

Email 1: June 2020

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June Newsletter

Career Ed in the Time of COVID

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the IEDRC's community colleges have endured extraordinary challenges, going from widespread campus closures to, to 100% online classes and student services, and finally to virtual graduation ceremonies all in a matter of months.

Despite these unprecedented disruptions to our personal and professional lives, community colleges across the region have continued to rise to the challenge of supporting their students and their communities. This month's feature story again highlights the everyday heroism of our programs and students as they do what they can to support our regional COVID-19 response while addressing the needs of our most vulnerable students.

Read on to learn about how a simulation lab allowed 76 Crafton Hills Medical Technician students to graduate, how Mt. San Jacinto College is teaming up with OnTrac to deliver 3D-printed face shields to regional hospitals, and how the San Bernardino Community College District used a grant from the Mexican Consulate in San Bernardino to create an Educational Opportunities Help Desk for DACA students inside the consulate near 3rd and D streets.

Even in this time of uncertainty, I think you'll agree that our regional career education programs give us a great deal to be proud of and look forward to.

As in previous months, you will also find links to our comprehensive COVID-19 Resource Page, featuring the most up-to-date information about

programs, campus closures and transitions, CDC resources, FAQs, and more.

Do you have a "Ready" career education story you'd like to share? Contact me at ashley.etchison@norccollege.edu.



- Ashley Etchison
Director, Strategic Communications & Marketing
Strong Workforce Program

Colleges and Community - From Health Services to Help Desks



A shifting landscape has required all 12 of the Inland Empire/Desert region's colleges to move classes online and look for new ways to reach students despite an ongoing pandemic and closed campuses. Amidst the change, Inland Empire's colleges have been working to connect their campuses to the community and, more importantly, their students.

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Inland Empire/Desert Community Colleges COVID-19 Coronavirus Resource Page



The Inland Empire/Desert Region's Community Colleges are closely monitoring the latest developments surrounding the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. As always, our primary concern is the well-being of our students, faculty, and staff.

The below list collects the most credible and relevant news resources for Inland Empire/Desert community college students, faculty, and staff and is broken into the following categories:

- **General Health Information**
- **Key California Resources (including the CA Chancellor's Office's weekly coronavirus webinar link)**
- **IEDRC Community College Homepages & Coronavirus Update Pages**
- **Other California Resource Page**

[READ MORE](#)

Articles of Interest

- **[Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce](#), Center for Global Education**

- **Ready for Recovery, Community College Daily**
- **Commentary: Equity in higher education essential for California's strong economic recovery, Cal Matters**

Just like the world, our campaign has adapted. The campaign focuses on the support and online education at our 12 community colleges.

Do you have a story about our community colleges helping in the community? Please share it with us by responding to this email.

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Come be a part of the "Ready" revolution!

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California Community Colleges | Career Education

READY career education

In The News

There's always great news at your local community college! Check out these local news articles featuring Career Education at the 12 colleges in the Inland Empire Region.

[Victor Valley College holds 2 events celebrating largest graduating class](#)

[SBVC Professor Reflects on Teaching Where She Studied as a Student](#)

[Workforce Development Board outlines services for businesses and job seekers in S.B. County](#)

[Crafton Hills EMT students graduate](#)

[MSJC Foundation voices support for college's Equity Pledge](#)

[Hesperia man serving in California State Guard](#)

[MSJC partners with OnTrac to ship face shields to regional hospitals](#)

[69-year-old Fontana resident becomes one of Chaffey College's oldest graduates](#)

[Crafton Hills celebrates 48th Annual Commencement with Virtual Ceremony](#)



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Julie Pehkonen <Julie.Pehkonen@rcc.edu>
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Tue, Sep 28, 2021 at 5:22 PM

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Email 2: September 2020

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September Newsletter

Back to "Zoom"

Back to school looked a little bit different this month as our college students, staff and faculty came “back” to school *virtually*. Nevertheless, our colleges were ready to meet the emerging needs of students across the region.

While this year has created a shift in how we teach and serve on campus and off, whether that includes socially distant labs or zoom classes, Inland Empire Desert colleges are up to the task. This month’s feature story highlights Riverside City College and their transition to provide a high-quality career education online.

Read on to learn about how Riverside City College partnered with the Riverside County Workforce Development Board to host a webinar on their no-cost Rapid Response program to help learners get back to work as quickly as possible.

For many students this is an invitation not just to back to school, but back to *their* future and our colleges are supporting them in that journey by continuing to move the needle forward on regional workforce development.

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- Ashley Etchison
Director, Strategic Communications & Marketing
Strong Workforce Program

Ready to Rock...RCC Brings It Online for Fall 2020



The anticipation of pumpkin spice lattes, the days slowly growing shorter, and the arthritic crackle of new textbook covers... It’s starting to feel like the season for going back to school.

Except this year, digital devices will replace spiral-bound notebooks, and touchscreen styluses shall supplant the usual number-two pencils. Higher education has marched forward online this fall, and at Riverside City College, that means more high-quality instruction and high-touch support... on a dialed-in digital platform.

[READ MORE](#)

Inland Empire/Desert Community Colleges COVID-19 Coronavirus Resource Page



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In The News

There's always great news at your local community college! Check out these local news articles featuring Career Education at the 12 colleges in the Inland Empire Region.

[Crafton Hills fire academy receives engine](#)

[MSJC apprenticeship program launches in fall](#)

[CMC to mix online and in-person learning once classes allowed to open](#)

[Crafton Hills Fall Semester kicks off Aug. 17 with virtual and hybrid offerings](#)

[MSJC semester begins online for more than 15,600 students](#)

[Thousands Of Free Face Masks Being Distributed At MSJC Menifee](#)

[College students find creative way to reach socially-distant senior citizens](#)

[San Bernardino Community College District saves taxpayers \\$19.6 million](#)

[Tabor's memory will help future EMTs](#)

[Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree offers scholarship honoring George Floyd](#)

[Colleges Make it Easier for Employers to Recruit](#)

[College Of The Desert: Prepare For A Career In Hospitality Management](#)

[Crafton Hills College respiratory care program recognized with CoARC award](#)

[Fontana High School's certified nursing assistant graduates will study nursing in college](#)



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Email 3: November 2020

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November Newsletter

Career Education is still "hands on"

2020 has been "challenging" (to say the least) for us all. Yet, amidst canceled events, Zoom meetings, and the uncertain economy, there is hope. In this time, our Inland Empire/Desert colleges are uniquely positioned to meet workforce needs and tackle new challenges within our communities.

