

CITRUS *view*

LATEST NEWS FROM CITRUS COLLEGE



Citrus College, APU join together to honor veterans

From live music to a ceremonial birthday cake, the 20th annual Saluting Our Veterans event honored service members from Citrus College and APU.

Citrus College commemorated 20 years of honoring local military heroes with its annual Saluting Our Veterans celebration on Nov. 10.

Held in the Campus Mall and co-hosted by Azusa Pacific University (APU), the event opened with heartfelt remarks from Dr. Greg Schulz, superintendent/president of Citrus College, and included a presentation of colors by APU's Army ROTC program, a moving rendition of the National Anthem by the Citrus College Blue Note Swing Orchestra, and an invocation from Ensign Rio J. Martinez, a U.S. Navy chaplain, veteran and coach at APU.

"This is a wonderful tradition that has taken place at Citrus College for 20 years, and we are privileged to host it with our partners next door, Azusa Pacific University. Our institutions benefit immensely from the presence of student-veterans, as well as our professional colleagues who have served," Superintendent/President Schulz said. "I am deeply grateful for the courage, sacrifice and steadfast commitment that these veterans have shown,

and I am also filled with gratitude that so many veterans have chosen to work or study at Citrus College."

During the ceremony, Citrus College honored two members of its campus community: Tommy Reyes, architecture instructor, served in the U.S. Air Force from 1996 to 2020, while student Joshua Alcaraz served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2011 to 2022. Both were recognized for their dedication, service and inspiration to others. APU employee Jeffrey Graham and student Clod Aljon Silverio, both veterans of the U.S. Army, were also acknowledged.

One highlight of the event was the keynote remarks from Maria Estrada, a retired U.S. Air Force and Army National Guard veteran who graduated from Citrus College. She served for more than 21 years in the military, including multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, and retired as a Sgt. 1st Class. After transferring to the University of La Verne and earning a bachelor's degree, Estrada continues to give back at VFW Post 12034, mentoring veterans and at-risk youth.



Student-veteran Jeremy Johnson (left) and Tommy Reyes, architecture instructor and U.S. Air Force veteran.



Alumna Maria Estrada, U.S. Air Force and Army National Guard veteran, served as the event's keynote speaker.



Student-veterans Jeremy Johnson (left) and Joshua Alcaraz, U.S. Marine Corps veteran.

Acclaimed rock drummer reflects on his time at Citrus College



Neil Young, Willie Nelson, Lady Gaga ... these are just a few of the artists that Citrus College alumnus Anthony LoGerfo has performed with throughout his three-decade drumming career.

After being featured in the November issue of "Modern Drummer" magazine, LoGerfo – who is currently playing drums with Neil Young and the Chrome Hearts – discussed his time as a student at Citrus College and how the experience helped prepare him for a career making music with the pros.

On his longstanding ties to Citrus College

A Glendora native, LoGerfo began playing drums at the age of 10. As a teen, he jammed to records and played in rock bands with his friends.

At 18, he decided to attend Citrus College to study music. In 2001, he met Alan Waddington, a fellow drummer who currently serves as an instructional technician III in the visual and performing arts division at Citrus College.

"[He] is the reason for all my music connections," LoGerfo said. "He introduced me to Gwen Stefani, which gave me a shot in the pro-music world. He also introduced me to Lukas Nelson, which led to working with Neil Young."

Bonding over their love of rock 'n' roll, LoGerfo said Waddington helped him understand the value of being a well-rounded musician.

"[Waddington] and I are big dreamers," LoGerfo said. "We like to make dreams come true."

Waddington, who still works closely with many student-musicians, shared that LoGerfo stood out in many ways.

"He has very little fear and is able to make quick, forward assessments, which is a big part of success," Waddington said. "He is very likeable, easy to work with and able to see all sides of a story."

