

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

LET'S GO! ¡ADELANTE!

February 2024

Crafton Hills College Respiratory Care Class of 2023



On December 14, Crafton Hills College celebrated the graduation of the 2023 Respiratory Care class.

CHC's Respiratory Care program is one of the best programs in the region. Program Director, Dr. Michael Sheahan, noted that this didactic and clinical program is so rigorous that they began with 37 students and lost 12 students in the first semester. Seventeen students graduated and will become licensed respiratory care therapists. Despite the challenges this graduating class faced, Daniel Rojas, Faculty Co-Chair for Respiratory Care, said that he is "blown away by their competencies" and encouraged them to continue learning and growing.

Class President Frances Ta'ase, opened

the ceremony as she discussed how much growth she witnessed in her classmates and how she not only "...gained skills but [also] experienced way more than [she] anticipated." Ta'ase closed her speech with, "May we continue to learn, grow, and make positive differences in the world of respiratory care."

Though the evening was largely celebratory, there were also some somber moments. Rojas teared up as he talked about a student who is no longer with us. Nicco Cabalu, one of the would-be graduates, unexpectedly passed away during the program and, to honor his memory, his classmates had a seat onstage where his photo and jersey sat. Rojas talked about Cabalu's contagious smile, consistent professionalism, respect for authority, and huge heart, and a video

of Cabalu played. As it ended, a soft voice in the crowd said, "that's my son."

Cabalu's family was invited on stage and presented with the degree he would have received along with a Presidential Award. The audience stood and applauded for an extended period to honor the graduates' fallen classmate.

Toward the end of the ceremony, CHC President Kevin Horan announced that all the graduates would be given checks from the Kirsten Greek Memorial Scholarship fund to help offset the costs of testing and licensing.

In addition, the following awards were presented:

- Jesson Scholarship: Luis Rebollar
- Academic Achievement Award: Richard Sevileno
- Clinical Achievement Award: Jose Araya

As each graduate received their certificate, family and friends showed their support for each of them as groups of loved ones stood, cheered, and whistled when their graduate's name was called. The graduates turned their tassels, the audience stood, and applause erupted from the crowd as Professor Reynaldo Bell said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Crafton Hills College's 2023 Respiratory Care [graduates]."

Photo: CHC Respiratory Care graduates.

Crafton Fire Academy Alumni Get Sneak Peak at New, State-of-the-Art Public Safety Center



myriad of benefits.

Harold stated the Alumni "...are blown away, and I will say as an alumnus myself, we can all remember our humble roots here as fire academy students throughout the years. The overall sentiment [about the new building] has been "What an incredible facility to be able to train future firefighters with so many offerings for advanced training."

Features of the center include:

- Fire burn props suitable for kitchen and bedroom simulation experiences,
- Space for commercial, industrial, apartment and residential fire response training,
- Additional room for rope rescue and ladder drill and rappelling operations, and
- A live-fire training prop.

When Crafton Hills College's next fire academy launches on Jan. 16, 2024, cadets will have a new tool to work with: a state-of-the-art Public Safety Training Center.

Program alumni received a sneak peek of the space on Dec. 12, when instructors and Interim Fire Academy Chief Ryan Harold led tours and spoke about the center's

Photo: CHC Fire Academy Alumni.

Special Delivery: Crafton Families in Need Treated to Holiday Gift Exchange at Annual Luncheon

Christmas came early for more than a dozen Crafton Hills College families, all thanks to a longstanding holiday tradition that started in the mid-1990s.

On Dec. 15, Good Ol' Saint Nick and his merry elves from the College's Psychology Club surprised guests with a catered lunch and bags filled with Barbies, trucks, dinosaurs, and much, much more.

"This is so cool!" shouted one child as they began the unwrapping process. "Mom, look what I got!" shouted another.

Dr. Diane Pfahler, a professor of psychology and club advisor, co-founded the giveaway at the site's sister college, San Bernardino Valley College, in 1996. Since then, it has grown to support Crafton EOPS, CARE, CalWORKS, NextUp, and DREAMers Scholar students in need of a helping hand.

Invited families each submitted wish lists

to event organizers, and members of the Crafton community took time out of their busy schedules to fulfill each request. For example, 5-year-old Mavery Butler of Yucaipa asked for Barbies.

"I think this is really nice for the kids, especially for these families here today," shared Mavery's mom, Alex Lechner, a respiratory care student at Crafton. "Inflation has impacted a lot of families, including my own, and this was just a really nice gesture, a really great one, especially for the kids."

"These are tough years for everybody, and the kids especially feel that stress, but they do not show it in the ways we do," added Pfahler. "This is a fun event to show that we are here for them."

"Maybe more importantly for me," she continued, "it sets the next generation [of students] by seeing their parents here.



That's what really matters to me – that they know this is a place to come."

Photo: Child hangs ornament on a tree at Holiday Luncheon.

109th Fire Academy Graduation

On December 15, Crafton Hills College celebrated the 109th Fire Academy graduation in the Finkelstein Performing Arts Center.

CHC President Kevin Horan noted that the Crafton Hills Fire Academy has trained firefighters since the early 1980s and has become a premier program in our region.

The 18-week academy requires students to train over 40 hours per week, with early mornings, long days, strenuous physical demands, and learning to work in various fire and rescue scenarios.