Over the last few months, we have seen the impact of our college's resources, unique approaches to online learning, and the resilience of our students.

In this month's newsletter, we hear from our job developers, regional directors, and students on how career education is combatting the unemployment crisis. It is apparent now, more than ever, that our colleges provide recession-proof training to our community and lead students to new futures.

For many students this is not just a career education, it is the start of a new life that will affect their family, community, and life.

Read on to see how community colleges are making a difference - one student at a time.

Do you have a "Ready" career education story you'd like to share? Contact me at ashley.etchison@norcollege.edu.



- Ashley Etchison
Director, Strategic Communications & Marketing
Strong Workforce Program

Adversity into Advantages: How Career Ed is Combatting a Crisis



In recent studies highlighted by Politico Magazine, about one in three people either worked a different job in September than they did in February or were unemployed. Those shifts were especially likely to affect younger workers in impacted industries like retail and hospitality.

The decline was fast. But Career Education was *faster*.

[READ MORE](#)

MSJC Helps Nursing Grad Achieve Her Dream



“MSJC was absolutely amazing and I will forever recommend this college to anyone,” she said. “Coming from a private school, where I completed my first step of nursing for my LVN in 2009 and comparing it to my experience at MSJC, I can truly say the comparison is unreal. From the moment I visited the nursing counselors to the time I graduated, I felt the MSJC staff truly cared about our success and our future. And I was able to complete my general education and nursing prerequisites for a fraction of the cost I was paying at the university.”

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College Futures Foundation Provides \$687,000 to Support Regional Guided Pathways Work in the Inland Empire



College Futures Foundation awarded \$687,000 in funding to support seven community colleges in the region to implement Guided Pathways initiatives from October 15, 2020, to June 30, 2022.

Guided Pathways provide students with clear course-taking patterns to encourage better enrollment decisions and a clearer path to graduation. “For Guided Pathways to work, colleges must implement an integrated, institution-wide approach to support students from the point of entry to attainment of high-quality postsecondary degrees and careers,” said Dr. Carlos Ayala, President and CEO of GIA.

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**Join Us for
National Apprenticeship Week**



JOIN US FOR
National
APPRENTICESHIP WEEK
NOVEMBER 8-14, 2020

PRE-REGISTER HERE **NAW**  **EVENTS** **PRE-REGISTER HERE**

This year, the U.S. Department of Labor announced that the National Apprenticeship Week: Building Skills, Expanding Opportunity will be conducted during November 8-14, 2020.

Join us!

Nov. 10 - Virtual recruitment event in Partnership with RivCo Americas' Job Center of California (AJCC)

Nov. 12 - LAUNCH and Learn event for Employers

Nov. 13 - Presentation to Riverside County Office of Education. Audience: teachers & counselors

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In The News

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[Chaffey College Top Ranked for Latino Enrollment, Granting Degrees](#)

[College of the Desert Announces Online Learning for 2021 Winter Intersession and Spring Semester](#)

[Copper Mountain College Rolls out Inaugural Student Art Gallery](#)

[Virtual Duality: Art Faculty Exhibit 2020](#)

[How One Undocumented Crafton Student is Navigating College Life](#)

[Free to Students - the Next Frontier Virtual Conference & Expo - November 10-11](#)

[RCC Ranked 4th in Top 100 Colleges & Universities for Graduating Hispanic Students](#)

[SBVC Names its Newest Dean of Applied Technology, Transportation, and Culinary Arts](#)

[Chaffey College Receives \\$3.2 Million Federal Grant to Support Latino Students](#)

[Honorary Life Directorship Bestowed](#)

[Student Health Services Transitions Wellness Resources to Virtual Format](#)

[SBVC Theater Student Finds Success in a New Virtual Landscape](#)

[NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars Application is now open](#)



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Email 4: December 2020

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December Newsletter

2021, Here We Come!

As a stormy year comes to a close, it's a great time to look back while celebrating fresh beginnings. In the Inland Empire/Desert region, we have a lot to be grateful for. When it comes to the recalibrating economy, career education has been a tremendous asset for our students looking to restart. Despite challenges, classes kept going, and so did our faculty, teachers and learners. As we turn over a new leaf in 2021, our community colleges and our workforce are becoming stronger than ever.

In this month's newsletter, we have some good news to cheer! The Inland Empire/Desert economy is on the mend, having regained half of the jobs it lost last February. Some of the hardest-hit industries, like Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, as well as Retail Trade, are making comebacks with significant month-over-month job growth. Thanks to the region's community colleges, competitive Career Education training is helping students be *ready* for in-demand, well-paying jobs as the economy bounces back.

And in another win for the region, Riverside City College finished in the top seven percent in a national cybersecurity and ethical hacking competition. Not only was it a huge honor for students, but it was also a hands-on opportunity to hone high-tech skills for tomorrow's workforce.

To see our community colleges in action, read on to see how the region is ushering in new careers for a new year.

Do you have a "Ready" career education story you'd like to share? Contact me at ashley.etchison@norccollege.edu.



- Ashley Etchison
Director, Strategic Communications & Marketing
Strong Workforce Program

RCC Students Compete, Place in National Cybersecurity/Ethical Hacking Competition



College Futures Foundation awarded \$687,000 in funding to support seven community colleges in the region to implement Guided Pathways initiatives from October 15, 2020, to June 30, 2022.

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Inland Rising: Career Education to Play a Vital Role in Workforce Recovery



They say it's always darkest before the dawn. And as the sun sets on a tumultuous 2020, Inland Empire's economy is beginning to see the light.

The year 2021, with all its potential, is approaching fast – and it's causing employers and educators to step back and take real inventory of 2020's damage. And while the pandemic certainly hit the economy hard, the region is already bouncing back.

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In The News

There's always great news at your local community college! Check out these local news articles featuring Career Education at the 12 colleges in the Inland Empire Region.

