

Citrus VIEW

— LATEST NEWS FROM CITRUS COLLEGE —

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Citrus College recognized as the people's choice

The annual Reader's Choice Awards Winners Magazine will recognize Citrus College in four categories in its upcoming June issue.

The ballots have been collected and the results are in – Citrus College has once again been voted the best community college in the region!

Earlier this year, the Southern California News Group asked the readers of their San Gabriel Valley newspapers to select the people, places and things they considered to be "the best of the best." This year, Citrus College was voted the region's top option in four academic categories:

- **BEST** Community College
- **BEST** College Extension Program
- **BEST** Cosmetology School
- **BEST** Career College: Trade/Specialty School

"I was happy to learn that Citrus College would be included in this year's Reader's Choice Awards Winners Magazine and thrilled to discover we were recognized in

four categories," said Dr. Greg Schulz, superintendent/president of Citrus College. "These recognitions affirm that we are on the right path when it comes to providing exceptional educational opportunities. We are grateful for the trust and support of our community, and we will continue to build on our strengths to provide our students with the best academic experiences possible."

The Reader's Choice Awards ballots were available on the high-traffic news websites of the San Gabriel Valley Tribune, Pasadena Star-News and Whittier Daily News newspapers from Jan. 31 through March 16, 2025. According to the organization, an overwhelming number of ballots were submitted this year. The 2025 winners will be announced when the magazine is published on June 22.

While these types of commendations are always appreciated, this honor is not new to Citrus College, having previously been selected as the "Best Community College" by the Southern California News Group in 2022, 2019, 2018, 2016, 2015 and 2014.

A Slice of Citrus History (110th Anniversary Edition): In 1915, the year that Citrus Junior College opened, it had an enrollment of 37 students, but graduated no one. The first college graduates – four students total – received their degrees in 1917. Fast-forward 108 years: This month, Citrus College will confer degrees to 1,354 students.

Celebration of success: Citrus College recognizes top students



The recipients of the 2025 Key of Knowledge awards were among those students honored during the 62nd annual Achievement Awards ceremony.

More than 100 Citrus College students were recently honored for scholarship and service during the college's 62nd annual Achievement Awards ceremony.

Family and friends joined Citrus College faculty and staff inside the Haugh Performing Arts Center on May 22 to applaud the accomplishments of this year's exceptional group of Citrus College scholars.

"Every year, this event serves as a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students," said Superintendent/President Schulz. "The honorees embody the spirit of Citrus College, showcasing academic excellence, personal growth and community engagement. It was wonderful to celebrate their achievements and contributions with our campus community."

Among the evening's accolades were the Key of Knowledge awards, the college's premier academic distinction. This year's recipients were Celine Ama, Ruby Bartlett, Eva Clark, Hamza El Lahib, Hina Furuyama, Cory Kanemoto, Anthony Vrej Mardoyan, Kaylin Martinez, Tessa Pulgar and Jasmine Soriano.

Also conferred during the ceremony were the 2025 Service Leader of the Year recognitions, which were presented to Celine Ama and Fatou Seck.

Kori Cunningham, a standout in women's water polo and swimming, was named the 2025 Female Athlete of the Year, while men's basketball guard Tyler Isaak earned the 2025 Male Athlete of the Year accolade.

Finally, Distinguished Student Awards were presented to 100 scholars whose superior performance within their respective programs places them at the top of their class.

"While the Citrus College student body is inspirational as a whole, the accomplishments of this distinct group of individuals are definitely deserving of recognition," added Superintendent/President Schulz. "On behalf of the entire college, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to each honoree and wish them continued success in their future pursuits."



End of Year Events



College Information Night

Several hundred local high school students and their parents, family members and friends attended College Information Night on April 24. Hosted by school relations and outreach, the event provided information about academic programs, student services, the enrollment process and more to prospective students.



Veterans Recognition Dinner

More than 25 student-veterans were honored on May 8 during the annual Veterans Recognition Dinner. Held in the Campus Center, the Veterans Success Center event celebrated graduating student-veterans who will be transferring to a four-year college or university or entering the workforce.



