De Anza College

Foothill-De Anza Community College District

President Search



Full consideration deadline: Thursday, January 28, 2027 | AGB Search

The Position

De Anza College invites nominations and applications for the position of president. Reporting directly to the Chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, the president will work collaboratively across the district and within De Anza College to advance the district's overall mission and the college's strategic goals. The next president will lead De Anza College through a period of institutional renewal and financial transition, strengthening the conditions for academic excellence, equitable student success, and service to the community.

The successful candidate will demonstrate a deep commitment to the open-access community college mission and a record of effective leadership in an institution of comparable mission and complexity. The next president will continue to meet the educational needs of Silicon Valley while navigating the shifting higher education landscape and leading change to address the impacts.

Located in Cupertino, California, De Anza College is an institution driven by its vision to empower all students to attain their educational goals, develop an equity-based mindset, and become civic leaders in their communities. The college serves nearly 30,000 students annually, offering 84 associate degrees, 119 credit certificates, 30 noncredit certificates, and a bachelor's degree. De Anza consistently ranks at or near the top statewide in community college student transfers to public universities, with 2,717 students transferring in 2024-25, the most of any college in Northern California and the fourth highest in the state.

College Profile

An Unparalleled Opportunity

> *De Anza College provides an academically rich, multicultural learning environment that challenges students of every background to develop their intellect, character and abilities; to realize their goals; and to be socially responsible leaders in their communities, the nation and the world.*

Excerpt from the De Anza College mission statement



De Anza College sits on 112 acres in Cupertino, in the heart of Silicon Valley, with deep roots in the region and a reach that extends around the world. Founded in 1967, it is the largest community college in Silicon Valley and a vital educational, cultural, social, and economic resource for the Bay Area. Its reputation for being "Tops in Transfer" draws students from across the region, including historically underserved neighborhoods of San José, and from as many as 55 nations.

The college serves a region shaped by the technology industry, venture capital, and immigrant communities from around the globe, and by immense economic growth and opportunity. De Anza is an important hub for educating

students from every background and for helping address the exclusion and income inequality that affect its students and surrounding communities. Voter-approved bond measures in 1999, 2006, and 2020 have funded state-of-the-art buildings, labs, and facilities.

AT A GLANCE

- Nearly 30,000 students served each year
- 2,717 transfers in 2024-25, the most of any college in Northern California, and a 58% three-year transfer rate
- A 44% eight-year graduation rate, the highest of any community college in the Bay Area, and 66% of students completing a degree or transferring
- An estimated $947 million in economic impact for Santa Clara County in FY 2024-25, with about 6,000 jobs supported
- Named a 2026 Pathway Champion of Placement for the third consecutive year, for helping students complete transfer-level English and math in their first year
- 77 courses and 11 degree and certificate pathways converted to zero textbook cost, saving students about $800,000 so far
- A Measure G bond program renewing the campus, including a Physical Education Complex renovation, a Creative Arts Building and a renovated Services for Students Building

A Diverse and Engaged Student Community

De Anza's students are among the most diverse in the state. Many students balance jobs and family obligations with their studies. In 2025-26, 38% of students enrolled directly after high school, and more than 70% of Foothill-De Anza students live outside the college service area, a result of longstanding efforts to open access to communities with low college attendance.

STUDENT SNAPSHOT

45% Asian, Filipinx, or Pacific Islander	**25%** Latinx	**5%** Black	**6%** International students
35% First-generation college students	**35%** From families with incomes below $50,000	**38%** Age 25 or older	**34%** Enrolled full-time (12 or more units)

Research shows that student success improves when faculty and staff reflect the student body, and De Anza's faculty are 26% Asian, 11% Latinx, and 5% Black (fall 2025), with educational administrators and classified professionals more diverse still. Campus life is active, with 16 intercollegiate athletics teams, more than 60 clubs, and an award-winning student newspaper, La Voz.