[More People with Bachelors Degrees go Back to School to Learn Skilled Trades](#)

[Could the Online For-Profit College Industry be "A Winner in this Crisis"?](#)

[How Career & Technical Education shuts out Black and Latino students from High-Paying Professions](#)

[Chaffey College Awarding \\$2.5 Million in Federal CARES Funding](#)

[Annual Foundation Festival of Wreaths Kick's Off the Holiday Season](#)

[Crafton Hills Counselors Present on Innovative Adult Summer Bridge Program at State Summit](#)

[MSJC Teams with County Public Health to Provide Free COVID-19 Testing](#)

Norco College: Mindfulness Virtual Workshop Tuesday, December 8th at 4pm and Thursday December 10th at 1pm

SBVC Launches Live Chat Feature to Expand Engagement



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Tue, Sep 28, 2021 at 5:25 PM

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Email 5: January 2021

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January Newsletter

Hindsight is... well, you know.

Now that 2020 is finally over, it's tempting to just shove it into a drawer and never speak of it again. Maybe in a few years we'll be looking for the backup set of car keys, and we'll spot 2020 back there with a couple of melted Mentos. I'm sure we'll look back at those Mentos with fondness and positivity.

As we begin to hit our stride on a more hopeful 2021, let's choose to reflect on what went *right* last year, and how the darkness of 2020 actually managed to shine a bright light on the power of career education. Our colleges could have simply clicked off the stopwatch and waited for a dry track. Instead, they rose up like never before, innovating new ways to serve students and uplift their communities.

If you've been following the "Ready" Career Education News Center during the health crisis, you've watched countless college success stories unfold. From the first sign of trouble, our career education providers adopted new protocols, forged new partnerships, and launched new efforts to keep students connected to evolving workforce opportunities.

From Norco to Barstow, our colleges scrambled to bolster offerings in essential sectors like health and public safety. They stepped up to provide campus space, PPE materials and volunteer manpower during the initial COVID-19 crush.

They went online, navigating "uncharted COVID waters" to implement remote learning, and in the case of Riverside City College, actually *surpassing* the number of career ed degrees awarded in 2019. And when they couldn't teach off-site, they found socially distant solutions, approaching the crisis as an opportunity to bring health and safety into the curriculum.

Our hard work did not go unnoticed. Our students and staff honored their communities with prestigious accolades in cybersecurity and ethical hacking, student success, skilled trade initiatives, and more. All the while, our colleges took their places in the battle for regional recovery, harnessing the same spirit of grit and innovation that has always defined career education.

By all means, let's take this opportunity to raise a glass toward the future. At the same time, let's not forget to pour one out for some of the accomplishments that got us here... even in a year we'd rather keep stashed away.

Do you have a "Ready" career education story you'd like to share? Contact me at Julie.Pehkonen@rcc.edu.

- Julie Pehkonen

Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium



Cash for Class: MoVaLEARNS Stipend Moves Moreno Valley



A whopping 80 percent of students work while attending college. It's a staggering trend that's especially harmful to low-income students, according to Dr. Anthony Carnevale, Director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

More than half of students who work 15 hours or more average a C or lower. The stress often causes struggling learners to seek a break from school, yet only 13 percent of college dropouts ever return, with far fewer persisting to graduation, according to a 2019 National Student Clearinghouse report.

The good news? Help is on the way.

[READ MORE](#)

BCC wins National Honor with The Trade Technician Jumpstart Program



Barstow Community College (BCC) was declared a national winner in the 2nd annual NACCE 2020 Pitch for the Trades competition sponsored by the Philip E. & Carole R. Ratcliffe Foundation. With a goal of empowering job creation and entrepreneurs in the local region, BCC competed in the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship nation-wide contest with the newly created and innovative Trade Technician Jump Start Project.

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[CA FWD Recognized By The Inland Empire Economic Partnership](#)

[Moreno Valley College Receives Grant for Veteran Student Assistance](#)

[Victor Valley College aims to house homeless students with new program](#)

[Mayor says another Chaffey College campus and a Northgate Gonzalez Market will be built in Fontana](#)



California Community Colleges

Career Education



Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

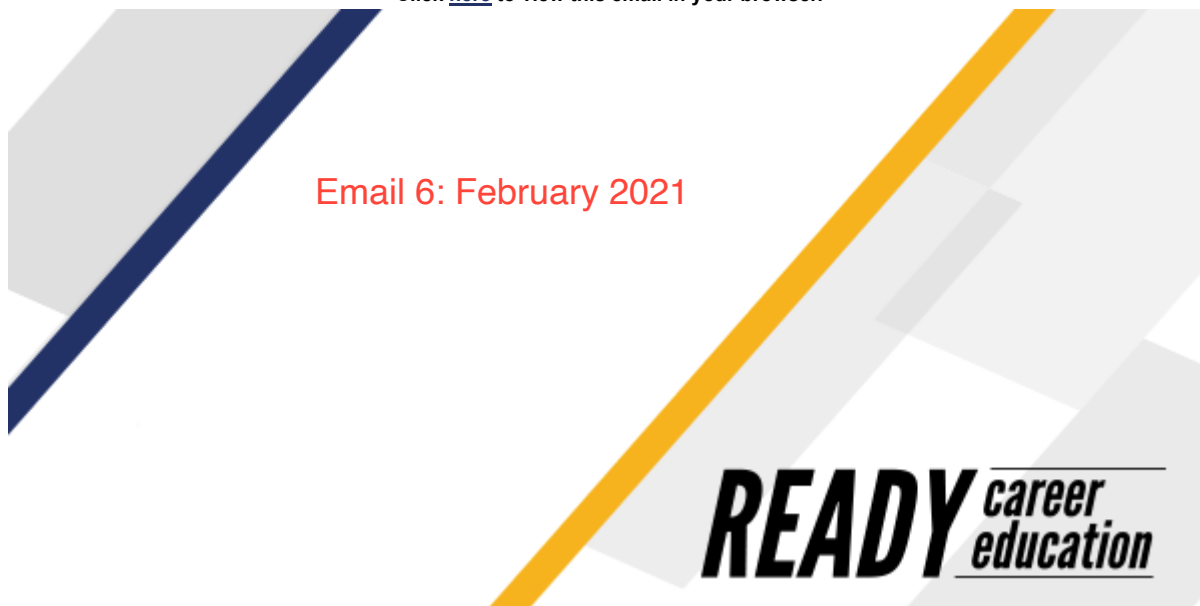
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February Newsletter

CTE Month 2021: Hats off to hands-on.

