



Fall 2025 Sawubona BLOC Report

This update provides the Board of Trustees with an overview of the impact, outcomes, challenges, and strategic alignment of the Sawubona Black Learning & Opportunity Center (BLOC). The Sawubona BLOC serves as a culturally affirming hub designed to increase retention, persistence, and sense of belonging for Black students at Santa Rosa Junior College.

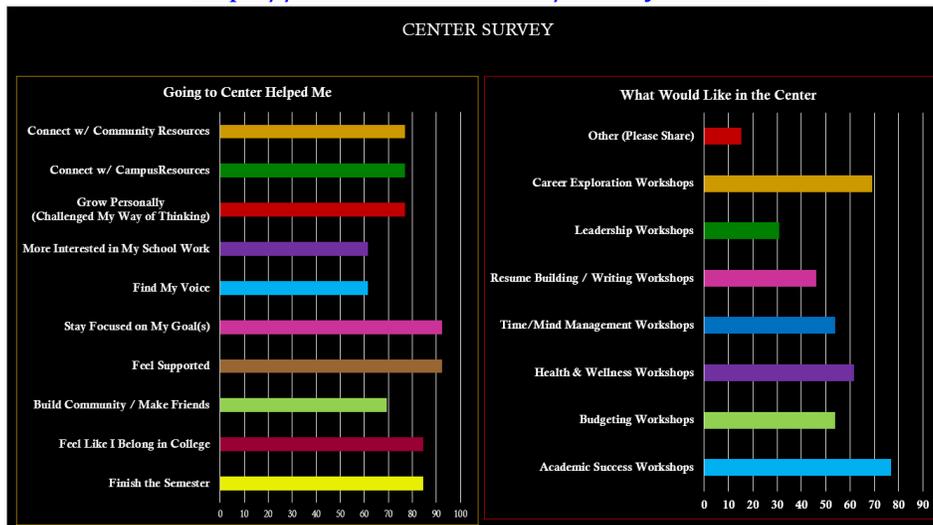
Overview

Since its inception in Fall 2023, the Sawubona BLOC has supported more than 9,000 student visits, reflecting strong and sustained demand for culturally affirming, equity-centered support. Through academic workshops, facilitated study hours, co-curricular partnerships, leadership programming, campus tours, and community-building events, the Sawubona BLOC has emerged as both a high-impact student success initiative and a vital cultural anchor for Black students. This work is strengthened by weekly, on-site collaborations with Financial Aid, Disability Resources Department, Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS), and Student Health Services, expanding access to essential resources in culturally responsive spaces.

Fall 2025 Highlights

- ✓ **1,000+ student engagements:** includes study hours, workshops, game nights, and culturally affirming events
- ✓ **60+ Welcome Home Kits – Polly O’Meara Doyle Hall Students**
- ✓ Successful launch of **Welcome Black Week**, fostering early connection and belonging
- ✓ **Weekly Lunch & Learns:** programming focused on academic, personal, and leadership development
- ✓ **End-of-semester and year student surveys** allow us to shift to meet student needs

<https://bloc.santarosa.edu/survey-results>





Challenges

While the Sawubona BLOC has demonstrated meaningful impact, several challenges underscore the need for shared institutional responsibility. The Center is often positioned as a primary response to inequities that are structural and campus-wide in nature. Reliance on a single center to address systemic barriers places unsustainable expectations on both staff and students. Key challenges include limited staffing capacity, constrained funding streams, and the need for broader faculty and department-level engagement in equity-centered practices. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated, district-wide strategies rather than program-level solutions alone and would allow for increased professional development and emphasis on bringing the knowledge/skills/cultural values reflected in the Center to the campus, and base funding for A2Mend/Brother to Brother programming/staffing.

Strategic Plan Connection

The Sawubona BLOC exemplifies the District's commitment to holistic, transformative learning by intentionally removing structural barriers and cultivating conditions for student flourishing. Aligned with the District's strategic plan, the BLOC advances student success through sustained engagement via academic workshops, facilitated study hours, and co-curricular classroom partnerships that strengthen academic momentum. As a culturally affirming hub, the Sawubona BLOC supports course completion, persistence, and leadership development; increases access and closes equity gaps for historically underserved Black students; fosters belonging and institutional connection; and reinforces workforce readiness through skill-building and navigation of college systems—while also modeling the need for shared, district-wide accountability for equitable, data-informed student support.

Black History Month Event Highlights

[\(click here for the full schedule\)](#)

- **February 3rd: Kickoff Kickball Game** | 11:30 - 2:30 pm | Softball Field
Join us at the BHM kickoff kickball game! Play or watch- just be there! [RSVP to Join the Kickball Game!](#)
- **February 10th: Trust the Tea w/ Trustee Bailey** | 10:30 - 12:00 pm | Sawubona BLOC, Pioneer Hall 360
Candid conversation with Trustee Bailey, as we sip tea and talk truth about leadership, and student advocacy. Come for the tea. Stay for the insight, connection, and real talk.
- **February 11th: Campus Feud** | 12:00- 1:30 pm | Student Activities Center, Bertolini 1st Floor
Survey says... Black brilliance! Join us for a high-energy game where teams go head-to-head answering campus-rooted questions that celebrate our collective wisdom and spark joy and laughter.
- **February 19th: The Blueprint in Balance- Reiki Infused Sound Bath** | 2:00 - 3:30 pm | Student Activities Center
Let sound and energy work together to support grounding, clarity, and inner peace.
- **February 25th: Still Becoming- BLOCed in Time** | 10:30 - 2:00 pm | Student Activities Center, Bertolini 1st Floor
Honor the past. Name the present. Speak to the future. Join us as we create a time capsule that captures who we've been, who we are, and who we're becoming. Bring small items that represent your journey. We're sealing memories. We're planting legacy. Be part of it.

Contact Information

For additional information about the Sawubona BLOC, please contact Regina Mahiri, Coordinator, at rmahiri@santarosa.edu.