Learn about our most recent achievements and accolades in the July edition of Citrus View.
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Of the 801 degrees awarded this year, 61 percent went to females and 39 percent to males. Not surprisingly, these degrees were in a wide range of majors. The top five majors of 2009 were sociology, biology, liberal studies, business, and fine arts, respectively. And, when examining these different majors, we find that many of our graduates were academically ambitious. In fact, we had 101 students who graduated with two majors, 11 students with three majors, and two with four majors.

Yes, Citrus College met each of its six goals for the year: training for emergency preparedness, completing our accreditation self-study, advancing our strategic plan, updating our board policies, continuing the facilities projects, and increasing community outreach. And yes, many challenges remain. But, while we work to address these challenges, let us never forget why we come to work every day - our students!

-- Geraldine M. Perri, Ph.D., Superintendent/President

Interesting Characteristics Define Class of 2009

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The class of 2009 also had a global flair to it. In fact, a total of 56 international students were among our recent graduates. These students hailed from Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Croatia, China, Taiwan, Canada, Burkina Faso, and Mexico.

While the Citrus College class of 2009 was outstanding as a whole, they were even more impressive as individuals. These students overcame numerous obstacles, faced many challenges, and made many sacrifices to achieve academic success. The college community is proud of each and every one of them for reaching this milestone.
Citrus College continues to produce outstanding students. The class of 2009 was a scholarly group and their academic accomplishments were impressive.

Over 250 students graduated with distinction during the 93rd Annual Commencement Ceremony on June 13. Of these, 161 graduated with honors (having earned a 3.3 to 3.59 grade point average), 59 students graduated with high honors (having earned a 3.6 to 3.79 grade point average), and 39 students graduated with highest honors (having earned a 3.8 to 4.0 grade point average).

In addition, 13 of our graduates were permanent members of Alpha Gamma Sigma, the California Community College Honor Society; 17 were part of the Phi Theta Kappa international honor society; and seven graduates were active in Psi Beta, the Psychology honor society for community colleges. The Citrus College class of 2009 also boasted 18 students who had completed the Honors Program.

And finally, four graduates received the highest academic honor that Citrus College bestows. These students are Melia Joanne Collins, Barbara Curcio-Miles, Courtney Walborn, and Pauline Samson.

These students are an affirmation that Citrus College is a vibrant educational institution with a quality academic program and comprehensive student support services. We look forward to watching their progress as they continue in their educational and career endeavors.

Educator, Author Receives Alumni Association Honor

Dr. Joseph D. Gallo, a resident of San Jose, recently received the Alumni Achievement Award during Citrus College’s 93rd Commencement ceremony. A long-time educator and successful writer, Dr. Gallo’s commitment to education earned him this special distinction.

In 1949, Joseph Gallo graduated from Citrus High School. Prior to serving in the U.S. Navy from 1951 to 1955, he attended Citrus College for a brief period of time. After completing his naval service, he moved to Fullerton, where his parents had relocated. He graduated from Fullerton Community College in 1956.

Dr. Gallo went on to receive his B.A. and M.A. in 1958 and 1960 from San Jose State University, and his doctorate in Literature and Composition in 1971 from the University of Pacific in Stockton. He immediately entered the teaching profession and taught at San Jose State University, Cabrillo College, University of Pacific, and finally at Foothill College.

Dr. Gallo and a colleague wrote “Shaping College Writing,” which printed four editions. He also wrote a non-fiction book, “The House on Garden Street,” an account of the murder of a police officer (his own grandfather) in Kenosha, Wisconsin in 1919.
Mother, Son Receive Degrees Together

When Jonathan Bruse received his degree from Citrus College on June 13, his mom cheered as loud as, if not louder than, the other parents gathered in the stadium. The difference, however, was that she wasn’t seated in the bleachers. Instead, Linda Bruse was right beside her son, receiving two degrees of her own.

"Graduating together was such an incredible experience," the Covina resident said. "I am so proud that we shared this moment. It was a lot of work, but it was definitely worth it."

The mother and son first enrolled in classes at Citrus College to "get their feet wet."

"It took over 20 years for me to gather the courage to return to school, but Jonathan was my inspiration," Linda said. "We chose to attend Citrus as a way of helping him transition from high school to college life."

Now, Linda has graduated from Citrus College with an associate's degree in Language Arts and another in Social and Behavioral Sciences. Her plan is to attend Azusa Pacific University’s Accelerated Teaching Program. After 25 years as a medical assistant, she is hoping for a career change.

"I always knew that I wanted to be a nurse or a teacher," she said. "I am looking forward to the second part of my life and career."

