

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

January 2026



Crafton Hills College Celebrates the Holiday Season with Campus and Community Events

Crafton Hills College kept a full calendar throughout the month of December as the campus prepared for the end of the semester and the close of the year.

The season began with hot chocolate and pastries on Dec. 3 for all faculty and staff at the Learning Resource Center. The event was organized by the Professional Development Committee to provide a welcoming space for colleagues to connect during this busy time.

On Dec. 11, Crafton hosted a campuswide holiday luncheon for all employees, featuring fresh tacos, a festive ugly sweater contest, and a variety of games and drawings that brought everyone together.

Crafton also engaged with the local community by participating in both the Redlands and Yucaipa holiday parades. Faculty, staff, and students marched down the parade routes, followed by a decorated fire engine. With pom-poms, candy, Santa hats, and light-up necklaces, participants helped spread holiday cheer.



The CHC Fire Cadets are always a crowd favorite as they stop along the route to do push-ups, sparking cheers from paradegoers. This year's Redlands parade was especially memorable with the CHC Women's Championship Water Polo team, which drew the loudest applause as members marched with their medals proudly displayed around their necks.

Crafton was also honored to have SBCCD trustees join the parades this year. Dr. Stephanie Houston and her grandchildren attended both parades, while board chair Dr. Nathan Gonzales joined in Redlands and

Trustee Carlos Aguilar, along with his wife and daughter, participated in the Yucaipa parade.

In addition to campus celebrations, there were opportunities for employees and students to serve one another. Throughout the month, the Psychology Club organized its annual toy drive to support EOPS families, collecting new, unwrapped toys for children ages 6 months to 14 years. All donated gifts were made available to parents during the EOPS holiday celebration on Dec. 19.

Photo: CHC Holiday Luncheon

Basic Needs Center Supports Students Ahead of the Holidays



The Basic Needs Center at Crafton Hills College stepped up in a big way to ensure students had the support they needed heading into the holiday season.

In the days leading up to fall break, the center hosted its annual turkey distribution, providing holiday food bags complete with a turkey, sides and dessert. Beginning at 9 a.m. Nov. 18, students were able to reserve a bag on a first-come, first-served basis.

These holiday bags replaced the weekly Grab & Go Groceries distribution, allowing the COACH Cupboard to offer something extra special for the season.

The Basic Needs Center ensures students' foundational needs are met so they can focus on succeeding academically and personally.

Photo: COACH Cupboard

Redlands Professional Firefighters Establish Endowed Scholarship at Crafton Hills College Fire Academy



On Dec. 2, Crafton Hills College (CHC) celebrated a moment of partnership and generosity during a check presentation at the CHC Fire Academy. The Redlands Professional Firefighters Association presented a \$12,500 endowed gift to the CHC Foundation to establish a permanent scholarship fund for Fire Academy cadets.

Representing the association at the presentation were Matt Swenson, Captain for Redlands Fire and President of the Redlands Professional Firefighters Association and Dustin Whitaker, Fire Captain for the Redlands Fire

Department and President of the Benevolent Fund. The check was presented to CHC Fire Chief Ryan Harold and CHC Operations Specialist Danny Ward.

The Redlands Professional Firefighters Association consists of 54 sworn firefighters dedicated to serving the Redlands community with professionalism, courage and compassion. Their one-time, permanent and irrevocable gift will remain with the foundation in perpetuity. The endowment will be invested, and only the earnings will be used to fund scholarships.

This gift establishes the Redlands Professional Firefighters Association Endowed Scholarship, which will provide a \$500 annual scholarship each fall beginning in 2026 to a student enrolled in the CHC Fire Academy.

Whitaker, a proud graduate of CHC Fire Academy Class 57, an associate degree recipient from CHC and a graduate of its paramedic program, shared the personal importance of giving back.

"This college gave me the foundation for my entire career. Crafton shaped who I am as a firefighter and as a person. I love this college, and it means everything to me to be able to support the next generation of cadets who are working toward the same dream."

Harold emphasized the endowment's long-term impact.

"This scholarship will support our cadets in perpetuity, ensuring that future generations of firefighters have access to the training and resources they need to succeed. We are deeply grateful for this partnership with the Redlands Professional Firefighters Association and their incredible commitment to our students."

Photo: Check Presentation

Student-led projects bring 'main character energy' to annual CHC Student Research Conference



Crafton Hills College's annual Student Research Conference on Dec. 5 brought months of hard work to life when

students presented their research projects to their peers and site faculty and staff.

The various projects discussed are part of College Honors Institute (CHI) course curriculum requirements.

They included Dr. T.L. Brink and Dr. Danae Hart's poster presentation on "Microaggression and Age of Perpetrator," which discussed differences between a microaggression committed by a 65-year-old professor compared to a 25-year-old educator, and a look at a lack of representation in movies of positive South Asian storytelling.

"It's inspiring to see what our students are capable of," said Honors Institute Coordinator Judy Cannon. "I find that students will take the projects they started at Crafton and continue to develop them when they transfer to a four-year college or their graduate programs."

Each Honors student was paired with a mentor to help with research and findings. Many were from the Roadrunner family, while support networks came from nearby universities, including Cal State San Bernardino and UC Riverside.

