

# CITRUSVIEW

LATEST NEWS FROM CITRUS COLLEGE



## Spring is an exciting time for Citrus College

The official start of spring is right around the corner. In just a few short weeks, nature will be resplendent with growth, energy and new life. As it does every year, the season's arrival will demonstrate the beauty of new beginnings.

In many ways, the onset of spring is similar to the start of every new semester at Citrus College. The optimism of our students, determination of our faculty and enthusiasm of our staff always create an energy that is unmatched. Although most of us have not returned to the campus due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19,

the excitement and promise of the spring 2021 semester is still evident in our current remote environment.

As we settle into a new semester, the college community remains as busy as ever. From acknowledging our sustainability accomplishments to celebrating a charitable donation, this first issue of Citrus View for 2021 reflects the activities that have set the stage for an eventful semester.

I look forward to the great progress the next few months will bring. Thank you, in advance, for your many contributions.

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

## Citrus College alumna explores autism in new research

Nearly two decades after graduating from Citrus College, T.A. Meridian McDonald, Ph.D., has addressed some of the biggest questions surrounding autism in a theoretical model published in the journal "Medical Hypotheses."

In her research, Dr. McDonald, a research instructor in neurology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, described a sub-population of people who have a combination of socially valued or broader autism phenotype constellations (BAPCO) traits. These include sustained attention, increased memory and nonconformity, among others. When people with a BAPCO personality have children, the traits can intensify or occur with a different disability and, thus, lead to autism.

A 2003 Citrus College graduate, Dr. McDonald's latest work is the culmination of decades of autism research.

"I was so pleased to learn of Dr. McDonald's recent journal publication, and I commend her on her research efforts," said Superintendent/President Perri. "Her hard

work is not only an inspiration to faculty and staff, but to current and future generations of Citrus College students."

Reflecting on her time at Citrus College, Dr. McDonald said she had fond memories of the college's Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) program; EOPS, CARE and CalWORKs Director Sara Gonzales-Tapia; and mathematics instructor Mohamad Trad, among several other Citrus College programs and employees.

"He was, by far, the best math teacher I have met," Dr. McDonald said of Mr. Trad. "He helped me develop the skills and confidence I needed to be successful from community college to my Ph.D. program."

Dr. McDonald also praised the college's Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) program for providing meals while she attended Citrus College.

Looking to the future, Dr. McDonald said her next step will be to create a measure of BAPCO traits to test the hypotheses.



Dr. McDonald is a research instructor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She graduated from Citrus College in 2003.

**The Citrus College campus is currently closed. Faculty and staff are working remotely. Visit [www.citruscollege.edu/covid19](http://www.citruscollege.edu/covid19) and follow the college's social media accounts for more information.**

# In memoriam: Joanne Montgomery (1933-2020)



The entire college community was saddened to learn that Joanne Montgomery, a long-serving member of the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees, passed away on Dec. 14, 2020. News of her passing was first shared at the start of the Dec. 15 board of trustees meeting.

“We have lost a staunch advocate, leader and an individual whom I have had the honor and privilege to not only call trustee, but friend,” said Superintendent/President Perri. “We can all feel comforted in knowing that Mrs. Montgomery was blessed with a loving family, many dear friends and colleagues, and a life filled with happiness, accomplishment and great pride.”

Mrs. Montgomery served as a member of the board for 22 years before officially retiring on Dec. 11, 2020. During her tenure, she took great interest in all of the college’s

instructional programs and had a reputation for understanding how big-picture decision-making affected instructors and students. She was a passionate advocate for AB 288, which allowed high school students to take college-credit courses while still in high school, and she tirelessly promoted Citrus College and its many benefits.

Prior to serving as a trustee, Mrs. Montgomery had a successful career in education. In addition to serving 32 years as an elementary school teacher for the Monrovia Unified School District, she also served as a master teacher for several universities and served on numerous school committees.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Montgomery received countless awards as an educator and community leader. These include a Teacher of the Year award; being selected as the 2003 recipient of the Dick Lord Award

from the Monrovia Chamber of Commerce; being named the 2015 Woman of the Year for Monrovia for California’s 48th State Assembly district; and the Outstanding Educator Award from the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association. Most recently, she received a Fulfilling the Trust award from the Community College League of California in May 2019.

“While Joanne represented the Monrovia area as a Citrus College trustee for more than 20 years, her service to the community actually spanned many decades,” said Board President Rasmussen. “She dedicated her life to helping others, and this loss is not only felt at the college, but throughout the entire San Gabriel Valley. Joanne is definitely missed.”

Mrs. Montgomery is survived by her two children, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

## Two new trustees, one returning trustee installed on governing board

The annual organizational meeting of the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees on Dec. 15 ushered in a new era of leadership when two newly elected trustees and one reelected trustee took their oaths of office.

Citrus College alumna Laura Bollinger and long-time public servant Mary Ann Lutz filled the seats of longtime trustees Susan M. Keith and the late Joanne Montgomery, respectively, who both retired in December 2020.

Patricia A. Rasmussen, Ed.D., who was first elected in 2007, retained her seat after being reelected to another term.

“The Citrus College community is excited to welcome Trustee Bollinger and Trustee Lutz to

the board, and to congratulate Trustee Rasmussen on her reelection,” said Superintendent/President Perri of Citrus College. “Each individual has demonstrated a keen awareness of the value of collaboration and understands the need to form meaningful relationships within our communities. They bring impressive experience, which will be valuable in the months and years ahead.”

Additionally, at the organizational meeting, trustees were elected to the following positions for the period from Dec. 15, 2020, through Dec. 14, 2021: Trustee Rasmussen will continue to serve as board president,



Board President Rasmussen, Vice President Lutz and Clerk/Secretary Bollinger were sworn in on Dec. 15.

