



New Center for Early Childhood Education Brings Preschoolers to College

This fall, College of the Canyons will welcome the youngest group of students ever to study at the Canyon Country campus — with the opening of the college's Canyon Country Center for Early Childhood Education (ECE).

The Center for ECE is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience for preschool children ages 3 to 4, while modeling an exemplary developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive learning environment.

Located in Quad-two of the college's Canyon Country campus, the 2,150-square-foot facility includes two fully-furnished classrooms, age-appropriate restrooms, a kitchen and observation areas to be utilized by parents and students majoring in ECE at College of the Canyons.

“With the opening of the Early Childhood Education Center the campus is taking a momentous step toward realizing its full potential,” said Dr. Dena Maloney, founding dean of the Canyon Country Campus. “This center is an important resource for our community. My children were students in the Early Childhood Education program at the Valencia campus, so I'm extremely proud to be a part of creating this lab in Canyon Country.”

Featuring a learning environment and preschool program structured around the state's recommended preschool learning foundations, the Center provides children with a variety of creative materials needed to stimulate learning and social interaction, and curriculum designed to develop and support language arts, math/science, dramatic play, music, movement, social/emotional and creativity skills.

The primary focus of the program is to promote feelings of competence and self-worth that will serve as a strong foundation for the student's future growth and educational development.

The Center offers half-day morning preschool sessions Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and will follow the college calendar for holidays and campus closures. To accommodate parent drop offs/pick-ups the Center will be open Monday-Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The 2009 pilot class will consist of 16 children (aged 3-4 with birth dates before Dec. 2) and adhere to a certified teacher to child ratio of 1:8.

The Center is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Division. All staff members — including a site supervisor, master teacher, associate teacher and teacher's aide — hold a child development permit from the state commission on teacher credentialing.

In addition to certified staff, students studying ECE at College of the Canyons will frequently be assigned lab hours to be conducted inside the Center under the direct supervision of a master teacher, allowing students to gain valuable hands-on experience.

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providing ECE students at College of the Canyons with the opportunity for an on-campus practicum experience in a state-licensed pre-school setting,” said Diane Stewart, Dean of ECE and Training Programs at the college.

Serving the children of students, college staff and Canyon Country community members, the Center for ECE will have the capacity to serve as many as 30 children per session in future semesters. College officials also anticipate eventually expanding the Center's hours of operation to include both half-day and full-day preschool sessions.

Classes at the Canyon Country Center for ECE will begin August 19, 2009. The Center will also host a ribbon-cutting and Opening Celebration, Thursday, September 17, 2009 from 1 to 3 p.m.

For more information about the Canyon Country Center for Early Childhood Education or for questions about enrollment, the Center's fee schedule and eligibility for state preschool funding please contact Gloria Lopez at (661) 362-3531.

