Despite still taking classes to complete the college’s baking certificate program, College of the Canyons culinary arts students Amanda McNelis, Megan Hourany and Marissa Oye just couldn’t wait to get their careers cooking.

Armed with spatulas and the knowledge gained during their brief time at the college’s Institute for Culinary Education (iCuE), last fall the trio began working as bakers at Velvet Cupcakes, located in The Patios at Westfield Valencia Town Center.

“This is actually my first real job,” said Hourany, 19, “so it’s pretty cool to have it be in a cupcake store.”

Last November, Velvet Cupcakes placed a help wanted ad looking for bakers to work in the pastry shop during the fast-approaching holiday season.

As a result, more than 200 culinary professionals applied, with most of the applicants hailing from more well known culinary schools, including Le Cordon Bleu. From that pool, 50 candidates participated in a group interview, including McNelis.

“Two of the people I interviewed were Le...”

The college has long sought a way to expand the depth and breadth of its culinary department, in order to serve as many students as possible. However, the lack of a permanent facility has been a continual roadblock.

In its five years of existence, the culinary arts program has been housed in three separate facilities — the existing college cafeteria, a restaurant space at the Westfield Valencia Town Center and,
Chancellor
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continues to thrive? Everything we can think of!

As you will read in the following pages, we have undertaken a number of efforts in recent months, from expanding things we were already doing, to launching entirely new initiatives aimed at equipping our students with the skills needed to begin a rewarding career in growing fields.

One of those new programs is our Fast Track Institute, which provides accelerated job preparation programs for job seekers, mid-career professionals, recent high school graduates and community members looking for an opportunity to quickly jump-start their careers. It offers a variety of fast-paced, intensive job preparation courses that will teach entry-level job skills and allow participants to quickly begin working in local businesses and industries where applicants with up-to-date training are in high demand.

This summer we have an Auto CAD class in progress with 28 students. This is the second class we have run in Auto CAD this year. In addition, we have offered CNC Machinist Training and Welding instruction. There is strong demand in many fields for employees with these particular skills.

We launched a Principles in Inventory Management class in partnership with the San Fernando Valley chapter of APICS, the Association for Operations Management. And in the fall, we will launch two new classes – Model Building and Commercial Photography.

Each course culminates with a job fair where area companies have a chance to interview every student in the class, with many graduates receiving job offers on the spot.

As you can see, we are focused on providing our students with high quality educations in fields where they can find satisfying and financially rewarding careers.

Alternative energy is a booming employment sector. A national survey this year of the solar industry showed that companies expect a 26 percent increase in the industry’s workforce over the next year.

The timing couldn’t be better for us to debut our Solar Energy Technician certificate program. In addition to learning the latest developments and skills in this burgeoning field, students who earn their certificate will also be eligible to sit for the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) exams in the areas of entry-level solar thermal and/or entry-level photovoltaics.

The program launches this fall at the Canyon Country Campus, and will be housed in the new Applied Technology Education Center. ATEC is in the final stages of construction and will welcome students in time for the start of the new semester on August 22.

Two more courses designed to prepare students for careers in alternative energy industries will also debut this fall. Introduction to Environmental Studies and Introduction to Environmental Science will provide students with the scientific background needed to work in the solar technology, biofuel technology and environmental surveying industries. The courses will be augmented with a field studies component – a demonstration garden at the Canyon Country Campus – where students will have an opportunity to experience in nature what they have learned in the classroom.

And speaking of hands-on learning, our Culinary Arts students continue to successfully move from the classroom to the kitchens of multiple Santa Clarita eateries. Their skills are on par with co-workers who graduated from more well-known – and much more expensive – cooking programs.

As the Culinary Arts program has grown, it has moved to different locations throughout the community to accommodate the demand. To that end, we are launching a Capital Campaign to build an on-campus location where we can offer high quality instructional space and continue to expand the program.

As you can see, we are focused on providing our students with high quality educations in fields where they can find satisfying and financially rewarding careers.

And that is certainly good news for Santa Clarita’s economy!

Dr. Dianne Van Hook serves as Chancellor of College of the Canyons.
For the second time in as many years, a Grammy Award-winning artist headlined Opening Night at the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center (PAC).

With 12 platinum albums, and four decades of chart-topping hits — including “I’m Alright,” “This Is It,” “Danny’s Song” and “What a Fool Believes” — legendary singer and songwriter Kenny Loggins took the stage September 16, as the PAC launched its 2011-12 season.

