

CITRUSVIEW

LATEST NEWS FROM CITRUS COLLEGE

Inspiring Students is True Success



As superintendent/president, I am always proud to share news of Citrus College's many accomplishments. After all, the college's awards and recognitions serve to validate the hard work the faculty, staff and managers invest daily into creating a learning environment where excellence flourishes.

The May edition of this newsletter features several examples of this effort and its resulting excellence. Whether it was the college winning the AACC's 2019 Award of Excellence in the Student Success category, another highly successful K-14 Education Forum or the impressive achievements of the men's basketball team, there have been many exciting developments in recent weeks.

It has been said that true success isn't measured simply by what you accomplish, but by who you inspire. At Citrus College, inspiring students to complete their college education and accomplish their goals is what we do best. For this reason, I can say for certain that we are a successful institution.

Dr. Geraldine M. Perri
Superintendent/President

National Organization Presents Citrus College with Award of Excellence

Out of more than 1,100 community colleges in the United States, Citrus College has been recognized as a national leader by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

The college's sustained commitment to student achievement earned the AACC's 2019 Award of Excellence in the Student Success category. The award was presented to Dr. Geraldine M. Perri, superintendent/president of Citrus College, during the organization's Awards of Excellence Gala in April.

"I was most pleased to accept the award on behalf of the students, faculty, staff and board of trustees of Citrus College," Dr. Perri said. "Since 2012, the college has been laser focused on increasing student success and completion. This award is truly a validation of our efforts, and it will certainly motivate us to do even more to change the lives of students."

According to the AACC, Citrus College was honored for establishing and promoting an associate degree for transfer (ADT) pathway to four-year college and universities, and for introducing the Citrus College Promise, a program designed to cover most college costs for first-time students for up to two years. As a result of the college's efforts, transfers have risen by 38 percent from 2014 to 2017, while ADTs awarded increased from 399 to 1,027 in the same time period.

Additionally, Citrus College implemented the I Will Complete College (IWCC) program, which includes academic advisement and completion counseling to students as they enter college. IWCC participants receive priority registration and qualify for the Citrus College Promise. The graduation rate for the first three cohorts of IWCC students is 8 percent higher than the rate of non-IWCC students.

"Winning this award affirms that Citrus College is leading California and the nation in its approach to increasing student completion rates and investing in collaborative support structures," said Susan M. Keith, president of the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees. "On behalf of the board of trustees, I extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Perri for her leadership, and to the faculty, staff, management and students of Citrus College who make recognitions such as these possible."

Citrus College was the only California community college among this year's honorees.



Pictured (L-R): Chris Clarke, protocol, government and community relations supervisor; Dr. Arvid Spor, vice president of academic affairs; Dr. Geraldine M. Perri, superintendent/president; and Dr. Gerald Sequeira, dean of enrollment services and acting vice president of student services, attended the AACC Awards of Excellence Gala in Florida on April 15.

Citrus College Education Forum Highlights Career Technical Opportunities



Representatives from local school districts joined Citrus College administrators and members of the board of trustees for the recent K-14 Education Forum.

The fifth annual K-14 Education Forum, which took place on April 12, welcomed local K-12 board of education members, superintendents and principals to Citrus College to learn more about the college's many career technical education (CTE) opportunities.

"Responding to labor market demands has become a priority for California's community colleges, and Citrus College is committed to preparing students for the workforce," said Superintendent/President Perri. "We want our partners in the K-12 system to be aware of the wide range of CTE programs Citrus College offers, and to know that the college's faculty and staff are committed to providing students with the education and skills to succeed in the workplace."

Three Citrus College deans presented information during the forum's program. Dr. Eric Rabitoy, dean of natural, physical and health sciences, shared information regarding Dual Enrollment. Dr. Rocky Cifone, dean of

career, technical and continuing education, provided details about the variety and breadth of the CTE programs at Citrus College. And Dr. Dana Hester, dean of social and behavioral sciences and online education, presented information about the college's many transfer degree opportunities.

Four Citrus College alumni also spoke during the forum, including Azusa Police Chief Steve Hunt. The alumni explained how their time at Citrus College prepared them to pursue additional education and contributed to their professional success.

According to Board President Keith, forum attendees left the event with an in-depth knowledge of the many CTE options available at Citrus College.

"As president of the governing board, I am happy that the college has had the opportunity to spread the word about these remarkable programs," said Mrs. Keith.

Long-Standing Board Member to Receive Prestigious Award



Trustee Montgomery will be honored for her many years of service during an upcoming conference of the Community College League of California.

