

City College mobilizes when dark clouds roll in

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San Diego City College graduation was truly a moving experience, thanks to San Diego's recent fickle weather.

For more than a decade, **City College** commencement has been in Balboa Park's outdoor Spreckels Organ Pavilion. Not last Friday, as it turned out. Shortly before the scheduled arrival of nearly 400 graduates, the temperature dipped to 57 degrees and storm clouds rolled in.

Organizers had fewer than three hours to move everything to the Harry West Gymnasium on the downtown campus. The protective gym floor covering was manually rolled out. Bleachers, sound system, podium, check-in and staging areas were quickly assembled. Flags and flower displays were relocated, and parking, police and shuttle bus service reorganized.

College officials notified more than 2,000 family members and guests of the change via e-mail, text message, media alerts and the campus Web site.

After the ceremony, which attracted an overflow crowd, college spokeswoman Heidi Bunkowske couldn't help but allude to the Federal Emergency Management Agency and its well-publicized organizational problems during Hurricane Katrina.

"FEMA could take lessons from City College," Bunkowske said.

http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20080529/news_1m29bell.html