

Citrus VIEW

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Retiring trustees honored at memorable celebration

Dr. Patricia A. Rasmussen and Mary Ann Lutz will conclude their service on the board of trustees this month.

The campus community gathered to express gratitude for Citrus Community College District Board of Trustee governing members Dr. Patricia A. Rasmussen and Mary Ann Lutz at a special celebration hosted before the November 2024 board meeting.

The “Thank You and Farewell” reception, which was held in Hayden Hall on Nov. 19, was hosted in honor of the retiring trustees and their more than 20 years of combined service on the board.

“We were happy that so many people could join us in expressing gratitude and celebrating these two special, special friends,” said Dr. Greg Schulz, superintendent/president of Citrus College. “On behalf of the campus community, we thank Trustee Rasmussen and Trustee Lutz for serving Citrus College and wish them the very best in retirement.”

A career educator, Trustee Rasmussen taught English and journalism at the high school and college levels, held several administrative positions at Citrus College, and served as vice president of institutional advancement at Mt. San Antonio College prior to joining the Citrus College Board of Trustees. She was first elected in 2007 and has represented the residents of Glendora and portions of San Dimas ever since.

Similarly, Trustee Lutz brought extensive experience to her role as trustee. First elected to represent the communities of Monrovia, Bradbury and portions of Duarte in 2020, she previously held a variety of government and elected positions, including serving as the government liaison/policy advisor to U.S. Rep. Grace F. Napolitano, serving six years as the mayor of Monrovia and serving six years as a Monrovia City Council member.

“Citrus College has been fortunate to have these two dedicated and accomplished professionals who not only represent the communities we serve, but also understand the challenges and opportunities that exist in higher education,” Superintendent/President Schulz added. “Their legacy will continue to inspire and guide us as we move forward in our mission to provide innovative educational programs, services and opportunities that promote student success.”

Trustee Rasmussen and Trustee Lutz will officially conclude their tenures prior to the Dec. 17, 2024, meeting. At that meeting, two new board members will be installed, along with Trustee Laura J. Bollinger, who was unopposed and will continue representing trustee area #2 for another four-year term. Steven Flowers was elected to represent trustee area #4, and Dr. Randa Wahbe was elected to represent trustee area #5.

Jarabe Mexicano visits local schools before Haugh performance



Jarabe Mexicano performs at Dalton Elementary School in Azusa on Oct. 31. Band members (L-R) include Eddy Valencia, Danny Brito, Kevin Lomes, Steve Smith and Tavo Alcoser Jr.

On Halloween morning, Dalton Elementary School students received a special treat – a performance from Latinx rock fusion band Jarabe Mexicano.

Dressed in colorful costumes and sitting crisscross in the quad, several hundred students cheered and sang along as the band performed for approximately 45 minutes.

In between classic tunes like “Twist and Shout” and “Remember Me” from the 2017 movie “Coco,” band members shared stories and described their instruments like the guitarrón, a large, deep-bodied acoustic bass guitar. Throughout the performance, the musicians also educated students about different types of songs and musical genres, from cumbia to the waltz.

The band’s performance at Dalton Elementary was one of several that took place in the Azusa Unified School District on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 prior to the band’s concert

at the Haugh Performing Arts Center on Nov. 2. The elementary and middle school concerts were part of the Haugh Performing Arts Center’s season and made possible through a collaboration between Citrus College and Azusa Unified staff.

“On behalf of the campus community, I would like to thank all of the individuals who made this amazing experience possible,” said Superintendent/President Schulz. “Additionally, I would like to thank the members of Jarabe Mexicano for graciously performing for these students. There is no question that these concerts had a profound impact on all of those in attendance.”

Following the school performances, Jarabe Mexicano wowed concertgoers at the Haugh Performing Arts Center.

To learn more about the band, visit www.marianliebowitz.com/jarabe-mexicano.

Citrus College team provides vital support to students in need



The Citrus College Basic Needs program and Dream Resource Center held a special holiday celebration on Nov. 21.

A crackling yule log video, lively music and gift bags filled with treats created a festive atmosphere when the Citrus College Basic Needs program joined forces with the Dream Resource Center to host their annual holiday lunch last month.

Approximately 50 students attended the fun-filled event, which took place a day after basic needs hosted an ally training for faculty and staff.

According to Alexis Silva, basic needs program coordinator, these events are two examples of how Citrus College supports students who are facing various challenges related to food, housing and other essential resources.