ASCC/ICC End of Year Dinner

The annual ASCC/ICC End of Year Dinner celebration took place in the Campus Center on May 13. During the event, the college honored graduating Associated Students of Citrus College and Inter-Club Council officers and student leaders, as well as our outstanding student clubs.



Tenured Faculty and Retirement Celebration

The college gathered on May 15 to celebrate the granting of tenure to instructor Aleli Clark and to pay tribute to 11 retiring employees. Pictured (L-R): Isabel Bellman, Fe Lopez, Carsten Dau, Aleli Clark, Dr. David Ryba, John Fincher, Cherie Brown, Catherine Gong, Dr. Greg Schulz, Todd Dickson and Connie Cabellero.



OWLSPY Awards

Citrus College Athletics hosted its third annual OWLSPY Awards celebration on May 15 in the Campus Center. The event highlighted the achievements and memorable moments from the 2024-2025 academic year. More than 150 student-athletes and guests were in attendance.



Black Scholars Recognition Celebration

Several students were honored during the Black Scholars Recognition Celebration held in the Campus Center on May 21. This special event provided the campus community with the opportunity to connect, share experiences and celebrate this year's Black Scholars graduates.

End of Year Events



Dream Resource Center Recognition Celebration

The Citrus College Dream Resource Center honored more than 10 immigration-impacted students who received a degree or certificate in a ceremony in the Campus Center on May 27.

Lavender Celebration – June 2
DSPS Recognition Ceremony – June 3
Transfer Recognition Ceremony – June 4
EOPS/CARE/NextUp and CalWORKs Recognition Ceremony – June 5
Automotive and Medium/Heavy-Duty Truck Awards Ceremony – June 6



Honors Reception

The first-ever Honors Reception was held on May 29 in the Campus Center. The event celebrated graduates from the Citrus College Honors Transfer program, as well as the Phi Theta Kappa and Alpha Gamma Sigma honor societies.

Other events

Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients Dinner – June 6
Registered Nursing Pinning Ceremony – June 10
109th Annual Commencement Ceremony – June 13
Registered Dental Assisting Graduation Ceremony – June 16

We Honor Ours: Citrus College instructors earn praise from peers



Dave Brown

For several decades, Citrus College faculty members Dave Brown and Dr. Senya Lubisich have been leaders in their respective fields. Recently, the two instructors were further recognized, receiving regional We Honor Ours (WHO) awards – an accolade that affirms their contributions to the advancement of the teaching profession.

Dave Brown

Brown, an automotive technology instructor, earned the California Teachers Association Service Center One Local WHO Award.

In his nomination form, Brown was praised for being an "indispensable part of the Citrus College Faculty Association leadership team."

"His long tenure in that [bargaining chair] position reflects the confidence many local association presidents have in his bargaining skills, judgment, knowledge of the contract and commitment to the interests of a diverse faculty," the nomination read.

Additionally, it stated that Brown commanded the respect of both the faculty and administration of Citrus College.



Dr. Senya Lubisich

Dr. Senya Lubisich

Dr. Lubisich, a history instructor, was honored with the Community College Association WHO Award.

Dr. Lubisich, who joined the campus community in 2004, was praised in her nomination form for being a "tireless advocate for both students and faculty."

"It's not hyperbole to suggest that instruction at Citrus College would not have continued during the COVID pandemic if it was not for Senya's leadership," the nomination stated.

It also highlighted Dr. Lubisich's recently completed two-year term as a Citrus College Faculty Association president, her ongoing role as online education coordinator and her commitment to the college's humanities program.

Upon receiving the award, Dr. Lubisich expressed gratitude.

"Recognition by one's colleagues and peers is a tremendous honor and always humbling," she said. "I am so grateful to the colleagues with whom I get to work, sacrifice and serve our community."

New director joins Citrus College Student Services team



Dr. Betzabel Martinez is the college's director of student equity and success.

Betzabel Martinez, Ed.D., views her work in student equity and success as a calling.

"I welcome the joys and challenges this work brings," she said. "I'm open to challenges because they're opportunities for growth, and I let joy in when it comes. I think this mindset is what makes me well-suited for this work."

Dr. Martinez believes her positive approach makes her a "perfect fit" for her new role as the director of student equity and success at Citrus College.