Still a close friend, Waddington recalled the joy of seeing LoGerfo on set for "A Star Is Born," the 2018 film starring Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga, and in Pomona when LoGerfo was drumming with Neil Young during a soundcheck.

"We mostly talk about things in the future now, from finance to thankfulness and everything in between," Waddington said. "Strong connection, strong love."

LoGerfo, who later attended Azusa Pacific University on a scholarship, also praised others at Citrus College for helping him on his journey, including Dave Beatty, Bill Hoehne, Tom Hynes, Gino Munoz and Bob Slack.

On what he learned as a student

LoGerfo said he learned "everything" at Citrus College and credits the instructors with teaching him things that he still uses today.

"These folks gave a kid like me, with no chance of going to a university or even breaking into the music scene, a shot at the big time," LoGerfo said.

As a student, LoGerfo had positive results when he applied himself to the task at hand. He also saw the importance of having a great attitude and being a good person to work with.

Looking back, LoGerfo is grateful to the college's faculty and staff for committing their lives to teaching others.

"They are selfless," he said. "They all could have kept going in the business, playing all the big, high-paying gigs, but they choose to teach and give back. That's real love for the art and universal law of giving back once you hit a peak."

On his advice to student-musicians

As someone with many years of experience, LoGerfo has a lot of seasoned advice.

"Don't give up and don't give in," he said.

Additionally, he recommends musicians be wise with their earnings.

"Musicians don't get to retire, so find ways to make those big pay days last so you can keep making art the way you want to do it," he said.

Finally, LoGerfo said it's important to not lose sight of the big picture.

"Make sure to have fun and enjoy the ride," he said. "All of it. Even the tough times. It will add to your music, make you groove harder and with more soul. Enjoy each step of the way."

Students workshop new play with accomplished actor, playwright



New York actor and playwright Nick Dillenburg (back row, sixth from left) visited campus to work with students on the play, "One Final Beautiful Impossible Year."

On a recent afternoon in early November, more than a dozen Citrus College performing arts students met with a star of "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" to do something that doesn't normally happen at community colleges.

Facilitated by theatre arts instructor Aubrey Saverino, the students participated in a workshop with New York actor and playwright Nick Dillenburg, who is currently starring in a national touring production of the Tony Award-winning "Harry Potter" hit.

They not only learned about a new play they would be performing on campus, they also offered their own perspectives in the hopes of tailoring the production into something they could relate to even more.

Saverino, who will direct the play, "One Final Beautiful Impossible Year," said she and Dillenburg were in awe of the students for taking part in the unique workshop experience.

"Their bravery and willingness to share became an integral part of the creative process," she said. "It was a wonderful, productive and unique experience for everyone involved."

The workshop between Dillenburg and the students was the first of several that will take place prior to the play's premiere in April. According to Saverino, most new plays – including large Broadway shows like "Hamilton" and "Wicked" – go through multiple rounds of workshops before receiving a full production.

"It's an essential part of creating new work, and we're so lucky our students get to be part of this process," she said. "Colleges provide a unique environment to host these workshops, foster creative work and connect students to the professional world."

The idea for the play came about from a conversation between Saverino and Dillenburg. Saverino recalls telling Dillenburg that she wanted a contemporary, large-cast play with plenty of diverse, age-appropriate roles for the student body.

"I wanted something modern but classically inspired – akin to those late '90s teen movies like '10 Things I Hate About You' or 'She's the Man,'" she said. "I had a hard time finding a script that fit those parameters, so Nick said, 'I'll write it,' and he began crafting a play specifically for our college community."

Loosely based on Shakespeare's "Love's Labor's Lost," the play centers on a group of young women who vow to focus on school and their friendships until they're forced to plan a prom with an all-boys school.

Student auditions will be held in December, with rehearsals taking place in February. According to Saverino, Dillenburg will return to campus in 2026 to continue fine-tuning the play with students.

"It is a gift to work at a place that nurtures artistic endeavors," Saverino said. "I am so grateful."