Educational Excellence

De Anza is academically strong and consistently recognized for transfer success. In 2025-26 the college awarded 2,284 associate degrees and 770 credit certificates, and the three-year transfer rate is 58%, up from 45% five years ago. About 658 full- and part-time instructors teach more than 1,800 courses in 11 academic divisions, spanning the arts, humanities, sciences, and career training in fields from automotive and manufacturing technologies to nursing and computer science.

Transfer success reflects a long tradition of integrating student services with instruction. Transfer maps, Associate Degrees for Transfer, a Transfer Center, and placement policies that put students directly into transfer-level English and math support students from the start. The Campaign for College Opportunity has named De Anza a Pathway Champion of Placement for three consecutive years.

Innovation drives the college's approach to career education and partnerships, which is a growing emphasis for the college. In addition to a new contract education program with Tesla, the college created a bachelor of science in Automotive Technology Management, launched Silicon Valley's first Associate in Science in Applied Artificial Intelligence in fall 2026, and established a nursing pathway with San José State that allows students to earn a bachelor's degree in less than three years. Grants from sources including the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Gene Haas Foundation strengthen programs from advanced manufacturing to oral history.

Online learning is a strength, with about 78% of students taking at least one class online and no gaps in success between online, face-to-face, and hybrid formats. Athletics sets high standards as well, with 24 Coast Conference All-Sports trophies and dedicated academic support for student-athletes. De Anza is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

Student Success, Equity, and Support

Equity is a campuswide commitment that shapes planning and instruction. Through shared governance, De Anza develops institutional plans with metrics for course completion, retention, transfer, equity, and civic engagement, and it is moving to a single institutional strategic plan. Departments and individual faculty use online data tools to examine outcomes by ethnicity, gender, and program participation. Beginning in fall 2027, a redesigned program review will place each program on a five-year cycle using six common indicators.

Belonging is built into the student experience. Six Villages, organized by major or area of interest, offer every student a community of peers and a designated campus space, building on more than 15 Learning Communities that support first-generation students, men of color, LGBTQ+ students, foster youth, and students who were previously incarcerated, among others. Pioneering programs such as Math Performance Success embed counselors and tutors in

the classroom and have narrowed achievement gaps for Black and Latinx students. The college has also converted 77 courses and 11 pathways to zero textbook cost, saving students about $800,000 so far.

Support begins before students arrive, through outreach to high schools, empowerment conferences, and a Summer Bridge program. It continues with the De Anza College Promise scholarship program, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services, and basic-needs support through The Hub and Roary's Market, mental health services, a free transit pass, and affordable student housing that opened in fall 2026 at full occupancy. The Intercultural and International Studies Division is one of the only academic divisions of its kind at a California community college, and the Pride Center, the Women's Resource and Advocacy Center, and services for students with disabilities, undocumented students, and veterans round out a broad culture of inclusion.

In 2025-26, De Anza's course success rate was 80% and its course retention rate was 92%. Among first-time students, 77% persisted from fall to winter. The college enrolled 3,327 dual enrollment students, and Career Technical Education makes up 26% of overall enrollment. A Career Center, an internship coordinator, and a growing credit for prior learning program connect students to employment, and noncredit enrollment has grown from 27 FTES in 2020-21 to 335 in 2024-25. External recognition reflects this record, as De Anza was one of only 200 community colleges nationwide eligible to apply for the 2027 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

The college is candid that work remains. In 2025-26, disproportionate impact in course completion continued for several student groups, and fall-to-fall persistence among first-time students was 60%. De Anza is responding through Guided Pathways, including the Villages and program maps, and its Educational Master Plan sets a goal of bringing each priority population within 5 percentage points of all other students on 10 metrics.