We're off and running on another annual "CTE Month," and while we're still picking up 2020's pieces in many ways, the light at the end of the tunnel is starting to get brighter.

I *tried* to cram a fourth cliché into that sentence... I really did. But I did it to prove a point.

As we re-imagine our post-pandemic career education agenda, it's so important to avoid cliché and open ourselves up to the critical role that CTE innovation will play in the return of California's economy, particularly here in the Inland Empire. Even

something as positive as “CTE Month” – promoted each February by the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) – runs the risk of being filed under “just another hashtag” if we don’t use it to advance the cause of career ed.

For decades, technology has been closing the gap between “blue-collar” and white-collar” professionals. To quote Kate Kreamer, Deputy Executive Director of *Advance CTE*, career ed and college is no longer “an ‘either/or’.” The upshot is: we’re not the “kid brother” to traditional college anymore... Now, bearing the burden of reinventing the old career pathways (and forging new ones), we’re more like traditional college’s mad-genius uncle.

It’s a mantle our IEDRC institutions are proud to bear, and we’re even prouder to be on the ground, pioneering the future of our workforce and region. We’re *doing this*, day-by-day, with efforts like “MoVa Learns,” an innovative town-gown partnership that allows working students to devote more hours to their chosen CTE pathway. We’re doing it by investing in our students and deepening our industry partnerships. Because in the Inland Empire, CTE isn’t just a month – it’s a *movement*.

Our region is on the rise... and we’re *Ready*.

We’re ‘Ready’ for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Donated Emergency Vehicles Drive Essential Careers at Crafton Hills



In a state of constant emergency, it's essential that first responders remain in a constant state of urgency.

Wildfire incidents are increasing in California, threatening land, homes and lives. Five of the state's 20 largest-ever wildfires occurred in 2020, according to CAL FIRE. That same year, more than 10.3 million acres burned — more than double the territory lost in 2019.

[READ MORE](#)

Cash for Class: MoVaLEARNS Stipend Moves Moreno Valley



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[Stellino named BCC baseball's new head coach](#)

[Rancho Cucamonga man restores 'Big C' in mountains](#)

[Vaccination site opens at Copper Mountain College](#)

[SBVC and Crafton Hills College receive full seven-year accreditation renewal](#)

[Norco College Receives High Marks for 'Military Friendly' Programs](#)



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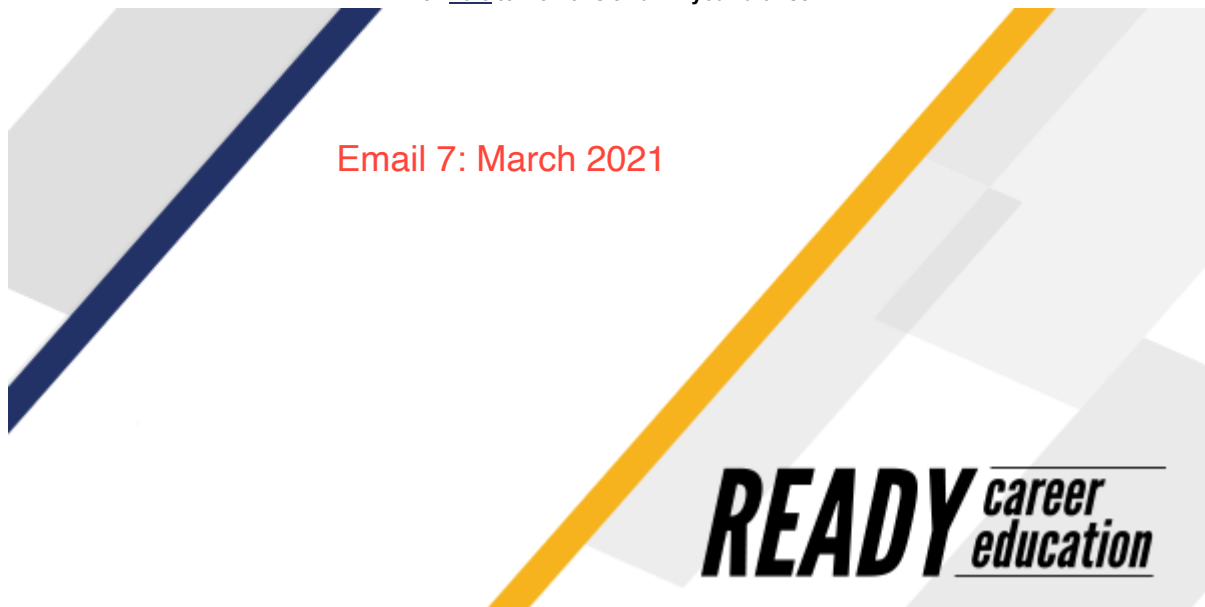
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March Newsletter

Super skills to the rescue...

Faster than a speeding workforce. More powerful than a local trade school. Able to leap over skills gaps in a single bound. It's not a bird... Or a plane, for that matter.

It's *public career education*... the hero that California both needs and deserves.

The health crisis has had a devastating effect on all 58 counties, with food service, retail, hospitality and live entertainment bearing the brunt. Temporary layoffs became permanent as the state unemployment rate spiked to nine percent, and in the end, more than 350,000 new Californians filed for assistance.

But within every bleak statistic lies a ray of hope. Since February 2020, the crisis has driven career ed innovation in unprecedented ways. We've seen hospitality and food services workers reinvent themselves in convalescent health care. We watched as Barstow Community College launch 22 new CTE certifications, in addition to free, non-credit programs to retrain workers in weeks.

Meanwhile, Moreno Valley and Mt. San Jacinto leveraged existing workforce partnerships to bolster opportunities in their struggling communities. And just days ago, Victor Valley College received approval for a new Community Health Worker (CHW) apprenticeship that promises to address a critical need for health advisors, family advocates, outreach workers and more.

And while it will take time to steady the economic ship in the Inland Empire and beyond, there's no doubt that it's *super skills* that will ultimately save the day.

To quote BCC Job Developer Danielle Jeffers, it all about "re-educating, re-training, and re-employing." From Norco to Blythe, our Inland-Desert institutions have spent the past year cultivating these "three re-s", ensuring that when the economy roars back, we'll be ready to rock.