“I would describe our office as dedicated,” she said. “As a team of two, we are constantly trying to implement new ideas on how we can better support the students at Citrus College to reach their academic goals. Our priority is to help our students and ensure their basic needs are met.”

This semester, the Citrus College Basic Needs program aided more than 1,000 students. This assistance included providing access to food pantries, emergency shelter resources, hygiene products, technology, campus showers and more. In addition, representatives from Medi-Cal and CalFresh were invited to the campus to help students apply for services, and a mobile food pantry visits the campus once a month.

“Through a combination of personalized support, technological integration and diverse resources, our office demonstrates a comprehensive approach to addressing student needs that is more extensive than what is found at many other colleges,” Silva said. “We will continue to grow in the months and years ahead because we are always looking for more resources to provide to our students.”

Citrus College, APU continue tradition of honoring veterans



Citrus College Veterans Success Center staff pose for a photo with Hootie following the conclusion of the event.

On Nov. 7, Citrus College and Azusa Pacific University (APU) came together to honor local military heroes during the 19th annual Saluting Our Veterans ceremony.

Held in the Campus Mall, the event opened with remarks from Superintendent/President Schulz and was followed by a presentation of colors from APU's Army ROTC. Afterwards, the Citrus College Blue Note Swing Orchestra performed the national anthem and Rio Martinez, a military and veteran coach at APU, delivered the invocation.

The event's two honorees included Martinez, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, and U.S. Army veteran Allan Weaver, who serves as an instructional lab technician II in the Citrus College Automotive Technology program.

Weaver was recognized for his military service and contributions to Citrus College. After 9/11, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served for more than seven years as a heavy-duty motor transport operator. In this role, Weaver was responsible for hauling tanks and supplies, as well as maintaining vehicles.

While in the armed forces, Weaver was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After being honorably discharged, he returned home and worked in a management role before deciding to study automotive technology at Citrus College.

As a work-study student, Weaver took on a leadership role in the Veterans Success Center, supporting staff and students while also creating a welcoming environment for veterans. After earning his degree at Citrus College, he began working in the automotive technology program, eventually becoming an instructional lab technician II.

After Martinez and Weaver were honored, Citrus College alumnus and U.S. Army veteran Jixing Bian gave the keynote address. Reflecting on his personal journey, Bian talked about his time at Citrus College and discussed his dream of working for the California Highway Patrol to improve traffic safety.

To learn more about the services available to Citrus College student-veterans, visit www.citruscollege.edu/vsc.



Allan Weaver (left), an instructional lab technician II at Citrus College, was honored at the event alongside Rio Martinez (right), a military and veteran coach at Azusa Pacific University.



Citrus College alumnus and U.S. Army veteran Jixing Bian gave the keynote address at the 19th annual Saluting Our Veterans ceremony on Nov. 7.

Exciting scientific research involving staff, students published in journal



Citrus College instructor Mariano Rubio (left) worked on the research with Joshua Tobar Lam (center) and Aimee Ortiz-Ramirez (right), among others.

As the world moves to a more sustainable future, there is a growing interest in determining what type of engines can be used to power the automobiles of tomorrow.

Amazingly, Citrus College students and faculty are at the forefront of this discussion. Recently, instructor Mariano Rubio worked with current students and alumni on plasma-enhanced combustion research that was published in "Fuel," a peer-reviewed scientific journal focused on the science and technology of fuels.

The goal of the research was to determine how plasma technology could help reduce the level of pollutants emitted from the burning of hydrogen in car engines. While hydrogen is one of the leading candidates among all carbon-free fuels, its use in engines can lead to high emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx).

The plasma technology used in the research was originally created by Dr. Martin Gundersen, a Citrus Union High School alumnus who, for decades, taught and conducted research at the University of Southern California (USC). Though Gundersen has since retired, his research continues at USC. Rubio, who is currently pursuing his Ph.D. at USC, invited several Citrus College students to join in on the project.

"It's been an exciting time having our students at the cutting edge of research," Rubio said. "Because of the data they provided, I was extremely pleased to include them as coauthors on the paper. Their hard work has demonstrated new ways to extract energy from non-traditional fuels with minimal impact to the environment."

Some of those involved in the research were Citrus College graduates Victor Chen and Oscar Hernandez, who became attached to the project through the Citrus College Summer Research Experience program. Other contributors included current students Joshua Tobar Lam, Aimee Ortiz-Ramirez and Travis Riggs.