A Beautiful and Vibrant Campus

The campus balances energy and calm, with a bustling Main Quad that hosts Club Day, Welcome Day, and a spring open house, and quiet gardens, fountains, murals, and sculptures for study and contemplation. De Anza's campus serves the community well beyond its students. The stadium, aquatics complex, Planetarium, theater, and Euphrat Museum of Art host competitions, exhibitions, and performances open to the public. The Community Education Division reaches more than 30,000 adults and children each year, from enrichment classes for middle and high school students to child care for toddlers and preschoolers, and nine LEED-certified buildings, two at the Platinum level, reflect a commitment to sustainability. Voter-approved bonds continue to renew the campus. The Beach volleyball facility opened in April 2026, a Creative Arts Building and a renewed Services for Students building are in design, and the Physical Education Complex renovation, which is 75% funded by the state, is scheduled to begin construction in fall 2027. Other Measure G projects are moving forward.



Shared Governance and the District

De Anza is committed to a vibrant and inclusive shared governance process in which administrators, faculty members, classified professionals, and students are stakeholders. Governance bodies include the Academic Senate, the Classified Senate, and De Anza Student Government (DASG), along with the various committees and work groups that guide these entities. Participants include representatives from the district's collective bargaining units — such as the Foothill-De Anza Faculty Association, the Association of Classified Employees (ACE), and Teamsters (Supervisors) — as well as the Administrative Management Association.

De Anza's president is a key member of the district executive team led by Chancellor Lee Lambert, together with the president of Foothill College and four vice chancellors. Both college presidents are voting members of the Foothill-De Anza Foundation Board and work closely with the chancellor and the foundation to raise funds for college priorities. The foundation is among the largest nonprofit auxiliary organizations supporting California community colleges, with $67 million in total assets. The district is a founding member of the League for Innovation in the Community College and the only California district represented on its board.

Community Supported Funding

The Foothill-De Anza district became community supported, a model also known as basic aid, in 2025-26. Under this model, the district's revenue comes primarily from local property taxes and enrollment fees rather than state apportionment. Spending decisions rest locally, which over time gives the district and the college more flexibility to plan around students' needs.

Strategic enrollment management continues to shape instructional load, class availability, and the services students need. What has changed is the emphasis, from pursuing FTES growth to managing schedules, program maps, and support services strategically so that all students can reach their goals. A task force established by the chancellor and the Board of Trustees is developing a new resource allocation model intended to be fair, equitable, transparent, and data-driven, and the college is streamlining its budget planning with budget managers, deans, and the Academic Senate and Classified Senate.

De Anza is focused on returning the community's investment. A recent district-funded study estimates that the college generated $947 million in economic impact for Santa Clara County in FY 2024-25, supported about 6,000 jobs, and returned $3 to taxpayers for every public dollar invested.

Expectations of the President



The next president will lead De Anza College through a period of institutional renewal and financial transition, strengthening the conditions for academic excellence, equitable student success, and service to the community. Reporting directly to the chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, the president will work collaboratively across the district and within De Anza College to advance the district's overall mission and the college's strategic goals.

De Anza College's next president must have a proven record of effective leadership at an institution of similar mission and complexity, along with the emotional intelligence to rebuild trust and foster healing after a series of presidential transitions.

Leadership Challenges, Priorities, and Opportunities

The following priorities define the work ahead. This agenda offers prospective leaders an honest invitation to understand where their talents are most needed and to help shape De Anza's future in partnership with the stakeholders who shared their thoughts and dreams for the future.

1. Rebuild Trust, Foster Healing, and Provide Stable Leadership

De Anza College desires a president who offers steady, visible leadership and understands the fatigue and uncertainty that repeated changes at the top have left behind. Genuine relationships grow from candid communication, careful listening, fair decisions, and reliable follow-through, and the next president should cultivate all four. This leader will foster a climate where people feel safe to voice concerns and disagree respectfully and will model accountability by owning mistakes and resolving lingering issues. Drawing on the commitment and ingenuity of the college community, the president should recognize employees' contributions and care for their well-being. Above all, the campus needs continuity in leadership and institutional priorities so people can invest in the college's future with confidence.