Loggins has enjoyed incredible success as an accomplished singer and songwriter; guitar player; one half of a legendary country-rock duo; a massively successful solo artist; a pioneer of the smooth jazz genre; a reigning soundtrack superstar; and an amazing live performer who has made an impact with music fans of all generations.

Other acts and artists highlighting the 2011-12 PAC season include: Grammy Award-winning vocalist Dionne Warwick, comedian and “Saturday Night Live” alum Martin Short, Travel Channel’s “No Reservations” host Anthony Bourdain, legendary pianist Roger Williams, Ozomatli, Second City, Momix “Botanica,” Tao: The Art of the Drum, “101 Years of Broadway,” “Charlotte’s Web,” “The Mask Messenger” and Rennie Harris: RHAW.

“There are so many great artists that will be part of the COC Presents season,” said Adam Philipson, PAC managing director. “Of course, we are all thrilled about Kenny Loggins and our other talented headliners, but what’s most exciting about this season is the fact that almost every performance will include additional opportunities for students and community members to connect with visiting artists and acts.

“From special receptions to intimate jam sessions, and student bus-in events to master classes, patrons of the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center will have a variety of unique opportunities to experience the season,” added Philipson.

The 2011-12 PAC schedule will offer shows spread across six series selections: Chancellor’s Choice, Great Performances, In Motion, Almost Free Family Series, the all new Sounds of Latin America series and SCV World Music Concert Series.

As in years past, the PAC will also host a number of College of the Canyons theatre, music and dance department productions, as well as community group performances.
The College of the Canyons Foundation presented Diana Cusumano with the Silver Spur Award for Community Service at a gala celebration March 5 at the California Club. More than 200 friends, family and community leaders gathered to honor Diana and her three decades of serving Santa Clarita.

1. COC Chancellor Dr. Dianne Van Hook and Silver Spur honoree Diana Cusumano.
2. Past Silver Spur honorees (from left) Myrna and Gary Cordie, and Harold and Jacquie Petersen.
3. Erica Betz, Dr. Van Hook, and Bill Cloyd.
4. Foundation board members Roxie Ramey and Mark Jenkins.
5. Diana and husband Gary (center) with their family.
6. Gary is a previous recipient of the Silver Spur award.
7. Gabie and Jim Temple.
8. Kathy and Joe Klocko.
10. Jack and Doreen Shine, Jasmine Foster, and Dr. Van Hook.
New Tech Building, Solar Courses Debut in Canyon Country

The College of the Canyons Canyon Country Campus has its first permanent building — and an assortment of new solar and technology oriented courses to house in it — with the completion of the college’s Applied Technology Education Center (ATEC).

Designed to give students hands-on learning and training opportunities, the ATEC’s approximately 10,000 square feet of workshops and laboratories provide the space needed to offer the type of Career Technical Education (CTE) training that leads directly to jobs.

“The Applied Technology Education Center expands the college’s ability to provide students with cutting edge education that leads directly to employment,” said Dr. Dena Maloney, Vice President of the Canyon Country Campus and Economic Development.

Included in the building’s design are five modular buildings, accompanying modular restrooms, and a permanent facility for the college’s automotive technology program, which is currently housed in the auto shop located at Saugus High School.

Other programs in the ATEC include: plumbing, water systems technology and the college’s new solar technology and renewable energy program.

“Along with the increased amount of renewable energy being generated will come an increased demand for a workforce of highly skilled solar technicians,” said Kristin Houser, Dean of Career Technical Education at the college.

In fact, a survey of the nation’s solar industry, showed that more...
In summer of 2001, College of the Canyons launched a grassroots campaign to secure badly needed local bond funds that would allow the college to embark on a series of construction projects that would reshape the college and serve Santa Clarita Valley students for decades to come. At that time, COC was serving approximately 12,000 students, but still operating on a campus designed to serve just 5,000. As a result, several key campus facilities were in need of renovation, classrooms were severely overcrowded, and college officials lacked the space and resources needed to develop, and house, new certificate, degree and job training programs.

That November local voters showed their support for COC at the ballots, passing an $82.1 million general obligation bond more formally known as Measure C.

A decade later, that funding has been used to complete all of the facility upgrades, renovations and construction projects originally included in the bond proposal. “When our community passed Measure C, it made an investment in the future,” said COC Chancellor Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook. “Their investment has paid enormous dividends in terms of the academic programs and workforce training we can now offer thanks to these outstanding facilities.”

Through interest earnings and the refunding of bond proceeds, College officials successfully leveraged the Measure C funding to create more than $92 million. Having that bond money also allowed the college to receive approximately $40 million in matching construction funds from the state – bringing Measure C’s total value to more than $132 million.