Up, up, and away.

We're 'Ready' for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Essentially Unstoppable: VVC Apprenticeship Yields New Health Care Heroes



While doctors and nurses hold the line against COVID-19 with their heroism, another equally essential – if little known – group of frontline workers have been bustling behind the scenes.

Community Health Workers (CHWs) champion underserved communities by providing a range of health and social services close to home. According to a recent CDC report, these professionals have been critical in helping close service gaps for those hardest hit during the pandemic.

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[Virtual skilled trades expo Thursday](#)

[RCC Awarded Nearly \\$1 Million to Recruit and Support](#)

[New program aims to increase Victor Valley College students' employability](#)

[Fast vaccine clinic felt like a gift at Crafton Hills College](#)

[Moreno Valley College program donates first-aid kits to Sheriff's Department](#)

[JBS extends free community college tuition program to workers, employees' children](#)

[Job training and college courses expanding](#)

San Bernardino Valley, Crafton Hills colleges delay return to in-person instruction

Victor Valley College to reopen campus to students, public in May

How a Victorville program is helping community college students experiencing homelessness

Crafton Hills College students prove their skills, deliver COVID-19 vaccine

Mt. San Jacinto College earns military friendly school honor



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Email 8: April 2021

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April Newsletter

Zooming in on the 'big picture'

It's natural, and probably even necessary, to take a bird's-eye view when creating a vision for career education's role in regional recovery.

From our vantage point, we're encouraged by the reality that jobs are returning at a far-faster-than-average rate. The future is bright for regional growth industries like logistics, healthcare, construction and manufacturing, as well as fast-recovering sectors like leisure & hospitality and retail.

We're looking at an enormous grid of tiny moving dots and squiggles, and by all accounts, they seem to be teeming in the right direction.

But, as we all know, the big picture doesn't tell the whole story. Trends aside, there are still Inland-Desert families struggling *right now*, and for those concerned about medical bills or making next month's rent, there *is* no big picture.

For many of those turning to career education in the wake of the pandemic, it's not about finding oneself, or even "turning a passion into a paycheck." It's about getting trained, getting hired, and landing a job and earning a living wage as quickly as possible.

That "living wage," incidentally, currently stands around \$22 per hour (about \$45,000 annually) for a single adult with one child, according to the California Family Needs Calculator. It's a bar that "Ready" career education is committed to clearing, through our focus on career programs that are not only fast and flexible, but fully supportive of Inland-Desert region families.

And when we shift back to the big-picture view, we can feel good that our goals are coming into focus. The 2021 Top Critical Workforce Occupations report from the Centers of Excellence highlights *dozens* of in-demand, \$22-and-up occupations projected to emerge in virtually every sector. The hottest opportunities are coming both from regional fields like Advanced Transportation and Construction, and up-and-coming industries like Business and ICT (check out this month's feature on Chaffey College's Cyber Security internship with the US Naval Research Center).

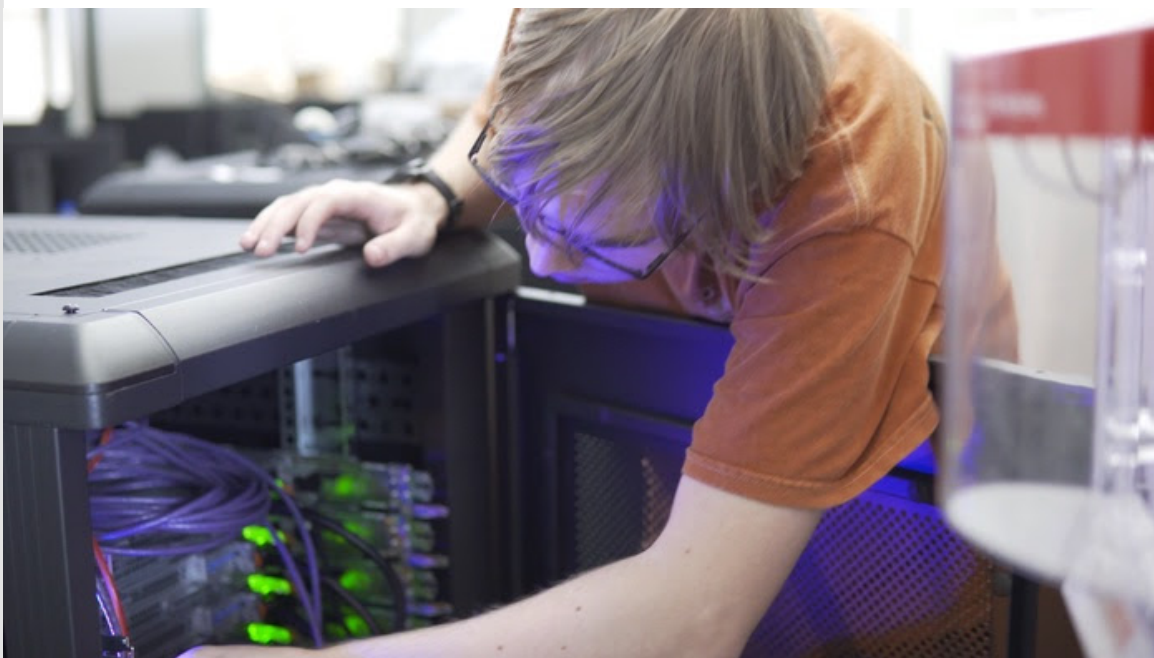
When it comes to putting people to work, career education is going to do its job. And as long as we can keep an eye on the details, the "big picture" will work itself out.

We're 'Ready' for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Hackers Aweigh: Navy Internship Goes Beyond Basic Training for IT Students



When malware brought the entire city of Atlanta to its knees for *over five days* in 2018, it revealed a glimpse of the economic chaos that a lack of a trained cybersecurity workforce could affect.

But when a remote hacker tried to poison a Florida town's water supply this past February, the stakes grew larger. With human lives on the line, the IT skills gap was no longer just a costly inconvenience but a national crisis.

