



ASO Joint Retreat Minutes

Friday, January 23, 2026

Grossmont College, Griffin Gate

Welcome & Introductions 9am-9:30am

Dr. Lauren Vaknin, Cuyamaca College Dean of Engagement and Belonging and Sara Varghese, Grossmont College Dean of Student Affairs, provided a welcome and overview of the day.

Community Building Circle 9:30am-11:30pm*

Ojore Lateef Bushfan, Grossmont College Mental Health Counselor

Leticia Estrella, Grossmont College Mental Health Counselor

*Please bring a personal item to share with the group

Participants guided through a community-building circle.

Participants shared the following feedback at the conclusion of the exercise:

- Gratitude
- Closer, heard, seen
 - Understanding
 - Connected
 - Appreciative
- Want to know others more
- Acceptance, compassionate
 - Relaxed
- New perspectives
 - Grateful
- Sad, jealous didn't get things passed down
- Open, relaxed
- Chill- emphasis on slowing down
 - Sentimentally
 - Honored
 - Grounded
 - Unity
 - Curiosity
- Community being built around connective
 - Closeness
- Relating to others

Lunch/Networking Break 11:30pm-12pm

Serving and Strengthening Community 12pm-1:30pm

Dr. Aaron Bruce, Dean of Student Success and Equity, Cuyamaca College, invited participants to reflect on:

- What systems are better because we were here?
 - Who will have easier access after us?
 - Whose experience have we made better?

Recap and Wrap-Up 1:30pm

Deans Vaknin and Varghese provided a reflection of the day.