

# October 2025



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

### Crafton Hills College Renames Crafton Hall After Longtime Volunteer and Donor Barbara L. Smith



At Crafton Hills College, what was once old is new again—thanks to the generosity and enduring commitment of Barbara L. Smith.

During a special Preview Party and Naming Ceremony on September 12, the Yucaipa-based college officially renamed the building formerly known as Crafton Hall in honor of Smith, a longtime volunteer, donor, and friend of the college.

While the building has undergone major renovations, Smith's gift was not tied to the remodel. Instead, her donation is an unrestricted investment to support students, providing vital resources to help them overcome unexpected challenges on their academic journey.

"We're so grateful for Barbi's decision to make this gift," said Crafton President Dr. Kevin Horan. "It is an investment that enables us as a college to meet students where they are. It creates an unrestricted endowment to meet student needs when they face obstacles they can't anticipate."

Smith, a former Crafton student herself, attended the college during its early years. At the ceremony, her longtime friend Christopher Palmer fondly recalled her enrollment in Crafton's snow skiing class in the 1970s—when students practiced on a hill covered with tiny pellets.

After completing a bachelor's degree in recreation from Cal State Los Angeles and an MBA from Cal State San Bernardino, Smith worked nearly three decades in parks and recreation before opening her own Yucaipa-based business helping people enroll in Medicaid.

She joined the Crafton Hills College Foundation in 2018, where one of her first responsibilities was reading student scholarship applications. The stories she encountered made a lasting impression.

"I had no idea that in my little town of Yucaipa so many youth and young adults had experienced such difficult times," Smith said. "The Foundation provides relief to these types of unfortunate situations, and I am so impressed with all the wonderful and outstanding opportunities offered by Crafton Hills College to students living in our local communities."

Now serving as vice president of the Foundation's board of directors, Smith continues to champion student success through her leadership and generosity.

The ceremony concluded with a champagne toast—a Crafton tradition marking new beginnings—and the unveiling of the building's new name: The Barbara L. Smith Event Center. Guests then enjoyed self-guided tours of the updated facility, which now features a state-of-the-art sound system, a massive video wall, an expanded prep kitchen, and new Foundation headquarters, complete with offices, storage, and a break room.

The refreshed space retains its 1970s charm, including its iconic indoor stairwell, while offering modern amenities for both students and the community. Soon, the college will make the center available for public rentals for anniversaries, birthdays, and other milestone celebrations.

*Photo: Barbara L. Smith.*

## Crafton Hills College Celebrates Graduation of 44 New EMTs in its New PAC



Just months after making history as the last program to graduate inside the old Finkelstein Performing Arts Center, Crafton Hills College's Emergency Medical Technician program unlocked a new tradition on Aug. 19. The Yucaipa-based college's graduation of its summer EMT cohort was celebrated in front of friends and family inside the brand-new Performing Arts Center, across from where the old PAC once stood.

Inside, guests and graduates were greeted with LED lighting, and additional amenities

made possible by a crew working to ready the space just hours before the Tuesday evening ceremony.

"At 10 a.m. this morning, [the PAC] did not look this good," joked Crafton President Kevin Horan. "The team at the college did an amazing job making this ready for you all because we like to celebrate our students and this is one of the best ways we get to do it."

Crafton's summer EMT cohort is an accelerated program where 16-weeks'

worth of instruction is packed into 10 weeks. Forty-four students had the dedication and stamina to complete all course requirements in this abbreviated schedule.

CHC's Interim Associate Dean of Public Safety and EMT Program Director Amanda Ward praised each student's achievement. She also recognized the sacrifices and contributions each grad's families and friends made to see their favorite graduate complete class assignments.

"To watch the growth that happens across our EMT program is significant," she said. "What your students experienced within our programs is life-changing, and they are now true, full-fledge lifesavers."

Crafton Hills College offers three program cohorts each year, with the next starting in the Fall. The program's objective is to train students to perform basic life-saving support in a pre-hospital setting. Students who complete the program earn EMT certification and eligibility to take the national registry EMT basic exam.

*Photo: EMT Graduates.*

## Crafton Hills College In-Service Day Focuses on Wellness



On Aug. 22, Crafton Hills College held its fall in-service day with a theme of wellness. The day emphasized mindfulness, healing-centered engagement, and restorative justice as ways to strengthen campus culture and student success.

The Health and Wellness Center announced expanded services, including three full-time therapists (with a fourth to be hired), new support groups for students, and greater use of TimelyCare, a 24/7 virtual mental health platform. The Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) introduced a streamlined referral process, reducing the referral form from 30 to 8 checkboxes to better connect students with resources.

Keynote speaker Brandy Julius addressed the links between wellness, work culture, and identity, offering strategies to prevent burnout and encourage collective care among employees.

Student Trustee Jazmyn Garcia shared her personal journey, underscoring the impact of faculty support, scholarships, and student programs in helping her succeed at Crafton Hills College.

The event reinforced the college's commitment to fostering a compassionate, inclusive, and wellness-focused campus environment.