2. Guide the Funding Transition with Financial Expertise and Care

The president must bring proven expertise in California community college funding formulas to lead the shift to community supported funding with competence, transparency, and compassion. Working alongside district leaders and campus constituencies, this leader will shape a sustainable multiyear financial plan that links budgeting, enrollment, staffing, and educational investment. Faculty, staff, and students deserve plain, honest communication about financial realities and trade-offs, along with careful attention to how decisions affect them. Throughout the transition, the president must safeguard equitable access, instructional quality, and student completion. By inviting employees to share their knowledge in finding efficiencies and improving resource allocation, the president can turn this transition into a more stable foundation for the college's future.

3. Build Inclusive, Credible, and Effective Participatory Governance

The college community is looking to its next president to restore confidence in participatory governance by ensuring that participation genuinely shapes institutional decisions. That means involving constituencies early, clarifying responsibilities and decision-making authority, and showing how recommendations influence outcomes. A successful leader will honor the institutional knowledge of classified professionals, the expertise of faculty, and the perspectives of adjunct faculty, affinity groups, and students. When full agreement is not possible, the president should seek common ground and explain decisions with care and respect. Existing governance structures, together with the community's willingness to contribute, offer a strong foundation for better decisions, stronger relationships, and shared ownership of progress.

4. Develop Leadership Capacity, Accountability, and Operational Coordination

The president will bring together a cohesive leadership team that collaborates across divisions, shares responsibility and accountability, and models respectful communication and sound judgment. Clear roles and expectations, stronger management skills among leaders and supervisors, and consistent practices will help restore morale and keep services moving. This leader should turn institutional assessment findings into visible improvements and ensure key processes are documented so employees have what they need to do their work well. By valuing internal expertise and deepening collaboration with the sister college and the district, the president can reduce duplication, improve coordination, and give students a more connected educational experience.

5. Advance Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Educational Excellence

The college community seeks a president who will make De Anza's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion visible in students' access to high-quality learning, their sense of belonging, and their progress toward their goals. Students should not be held back by course unavailability, fragmented counseling, or unmet basic needs, and the next president must work to remove these barriers. Expanding access to academic support, housing assistance, and physical and mental health services, especially for students facing the greatest obstacles, is central to this work. Learning Communities, the Villages, identity-based programs, disability services, and Caring Campus will benefit from a leader who champions better coordination, greater awareness, and outcome assessment. Guided by evidence and by students' lived experiences, the president should invest in advancing both equity and excellence.

6. Link Institutional History and Academic Strengths to a Shared Future

The next president should honor De Anza's legacy by learning from the people, programs, and decisions that built its reputation for educational quality, equity, and innovation. Respecting institutional memory while pursuing a vision for excellence and stability, this leader will invite the community to help decide what to preserve, strengthen, and change. Together, the president and the college can shape a shared direction rooted in De Anza's strengths and responsive to emerging needs, with realistic priorities and a pace that honors both institutional capacity and the need for healing. Building on excellence in teaching, transfer preparation, nursing, automotive technology, and other career programs, the president can help define what makes De Anza distinctive and inspire confidence in its next chapter.

7. Broaden Pathways to Opportunity

The college will rely on its president to align programs and services with the lives of working adults, part-time and returning students, international students, retirees, and recent high school graduates. Every student should find registration, scheduling, communication, and support systems that understand and meet their educational goals. While offering instructional options that reflect students' needs, the president should preserve meaningful in-person learning experiences. Growing retraining, certificate, career advancement, and lifelong learning programs will require strong partnerships with employers, healthcare organizations, community agencies, and donors. Through these relationships, the president can open doors to internships, career pathways, and resources that expand students' educational and economic opportunities.

8. Lead Technological and Campus Renewal with a Human-Centered Purpose

De Anza's next president must guide a coordinated response to technological change, one that keeps human judgment, ethical responsibility, and educational purpose at the center. This leader will bring faculty, staff, students, and technical experts together to explore what artificial intelligence means for academic integrity, teaching, learning, and future careers. Alongside this work, intentional improvements to facilities and campus life can promote accessibility, health, well-being, and engagement. Building on successful outreach and community events, the president should prioritize investments that enrich learning and human connection, positioning De Anza to innovate in ways that reflect its values and serve its people well.

