

My name is Kayla Kennamore, and I am currently navigating my academic journey at Hartnell Community College. I am eager to take on the role of vice chair and promptly aid other students in their journeys. My time in high school was marked by active participation in the student council, which shaped my communication skills. Being a Mesa Student Ambassador further enriched these skills while also allowing me to become familiar with managing important data and documents, such as students personal data and others. It is an experience that underscores my reliability, a quality crucial for the vice chair position, which involves handling records for the region committee. As I aim for the vice chair position, I draw on my diverse involvement in various groups. Balancing roles has fine-tuned my time management and planning abilities. Being that I have recently joined other organizations, I believe my ability to network and build relationships within the community will amplify their voices. Not only this, but by continuously surrounding myself with new experiences and people, there is ample opportunity to recruit other students.

To my understanding of the core commitments of SSCCC, it is focused on enhancing the college experience for students. This involves creating pathways aligned with educational goals, ensuring accessibility, and refining assessment and placement practices. The organization views data analysis as integral to continual improvement, as well as encouraging evidence-based decision-making, and promoting transparency in California community colleges. Additionally, SSCCC strives to promote thoughtful innovation and foster collaboration among educational leaders as a way to strengthen pathways and improve educational outcomes. Moreover, diversity, equity, and inclusion hold paramount importance. Diversity goes beyond tolerance; it is about embracing and appreciating the unique qualities of people's lives and cultures. It plays a pivotal role in building vibrant and dynamic environments that reflect the richness of the human experience. Equity is a commitment to ensuring fairness and impartiality, dismantling systemic barriers, and creating inclusive policies. Inclusion involves embracing diversity and advocating for equity. Inclusion fosters an environment where individuals can express their authentic selves, enabling people to appreciate individual outlooks.

My family, akin to many others in Salinas, have faced and are aware of the lack of accessible opportunities in STEM careers for the underprivileged. There is also a lack of diversity, which may stem from the unequal access to resources compared to more affluent and mainstream locations. I strongly believe that community colleges should utilize their resources to level the playing field for these students. A possible solution is to increase funding, expand opportunities, and generate more interest among students to pursue these careers. Furthermore, while exploring cost-cutting measures is important, it is also essential to aid students in acquiring materials for classes and daily life. As a first-generation college student with parents who could not attend college, I applaud and respect the journey of those who were in a position to pursue a higher education and did. Given the financial strain of college, childcare concerns, and overall stress, I believe it is the duty of the community college to assist all of its students towards their goal. Creating a supportive environment involves addressing specific needs, such as efforts to relieve certain troubles for these students. Some options may include exploring affordable ways the schools can support daycare, transportation, and school materials. With these solutions and more to come, I believe it may also encourage more people from this community to pursue a higher education because they feel seen and truly helped by their respective colleges.

My strength as the ideal voting member on the board lies in my shared experiences within the community. These experiences uniquely position me to amplify the voices of women, people of color, and first-generation students. I am committed to fairness, meticulously examining each situation from all perspectives to ensure that the ultimate decision is equitable and reasonable for all parties involved.