Trustee Lutz is the new board vice president; and Trustee Bollinger is the new board clerk/secretary.

# Citrus College welcomes new vice president

A leader with more than two decades of experience in higher education, Richard Rams, Ed.D., was recently appointed as the vice president of student services at Citrus College on Jan. 19. He began his new role on Feb. 3.

"I am thrilled to work with Dr. Rams to advance student success at Citrus College," said Superintendent/President Perri. "The entire Citrus College community will benefit enormously in the coming months from Dr. Rams' leadership and experience."

In his role, Dr. Rams will lead admission and records; campus safety; counseling and advisement; EOPS, CARE and CalWORKs; financial aid; the Student Health Center; and the Veterans Success Center, among others.

"I am excited to join Citrus College and look forward to supporting our students during these challenging times," Dr. Rams said. "Collaborating with our faculty and staff while elevating the voices of our students will be critical to promoting a responsive, caring and supportive learning environment."



Dr. Rams began his new role as vice president of student services on Feb. 3.

Before joining Citrus College, Dr. Rams was most recently the dean of student support services, kinesiology and athletics at Cypress College. Some of his accomplishments at Cypress College included authoring the first comprehensive student services plan and establishing and monitoring the development of a food pantry and basic needs service. Prior to working at Cypress College, Dr. Rams served as the director of financial aid and scholarships at Golden West College.

Dr. Rams holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside, and a Master of Science in Education from the University of Kansas. He also earned a Doctor of Education in Educational Administration and Community College Leadership from the University of California, Irvine/California State University, Long Beach.

"Dr. Rams has been an incredible addition to the Citrus College leadership team," said Board President Rasmussen. "The board looks forward to working with him to advance student success and promote a safe, positive and inclusive community for all."

# Citrus College sustainability efforts celebrated



The central plant was one of several buildings on campus that was retro-commissioned.

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors recently recognized Citrus College for drastically reducing its carbon footprint and saving taxpayer dollars through lower utility bills.

The Citrus Community College District was presented with a 2021 Energy and Sustainability Award during the Board of Governors meeting on Jan. 19, 2021. Lauded for its retro-commissioning projects, the college won Best Overall Innovative Project for a medium-sized community college district.

"Sustainability has always been a priority at Citrus College, and this honor validates the incredible strides we have made in recent years," said Superintendent/President Perri. "I am grateful to Director of Facilities and Construction Fred Diamond and his staff for their efforts in guiding these projects to completion, as well as Claudette Dain, vice president

of finance and administrative services, for her vision and leadership guiding the college's sustainability efforts."

The retro-commissioning projects took place in the college's central plant and 12 largest buildings on campus. As a result of these efforts, Citrus College is saving nearly 1.5 million kilowatt-hours and 40,000 therms each year, leading to an annual cost savings of approximately \$225,000.

"The Citrus College community has worked to conserve resources and promote environmentally friendly initiatives for many years. Through this collaborative work, we have made great progress toward increasing sustainability on campus," said Board President Rasmussen. "This award serves as an affirmation of the college's sustainability efforts, and I congratulate everyone who made it possible."

# Cathy Day receives ABCD Award

Cathy Day, administrative secretary II, was recently named the fourth Above and Beyond – Classified Development (ABCD) Award recipient for 2020.

Ms. Day, who began working at Citrus College in January 2000, is known by her peers as an exceptional staff member who always exhibits a courteous, approachable and professional demeanor. She has also been commended for her work ethic, which allows her to be extremely efficient at administrative tasks, in addition to having a great rapport with faculty and students.

"As her supervisor, I appreciate how capable and flexible Cathy is, and I recognize that she embodies the college's vision of student

success, collaboration and dedicated service," said Dr. Gina Hogan, dean of language arts and library. "I find Cathy to be integral to the function of the division, as well as an asset to the college."

In her spare time, Ms. Day enjoys gardening, home renovation, music and movies. She also enjoys spending time with her family, including her three grandchildren.

"I wish to congratulate Ms. Day on this well-earned accomplishment," said Superintendent/President Perri. "In her more than 20 years of service, Ms. Day has demonstrated dedication and passion for Citrus College and its mission."



Ms. Day, a secretary in the language arts and library division, has worked at Citrus College for 21 years.

# Citrus College auto program receives generous donation



Automotive technology instructor Dave Brown (left) discusses wheel alignment procedures with students in the college's Technician Development Center. Note: this photo was taken before the campus closed due to COVID-19.

The Citrus College Automotive Technology program recently received a \$10,000 donation from the Greater Los Angeles New Car Dealers Association (GLANCD) for the third consecutive year.

Founded in 1907, GLANCD is a philanthropic organization of factory-franchised dealers that provides educational assistance to Los Angeles County communities.

"I am grateful to GLANCD for their generous donation, which will have a significant impact on the students in our automotive technology program," said Superintendent/President Perri. "I also want to commend our outstanding faculty, who have worked so hard to maintain this program's outstanding reputation."

Certified by the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Education Foundation, the automotive

technology program has six full-time instructors who have worked in the industry and are ASE master technicians. It offers students a choice between two associate degrees and six certificates, and also allows full-time employment as an entry-level technician during a student's second year of training.

The college plans to use the grant funds to buy new laptops and vehicle communication interfaces that will improve the program's ability to connect to vehicles for diagnostics and network communication validation across all lab facilities. As a result, the upgrades will also help Citrus College students prepare to work in new car service centers.

For more information about the college's automotive technology program, visit [citruscollege.edu/academics/programs/auto](http://citruscollege.edu/academics/programs/auto).

## Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees

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