"We found it was trickier than expected with a good amount of time spent discovering weak points in the systems," said Chen, who plans to graduate from

Cal Poly Pomona with a mechanical engineering degree in 2025. "However, we did prove the practicality of this technology."

According to Hernandez, who will also be graduating soon from Cal Poly Pomona, the research was promising.

"This research allows for discussion about alternatives to a traditional ignition system," Hernandez said.

Much of the experience was hands-on, Tobar Lam recounts. His responsibility was to make sure that the correct amount of hydrogen was introduced into the natural gas engine at a precise pressure. His other job was to apply a load onto the engine as more hydrogen was injected.

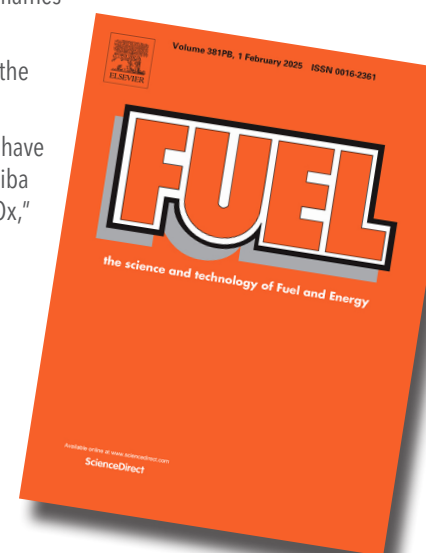
"The most important part was to make sure that all gas tanks were closed, along with turning off all electrical sources and flames that could potentially ignite," he said.

Ortiz-Ramirez also played a major role in the research, serving as a data analyst.

"As the experiment was running, I would have to look at values that were given on a Horiba [device], which measured the levels of NOx," she said.

Ultimately, the research showed that the plasma-enhanced combustion of hydrogen leads to higher power output and more stable operations, in addition to lower NOx emissions, indicating that the technology has potential.

To read more about the research, visit <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2024.133233>.



Citrus College ranked as a top college for veterans



The support provided to student-veterans at Citrus College has once again received national recognition.

Military Times, an independent news source for service members and their families, recently recognized Citrus College as one of the nation's top community colleges for veterans and members of the military.

After surveying hundreds of colleges and universities nationwide, the organization released its "Best for Vets" rankings in early November. Citrus College was ranked 12th in the state of California and 22nd among the western region's colleges and universities.

To create the annual rankings, Military Times gathered information, including student-veteran policies, academic outcomes, military-supportive cultures and more, from hundreds of colleges and universities across the country. Each institution also answered questions about their operations, which was then compared to federal data from the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and U.S. Department of Defense.

"Veterans interested in pursuing higher education often consult the Military Times to make informed decisions, which is why it is such an honor for Citrus College to be included among these rankings," said Superintendent/President Schulz. "The fact that our veterans program is consistently recognized for providing exceptional support to students is a testament to the great work taking place in our Veterans Success Center. I am proud that Citrus College is helping our student-veterans in such an effective way."

Citrus College recognized for helping students complete transfer requirements



A student receives her diploma during the 108th Citrus College commencement ceremony in June 2024.

The Campaign for College Opportunity, an organization dedicated to expanding college access and improving completion rates, recently acknowledged the efforts of Citrus College to support equitable student success in transfer-level coursework.

During a virtual celebration in late November, the organization presented Citrus College with a Growth in English Success award. Of California's 116 community colleges, Citrus College was one of only 20 honored during the ceremony and one of only three to receive this specific honor.

"It is important that we recognize colleges that are simplifying the path to transfer through equitable placement and supporting students to achieve their college dreams," Jessie Ryan, president of the Campaign for College Opportunity, wrote in a letter. "We are incredibly proud of the exemplary efforts Citrus College has demonstrated in advancing student success in transfer-level coursework."

According to the Campaign for College Opportunity, the purpose of the Excellence in Placement awards is to celebrate those community colleges who have made progress in implementing the equitable placement policies established by AB 705. Not only did Citrus College make the legislation's mandatory changes to placement strategies, it was also the first local community college to replace remedial classes with co-requisite support classes.

"Citrus College was presented with this award because we had the highest percentage point growth of students completing transfer-level English since the previous academic year," said Superintendent/President Schulz. "This success can be attributed to the vision, hard work and commitment of our faculty and staff. Their efforts to prepare students to successfully complete their degrees and transfer to four-year institutions are yielding impressive results."

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