

# Citrus VIEW

—LATEST NEWS FROM CITRUS COLLEGE—

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## New foster and kinship care office provides safe space for learning



A grand reopening of the foster and kinship care education office was held in September 2023.

For over 25 years, the Citrus College Foster and Kinship Care Education (FKCE) program has supported foster students and met the training needs of prospective and continuing caregivers. Although its services and resources have evolved over the years, in many ways, the program is one of the college's best-kept secrets.

"Citrus College is working to help this special student population of foster youth overcome obstacles that may prevent them from achieving academic success," said Jorge Razo, foster/kinship education and resources program supervisor. "We have expanded and upgraded to promote a place for collaboration, creativity and learning. After realizing that many people weren't aware of the services we offer or where our office was located, we decided to host an event that showcases FKCE."

Earlier this fall, community partners joined Citrus College faculty, staff and students for the grand reopening of the FKCE office. Located in the Integrated Success Center, the office houses the FKCE, resource family approval, Guardian Scholars and Rising Scholars programs.

Although the new space includes a computer lab, kitchen and classroom, Razo believes the highlight is the student lounge. With its spaciousness, contemporary furniture, large TV and phone charging station, it is designed to give students a safe and comfortable area to spend their downtime between classes.

"Our goal is to provide unique services, individualized counseling, career information, community referrals, cultural activities and enrichment workshops, as well as academic and personal guidance," Razo said. "We want to empower

students and help them earn associate degrees, career technical certificates, and transfer to a college or university. Our job is to ensure that they achieve their educational goals and feel supported along the way."

To learn more about FKCE and its programs and services, or to see the new space firsthand, visit the Integrated Success Center, which is located in the middle of the campus, just east of the Educational Development Center.



# Citrus College hosts fun-filled Homecoming celebration

Dozens of Citrus College campus community members came together on Oct. 14 to celebrate Homecoming at the Citrus Stadium.

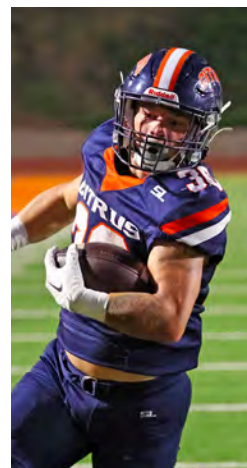
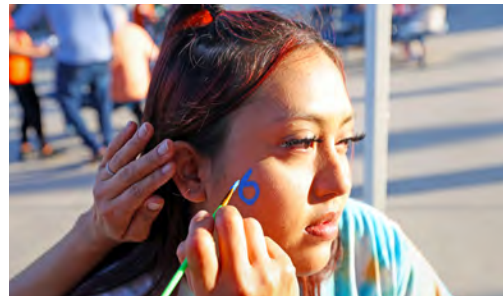
The festivities began with a handful of pre-game activities, including live music from the student musician group, Night Shift; cornhole; and face painting courtesy of esthetician students. Several student clubs and honors societies were also in attendance, and some held opportunity drawings where guests purchased raffle tickets in hopes of winning a prize.

Additionally, the Citrus Alumni & Friends Association held a membership drive where they handed out free T-shirts to new members. Hootie made an appearance and greeted guests, including many Citrus College alumni.

After the festivities, Citrus Alumni & Friends Association President Lucy Code and Immediate Past President Steven Bluiitt Flowers joined Dr. Greg Schulz, superintendent/president of Citrus College, and others on the football field for a ceremonial coin toss. Over the next few hours, attendees cheered for the Fighting Owls in their 42-7 win over the San Bernardino Valley College Wolverines.

"We are already looking forward to growing this event and hosting the next one," said Christina M. Garcia, director of the Foundation.

For more information about the Citrus College Foundation, visit [www.citruscollege.edu/foundation](http://www.citruscollege.edu/foundation).



# New faculty members bring talent, knowledge to campus



**Marius Beltran**  
*Vocal Music*

Marius Beltran's impressive resume includes more than a decade of experience in musical theater, dance and professional music direction, as well as 21 years of experience in vocal music. He brings this extensive knowledge to his new role as a full-time faculty member in the Citrus College Visual and Performing Arts Division. Prior to joining the campus community as an instructor and as the new director of the Citrus Singers, Beltran served in an adjunct role for five years.