Joanne Montgomery, member of the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees, will be presented with a Fulfilling the Trust award during this month's Community College League of California's (CCLC) Trustees Conference.

Designed to recognize the enduring dedication and service of California's community college trustees, the Fulfilling the Trust award is given to those who have achieved 20 years of service at a California community college.

Mrs. Montgomery, who represents Monrovia, Bradbury and portions of Duarte on the board of trustees, was first appointed to fill a vacancy in 1998. She was later elected in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015.

"On behalf of the college community, I congratulate Trustee Montgomery on receiving this very special honor," said Superintendent/President Perri. "During her more than 20 years of service to Citrus College and the communities it serves, she has contributed greatly to the college's growth and progress. Her leadership has been instrumental in establishing Citrus College as a national leader in higher education."

Mrs. Montgomery's passion for education and for giving back to the community has earned her several recognitions. Most recently, the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association presented Mrs. Montgomery with their Outstanding Educator Award in November 2018.

"I am pleased that Trustee Montgomery's service to California's community colleges is being recognized," said Board President Keith. "It has been an honor to serve beside her on Citrus College's governing board, and I am certain my fellow board members join me in offering our most heartfelt congratulations."

Vehicle Awarded to Citrus College Student Veteran

No one had to tell Citrus College student veteran James Whitaker that this past winter featured a record-breaking amount of rainfall. He knew that by walking to the bus stop in order to get to and from home, work and class. After weeks of trudging through heavy downpours, James wished he had his own car.

As an active and engaged student, James often visited the Veterans Success Center to speak with counselor David Rodriguez or to catch up with fellow student veterans. He would feel refreshed by spending time with friends, and he brightened other students' days with his easy-going nature. It was during one of these visits that Mr. Rodriguez and Maria Buffo, director of the Veterans Success Center, decided to nominate James for the chance to win a free car.



Director of the Veterans Success Center Maria Buffo and James Whitaker in his newly gifted 2013 Toyota Prius.

Since 2013, the Automobile Club of Southern California (AAA) and Seidner's Collision Centers have partnered together to give away one vehicle each year to a family in need, especially to households with former members of the military. James, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and newlywed, was a perfect match.

On April 12, James was presented with a 2013 Toyota Prius at Seidner's Collision Center in Duarte. After receiving the title and the keys, he drove away to a cheering crowd.

"When I learned that James was selected to win the car, I was ecstatic," said Ms. Buffo. "He is such a kind and helpful person who cares so much for others. I am grateful for the generosity of AAA and the hard work of the highly skilled technicians at Seidner's Collision Centers. They have dramatically improved this wonderful person's quality of life."

The new-to-him car will help James focus on graduating from Citrus College and eventually obtain his bachelor's degree to fulfill his dream of becoming an accountant. His wife, Sarah, will also benefit from being able to take the car to her work with special needs children at the Oneonta Cooperative Nursery School in South Pasadena. On the weekends, volunteering at local animal rescue shelters – the couple's favorite pastime – will become easier for both of them.



Head Coach Brett Lauer, kneeling, draws up a play for the Owls during a crucial point in the game to help secure a win.

Men's Basketball Team Celebrates Three-Peat Conference Title

For the third consecutive year, the Citrus College men's basketball team won the Western State Conference (WSC) East Title. The win advanced the Owls to the California Community College Athletic Association Southern Regional Tournament, qualifying the team for a shot at the coveted state championship, a feat unduplicated since 2008. Yet, after defeating the Giants of College of the Sequoias in the state quarterfinals, the Owls lost in overtime to the Rams of City College of San Francisco in the state semifinals, wrapping up an incredible 25-7 season in dramatic fashion.

Although they were only one game away from playing in the state championship, the Owls returned to Glendora with their heads held high. Throughout the season, they had broken records, advanced a winning legacy and laid the foundation for future teams to continue soaring.

"We had a great season, and our guys helped build a culture of success," said Head Coach Brett Lauer. "At Citrus, we evaluate a player's character along with their talent on the court. This enables us to get the right guys for the job, which this year we had – a team of unselfish young men who put their teammates ahead of themselves. Next year will be a new journey, but our strategy will be the same."

Apparently, Coach Lauer's system works. Since the 2005-2006 season, no program in California has moved on more players to four-year schools than the Citrus College men's basketball team. Several players are currently weighing their options and will undoubtedly play in top programs next year.

Coach Lauer's philosophy of building a team around coachable talent pays off in the classroom as well: 11 out of his 13 players this season earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher, making 85 percent of his team Scholar Ballers.