Re-Entry Student Earns Associate Degree

Eight years ago, Donna Estevez received a sign that Citrus College was the school for her - literally. Driving down Citrus Avenue on her way to a friend's house, she saw a flashing sign that read "Welcome to Citrus College."

"I had an instant feeling that this was a friendly and inviting school," she said. "After a month of contemplating that sign, I finally called and asked for a schedule."

Thirty-four years after graduating from high school, Donna became a Citrus College student.

"I began by enrolling in two classes and the transition wasn't easy. I found that I had to work harder than most of the students in my classes, but I also excelled," the Baldwin Park resident recalls.

And excel she did. Donna's long list of honors include numerous certificates of recognition from Citrus College, the Deborah J. Anthony Memorial Scholarship awarded through the Citrus College Foundation, and a certificate of excellence from Disabled Students Programs and Services.

"I was fortunate to have had good people help me along the way," she said. "Staff members helped me with any problems and the professors were approachable and friendly."

Although she is sad that she will be leaving her "extended family" at Citrus College, Donna is excited about the future. She transfers to California State University, San Bernardino in the fall and will be majoring in Human Services.

Citrus Employee Receives Media Coverage

Long-time Citrus College employee and Class of 2009 member, Teresa Ferri, has appeared in several newspapers recently. From the San Gabriel Valley Tribune to the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, Ferri's story of overcoming obstacles and achieving academic success has been shared with thousands of readers.

Sixteen years after taking her first class at Citrus College, Ferri received her associate degree during our June 13th commencement ceremony.

"It has been a journey," the 70-year-old Veterans Office financial aid technician told the San Gabriel Valley Tribune. "It's been a wonderful journey."

Ferri first enrolled at Citrus College after losing her husband of 34 years to an inoperable brain tumor. The classes almost served as therapy while she went through the recovery process.

However, after studying everything from art history to body conditioning, she soon found herself on the way to an associate degree.

Now that she holds that degree, Ferri is considering continuing her education.

"My journey may not be over," she told the Tribune. "Who knows what the future has in store for me? I'm ready for it."
Active Students Named Man, Woman of the Year

The Citrus College 2009 Man and Woman of the Year have several things in common. First, they both have a history of campus involvement; specifically as members of the Associated Students of Citrus College Executive Board. Second, they have both received acclaim as leaders on campus.

However, the most important commonality between the two is their desire to be lifelong advocates for students. It is this goal that set Jesse Sanchez and Savannah Star Dominguez apart from the over 12,000 students on campus.

Dominguez, a Nursing major, was a busy woman during her time at Citrus College. Her résumé includes time spent as an ASCC senator, ASCC president, senator-at-large for the Student Senate of California Community Colleges, member of the Phi Theta Kappa and Psi Beta honors societies, and a Student Ambassador. On top of all this, she also worked a full-time job while attending Citrus as a full-time student.

Sanchez, a 22-year-old sociology major, was also busy. He has held a variety of different leadership positions on various campus clubs and organizations; such as Latinos Unidos Student Association, the Associated Students of Citrus College, and the Measure G Bond Oversight Committee.

Now that Dominguez and Sanchez are Citrus College graduates, they are preparing for the future. Sanchez will be attending the University of California at Berkeley in the fall and Dominguez is still waiting to see where she will be attending nursing school next year.

Students Achieve Academic, Athletic Success

Citrus College students Steven Bennett, Weston Locatell, and Jessica Nieves were named the 2009 Citrus College Athletes of the Year during the 2009 Citrus College Achievement Awards.

Nieves, the Female Athlete of the Year, helped lead the Lady Owls Basketball team to its best record in four years, and their first playoff appearance in that same span. Nieves averaged 12.3 points per game and earned All-WSC Honorable Mention honors for her efforts.

Locatell and Bennett shared the Male Athlete of the Year honors as both individuals had exceptional seasons.

Locatell competed in six different events for the Fighting Owls Swim team at the 2009 CCCAA State Championship, finishing 2nd in the 200 Butterfly. Along with his impressive performance at the State Championships, Locatell was named the 2009 WSC Male Swimmer of the Year, winning all three individual events at the WSC Championships, including a conference record setting performance in the 200 Butterfly.

Bennett helped lead the Fighting Owls Basketball team to yet another great season, pushing them to the State Sweet Sixteen and a 28-5 record. Bennett averaged 10.7 points per game and earned 1st team All-WSC honors in the process.

"We are extremely proud of all three of these athletes," Dean of Physical Education and Athletics Jody Wise said. "We know that they will continue to go on to do great things, and make the Citrus College family proud."