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[Victor Valley College Adds TimelyMD to Support Student Health](#)

[Cleaner water through corn](#)

[San Bernardino Valley, Crafton Hills colleges to resume in-person instruction in August](#)

[Chaffey College honors class of 2021 with 'Drive-Thru Grad Fest'](#)

[BIO-key PortalGuard IDaaS adopted by two more Colleges](#)



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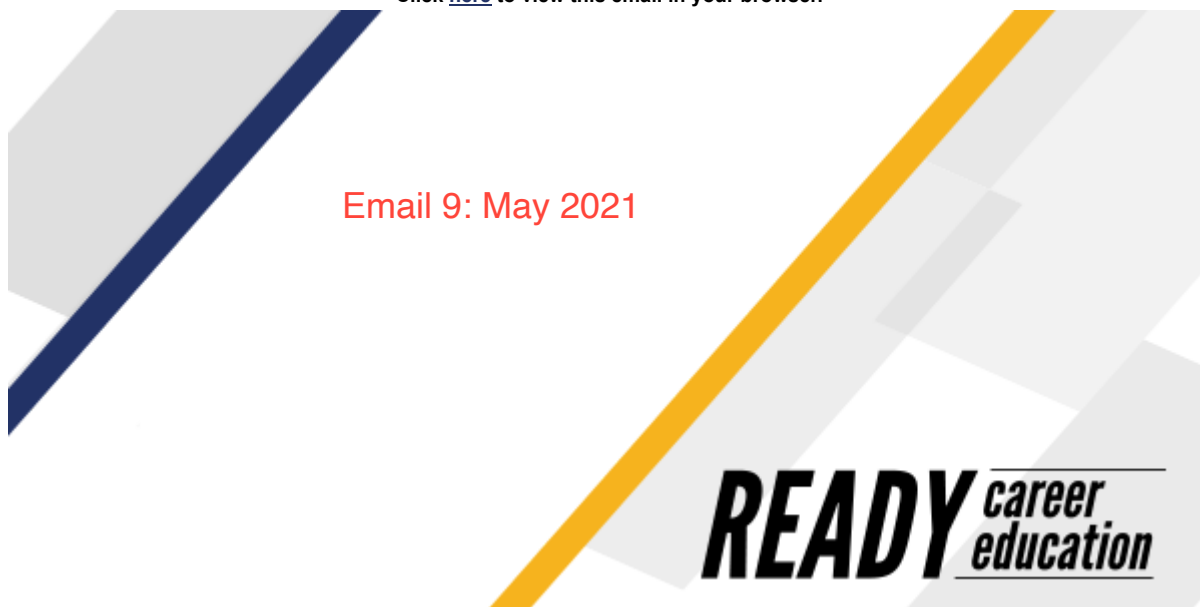
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Tue, Sep 28, 2021 at 5:30 PM

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April Newsletter

A date with data

It's the age of the living wage. And we've got the numbers to prove it.

As the Inland-Desert Colleges rebound and recalibrate for a post-COVID future, our info-sharks are busy swimming through regional workforce data in search of ways to better serve our communities. The 2021 Top Critical Workforce Occupations report, released by the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research in April, ranks the top Inland-Desert "living wage" careers by demand level. The result, for students and stakeholders, is a comprehensive hierarchy of the specific pathways most likely to result in self-sustainable employment.

It's no surprise that many of the hottest pathways dovetail with pandemic-era demand. Nine of the top 10 critical occupations fall under the Advanced Transportation & Logistics, Energy, Construction & Utilities or Health sectors. Meanwhile, an expected revival in the Retail & Hospitality industry figures to boost occupations like Food Service Managers (ranked #9) and Chefs/Head Cooks (ranked #26).

In this critical moment, after all, it's not enough just to be open and offering classes. Career education has to be like water – or better yet, elbow grease -- flowing into the smallest crevices to buoy the industries and employees that need it the most. Projects like the Critical Workforce Occupations Report allow us to approach this goal surgically and strategically, with genuine workforce data at our backs.

This month's News Center feature highlights another outcome-focused IEDRC endeavor affected by the health crisis. The Strong Workforce counselor conclave, traditionally convened in an in-person retreat, happened virtually this year, with K-14 counselors invited to engage with keynotes and breakout sessions covering CTE resources. The online event was a cyber-success, proving the point even further that, as long as we keep innovating, COVID can't stop career ed.

I invite you to connect and share the article below – and don't forget to check in with the Career Ready News Center for more features on career education in the Inland-Desert region.

We're 'Ready' for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Virtually Unstoppable: CTE Resource Sharing Goes Remote



When it comes to finding silver linings in the pall of the pandemic, a recent *Forbes* article points to the proliferation of new connectivity solutions.

The flurry of virtual workshops and training sessions, the author suggests, has become the great equalizer for businesses worldwide. Online events allow more people to participate while eliminating travel costs and promoting participation. It's changing the way that professionals connect to one another, and this April, the IEDRC Counselor Conclave became part of the revolution.

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[Chaffey College seeks community submissions for COVID-19 themed art exhibition](#)

[Walk-up COVID-19 vaccinations are now available at 12 San Bernardino County sites](#)

[Crafton Hills honors students and faculty for volunteer efforts](#)

[Moreno Valley College students get 1,000 free Chromebooks](#)

[Mt. San Jacinto College \(MSJC\) Art Gallery to host annual student exhibit](#)

[College collaboration yields business ideas from its students](#)

[2 candidates remain for San Bernardino Community College District chancellor](#)

'Without boundaries': Victor Valley College to hold virtual job fair in June

Barstow Community College, Barstow High School partner for inaugural Quick Pitch Competition



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Email 10: July 2021- Part 1



July Newsletter

A space to innovate...

It is, indeed, a small world.

Just ask the folks at Mt. San Jacinto College, who recently went looking for an industry partner to help expand MSJC's pioneering "Eagle MakerSpace" project. This new collaborative space, planned for the San Jacinto campus, was set to focus on animatronics and robotics, supplying a truly unique environment for hands-on STEM engagement.

They couldn't have *imagineered* a better partner. Stepping up to sponsor the new makerspace was Redlands-based Garner Holt Productions, a special effects company known best for creating the animatronic inhabitants of Disneyland's "It's a Small World." Evidently, it's true what they sing.

It's already been a great ride for Eagle MakerSpace – a dedicated, high-tech hub for STEM/STEAM projects on MSJC's Menifee campus – and for Inland-Desert makerspaces as a whole. Amid the initial COVID crush last spring, the MSJC and San Bernardino Valley College MakerSpaces literally got into gear, cranking out PPE including face masks and (then-rare) face shields for local hospitals. Meanwhile, Moreno Valley College and College of the Desert used the down time to prepare their new makerspace initiatives for launch.