*Photo: Jazmyn Garcia.*



## Crafton Hills College Celebrates 21 New Paramedics



On Aug 22, CHC graduated its 106th paramedic cohort, adding 21 new first responders to the workforce during a ceremony at the new Finkelstein Performing Arts Center.

Family and friends cheered as graduates crossed the stage, celebrating the culmination of a rigorous program

that includes classroom training, clinical internships, and real-world emergency response experience.

Interim Associate Dean and Program Director Amanda Ward praised the graduates' grit and commitment, while guest speakers included Hemet Fire paramedic Darren Wiswell, Crafton President Kevin

Horan, and Instructor Glen Thronson. Medical Director Dr. Phong Nguyen brought energy to the event with a playful rendition of "Heal the World."

Tradition was honored with the unveiling of a class plaque and pinning ceremony, along with the presentation of awards. Highlights included: Medical Director's Awards: Michael Hoar, Diana Diaz-Maciel, Beaver Medical Clinical Award: Aaron Gonzales, Cardiology Award: Benjamin Cowan, Pharmacology Award: Austin Bowden, Clinical Award: Dylan Guerrero, and Multiple Awards: Kyle Aguilar (Theory, Skills, Field), Benjamin Quirk (Patient Assessment, Director's Award)

Other graduates included Anthony Bazzo, Anthony Beers, Dezmon Bell, Chris Cole, Jonathan Farmerie, Christopher Flores, Henry Gomez, Daniel Kuo, Max Myman, Kristopher Nijst, Edgar Valencia, Eric Vides, and Trent Young.

*Photo: Paramedic Graduates.*

## Crafton Hills College Honors Program Hosts Fall Meet & Greet



On Sep 5, the CHC Honors Program hosted its annual Meet & Greet to welcome students for the new academic year. More than 50 new students joined the

program over the summer, bringing total participation to over 150. The Fall Meet and Greet drew more than 100 attendees.

The event provided an opportunity for students to build community, connect with peers, and learn about valuable resources.

Presentations highlighted campus services, the STEM/MESA program, transfer guidelines, and off-campus opportunities such as membership in the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

The event concluded with an interactive campus scavenger hunt. Students worked in teams to complete challenges and capture group photos at various locations, including a memorable photo opportunity with President Horan in his office.

*Photo: CHC Honors Students.*



## Crafton Hills College Hosts Fall EOPS Open House



On Sep 9, the quad buzzed with music, food, and community during the Fall EOPS Open House. Students enjoyed a complimentary lunch while learning how EOPS supports first-generation, low-income, foster youth, and single parents with counseling, financial assistance, priority registration, and academic supplies.

The event also introduced related programs—CARE, CalWORKS, NextUp,

and DREAMers Scholars—while giving students a chance to connect with staff and peers. With a food truck, fresh churros, and a lively DJ, the open house highlighted how EOPS helps students thrive academically and personally in a welcoming, supportive environment.

*Photo: George Mora, Maita Ready, Amity Lodevico.*

## Annual Transfer Fair Opens Doors for Roadrunners



Crafton Hills College's Transfer Center hosted its annual Transfer Fair on Sept. 10, welcoming more than a dozen

representatives from colleges, universities, and trade schools.

"We are here to transform lives—that's what education does," said Transfer Center coordinator Mariana Macamay. "Our goal is to provide opportunities for students to achieve their dreams. That's why we host events like this."

The fair began at 9:30 a.m. in the CHC Quad, drawing students to meet with institutions ranging from the University of Redlands and Cal State San Bernardino to DePaul University in Chicago.

"I was a first-generation college student, so I'm passionate about this work," said Melissa Farardo, a regional transfer admissions

representative from DePaul. "If I knew then what I know now, my college experience would have looked completely different."

Crafton Hills College was recently recognized as the top community college in Region 9 for UC transfer admission rates for the third year in a row. Black and African American students achieved a 100% UC admission rate, while Latinx students were admitted at 81%.

"The goal is to help students expand their horizons," added Macamay. "We're here to support them and celebrate their success, wherever their journey takes them."

*Photo: Melissa Farardo*

## IMALIVE Mental Health Fair Comes to Crafton Hills College



On Sep 11, CHC held the IMALIVE Mental Health Fair, a powerful event dedicated to mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

The fair was hosted by Crafton's Health and Wellness Center and Student Accessibility Center in collaboration with the IMALIVE suicide prevention network and "the world's first virtual crisis center." Attendees had the opportunity to engage in important conversations about mental health while learning about available resources.

Since 2010, IMALIVE has organized over 300 mental health events across North

America aimed at engaging students in discussions about recognizing warning signs of mental problems and reducing stigma.

At the heart of the event there was an interactive art display that invited attendees to write down a secret to add to the display. By contributing anonymously, attendees could express their struggles while realizing they were not alone in facing challenges.

CHC is committed to advancing a culture that affirms the importance of asking for help.

*Photo: Students visit secrets display.*