Such a rigorous program requires dedication and determination. Cadet Jared Kavalle explained that their motto--“all grit, no quit.” reflects their passion and perseverance. He said, “We have made a commitment to ourselves, the academy, and our loved ones” and “quitting can be the difference between life and death.”

Cadet Matthew Sawyer, in his address to the Academy, talked about how they came together as a team to get through the challenges they faced. He closed his remarks with: “The hard work doesn’t end here; it doesn’t end after probation or after you reach a certain rank.... Keep working hard, stay up on your knowledge, and

continue to learn. I’m proud of you guys and I’m proud to be a member of class 109.”

As a tradition, the 109th Fire Academy presented a plaque that will remain in the PSAH building. Cadet Craig Roach and Cadet Rubin Valverde helped create the plaque, which depicts an axe layered within a flag. After an audible awe from the crowd and hearty applause, it was time to hand out the awards.

As the following awards were presented, recipients were met with cheers and whistles from the audience:

- Most Inspirational Cadet in Class (a peer-chosen award): Cadet Rubin Valverde, runner-up Ryan Handley
- Instructors’ Award (decided by instructors): Chief Ryan Harold and Cadet Craig Roach, multiple runners-up
- Academic Achievement Award: Trent Walnofer and Jacob Arnett
- MT-241 Scholarship: Johnny Magallanez Jr.

After the awards were distributed, Chief Ryan Harold read the Firefighter Code of Ethics, which the cadets all swore to uphold, and then he said, “These men here ...are now certified by the state of California as



firefighters.”

Captain Bret Raney then distributed the certificates, presented the 109th Fire Academy to the crowd, led the traditional retiring of the guide-on flag, and finished with two final traditions: the ringing of the bell and final dismissal. Captain Raney explained that when a job is complete, the bell is rung in three sets of three. He said that we would now do just that because “they completed their job, they completed the academy” and proceeded to ring the bell. Captain Raney then said, “for the last time, dismiss academy 109” and the now-firefighters yelled “academy 109, all grit, no quit” and threw their caps in the air.

Photo: Cadet Rubin Valverde with his nephews.

Crafton Hills College President’s Circle Members Get First Look at New Public Safety Training Center



As has become a college tradition, Crafton held an event exclusively for its Foundation’s President’s Circle members at the newly completed Public Safety Training Center on December 7 to celebrate the completion of this new facility.

This invitation-only VIP champagne toast and special preview party for President’s Circle members provided them access to the facility before any other members of the College or community. The central activity of these celebrations is toasting with a glass of champagne with the College president, Dr. Kevin Horan. A highlight of the evening for everyone was the tour

and demonstrations of the training facility, including smoke-filled simulations of firefighting scenarios.

Each year the President’s Circle members support Crafton Hills College with a donation of \$1,000 or more for unrestricted use. President’s Circle members receive invitations to exclusive events like this one and prominent acknowledgment and listing in all appropriate publications. To join the President’s Circle, visit craftonhills.edu/presidentcircle.

Photo: Guests raise their glasses at toast to new facility.

Meet CHC’s New Director of Technology Services – Aaron Oxendine



Beginning this year Crafton Hills College will have a new director of technology services, Aaron Oxendine. Aaron began his career in information technology (IT)

25 years ago at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

After moving to California, he took a position as IT consultant for Cal State University, San Bernardino, where he worked for more than ten years and lead desktop support tech for the campus.

When asked what he was most looking forward to in his role at CHC, he replied, “I’ve always enjoyed figuring out new ways to innovate, streamline, and automate certain technology functions to increase both efficiency and ease-of-use for end users. At CHC, I’m looking forward to

working with my colleagues by using my knowledge and experience to make the IT experience here the best it can be.”

Aaron grew up in North Carolina and completed his undergraduate studies at the University of North Carolina. He still roots for the Tar Heels’ sports teams. He has two kids— a 13-year-old daughter, Emory, and a nine-year-old son, Grayson.

Aaron has lived in Yucaipa since 2012. He enjoys traveling to new places when he has the time.

Photo: Aaron Oxendine.

Crafton Hills College Student Ekaterina Vyun Completes Internship with City of Redlands



Inaugural LAEP Research Assistant Program Employs Three Students



Ekaterina Vyun recently finished an internship with the City of Redlands as a participant in Crafton Hills College’s internship program. The cities of Yucaipa and Calimesa will soon be added to this program, which provides practical work experience to CHC students who excel academically and want to experience real world careers.

Reflecting on her internship, Ekaterina said that she valued the opportunity to put the knowledge she had acquired in the classroom into practice in an office environment.

Ekaterina said, “I received support at each step, from my application process till the end my internship. I noticed that the most challenging was overcoming the language

barrier as English is my second language, and learning to communicate fluently in English in an office environment was most important for me. I did this successfully thanks to the employees of the City of Redlands I worked with.”

She added that her experience exceeded her expectations, saying, “I felt trust and support from the employees of City of Redlands, I was given interesting assignments and got answers to all my questions. I am grateful to the Crafton Hills College Career Center and the team of the City of Redlands for this opportunity.”

The internship program is funded by the CHC Foundation.

Photo: Ekaterina Vyun.

Institutional Effective, Research & Planning Department under the supervision of Dr. Giovanni Sosa.

Students will work on projects related to sustaining a campus-wide culture of data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

Photo: Research Staff with LAEP students.