"It is definitely exciting to watch these young men compete on the court and in the classroom," said Junior Domingo, dean of kinesiology, health and athletics. "Our appreciation goes out to Coach Lauer, WSC Coach of the Year, and his staff for the leadership they provide to our student athletes."



The men's basketball team was honored by the board of trustees at a meeting in April.

Sean Osborn Receives ABCD Award

A month after celebrating 10 years of service at Citrus College, Sean Osborn, instructional and administrative systems development lead, was named the second ABCD Award recipient of 2019.

Respected by his colleagues for his unparalleled work ethic and friendly demeanor, Mr. Osborn has distinguished himself by mentoring colleagues and tirelessly seeking new ways to enhance the college's technological services.

"Sean embodies the college's mission statement of providing innovative educational opportunities and student support services through his daily assignments, as well as with larger projects, such as his work on Multiple Measures in 2017 and the college-wide implementation of AB 705," said Chief Information Services Officer Bob Hughes. "Staff across campus know that, when they call on Sean for a report, their requests will be completed in a friendly, helpful and timely manner."

When he is not busy coordinating programming assignments or ensuring that deadlines are met for state and federal reporting, Mr. Osborn enjoys playing video games, attending live theater and musicals, and catching up on "Game of Thrones." Mr. Osborn worked in security for years before finding his career path in information technology.

"On behalf of the entire college community, I am proud of Sean Osborn for his decade-long service to Citrus College," said Superintendent/President Perri. "His specialized skillsets and willingness to assist faculty, staff and students are admirable and have helped advance the mission of the college."



Sean Osborn poses with Superintendent/President Perri (left) and Board President Keith (right).

Student Uses Assistive Technology to Present at Research Conference

At the 19th annual Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC) Student Research Conference, Elina Hughes, a communications major at Citrus College, gave a presentation before a large crowd of educators and students. Her project, which focused on federal policies regarding non-combat soldiers with disabilities during the American Revolution and Civil War, intrigued the audience with its unique subject matter and well-documented research.

Equally impressive was the fact that Elina was the first student with a disability to ever present at the conference using assistive technology.

Elina had to navigate significant transitions before coming to Citrus College. An astute learner with exceptional writing ability, Elina was determined to educate others about her disability. Armed with a laptop, iPad and state-of-the-art Augmentative and Alternative Communication software designed by AssistiveWare, Elina eventually earned her way into the honors program at Citrus College.

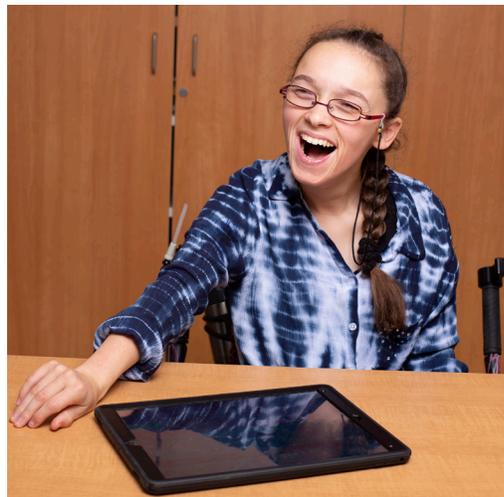
While enrolled in HIST 107: History of the United States Before 1877, Elina distinguished herself by submitting assignments before their due dates and raising important questions in class. After reviewing a few of her essays, Elina's instructor, Brian Waddington, began to notice the level of commitment Elina showed toward her education. When Elina turned in a paper about the United States government's policy on military members with disabilities during the American Revolution and Civil War, Mr. Waddington realized that Elina's research had a chance of being accepted at the HTCC Student Research Conference.

"I was very impressed with Elina's research," said Mr. Waddington. "As I reviewed her work, I

found myself learning about content I hadn't seen covered before. It was clear to me that Elina's disability had given her a passion for research and a unique perspective into various subjects, helping to distinguish her research from others."

Mr. Waddington's instinct was correct, and Elina's research was accepted into the prestigious conference. After presenting, Elina was also given an award for outstanding achievement by the conference committee. Her story and her fortitude inspired hundreds outside Citrus College.

"Elina Hughes' dedication and resourcefulness serve as a model for all Citrus College students to emulate," said Superintendent/President Perri. "The entire college community is proud of Elina's impressive accomplishment, and we look forward to seeing her academic career continue to flourish."



Elina Hughes poses with her iPad, which she used to create her project about soldiers with disabilities in the American Revolution and Civil War. Photo courtesy Daniel Escamilla.

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