Photo: Student Research Conference

Crafton Volunteers Shine Through the Storm at Fall Food Drive



On November 15, fifty dedicated employees and students from Crafton Hills College braved one of the rainiest days of the year to make a meaningful impact in their community. Meteorologists described the relentless downpour as an atmospheric river, but the storm did nothing to dampen the volunteers'

enthusiasm or shared sense of purpose.

In partnership with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Family Service Association (FSA) of Redlands hosted its annual Fall Food Drive—a family-friendly day of service supporting the local Food Pantry. Alongside other

community volunteers, Crafton's team helped sort an impressive 19,000 pounds of donated food.

Throughout the day, the group organized thousands of items, working shoulder-to-shoulder under tents and easy-ups as the rain poured around them. Box after box was moved with care and determination, all with the understanding that their efforts would help feed families across the region this holiday season and throughout the year.

This annual event plays a crucial role in supporting FSA for the coming year, ensuring that every donation goes directly back into the community and into the hands of those who need it most. Despite the storm, the spirit of service burned bright, proving once again that when Crafton Hills College comes together, not even an atmospheric river can wash away their commitment to helping others.

Photo: CHC Volunteers

Native American Heritage Month at Crafton Hills College



CHC celebrated Native American Heritage Month with a meaningful series of events designed to help students connect with Native culture and history. The month began with a virtual opening ceremony on Nov. 6, where storyteller

Jacque Nuñez shared captivating tales, taught basic Native language, and showcased traditional instruments. On Nov. 7, students had the opportunity to visit the Malki Museum in Banning, exploring California's first Native American museum.

The celebration continued on Nov. 12 with a virtual poetry reading by MariQue Moss, highlighting the power of Indigenous storytelling.

The final event in the series was held at the Multicultural Center on Nov. 18 with a hands-on workshop featuring frybread history and Navajo basket painting.

In addition to these activities, Crafton Hills College also hosted the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation's annual Wa'at Celebration, an educational event honoring Southern California Native American culture. Each year, local elementary school students visit campus to participate in interactive workshops led by San Manuel educators. Through lessons in basketry, cordage, language, and music, students gain a deeper appreciation for Native traditions. This year's Wa'at Celebration was held Nov. 12 and 13, with workshops hosted across campus.

Photo: Wa'at Celebration

Fall 2025 Student Art Exhibit Celebrates Student Achievement



In both fall and spring semesters, our Crafton Hills Student Art Exhibit showcases student artwork from each studio class. Pieces created in sculpture,

two-dimensional design, three-dimensional design, painting, life drawing, and drawing classes are on display highlighting the technical and conceptual skills the students developed throughout the semester. The fall 2025 exhibition culminated in a reception for the student artists on Dec 10 in the Art Gallery located in the Learning Resource Center. The artists invited their family and friends to join and celebrate their work.

Student prizes for first, second, and honorable mentions in the categories of two- and three-dimensional disciplines

were awarded. In Painting and Drawing, Nathan Raley received first place and Caitlin Studer received second place. In Sculpture and Design, Lily A. Lancaster earned first place, followed by Allyson G. Orr in second place.

Prize funding for the student awards was provided by the Crafton Hills College Foundation, which supports student success and recognition across campus programs.

Photo: Student Art Exhibit

Two-day festival recognizes Crafton Hills College arts community



In the months since Crafton Hills College opened its new Finkelstein Performing Arts Center, the building has hosted graduates, musicians, and much more. But a two-day arts festival on Dec. 5 and 6, focused exclusively on the Yucaipa-based college's arts community during a special housewarming celebration.

Hot coco and cider, music by the Crafton Jazz Band, and performances of John Cariani's *Almost, Maine* were event highlights for attending friends, family, and theatre supporters.

"This is the beginning of Crafton reestablishing its performing arts community," said Anna McNaughton, director of *Almost, Maine* and a theatre arts adjunct professor. "The idea of creating it as a 'housewarming' and inviting everyone on campus is because this 'house' belongs to everyone."

"The hope is that poets will bring their poetry here and artists will bring their art here, and it will be a place of community

and creativity and collaboration and celebration for all the voices of our entire community," she continued.

The new performance center was years in the making, officially opening its doors in September. The state-of-the-art facility replaces the college's old gymnasium complex and now serves as a hub for music, theater and dance programming, all under one roof.

With a mission to foster creativity and community engagement, the PAC is host to a new performing arts stage, multiple practice rooms, and additional space to display artwork of various mediums.

Photo: 'Almost, Maine' Cast

CSUSB Day Brings Transfer Opportunities to Crafton



The University Transfer Center hosted CSUSB Day and Instant Admit Day, offering students an opportunity to explore their futures with California State University, San Bernardino. CSUSB faculty,

admissions staff and program representatives met with students to discuss program information as well as essential support services such as honors, financial aid, housing and veteran services.

"We are also pleased to share that CSUSB reported approximately 580 student contacts throughout the event. While this number does not represent individual students — as most students visited at least three tables — it reflects strong engagement and meaningful interaction with CSUSB programs," said Mariana Macamay, Transfer Center coordinator.

During Instant Admit Day, many Crafton students took the opportunity to have their transcripts reviewed on the spot for fall 2026 admission. Those who qualified were awarded a Coyote Pass, guaranteeing their seat at CSUSB. 88 students were offered on-the-spot admission for fall 2026 which means they have met or will meet the transfer requirements to start as Juniors at CSUSB.

Both events were part of our Coyotes on the Horizon MOU partnership to streamline and increase transfer with CSUSB.

Photo: CSUSB Day