



# BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

November 2025



## Batter Up!: Thousands raised at Crafton Hills College Foundation's annual fundraiser

A grand slam of generosity resulted in \$259,000 in support of the Crafton Hills College Foundation during the nonprofit's annual fundraising gala on Oct. 16.

The baseball-themed event paid homage to the 1989 Kevin Costner film *Field of Dreams*, by turning Crafton's quad area into a ballpark intended to celebrate America's favorite pastime and kickstart the dreams of students looking to obtain a higher education.

"There's a line [in the film], 'People will come, Ray. They'll come to Iowa for reasons they can't even fathom,' that reminds us of the power of belief, that when we build something meaningful, people are drawn to be a part of it," shared Foundation President Amy Minjares.

Attendees were encouraged to come decked out in their favorite team's jerseys, all while enjoying the common sights and sounds and tasty delights commonly found at the ballpark. Program highlights included a performance of the National



Anthem by Roadrunner Sage Horan; remarks from San Bernardino Community College District Chancellor Dr. Diana Z. Rodriguez and Crafton President Dr. Kevin Horan; and a few dad jokes from Josh Stapleton, the event's master of ceremonies and a CHC alumnus.

Stories of impact brought laughs and tears from attendees thanks to remarks made by Syndey Weissman, a Crafton Honors

Institute student, and musician Stephen Prutsman, both of whom credit the college for changing the trajectory of their lives.

A special thank-you goes out to the Gold Level Sponsors: KVCR, Tilden-Coil, Pepsi, Markarian Law Group, AECOM, Kitchell, Redlands Yucaipa Medical Group, Bidaki Law Firm, and Epic Engineers.

*Photo: Field of Dreams Gala*

## Stephen Prutsman Named Crafton Hills College 2025 Outstanding Alumnus



CHC has selected internationally acclaimed pianist and composer Stephen Prutsman as its 2025 Outstanding Alumnus. Prutsman attended Crafton in 1981, taking general education courses before transferring on to continue his studies.

After Crafton, he enrolled at UCLA, and later earned a master's degree and an artist diploma from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University.

"It is a wonderful honor," Prutsman said. "I was fortunate to have had the chance to be a student at Crafton at a time when there would not have been any other institutional option for me. It will be nice to return there after more than 40 years since I was a student and graciously accept this recognition."

*Photo: Stephen Prutsman Accepting Award*

Crafton Hills College Celebrates Grand Opening of New Finkelstein Performing Arts Center



Lester Finkelstein and continuing today through the efforts of the CHC Foundation.

“This new Performing Arts Center is more than a building—it’s a promise to our students and our community,” said Dr. Horan. “It provides the spaces, resources, and inspiration for our students to pursue their dreams in music, theater, and dance, while also serving as a cultural hub for our region.”

The ceremony concluded with the ribbon cutting in front of the new building.

On Sept 19, Crafton Hills College and the San Bernardino Community College District celebrated the grand opening of the new Finkelstein Performing Arts Center (PAC). The state-of-the-art, 24,000-square-foot facility replaces the original Finkelstein Performing Arts Center, which had housed the college’s theatre arts and music programs since 1978.

Speakers included CHC President Dr. Kevin Horan, District Chancellor Dr. Diana Rodriguez, SBCCD Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Nathan Gonzales, State Senator Rosilicie Ochoa-Bogh, and Scott Ward, representing San Bernardino County Supervisor Dawn Rowe’s office. The granddaughter of Ruben Finkelstein, one of the brothers who donated the land the college occupies, Nancy Finkelstein, was an honored guest.



Photos: PAC Grand Opening

Students, alumni, community members, and local leaders gathered to mark this historic milestone. Before the ceremonies began, guests were welcomed by piano music and a rousing song by Debbie Prutsman, a CHC alumna.

President Horan highlighted CHC’s long tradition of philanthropy—beginning with the gift of 523 acres from Ruben and

Multicultural Center Ribbon-Cutting



Crafton Hills College’s new Multicultural Center, a renovation and re-purposing of the second floor of the old Student Services Building, opened on Sept 18

with a ribbon-cutting ceremony that brought together college and student leaders, faculty, staff, and students to celebrate the purpose of this space: to be a place on campus where everyone feels at home and where their cultural identities are valued, amplifying student voices and building a stronger campus community.

by saying the Multicultural Center will be a place where students share their experiences and celebrate their cultures in their own voices, a place that unites us. She ended with “Welcome home, everybody!”

The ceremony culminated with President Kevin Horan cutting the green ribbon with ceremonial scissors. Associate Dean of Student Services Dr. Erika Paddock summed up the theme of the ceremony

Following the ceremony, guests were treated to a buffet in the Center with a generous assortment of delights to nibble on as they chatted in groups and explored the space.

Photo: Multicultural Center

## Deafness as a Superpower: Lessons from The Boys of Riverside



Each year, the One Book/One College program invites students, faculty, staff, and administrators to gather around a shared text that sparks dialogue, creativity, and community. The goal is simple yet powerful: to unite the campus through the exploration of equity, inclusion, and the human experience.

This year, the chosen book is *The Boys of Riverside*, by Thomas Fuller, a New York Times reporter. The book tells the inspiring story of the undefeated 2021 football season of the California School for the Deaf, Riverside (CSDR), and highlights the team’s resilience, identity, and teamwork.

