, which ensure that students pursuing technical certificates, healthcare credentials, or research pathways train in environments that mirror industry standards.

- Healthcare Equity: Extensive updates to the Nursing, Sonography, and Respiratory Therapy labs, alongside a complete modernization of the Dental materials, sterilization, and clinical spaces (DASH 80 and DAGC 128), provide cutting-edge learning spaces for high-demand careers.
- Workforce & Community Opportunity: Upgrades to Early Childhood Education spaces (DASR), Technical Studies labs (HVAC, Welding, Automotive), and specialized Workforce event rooms directly empower non-traditional and community students to achieve upward economic mobility.
- Inclusive Research: The creation of a brand-new research lab (Science Lab 282 in DAHL) expands undergraduate research access to historically underrepresented students in STEM disciplines.

Ultimately, these combined improvements ensure that every facility reflects the institution's core mission: providing a safe, accessible, and elite learning environment where every community member has the opportunity to succeed.

Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as an Asset Through Excelencia (FY23-25) – Objective 4.1
DACC firmly established its leadership in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion by leveraging the Excelencia Pathway program to embrace diversity as a foundational asset for student success. By pairing existing college services with personalized academic, social, and emotional mentoring, the program successfully assists diverse student populations in navigating institutional challenges, building community involvement, and transitioning into four-year programs or the workforce. To cultivate an inclusive culture of belonging, Excelencia Pathway deployed highly accessible, multi-campus student engagement initiatives across the Sunland Park, Gadsden, East Mesa, and Espina campuses—including *Meaningful Mindful Midterms*, *Family Friendly Finals*, financial aid events, career fairs, and cultural celebrations. The equitable impact of these holistic support structures is clearly

demonstrated by strong academic growth and persistence data across successive cohorts: the Fall 2024 cohort of 165 students systematically raised its average GPA from 2.5 to 2.71 while climbing to a 77.46% completion rate and an 84.45% retention rate by Spring 2026. Furthermore, the Spring 2025 cohort (60 students) and Fall 2025 cohort (263 students) achieved exceptional Spring 2026 retention rates of 86.67% and 85.51% respectively, driven by high-touch interventions including 495 individualized coach and financial aid contacts in a single term. Through these deliberate efforts, DACC has successfully built a premier, scalable model that eliminates opportunity gaps and ensures all students reach their full potential.

Incorporating Quality Technology in Support of the DACC Mission – Objective 4.4
During the plan period, DACC underwent a comprehensive modernization of its wireless infrastructure across all campuses. Orchestrated during FY2024–2025 following a thorough assessment by ANM, DACC replaced obsolete, legacy infrastructure with an enterprise-class Cisco Wi-Fi 6/6E platform. This system overhaul expanded network resiliency by deploying 281 wireless access points supported by a fully redundant, high-availability pair of Cisco Catalyst 9800M wireless controllers, which successfully eliminated unplanned outages through automatic failover. To accommodate growing digital demands, the college upgraded its wireless backbone from 1 Gbps copper to 10 Gbps fiber connections, seamlessly amplifying maximum system throughput from 8 Gbps to 50 Gbps and increasing concurrent device capacity from 20,000 to 32,000 clients. Furthermore, in a strategic collaboration with NMSU Networking, DACC streamlined system-wide integration and reduced technology barriers by eliminating frustrating, legacy MAC address registration requirements in favor of simplified, secure authentication. Placed into production in May 2025, this standardized, scalable platform directly enhances the daily instructional and administrative experience for over 7,000 students, 600 faculty and staff, and visiting community members, providing the technological foundation necessary to support future institutional growth and modern digital learning initiatives.

Additionally, in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden transition of all instructional courses to an online modality, Doña Ana Community College rapidly expanded its technological infrastructure to ensure equitable digital access for students. By strategically deploying campus-specific outdoor wireless access points—including dedicated installations at the East Mesa, Espina, Gadsden, and Sunland Park locations—the college successfully extended network capabilities beyond the classroom walls. These vital outdoor hubs continue to remain fully operational and accessible today, providing students with dependable, open-air Wi-Fi resources to support their ongoing academic goals.

Looking Ahead: Sustaining Momentum in an Uncertain Horizon
The initiatives detailed throughout this strategic report demonstrate significant institutional progress across every major goal area. From closing opportunity gaps in adult education and expanding pre-college K–12 pathways to integrating course-based undergraduate research (CUREs), transforming regional industry partnerships, and championing operational and technological equity, Doña Ana Community College (DACC) has proven its capacity to deliver measurable student success and social mobility. By grounding our mission in community engagement, civic responsibility, and inclusive career readiness, these collective efforts have reinforced DACC's vital role as an engine for regional economic growth and workforce development within the NMSU system.

However, celebrating these achievements does not mean the work is complete. Higher education operates in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, and rapidly shifting environment—particularly within the federal landscape. Fluctuating policy directions, shifting federal funding mechanisms, evolving regulatory frameworks, and broader macroeconomic pressures present real, ongoing challenges to institutional stability. Protecting and expanding our progress will require continuous vigilance, adaptive leadership, and a steadfast commitment to institutional resilience, ensuring that external instability does not compromise our student-centered mission or disrupt the momentum we have built.

Moving forward, DACC must build upon these established foundations with strategic agility and unyielding purpose. Sustaining our success requires us to continually refine academic and workforce pathways, diversify resource streams, modernize campus infrastructure, and deepen our community and industry alliances. By pairing a clear-eyed assessment of emerging systemic challenges with an unwavering dedication to equity, innovation, and educational access, DACC remains positioned not only to navigate an unpredictable future, but to successfully lead our students and borderland communities through it.