

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

June 2025



Crafton Hills College Honors Largest Graduating Class at 2025 Commencement



CHC marked a major milestone May 23, as more than 1,100 students received their degrees and certificates during the college's 2025 Commencement Ceremony, setting multiple records and celebrating several firsts along the way.

Family members, friends, faculty and staff gathered in the campus quad to honor the 378 graduates who chose to participate in the ceremony. The Class of 2025 earned a total of 878 degrees and 988 certificates, both all-time highs for the college.

President Dr. Kevin Horan welcomed attendees with a light-hearted reflection on teamwork, gratitude for faculty and staff and recognition of retirees. "Group projects are a practical example of how life works. No one achieves anything without the help of others. Life is a group project."

This year's ceremony included tributes to 24 graduating student veterans, 402 students who earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher, and 103 graduates who achieved perfect 4.0 GPA's.

As confetti flew and cheers echoed, grads were reminded that the journey continues, and this community is always behind you.

Photo: CHC Graduates with Ryker before commencement ceremony.

Crafton Hills College and IEHP Partner to Expand Student Health Services



Crafton Hills College hosted a signing ceremony with Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP), formalizing a new partnership to enhance student access to health and wellness services. The agreement will provide students with no-cost resources including physicals, screenings, dental and vision care, and 24/7 nurse support.

Leaders from SBCCD, IEHP, and the college community emphasized the critical role of wellness in academic success. Student

speaker Sierra Mason shared the life-changing impact these services will have, while IEHP CEO Jarrod McNaughton and SBCCD alum Shalon Jones highlighted the importance of removing health-related barriers to education.

The partnership reflects the district's commitment to equity and meeting students' basic needs.

Photo: Ryker and President Horan.

11-Year-Old Alisa Perales Becomes Crafton Hills College's Youngest Graduate in History



Most 10-year-old students are typically in fifth grade, studying the basics of reading, writing, and mathematics. But Alisa Perales, of San Bernardino, became the youngest ever to graduate from Crafton Hills College.

Alisa, who had just turned 11 by the time of graduation, on May 23, was a true academic prodigy. "It's very fun to me – almost as fun as playing outside or riding a bike," Alisa shared. "I just enjoy learning."

Her father, Rafael Perales, recalled that Alisa was reading books by the age of two and working on algebra by the age of five. Though he never expected her to graduate from college at just 10, he always knew she was capable of great things.

Alisa began homeschooling at the age of 1, with her father dedicating significant time and effort to her education. "We were working from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon six days a week,"

Rafael explained. "It was a lot of work."

At the age of 8, Alisa enrolled at CHC, and her presence certainly turned heads. "A lot of times they thought I was the student, and I was bringing my child to class," Rafael recalled.

Alisa's professors were quick to recognize her exceptional drive. Computer and Information Science; Professor Sandra Ruiz described Alisa as "extremely determined," adding, "Her young age doesn't stop her. She was always curious to learn, to explore new things."

Alisa intends to transfer to a university, with hopes of attending Stanford to pursue a career in computer science. Her father is confident that whatever path she chooses, the sky is the limit. "She's only getting started. That's what shocks me the most. It's been a short ten years, but we've covered a lot of ground."

Photo: Alisa Perales.

Crafton Hills College and CSUSB Launch Guaranteed Transfer Pathway



On April 17, Crafton Hills College and Cal State San Bernardino (CSUSB) signed a groundbreaking agreement to strengthen the student transfer pipeline through a new initiative, Coyotes on the Horizon.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) guarantees admission and priority

registration for Crafton students who complete an associate degree for transfer (ADT) and meet deadlines. The partnership also includes joint advising, onsite CSUSB support at Crafton Hills College, early engagement activities, and streamlined application processes.

"This agreement reflects our commitment to creating clear, supportive, and accessible pathways for students to reach their educational goals," said Dr. Kevin Horan, President of Crafton Hills College. "Together with CSUSB, we're building a future where more students can succeed close to home."

With over 70% of Crafton students identifying as first-generation, the program aims to double transfer rates to CSUSB by 2026. Student Mary Tyree-Garcia praised the initiative, calling it "a bridge built with heart, support, and opportunity."

College and university leaders celebrated the agreement as a milestone for student success in the Inland Empire.

Photo: CHC and CSUSB representatives with mascots.

Crafton Graduated First Cohort of Bachelor's Degree Students in Respiratory Therapy



On May 23, 2025, Crafton Hills College celebrated a major milestone as seven students became the first to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy—marking the completion of

the college's inaugural bachelor's degree program.

The program launched in January 2024 under California's community college

baccalaureate initiative, designed to meet growing workforce demand for advanced respiratory care training. By 2030, a bachelor's is expected to be the required entry-level credential for new respiratory therapists, as set by the American Association for Respiratory Care.