Leadership Qualifications, Attributes, Skills, and Experiences

The successful candidate will demonstrate a deep commitment to the open-access community college mission and a record of effective leadership in an institution of comparable mission and complexity. The next president will continue to meet the educational needs of Silicon Valley while navigating the shifting higher education landscape and leading change to address the impacts. The following qualities and experiences describe the capacity needed to deliver the leadership agenda.

Desired leadership attributes, skills, and experiences include:

- Demonstrated knowledge of the California Community Colleges system and the ability to navigate the legislative, social, and economic environment impacting the system and colleges
- A deep understanding of an open access multi-college community college district and proven ability to work collaboratively across a complex system and with a sister institution
- A track record of strategic planning and the capacity to develop a shared vision and key strategic goals with all stakeholders to spark innovation and meet educational and workforce development needs of various communities
- Evidence of being student centered and inclusive with a strong focus on academic quality, student engagement, and student success; demonstrated experience in leading strategic enrollment management initiatives with successful results
- Exceptional skill in financial planning, stewardship, and decision making to maintain long-term fiscal stability and sustainability of an institution; in-depth knowledge of the community supported funding model and its impacts
- High emotional intelligence and compassion for colleagues to support an institution's organizational health and positive work environment, employee retention, and work-life balance
- A transparent, inspirational leadership style, demonstrated through the ability to motivate, listen, be visible, and actively collaborate with all stakeholders to build trust and nurture a strong sense of community
- Demonstrated experience reporting to a district chancellor or similar position and maintaining a productive and supportive working relationship
- The proven ability to develop and maintain successful working relationships with labor groups and participatory governance to address key issues and goals, support collaborative decision-making, and enhance effective communication across the college
- Evidence of building strong relationships and partnerships with community organizations, business and industry, K-12 school systems, and other educational institutions to create sustainable support for various student populations, transfer initiatives, and workforce development and career training programs
- The capacity to be a strong, persuasive institutional advocate and leader within the community who will garner increased support for students and the college
- A track record of fundraising and working with a foundation to develop relationships with donors and increase major gifts, endowments, and grants that support students, programs, and an institution
- A working knowledge of emerging technology, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), relevant to supporting academic programming, student learning, and administrative functions

- Effective and clear oral and written communication skills, including the ability to listen to different groups and communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences
- Strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and the ability to utilize quantitative and qualitative data to inform decisions
- Professional and personal integrity and ethical conduct

Minimum qualifications

A minimum of a master's degree in a related field is required; a minimum of five (5) years of progressively responsible experience within complex organizations and proven management accomplishments related to the requirements of this position is required. Senior-level experience, including working with governing bodies or other high-level oversight committees is required.

Understanding of, sensitivity to, and respect for the diverse academic, socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, disability, and sexual orientation of community college students, faculty, and staff.

Preferred qualifications

A terminal degree is preferred; higher education experience, preferably in a community college, is preferred. Experience teaching in a higher education setting (or equivalent experience) and/or experience working with faculty and staff to support a student-centered learning environment is preferred.

Nominations and Applications

AGB Search is partnering with De Anza College in its search for the institution's next president. To ensure full consideration, applications should be received by Monday, February 8, 2027, and include the following:

- A letter of interest addressing the strategic objectives and qualifications identified in the profile;
- A current curriculum vitae; and
- The contact information (email and phone) for five professional references, including their relationship to the candidate (references will be contacted at a later date in the search process and only with the permission of the candidate).

Semifinalists will be selected the week of March 8, 2027.

Application materials should be submitted through the AGB Search portal system: https://bit.ly/484JOpw

Please direct nominations and expressions of interest or any questions regarding the application process to: DeAnza-President@agbsearch.com

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Foothill-De Anza Community College District is an equal opportunity employer and actively seeks a diverse pool of qualified applicants. No person shall be denied employment because of ethnicity or race, color, sex or gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, religion, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, medical condition, or military and veteran status.