All told, nine of our region's 12 community colleges now have a makerspace program either live, pending or under development. [Be sure to check out this month's News Center feature "Full STEAM Ahead" article for a look at the latest!

As career education continues to make good on its promise to the "Innovation Empire," these collaborative, connective workshops will no doubt play a key role. The more space we give makers to make, the more we'll inspire innovation and opportunity... in our communities, and beyond.

It's a *big* world, after all.

We're 'Ready' for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Full STEAM Ahead: Inland-Desert Makerspaces Hack the Pandemic



Offering cutting-edge industry equipment and inclusive, collaborative spaces, the region’s community college makerspaces are the cornerstone of creative, hands-on learning. Though the pandemic temporarily closed campus innovation centers and mobile labs, it couldn’t stop makers from making. Now, a year later, these “Swiss Army knives” of innovation are returning in full force.

“Empowering students and adults to create, innovate, tinker, and make their ideas and solutions into reality is at the heart of the maker movement,” says Donnell Layne, STEM Innovation Center & Makerspace Director at Moreno Valley College. “We are ready to meet the challenges of the future with a clear message — ‘you belong here.’”

MVC’s new, 4000-square-foot makerspace launched in December 2019, just a few months before campus closed.

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Chaffey College

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In The News

There's always great news at your local community college! Check out these local news articles featuring Career Education at the 12 colleges in the Inland Empire Region.

[Barstow Community College outlines new health- and tech-focused measures ahead of campus reopening](#)

[Residents benefit from Chaffey College's InTech Center in Fontana and S.B. County's Workforce Development Board](#)

[CMC breaks ground on solar project](#)

[SBVC Launches Machinist Training Pilot Program for Individuals with Autism](#)

[MSJC Selected to Participate in Urban Institute's CTE CoLab](#)

[Here's how federal funding could help your Inland community](#)

[VVC hits the reset button moving forward](#)



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July Newsletter

A new way to CNA...

Have you high-fived a Certified Nursing Assistant today?

Perhaps in COVID times, a thumbs-up or an approving head-nod would be more appropriate. Really, any gesture of acknowledgement will do... as long as we're finally doing what we can to give these amazing people their due.

We didn't take PTO or plan family barbecues around National Nursing Assistants Week like we did for July 4... but maybe we should have. Chances are, just about everybody at that barbecue would have been aided, cared for or comforted by a CNA at some point in their life. They're the gears that keep hospitals grinding away, particularly during high-stress times like those brought on by the pandemic. In some parts of California, though, they're becoming an endangered species.

This month's "Ready" News Center feature highlights a groundbreaking pathway at Palo Verde College that has been supplying CNAs for 20 years, in bold defiance of regional shortages. The program is a beacon for what's possible when career education joins the fight against a skills gap. And with our state facing adversaries like an aging population and rural flight, it just might represent a blueprint for a better California.

As always, we're proud to share achievements like these from our member colleges with this monthly update. Meanwhile, we know there are so many similar stories going untold. A big (virtual) high-five to everyone carrying the torch for career education in the Inland Empire-Desert region. We continue to be inspired by your ingenuity and sustained by your successes.

We're 'Ready' for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Free Ride to Certified: Palo Verde Grant Aims to Solve CNA Shortage



Of all the tireless health care heroes keeping a busy hospital humming, nursing assistants are perhaps the most unsung. Now, thanks to a privately funded grant through Palo Verde College, at least they'll be *spoken for*.

PVC's prerequisite-free Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program has been launching nursing assistants into rewarding work for more than 20 years. This fall, the program will make those opportunities available to even more Californians with a new grant from the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation.

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[Chaffey College students are researching climate change, public health, and more](#)

[Southern California Gas Company awards Crafton Hills College grad with \\$5,000 scholarship](#)

[MacKenzie Scott makes \\$18 Million donation to College of the Desert](#)

[With 1,817 grads, Victor Valley College celebrates record-setting class during commencement ceremony.](#)

[Grant money at Crafton Hills College helps boost success at the finish line](#)

[Victor Valley College celebrates 34 nursing graduates with pinning ceremony.](#)

[Fontana resident shows her determination while graduating from Cal Poly Pomona](#)

[Diana Z. Rodriguez named chancellor of community college district](#)

[Victor Valley College hosts adult education graduation ceremony honoring hundreds of students](#)



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Email 12: August 2021

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August Newsletter

Mouthpieces & megaphones

In the workforce, there's no such thing as "summer break." As demand for tech-savvy, college-educated workers sizzles, the Association for Career and Technical Education is turning up the heat on efforts to spread the critical CTE message.

The organization has declared August to be ACTE Advocacy Month, prescribing a series of weekly tasks for CTE allies to affect federal policy around career education.

From posting on social media to writing op-eds and attending policy events, it's a brilliantly simple (and low-effort) endeavor that carries the potential to change the conversation around CTE funding at the highest levels.

Though individually, we may be cogs in the career education machine, we should never underestimate the power of a single voice – properly amplified -- to break through the hum of high-level discourse.

Our success in expanding and improving CTE pathways in recent years has given us momentum. More than ever, the powers that be are recognizing CTE's pivotal role in the future of our economy. And while a single Tweet may seem insignificant, it just might be the sonic wave that triggers the advocacy avalanche.

Find out how you can be a megaphone for career education at **ACTE Advocacy month**, and check out IEDRC's August newsletter to share the latest local CTE success stories. This month, we're featuring an article on Riverside County's widening EMT shortage, and Moreno Valley College's timely plan to train future first responders, *tuition-free*. I invite you to connect, share using the #CTE hashtag, and in honor of ACTE Advocacy month, even engage your nearest congressional influencer.