Celebrating holiday spirit at Citrus College

With the holiday season in full swing, the campus community recently reflected on the importance of tradition, community and taking time to rest.



Cassandra Salinas,
student

Q: What does the holiday season mean to you?

A: "The family bonding and waking up late at night just to stare at the lights on the Christmas tree. That's what sticks with me the most."



Eduardo Calderon Hurtado,
gardener III

Q: What do you love most about working at Citrus College?

A: "I love the team [and] the team effort that we put in."



Nadine Henley,
mental health supervisor

Q: What's your favorite thing about working at Citrus College?

A: "The students. I love serving the students and I love getting to work with my peers – they're student-centered."



Darla Ramirez,
administrative secretary II

Q: What do you enjoy most about the holiday season at Citrus College?

A: "We have a Christmas party with all of the staff and we invite the Night Shift band and singers to come. It's a wonderful time."

Holiday Events



Adopt an Angel

At the annual "Adopt an Angel" holiday party on Dec. 4, Citrus College EOPS, CARE, NextUp and CalWORKs students gathered with their children to receive wrapped gifts and books selected just for them. Throughout November, campus community members visited the EOPS/CARE office to pick an ornament representing an "angel" – the child of a Citrus College student. This year's theme, "Rocking Around the Christmas Reading Tree," encouraged literacy. Participating employees purchased presents from each angel's wish list along with an age-appropriate book, spreading warmth and generosity for the holiday season.



Winter Wonderland

The Citrus College Foster and Kinship Care Education and Resource Family Approval (RFA) programs welcomed foster, kinship and RFA families to their third annual "Winter Wonderland" celebration on Dec. 6. Created to nurture cherished traditions, the event provided attendees with a warm, festive experience. Holiday spirit filled the air as families enjoyed brunch, crafted keepsakes and played games while sipping hot chocolate. The event ended with raffle prizes, stockings and a magical visit from Santa!

Citrus College selected to compete for prestigious Aspen Prize



Citrus College recently received its seventh consecutive invitation to compete against the best community colleges in the United States for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

Awarded every two years by the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, the prize serves as the nation's premier recognition of high achievement among community colleges.

"It is an honor for Citrus College to receive yet another invitation to compete for the Aspen Prize," said Superintendent/President Schulz. "None of this would be possible without our passionate and skilled faculty and staff, who work tirelessly to promote student success. The entire campus community is grateful to them for their dedication and hard work."

Citrus College was chosen among the top 200 from a field of approximately 1,000 community colleges. Only 13 other higher education institutions in California were included on the list and invited to apply for the Aspen Prize.

Rising Scholars works to improve access, increase retention



Rising Scholars is a support program at Citrus College that helps students who have experienced the justice system.

For many young people who have been impacted by the justice system, enrolling in college represents more than pursuing higher education; it marks the start of a new chapter. With the help of the Citrus College Rising Scholars program, these students can turn that new beginning into meaningful progress and long-term success.

Designed to serve students who are or have been on parole, probation, AB 109 supervision or were formerly incarcerated, Rising Scholars was first introduced on campus during the 2022-2023 academic year, and it currently assists 23 students.

"The program is part of a broader network of similar initiatives across California's community colleges called the Rising Scholars Network, which was established to expand opportunities for justice-involved students," said Crystal McDonough, counselor/coordinator.

"Focused on this specific population, Rising Scholars emphasizes access, retention and success."

Within the Rising Scholars program, students receive counseling and access to a variety of services, including individualized counseling, priority registration, technology support, financial aid help, textbook vouchers and more. Student success workshops, cultural activities and enrichment opportunities also provide the students with guidance, connection and skill development.

"The mission of Rising Scholars is to provide a targeted, holistic support system for students with justice-system involvement or system-impacted backgrounds," McDonough said. "Our goal is to ensure that they gain access to higher education, remain enrolled and supported, and ultimately achieve their academic goals with confidence and a sense of belonging."

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