Below are some of the major construction projects that have been at least in part paid for by Measure C.

**COC Canyon Country Campus**

The 70-acre Canyon Country Campus opened August 27, 2007, to provide access to students living in the Santa Clarita Valley’s growing east side. Currently comprised of 28 modular buildings, at build-out the Canyon Country Campus is expected to serve up to 10,000 students.

**Aliso Lab & Aliso Hall**

Totaling a combined 32,000 square feet, Aliso Laboratory and Aliso Hall were opened in summer 2007 to meet increasing demand for instructional programs housed in the college’s Allied Health & Public Safety and Mathematics, Sciences & Engineering Divisions.
East Physical Education Building

In fall 2008 the college officially opened its new East Physical Education building and adjacent tennis courts. The new 21,543-square-foot building – which also includes basketball and volleyball courts, locker rooms and a training room – marked the first physical education facilities project undertaken by the college since 1976.

Pico Canyon Hall

In August 2005, less than one year after opening the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center (PAC), the college unveiled a nearly 20,000-square-foot adjoining music and dance building known as Pico Canyon Hall. The building houses the college’s music and dance programs, and features a choir room, instrumental room, dance studio, electronic music room and music library.

Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook University Center

Though already in the early stages of development, in 2001 college officials learned that the University Center project could be designated as an allowable Measure C expenditure. Cited as the college’s solution to the lack of upper division, graduate school and continuing education programs in the area, the University Center concept was established with a goal to increase student access to advanced degrees by forging partnerships with surrounding four-year colleges and universities.

The University Center also houses the William S. Hart Union High School District’s Academy of the Canyons, the SCV Worksource Center, the SCV Economic Development Corporation and a number of key college departments.
Cordon Bleu graduates,” said McNelis, 21, who enrolled in COC’s culinary program after earning an associate degree in accounting. “So for me, coming from nearby COC, I thought I probably had a fat chance.”

Currently, the vast majority of available culinary training is conducted by for-profit, proprietary schools and institutions, which often charge much higher per-unit rates than COC.

In fact, iCuE is one of the only affordable options available to students looking to receive the level of high-quality culinary training needed to remain competitive in this high-demand field.

Despite her doubts heading into the interview, McNelis was hired as a baker, and scheduled to begin working during the shop’s grand opening. But with the first week of business brisker than expected, management was soon looking for more help.

“My boss asked if I knew of anyone else from the COC culinary program,” said McNelis, who has since been promoted to shift supervisor, “so I called Marissa and Megan, and they’ve been working here ever since.”

Since being hired at Velvet Cupcakes, the trio of COC-trained bakers has spent countless hours in the Velvet Cupcakes kitchen, and that experience has only reinforced their passion for the culinary arts.

“After a 14-hour work day I still go home and bake,” said Oye, who is working towards her baking certificate.“I mean this is work, but then I get to go home and play.”

Currently, at another restaurant space in Castaic. While each of these temporary facilities has served its purpose by providing students with a professional setting to hone their cooking skills, that “student experience” has been offset by the lack of access to on-campus support services and facilities — library, academic counseling, health office etc. — that students visiting campus take for granted.

A permanent iCuE facility would also allow culinary students to enroll in other general education college courses needed to earn a certificate or degree, without the inconvenience of traveling between Castaic and the college’s other campuses.

“Having an on-campus culinary facility would make a significant difference in the lives of students who are trying to manage their time between the classroom and the kitchen,” said Cindy Schwanke, lead iCuE faculty member.

“But perhaps more importantly,” added Schwanke, “it would provide students with a sense of security in knowing that they will be able to enter the culinary program and complete their certificate or degree without having to wonder where, and if, they will have a facility to work in the following semester.”

As part of the Culinary Arts Capital Campaign awareness and fundraising efforts, volunteers are working to assemble and publish a community cook book featuring recipes from local families, chefs and cooks. This project will enable participants to highlight their favorite recipes while donating funds to help build a permanent Culinary Arts Center on campus.

College of the Canyons has long played an integral role in the educational and economic development of the Santa Clarita Valley. Many area businesses and industries have come to rely on the college to provide the skills and knowledge their employees need. The culinary arts, restaurant and food industries are no different.

But since the majority of culinary training is conducted by for-profit, proprietary institutions — which charge much higher per-unit rates — the college’s Institute for Culinary Education (iCuE) is one of the few affordable options available to students.

It offers programs designed to allow students to work toward a certificate of achievement in culinary arts, along with certificate of specialization programs in baking and pastry, wine studies and hospitality wine service. However, the presence of a permanent iCuE facility would allow the college’s culinary department to greatly expand its degree offerings, in accordance with the needs and trends of the food service industry.