We're 'Ready' for more! If you have a career education success story to share, contact me at julie.pehkonen@rcc.edu



- Julie Pehkonen
Chair, Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

Tuition-Free EMTs:MVC Teams Up to Train Future First Responders



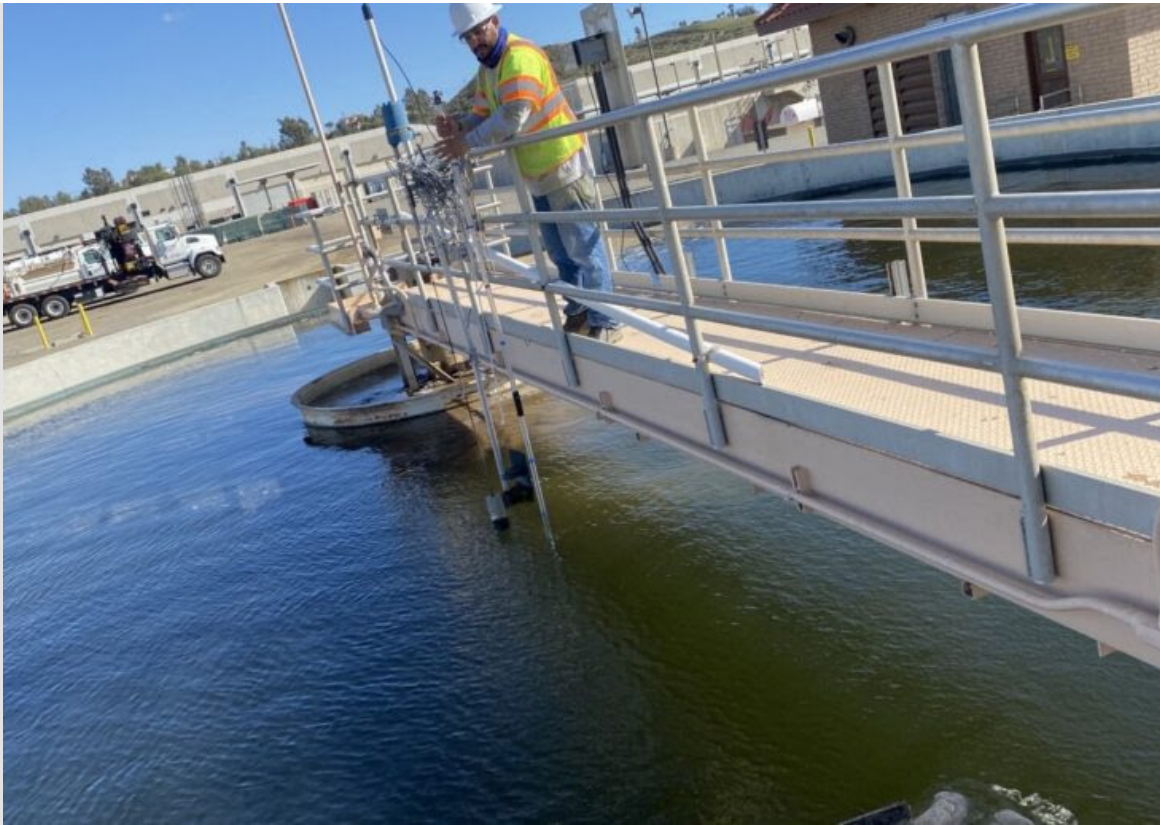
For some, college is a stepping-stone — not much more than a means to an end. But for students like Naasen Harmon, it's *essential* that higher education comes with a higher calling.

“I just didn’t feel motivated,” Harmon reflects on his first foray into college. Unsatisfied with general education classes, he craved connection, passion, and the opportunity to do something that really mattered.

That’s when the former athlete, who yearned for a way to avoid cubicle life and work on a team to help people, found his second wind as a first responder.

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MSJC and Internship Lead Water Technology Major to Full-Time Job



It's not always clear where one's academic and career journey will lead, but MSJC Water Technology major and Menifee resident Francisco Aguirre knows he's on the right path now.

"I originally started at MSJC in about 2010 and ended in 2011. I was working about 60 hours a week making good money as a delivery driver," he explained.

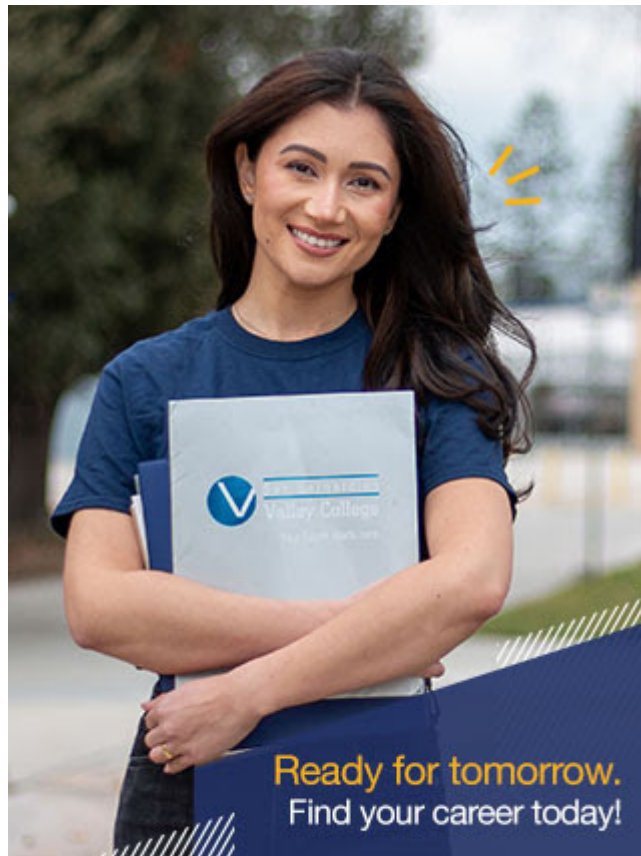
In 2019, Aguirre decided to return to MSJC to pursue an associate degree in Water Technology. That decision has proven fruitful as Aguirre met with MSJC Career Education Counselor Matt Leyden, who helped him land an internship at Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District through the MSJC Cooperative Work Experience Education (CWEE) Program.

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[Crafton Hills offers digital media courses in virtual and mixed reality, level II 3D modeling](#)

[Mt. San Jacinto College to require proof of coronavirus vaccine to enter campuses](#)

[College of the Desert requiring masks, but no vaccine mandate](#)

['Metallica' foundation donates \\$100k to Victor Valley College](#)

[New job training program is launched at Chaffey College thanks to \\$1 million in state funding](#)

[\\$4 million state funding keeps KVCR on the air](#)



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