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BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

Crafton Hills College Launches Vocational Nurse Program

CHC has rolled out a new Vocational Nurse (VN) Program, expanding the college's healthcare education offerings and creating a direct pathway into one of the region's most in-demand professions. The program comes as the Inland Empire faces a critical shortage of healthcare professionals, and CHC is looking to help close that gap by preparing more students for careers in nursing. The inaugural cohort began classes on May 26 and is scheduled to graduate on August 13, 2027.

The program is a full-time, 55-week curriculum divided into four terms (Summer, Fall, Spring, Summer), comprising a total of 1,530 hours—576 hours of theory and 954 hours of clinical training and prepares students for careers in skilled nursing facilities, sub-acute recovery centers, and acute care hospitals. Upon completion the students are eligible to sit for the National Council Licensure



Examination-- Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN). Once completed they will be a Licensed Vocational Nurse.

The VN Program is designed as a living-wage certificate program that will give students a direct route to stable employment while helping address a persistent nursing workforce shortage in the Inland Empire. "This program

does far more than provide workers to fill gaps. It provides students in our community with a clear path into stable and respectable healthcare careers and provides local healthcare providers with the skilled nurses needed today," said John Cordova, Vocational Nursing Program Director.

Photo: Vocational Nurse Students

Service Through Action: Karl Sweeting Earns National EMS Leadership Honor



From combat medic to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) instructor, Karl Sweeting has spent his entire career giving back to those who need it most. His hard work and positive

impact were recognized by The National Association of EMS Educators (NAEMSE) at their annual symposium on August 13, 2026, in Reno, Nevada.

At this symposium, Crafton Hills College's EMS Adjunct Faculty, Karl Sweeting, was presented with the James O. Page Award. This award is presented annually to an individual who exemplifies exceptional leadership in EMS areas related to fire-service.

Karl's experience as a combat medic

for the U.S. Army and his passion for teaching both inform how he approaches his students. Karl's motto is "Service through action. Leadership through teaching." He embodies this philosophy through his teaching at Crafton and is now getting much deserved recognition from NAEMSE for his outstanding achievements in his field.

Photo: Karl Sweeting

Crafton Hills College Respiratory Care Student Selected for The SHIFT, Season 2



From July 31 through August 2, Crafton Hills College Respiratory Care student Christian Brandes visited Texas for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: competing in *The SHIFT*, Season 2, a reality competition focused on respiratory care.

Created and hosted by Joe Lewis, known online as Respiratory Coach, *The SHIFT* is the first reality show competition structured around respiratory therapy students and professionals. The show brings together eight respiratory

therapy students for clinical and creative challenges designed to test their knowledge, clinical judgment, communication, teamwork, leadership, and ability to perform under pressure.

Contestants participate in a “princess shift” from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m., simulating a 12-hour healthcare shift. During the experience, students must draw on their clinical skills and judgment while navigating fatigue and high-pressure situations to provide the best possible patient care.

Of the more than 300 respiratory therapy students from across the country who applied for this opportunity, only eight were selected. Brandes was among those chosen to compete. Recognizing the significance of this opportunity for a Crafton Hills College student, the Crafton Hills College Foundation provided funding for Brandes’ airfare to Texas, helping remove a financial barrier that could have prevented him from participating.

This is one example of how the Crafton Hills College Foundation creates opportunities for students to go beyond the classroom. Through scholarships, emergency grants, program support, professional development opportunities, and assistance with workforce-entry expenses, the Foundation helps students access experiences that strengthen their education and prepare them for successful careers. For students like Brandes, Foundation support can make it possible to say “yes” to opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach.

Due to confidentiality agreements, much of what Brandes can share about the competition is limited until the show airs. Crafton Hills College looks forward to learning more about his experience when *The SHIFT*, Season 2 premieres in September 2026.

Photo: Christian Brandes

A \$60 Bus Pass, A Lifetime of Impact: How Donor Support Helped Two Future Physicians



This summer, two students in CHC’s Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program, Orume Igbako and Luis Castillo Gonzalez, spent their days immersed in microbiology research thanks to the generosity of CHC Foundation donors. Each student received a \$60 bus pass—a small investment that made a summer research internship possible.