**Roberto Loya**  
*Construction Management*

Roberto Loya may be a new full-time faculty member, but he is not new to the campus. In fact, he has held a variety of positions on campus over the past eight years, including adjunct instructor, professional expert, subject matter expert and program coordinator. In his newest role, Loya is a full-time construction management faculty member. Prior to joining Citrus College, he worked as an instructor and graduate research assistant at Old Dominion University and as an instructor/lecturer for California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.



**Claudia Ramirez**  
*Mathematics*

Claudia Ramirez always wanted to be part of a team that inspires, supports and promotes student success in mathematics. This longtime career goal led her to the Citrus College Mathematics and Business Division, where she now works as a full-time mathematics instructor. Prior to joining the campus community, Ramirez spent two years as a part-time lecturer in the mathematics department at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. She also worked as an adjunct instructor for nearly a decade, serving both Mt. San Antonio College and Rio Hondo College.

## Student trustee balances campus service with academic responsibilities



In her student government role, Sabrina Soriano connects with students, listens to their concerns and personal experiences, and builds relationships on campus.

she said. "With the support of the Citrus College community and the encouragement I received from former student trustee Serina Mummert, I felt driven to step into this role."

Leadership isn't anything new for Sabrina Soriano.

Prior to her role as student trustee on the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees, the 19-year-old psychology major served as student body president of both her elementary and high school. She also spent time as her high school's campus ministry president.

"When I was first introduced to the role of student trustee, I had little understanding of its exact responsibilities. However, upon learning more about the position, I was pleasantly surprised to find that it closely mirrored the roles I had previously undertaken,"

A self-declared "nerd," Sabrina says this ambition can be attributed to her parents. Their work ethic, intentionality and the "genuine care" they invest into their careers has taught her valuable life lessons.

"I am a testament to the incredible qualities both of my parents possess," she said. "The sacrifices, discipline and care they have given me have been instrumental in shaping me into the person I have become."

Who she has become is a woman on a mission. As student trustee, Sabrina has a variety of goals, including connecting with students, collaborating with the student life and leadership development program to promote voting, visiting classrooms and other spaces on campus to provide information about programs and services, and more.

When she is not focusing on her role as a campus leader, Sabrina is working toward her goal of transferring to the University of California, Los Angeles. An active member of the college's honors and promise programs, her projected Citrus College graduation date is June 2024.

While Sabrina is keeping her career options open for now, she envisions herself pursuing a doctoral degree and working in the field of education one day.

"While I recognize I am just one person, I hold a strong desire to effect change within the educational pipeline," she said. "My hope is to make a meaningful impact on who has access to education and the levels of degree completion achieved in different communities."

# Citrus College celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month



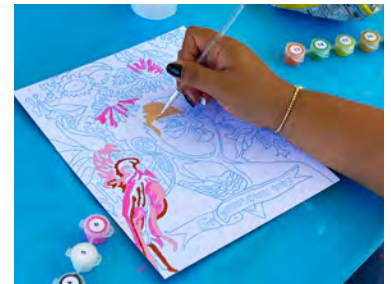
Five campus community members participated in a Hispanic Heritage Month panel on Oct. 3.

Citrus College continued its tradition of honoring Hispanic Heritage Month by hosting several activities and educational opportunities.

During the 31-day celebration, the college held a lotería (Mexican bingo) mixer, a “paint by numbers” event, a panel discussion and a musical performance. The Hayden Memorial Library also had an in-person book display and virtual resource guide.

The panel discussion, which took place on Oct. 3, featured perspectives from five campus community members, including Sabrina Soriano, student trustee; Eduardo Lopez, professional expert in EOPS/CARE/NextUp; Jose Pineda, student veteran; Sara Gonzales-Tapia, director of EOPS/CARE and CalWORKS; and Raquel Perez, administrative assistant for the superintendent/president’s office. During the event, participants discussed growing up, overcoming adversity and what Hispanic Heritage Month meant to them.

The celebration concluded on Oct. 18 when the Blue Note Swing Orchestra held an outdoor concert featuring songs from Hispanic and Latinx composers.



## Transfer Fair, Alma Mater Day highlight colleges, universities

Every semester, the Citrus College Career/Transfer Center hosts a Transfer Fair and Alma Mater Day to provide students with the chance to meet representatives from several dozen four-year colleges and universities.