“In good times and in bad, food brings people together,” Schwanke said. “The food service industry continues to grow, and employ millions of people, because of this commonality. It’s exciting to know College of the Canyons will be a part of that.”

For more information about the Culinary Arts Capital Campaign, please contact Murray Wood at (661) 362-3433.
FAST TRACK
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15-minute “speed interviews” with 11 employers. “Just a few weeks before the class was wrapping up one of the participating staffing agencies called us and commented that they were having difficulty finding qualified CNC machinists in the area,” Klocko said.

Several Fast Track participants were officially offered positions or invited back for second interviews. Those who did not immediately receive a job offer have since been referred back to the staffing agencies, with those students expected to be quickly placed in a CNC-related position.

The college’s first class of Fast Track CNC machinist graduates was invited to a graduation ceremony and exclusive job fair, held at the Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook University Center in May.

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than 50 percent of all solar firms expect to add jobs over the next year.

The solar job positions expected to be among the fastest growing include: photovoltaic (PV) system installers, electricians and roofers with experience handling solar installations, sales personnel at wholesale solar firms and sales representatives at installation firms.

College of the Canyons officials have developed CTE courses that will prepare students for a variety of jobs within the solar power and other renewable energy industries.

“All of our new solar technology courses and program options have been developed in conjunction with an advisory board composed of local businesses and industry representatives to make sure the curriculum addresses the direct needs of the industry,” said Houser. “We want to turn out well-trained technicians who will be prepared to help meet the energy industry demands of tomorrow.”

The college’s first solar energy technician certificate program will include 13 units of instruction spread over three courses — Introduction to Energy Technology, Solar Photovoltaics Systems and Solar Thermal Systems — with students typically able to complete the program in two to three semesters.

Upon successful completion of the solar energy technician certificate program, students will possess a detailed understanding of the PV and solar thermal energy technologies being employed today and will be qualified to accept entry-level positions in the fields of solar PV and solar thermal design, installation and maintenance.

Students who complete the program will also be eligible to sit for the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) exams in the areas of entry-level solar thermal and/or entry-level photovoltaics.

College officials are currently in the process of developing additional solar technology and energy program options in the areas of photovoltaic sales/customer service, weatherization and energy efficient technology, energy code compliance and energy auditing.

Once these program options are developed, students who first complete the introductory course prerequisite, Introduction to Energy Technology, will be eligible to enroll in the solar or general energy technology certificate program option of their choice.

For more information please visit www.canyons.edu/solar.
Internationally renowned composer, librettist and esteemed College of the Canyons music faculty member Daniel Catán, who was credited with producing four operas in the United States, including 2010’s highly acclaimed “Il Postino” starring Plácido Domingo, died of apparent natural causes in Austin, Texas the weekend of April 9, 2011. He was 62.

At the time of his death, Catán had been working as an artist-in-residence at the Butler School of Music, located on the campus of University of Texas at Austin, in addition to his teaching responsibilities at College of the Canyons. Catán had been commissioned by the university to write a new opera based on Frank Capra’s film “Meet John Doe,” scheduled to premiere in 2012.

“This loss will be felt not just in our community, but also throughout the world, as Daniel’s influence was incredibly far-reaching,” said College of the Canyons Chancellor Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook. “In his time at College of the Canyons, Daniel brought an unbelievable amount of credit to himself and, through his successes, brought the college to a position of high esteem throughout the state, the nation and, indeed, the world. His legacy is one that will carry on for generations.”

Catán arrived at College of the Canyons in 1999, and served as a professor of music in the college’s Fine and Performing Arts Division. During his time at COC, Catán taught a wide range of courses, including music history, world music, music appreciation, fundamentals of music and musical orchestration.


Based on the Academy Award-winning film of the same name and the novel “Ardiente Paciencia” by Antonio Skármeta, “Il Postino” tells the story of a shy young postman in a tiny Italian fishing village who discovers the courage to pursue his dreams through his daily deliveries to the famous (real-life) Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

“I realized, from the very first time I saw the film, that it was a perfect theme for an opera,” said Catán in a 2010 interview about the project. “It deals with art and love: the foundations upon which we build our lives.”

Starring opera legend Plácido Domingo in the role of Pablo Neruda, the six-show run of “Il Postino” quickly captured the hearts of audiences, and critics. Though “Il Postino” was Catán’s most recent success, during his career the acclaimed composer also penned the operas “Encuentro en el Ocaso,” “Florecia en el Amazonas,” “Saltipuedes, A Tale of Love, War and Anchovies” and “La Hija de Rappaccini,” which was the composer’s first opera.