Working alongside Dr. Andrea Dillon, Igbako and Castillo Gonzalez conducted research focused on antibiotic-resistant bacteria, an area of growing importance in healthcare.

The research experience has been especially meaningful because each student’s project is connected to healthcare issues that are important in their home countries. Igbako, from Nigeria, and Castillo

Gonzalez, from Venezuela, found a strong sense of purpose by studying biological processes that could one day contribute to improving health outcomes in their communities.

This fall, both students will transfer to continue pursuing their dreams of becoming physicians. Igbako will attend the University of California, Riverside, and Castillo Gonzalez will attend the University of California, Irvine.

Their success is a powerful reminder that generosity doesn’t have to be grand to be transformative. For a total investment of just \$120, donors removed a critical transportation barrier for two promising students, making this life-changing opportunity possible. Sometimes, the path to changing lives begins with something as simple as a bus pass.

Photo: Castillo Gonzalez Doing Research

From Crafton to a Career in American Sign Language



When Amanda Barnum graduated from Crafton Hills College with associate degrees in American Sign Language and History, she had already discovered a passion for serving

others through communication. She continued her education at Riverside City College, where she earned her credentials as an American Sign Language interpreter, and at California State University, San Bernardino, where she studied art history with an emphasis in Deaf art.

Over the past decade, Amanda has built an impressive career as an American Sign Language interpreter, working in educational, medical, religious and industrial settings. Today, she serves as a top-level interpreter for both the San Bernardino Community College District and Riverside Community College District, is the primary interpreter for Beaumont Church of Christ, and helped launch the

American Sign Language program at Aquinas Catholic High School in San Bernardino.

Amanda is passionate about increasing access and awareness for the Deaf community. As an educator, she hopes to inspire more people to learn American Sign Language, helping bridge communication gaps, and ensuring Deaf stories are shared. Her passion for connecting people through American Sign Language first took root at Crafton Hills College, and today she continues to make a meaningful difference throughout the Inland Empire.

Photo: Amanda Barnum

100% Confidence: Crafton Hills Child Development Center Delivers Exceptional Results

Parenting is a full-time job and attending college while being a parent or guardian can seem unattainable, but CHC's Child Development Center (CDC) makes both possible. The CDC at CHC offers a preschool program for children aged three to five that operates in both the morning and afternoon and includes high quality developmental and educational programs, educated and highly trained staff, and beautiful indoor and outdoor environments.

In Spring 2026, the CDC sent out a satisfaction survey to participating families with the goal of getting feedback on program quality, learning and development, safety, communication, parent/guardian involvement, and overall satisfaction. The results were astounding! All respondents reported feeling confident that their child was in a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment, and they felt comfortable reaching out to staff with questions or concerns. They also unanimously agreed that the program effectively supported their child's learning and development, met social and emotional needs, and provided high-quality classroom and outdoor experiences.

In addition, families consistently noted strong communication from teachers and staff, along with meaningful opportunities to be involved in the program.

When asked for feedback, parents and guardians enthusiastically expressed high levels of overall satisfaction with the program and said they would absolutely recommend it to others. One parent remarked, "The program is excellent, the teachers and staff are above reproach, and the students and parents all express their liking of the CDC." Another responded, "They have been nothing but perfect. Sad to have to leave to go to kindergarten because we love them so much."