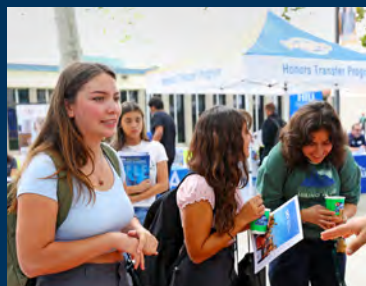
On Sept. 27, the tradition continued as more than 350 students came to the Campus Mall to learn about college admission requirements, campus life and the transfer process.

“During the fair, students had an opportunity to speak with more than 40 representatives from the University of California and California State University systems, as well as in-state and out-of-state private colleges and universities,” said Jessica López Jiménez, director of student support services. “I hope that in speaking with the representatives, students learned more about the respective campuses, majors and support programs that are available.”

While the Transfer Fair was being held, the college also hosted Alma Mater Day where staff wore their alma mater gear, took photos and enjoyed refreshments from Kona Ice.



Students spoke with college and university representatives during the Transfer Fair in late September.



# Beloved educator celebrates 50 years of teaching

Dale Salwak, Ph.D., once asked his mother what she believed to be the purpose of life.

"Without hesitation, she answered, 'discovery,'" the Citrus College faculty member said. "And she was right. Every day, there are new discoveries waiting for us."

This optimistic outlook has come to define Dr. Salwak's approach to teaching. Celebrating a professional milestone few community college educators achieve, the popular language arts instructor noted that each one of his past 50 years at Citrus College has been unique.

"Each semester is different because the students are different and I am different," Dr. Salwak said. "It's a wonderful profession in which to grow and serve."

Joining the Citrus College community as a full-time faculty member in 1973, Dr. Salwak has maintained high standards for himself and high expectations for his students while

teaching classes such as Shakespeare, the literature of the Bible, advanced rhetoric and English literature.

"I have continued to work at Citrus College because I love the courses I teach and the people with whom I work, and I derive great fulfillment from helping students who are all teeming with enormous potential," he said. "This is an ideal working environment with supportive management and very smart, dedicated colleagues."

In addition to being a longtime educator, Dr. Salwak is an acclaimed author and an internationally celebrated magician. He has also accumulated many honors and recognitions throughout his career, including being named the 2018 Citrus College Distinguished Faculty Member.

"We are incredibly fortunate that Dr. Salwak has chosen to share his talents and skills with Citrus College for the past 50 years," said Superintendent/President Schulz.



Dr. Salwak began at Citrus College in 1973.

## Nursing students, faculty attend community health fair



Citrus College nursing students and faculty volunteered at a Los Angeles health fair in September.

Several Citrus College nursing students and faculty recently connected community members to important resources at a community health fair in Los Angeles.

The free event took place on Sept. 29 at Plaza De La Raza and was hosted by La Voz, Keck School of Medicine of USC's Hispanic and Latinx employee resource group. Keck's Hispanic and Latinx inclusion resource group, La Comunidad Hispana/Latinx, also helped organize the event.

The fair, which was open to all community members, featured multiple activities, educational demonstrations and resources. It also offered blood pressure checks, diabetes education, and other health and wellness items.

Citrus College was invited to the fair by Dr. Yolee Casagrande, associate administrator for nursing at Keck Hospital of USC. Dr. Casagrande and Dr. Noemi Barajas, interim director of health sciences at Citrus College, attended the same doctor of nursing practice program and are board members of the Orange County chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses.

During the fair, attendees had the opportunity to scan QR codes containing links to mental health resources, phone numbers and hotlines. The Citrus College team thought the virtual codes were helpful – attendees didn't have to go home with pamphlets or flyers on mental health assistance and potentially get questioned by family members, since mental health awareness and issues are viewed differently in many cultures, Dr. Barajas said.

These types of events are important, Dr. Barajas added, because they help students learn about other community resources, agencies and individuals that have similar goals.

"My hope is that our students learn early in their nursing careers to be confident liaisons in the communities they serve," Dr. Barajas said. "I want them to feel comfortable sharing and teaching patients and their families about mental health and other resources available to them. It is important for our students to learn, understand and respect culture awareness and beliefs for different medical illnesses."

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