



From the 8th President of Gavilan College To the Students of the Future,

As you stand here today, one hundred years after this campus first opened its doors, I want you to know that you were in our hearts the moment we broke ground on this soil.

My name is Dr. Pedro Avila. I served as the 8th President of Gavilan College and was the first Latino to hold this office. When I wrote this, I was an immigrant from Guadalajara, Mexico, who had arrived in this country decades earlier as a nine-year-old, fueled by the belief that education is the only true equalizer. I hope that, in your time, the barriers I faced—poverty, housing insecurity, and the struggle for belonging—have been dismantled by the progress we have made.

We are placing this time capsule here to mark the birth of the Hollister Campus. In its first year, over 1,000 students walked through these halls, seeking the same thing I imagine you are seeking: a better life, a sense of purpose, and a community that sees them.

You should know that in the year 2026, the world was a complex and often difficult place. Many in our migrant and LGBTQ+ communities faced uncertainty and hardship. But at Gavilan College, we took immense pride in being a place of radical inclusivity, providing the most support to those who needed it most. I hope that as you read this, the spirit of radical kindness is no longer an "effort" but a fundamental way of life in your century.

To give you a sense of your roots, I am including the [History of Gavilan College](#), authored by our retired History instructor and campus historian, Leah Halper. Within those pages, you will find the story of San Benito Junior College, founded in 1919 right here in Hollister. It was built by the grit and vision of local citizens who dared to dream of a college for the people. That dream eventually became the Gavilan Joint Community College District.

As the President of your past, I have spent my career advocating for students just like you. My greatest hope is that this campus has served as a lighthouse for your families for the last century, and that you continue to create opportunities where none existed before.

You are the realization of our hardest work and our greatest dreams. Study hard, care for one another, and keep the fire of Gavilan burning for the next hundred years.

With hope and pride,

Superintendent/President
Gavilan College
January 28, 2026