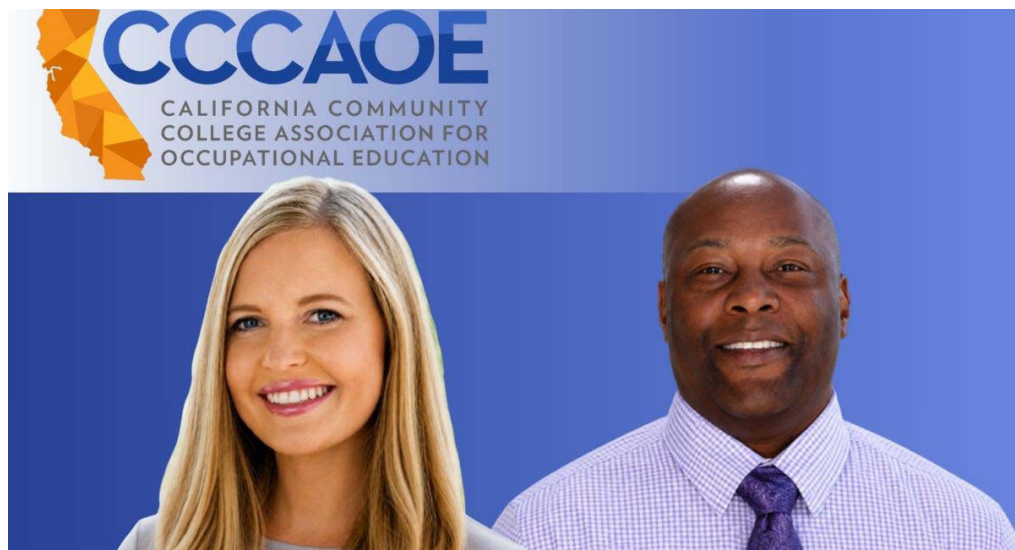
When asked about the CDC, Deanna Brown, the Director of the program said, "At the CDC, we are committed to creating a nurturing and engaging environment where every child can thrive. Through hands-on learning, meaningful relationships, and a focus on social-emotional growth, we provide a safe and enriching environment that inspires curiosity, creativity, and a love of learning."



At CHC, students don't have to make the impossible choice between their child's wellbeing and their own future. The CDC eliminates this predicament by offering a safe, enriching, welcoming, developmentally appropriate environment where children can stay while their families pursue the next steps in their professional and academic journeys. You can't get better than the Child Development Center!

Photo: CDC Kids Doing an Activity

Two Crafton Hills College Leaders Elected to CCCAOE Board of Directors



Two CHC leaders have been elected to serve on the Board of Directors for the California Community College Association for Occupational Education (CCCAOE), recognizing their commitment to advancing career education and student success across the state.

Dan Word, Dean of Career Education and Human Development, will serve as president elect, helping guide CCCAOE's statewide efforts to strengthen workforce education and career pathways. In his role at CHC, Dan leads programs that prepare students for meaningful careers

while supporting their academic and professional growth.

Dr. Veronica Arrowood, Director of Grants and Administration, will serve as vice president for the Inland Empire and Desert region. She will bring her expertise in securing resources, building partnerships, and supporting innovative career education programs to colleges throughout the region.

Their respective elections highlight the outstanding leadership and statewide impact of CHC. Both Dan and Veronica represent Crafton's commitment to creating opportunities for students through strong programs, collaboration, and community partnerships. Please join us in congratulating Dan and Veronica on this well-deserved recognition and their continued leadership in career education.

Photo: Dan Word and Veronica Arrowood

Creating Pathways for Success: Faculty Engage in Transformative Equity Workshop



On June 23 and 24, Dr. Lyn Westergard facilitated a robust two-day workshop that included a theoretical exploration of academic support structures and their application, example lessons from English and STEM, and opportunities for faculty to discuss anti-racist pedagogies. Participants explored these topics with the goal of improving CHC's efforts to uphold

a high standard of student equity and success.

This workshop adds to the many ways that CHC and the Multilingual Program demonstrate a strong commitment to improving equity at the college.

Photo: Equity Workshop Participants

Crafton Hills College Welcomes Basic Needs Professionals for Regional Convening



On June 23, CHC welcomed basic needs professionals from across the Inland Empire and Desert Region

for the 2026 Basic Needs Regional Convening, hosted in partnership with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Real College California Coalition (RCCC).

The convening brought together college leaders, basic needs coordinators, student services professionals, and community partners to share innovative practices, discuss challenges, and strengthen

collaboration in support of students experiencing food, housing, and other basic needs insecurities.

The event reflected CHC's ongoing commitment to student success by fostering collaboration and sharing strategies that help remove barriers to education for community college students across California.

Photo: Regional Convening Attendees