On Sept 15, Crafton Hills College welcomed Fuller along with CSDR’s defensive coordinator, Kaveh Angoorani, for a special Q&A and book signing. Students, faculty, and community members attended, eager to hear the voices behind the story.

Fuller described the moment he first met the team: walking into a room of coaches and players who looked at him curiously, wondering why this reporter was so excited. He shared how he came to see deafness not as a limitation, but as a superpower—an asset that transformed the game.

The event was more than a book talk; it was a testament to the power of stories that inspire and connect. In classrooms and conversations across campus, the book will continue to spark dialogue, challenge assumptions, and strengthen community.

*Photo: One Book/One College Opening Event*

## Amanda Ward appointed to California EMS Commission; alumnus Sean Edwards also named



Crafton Hills College Interim Associate Dean of Public Safety and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Paramedic Program Director Amanda Ward has been appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom to the California Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Commission, which makes recommendations to the state on EMS system standards and policy. The announcement was made by the Governor’s Office on Sept 11.

Another Crafton-related appointment to the EMS Commission is Sean Edwards, a Crafton Hills College alumnus who completed EMT, Fire Academy and additional coursework at Crafton before beginning his fire service career

“This appointment is an honor and a responsibility,” Ward said. “Crafton’s EMT and paramedic programs are built on patient-centered care, rigorous training and community partnerships. I’m excited to bring that perspective to the Commission and help strengthen California’s EMS system for both providers and the people we serve.”

Crafton Hills College President Dr. Kevin Horan applauded the announcement. “Amanda is a student-first leader who has elevated our public safety programs and built strong pipelines into the workforce. Her voice at the state table will reflect the best of Crafton and our region,” Horan said.

*Photo: Amanda Ward and Sean Edwards*

## Crafton Hills College Counseling Recognized for Innovation



The CHC Counseling Department has been recognized by California’s Career Ladders Project (CLP). In its Sept 12 edition of the Equitable Counseling publication, CLP highlighted CHC’s innovative approach to reimagining counseling and student support. Rather than grouping students by major, CHC now organizes students by unit-based milestones. This model allows counselors to provide proactive interventions at

critical points in a student’s academic journey, shifting the focus from reacting to challenges to offering timely, targeted support that keeps students engaged and progressing toward their goals.

Dean of Student Services & Counseling, Dr. Ivan Peña, credited the recognition to the collective efforts of both CHC senior leadership and counselors.

*Photo: Dr. Ivan Peña*

## Friendly competition, school spirit on display at second SBCCD Employee Olympics



Each sporting event calls for three things: athleticism, a bit of drama, and plenty of (friendly) smack talk.

All three were on display during the second annual San Bernardino Community College District (SBCCD) Employee Olympics, a competition where faculty and staff from Crafton Hills, San Bernardino Valley College and the District Office

are invited to come together to compete, share laughs, form friendships and celebrate what makes the District special —its people.

"This is really just a wonderful event," said District Chancellor Diana Z. Rodriguez. "It's just a great opportunity for everyone to meet each other and to have some fun on a Friday afternoon," she said.

*Photo: CHC Olympians*

## MESA Research Symposium



Crafton Hills College's MESA Research Symposium, held on Sept 11, in the Roadrunner Café, highlighted the accomplishments of students who completed an intensive 8-week summer research experience at Crafton Hills College, CSU San Bernardino, and UC Riverside.

Participants presented their research posters to the campus community, sharing project outcomes and insights they gained. Through this experience, students built confidence as emerging STEM scholars.

*Photo: Student Presenters*

## Crafton Hills College Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month



Crafton Hills College hosted a series of vibrant events that brought students, faculty, and staff together to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

The month-long celebration began with an opening ceremony at the newly opened campus Multicultural Center.

Alex Jaco, Adult Education Counselor, shared insights on the culture and history of El Salvador while attendees enjoyed pupusas, a traditional Salvadorian dish.

On Sept 29 the Multicultural Center was filled with music, featuring Mariachi US. Later in the week students had the opportunity to visit The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture in Riverside for free. An online screening of "The Cheech" documentary was available for all students on Oct 7. On Oct 16 during an Immigrant Experience Panel, panelists shared stories of resilience and belonging. The event concluded with a lively game of Lotería (Mexican bingo).

Throughout the month students tapped into their creativity at the Lele Doll Craft Workshop, where Computer Science Professor Sandra Ruiz and Instructional Scheduling Analyst Elizabeth Lopez guided participants in making traditional Mexican dolls. There was also a Reggaeton Dance Workshop that got everyone moving to the vibrant rhythms of Latin music.

The celebration will continue throughout the month of October with a Día De Los Muertos Celebration on Oct 28 complete with ofrendas (an altar-like display set up for the holiday), music, food, and reflection on the beauty of cultural remembrance.

*Photo: Opening Ceremony*

## Crafton Students Secure Their Future at CSUSB Instant Admit Event



On Sept 10, CHC welcomed Cal State San Bernardino (CSUSB) admissions staff for the Spring 2026 Instant Admit event. The event gave students the unique opportunity to apply to CSUSB, receive immediate feedback on their application, and in many cases, walk away with their admission guaranteed.

The results were remarkable: 54 students were granted guaranteed admission to CSUSB, representing an impressive 91.5% guaranteed admission rate. Only five students will need to complete additional eligibility requirements before they are admitted.

*Photo: CSUSB Instant Admit Event*