Having worked in student equity and achievement programs within the California Community Colleges System for eight years, Dr. Martinez brings a wealth of experience to her new role. Most recently, she served as the director of equity and inclusion at Cerro Coso Community College. Prior to that, she worked at Mt. SAC as a program specialist for student equity programs.

"Citrus College's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is what attracted me to this position because I believed I would have the support I needed in my line of work overseeing student equity programs," Dr. Martinez said. "I am a people person and receive energy being around others, therefore working for a place that values community building sparks excitement and inspiration for me."

"So far, I have felt and witnessed a sense of camaraderie amongst employees that makes this college a great place to work," she added.

Dr. Martinez holds a bachelor's degree from UC Santa Barbara, a master's degree from USC and a doctorate from CSU Fullerton. However, she shared that she is eager to add to her knowledge in the days ahead.

"First and foremost, my goal for this job is to learn and lead," she said. "Being only a month in, I am still learning the ins and outs of the college, and I welcome what each new day brings."

Citrus College students build second solar-powered shower



Architecture and engineering students are nearly finished building the second Shower of Grace.

Two years after the first Shower of Grace was built, Citrus College students have nearly finished constructing a second solar-powered shower that will help even more unhoused communities in Southern California.

Since its inception, Shower of Grace has sought to address critical hygiene needs in underserved communities, while also providing users with food, clothing and haircuts.

In 2023, Citrus College students worked with other volunteers, including some from Hillside LA church and CSU Los Angeles, to build a trailer containing solar-powered showers that could be used throughout Orange County.

With this second project, architecture and engineering students are tackling the entire project themselves.

Tommy Reyes, Citrus College architecture instructor, has been involved with Shower of Grace since the beginning. He said the current group of students has been working on the project for more than seven months.

"It shows great heart and dedication for these students to volunteer their time," Reyes said.

The main difference between the two trailers, Reyes said, is cost. Some of the parts on the first one were custom-made and, as a result, more expensive. For the second trailer, students are using prefabricated equipment that is much more affordable.

Once completed, the trailer will be used by churches to help unhoused communities in Los Angeles County. In Reyes' eyes, the project is a powerful experience for students.

"It encourages them to think critically, design sustainably and always use a human-first approach," he said. "It also teaches empathy and showcases the power of education to serve humanity."

In addition to filling a regional need, the solar-powered showers are less demanding on the environment. Beyond harnessing the power of the sun to heat the water, the showers utilize a greywater system that collects the leftover water, which churches can then use to water their gardens.

"Shower of Grace demonstrates how architecture can serve both people and the planet," Reyes added.

As the project is nearing completion, Reyes said he and fellow Citrus College instructor Mariano Rubio are grateful to the students who have helped make the project a reality.

"We look at these students as heroes for taking on such a huge project in addition to balancing school, work and their day-to-day lives," Reyes said.

Citrus College Class of 2025 profile



DEGREES
1,812
Total degrees awarded



CERTIFICATES
1,938
Total certificates awarded



VETERANS
39
Student-veterans graduating



HONORS STUDENTS
599
Students graduating with an honors designation

AGE



Youngest graduate is
18



Average age is
26



Oldest graduate is
72

TOP MAJORS

- 1** Business Administration
- 2** Psychology
- 3** Pre-Allied Health
- 4** Administration of Justice/
Criminal Justice
- 5** Child Development/
Early Childhood Education

Campus community counts down to commencement on June 13



More than 1,800 associate degrees will be awarded to the Citrus College Class of 2025

With the spring semester coming to a close, the entire campus community is eager to celebrate the Class of 2025 at the 109th annual Citrus College commencement ceremony on June 13.

Held at the Citrus Stadium, the event will honor hundreds of graduates and feature remarks from Superintendent/President Schulz and others.

Additionally, the event will recognize Lucy Code and Regina de Doelder as recipients of the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Becky Rudd, a full-time English instructor, will also be celebrated as the 2025 Distinguished Faculty Award recipient. Since joining the campus community in 2006, Rudd has exemplified what it means to be an educator, mentor and leader.

No tickets or parking permits will be required for the event. Attendees are encouraged to arrive by 5 p.m. The ceremony begins at 6 p.m.

For more information, visit www.citruscollege.edu/commencement2025.

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