This program positions Crafton as a leader in workforce-aligned, affordable higher education. Building on that success, the college submitted a proposal to launch a Bachelor of Science in Emergency Medical Services, aiming to further expand career pathways for students and address regional healthcare needs.

Photo: Bachelors Degree graduates with program faculty and administrators.

CHC Community Garden Thrives Through Volunteer Efforts



In 2012, with the support of friends and family, CHC established the Community Garden. Each season, volunteers gather to clean, maintain, and replant the garden, with all harvested vegetables donated to the CHC COACH Cupboard Food Pantry to support students experiencing food insecurity.

This spring, volunteers were invited to participate in a garden clean-up and planting event on April 21. Participants had the opportunity to learn about raised bed gardening, take home plants to start

their own gardens, and contribute to the continued success of the CHC Community Garden.

The event was a great success, with approximately 20 students and three faculty members participating. Thanks to their hard work, the CHC Community Garden is prepared for a productive growing season and will continue to provide valuable resources to the campus community.

Photo: Volunteers at garden.

Crafton Hills College Hosts Successful 5K Run in Partnership with City of Yucaipa



CHC, in collaboration with the City of Yucaipa, hosted a spirited 5K run on April 26, drawing 266 enthusiastic participants to the scenic—but challenging—hills.

The top finisher was CHC Counselor Jimmy Grabow, who blazed through the course with an impressive pace of 5:34 minutes per mile, finishing in just 17:18. Close behind was Gregory Brown, who clocked in at 18:56 with a 6:05 pace. Taking third was 15-year-old Reid Horan, son of CHC President Kevin Horan, finishing

strong at 21:21 with a 6:52 pace.

Volunteers from Crafton's Cross Country, Swim, and Water Polo teams lined the course, cheering runners on and staffing water stations.

The event not only celebrated fitness and community but also underscored CHC's commitment to student-athletes.

Photo: 5k participants and volunteers.

Crafton STEM Student Presents at National Research Conference



STEM student Jo-Ann Lumintang recently attended and presented at the Genetics Society of America's 66th Annual Drosophila Research Conference in San Diego, made possible through support from the Crafton Hills College Foundation.

Lumintang participated in workshops, attended research presentations, and engaged in poster sessions alongside scientists from around the world. She also took part in a mentorship program, gaining

one-on-one insight from a professional in the field.

The experience deepened her interest in genetic engineering and reinforced her passion for scientific research. Lumintang expressed gratitude to the Foundation for supporting this transformative opportunity

Photo: Jo-Ann Lumintang (far right) with friends at the conference.

Crafton Alumnus Turns Campus Leadership into Career in Policy Reform



When Aaron Burgess Jr. came to CHC, he was looking for a fresh start. After a tough high school experience, Crafton offered a space to grow and rediscover himself.

That decision launched a powerful journey. Today, Aaron serves as Policy Manager for the City of San Diego's Commission on Police Practices, working to ensure community voices shape public safety policies. "My job is about accountability and making sure people are heard," he said.

Aaron's passion for advocacy was sparked at Crafton, where he immersed himself in student government and campus leadership. Guided by mentors like Dr. Ericka Paddock, he became student body president and learned to lead with empathy and purpose.

An Honors English class with Professor Cynthia Hamlett helped him connect

his personal story to larger systems of change. "That class helped me see that my experiences were a strength—and that I had something to say," he said.

Aaron later transferred to UC San Diego and earned a master's from the University of Pennsylvania, but credits Crafton for building both his academic and personal confidence. He also worked to support Black male students during his time on campus, laying the groundwork for the equity-focused work he does today.

"Policy isn't just paperwork," Aaron said. "It's about shaping how people experience the world. And for me, that work started at Crafton." For Aaron, Crafton was more than college—it was the launchpad for a life of purpose and impact.

Photo: Aaron Burgess.

A Lesson in Lab Safety: A Fiery Memory from Crafton Hills College



In 1993, pre-nursing student Rosemarie Hansen learned a memorable lesson in lab safety when her long hair accidentally caught fire during a microbiology lab. Thanks to quick action and guidance from instructor Lisa Shimeld, Hansen avoided serious injury—and took the safety warning to heart.

Years later, Hansen returned to Crafton as a substitute, eventually becoming a full-time Laboratory Technician in the anatomy and physiology department. Today, she shares

her story with students, offering them hair ties and a simple piece of advice: "I lit myself on fire. Tie your hair back." A humorous yet powerful reminder that accidents may happen—but they are often preventable.

From student to staff member and former co-chair of the campus safety committee, Hansen's journey highlights the lasting impact of learning—and laughter—at Crafton Hills College.

Photo: Bunsen burner in CHC lab.