In 2009 the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center (PAC), with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, presented a workshop performance of Catán’s “La Hija de Rappaccini” starring members of the L.A Opera Company alongside a collection of COC students.

Born April 3, 1949, in Mexico City, Catán discovered his musical genius early on as a gifted pianist.

He attended boarding school in England, and later earned a bachelor of arts in philosophy from the University of Sussex, and a bachelor of arts in music from the University of South Hampton.

Catán then went on to earn a master of fine arts and a doctorate in music from Princeton University, where he studied under the composer Milton Babbitt.

Catán would later serve as administrator at Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts, and in 1998 received the prestigious Plácido Domingo Award for his contribution to opera. In 2000 Catán also received a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Among his colleagues and former students at College of the Canyons, Catán is fondly remembered for his kind, gentle and gracious nature, equally as he is for his revered musical career. “Daniel’s contributions as a faculty member at the college were greatly appreciated, both by his colleagues and his students,” said Dr. Floyd Moos, Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction at the college. “He was a great instructor — knowledgeable, patient, generous with his time — and always willing to support his colleagues, whether in the music department, the Fine and Performing Arts Division or the college.” Catán is survived by his wife, Andrea Puente; three children, Chloe, Tom and Alan; and four grandchildren.

The college's Fine and Performing Arts Division has established the Dr. Daniel Catán Memorial Scholarship endowment with the College of the Canyons Foundation.

Meant to honor Catán’s passion for music, love for education and legacy as a professor, when fully realized the endowment will provide annual awards, in perpetuity, to College of the Canyons students majoring in music.

“Daniel was both inspired, and an inspiration to those who came in contact with him,” said Dr. Van Hook. “We are very privileged to have had the pleasure of knowing Daniel as a colleague.”

Bravo, Daniel, Bravo!
The College of the Canyons hockey team has secured the one accolade not yet accounted for in its trophy case: an American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA) Men’s Division-III National Championship.

The Cougars are national champions after defeating tournament host Hope College 5-3 in the ACHA Division-III championship game in March.

This is the program’s first national championship and constitutes the first time a West Coast team, and only the second time a community college team, has won an ACHA national championship.

“I am proud about what Cougar Hockey Pride has achieved based on the positive attitude they bring to the ice each and every day,” said Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook, chancellor of the Santa Clarita Community College District and College of the Canyons.

Hockey is not an intercollegiate sport in California community colleges. But that did not deter Jim Schrage, the team’s general manager and the college’s vice president of facilities planning, operations and construction, from forming a club team in 2001. He required its members to meet the same academic standards as athletes who play on intercollegiate teams.

“Competition in the ACHA level is not solely against other community colleges, since most don’t have hockey clubs. In search of competition, College of the Canyons over the years has played and beaten many established teams from four-year colleges and universities.

“This group thrives on competition because they take risks, and have a fundamental understanding of what being on a team means,” said Dr. Van Hook.

“Thanks to Jim Schrage and an outstanding coaching staff, College of the Canyons established not only a hockey club,” stressed Dr. Van Hook, “but provided an opportunity for an amazing number of students to continue with their education when, without hockey, they might otherwise have chosen not to.”

“At the beginning of the season we said ‘this is the year,’” said Schrage. “We knew it would be a battle, but we believed if the kids played their game, no one would be able to keep up with us.”

The class of 2011 enjoys a moment together (from left to right): Isaac Sopoaga, Chad Butler, Gary Peterson, Kyetra Brown, Shane O'Brien, Kristine Marbach and Mike Herrington.

The College of the Canyons athletic department recently celebrated its fourth biennial Athletic Hall of Fame. It welcomed four individuals and one team into Cougar athletics’ top honor, including the 1993 men’s golf team; women’s basketball player Kyetra Brown; women’s soccer player Kristine Marbach; and football players Isaac Sopoaga and Mike Herrington. With an emphasis on helping bring to fruition the permanent site for the athletic hall of fame, the evening began with iconic college football player and coach and Santa Clarita native Joe Kapp, who enlightened the crowd with stories of life at Hart High School as well as his time with the University of California, Berkeley. The night concluded with inspiring words from each of the new inductees on how College of the Canyons helped shape the person they have become. This year’s event also featured a silent auction for the first time, with proceeds going to benefit the hall of fame efforts, that saw brisk bidding on signed sports memorabilia, including photos and helmets.
In an effort to provide better care for the community’s aging population, while simultaneously preparing students for careers in the fields of aging services and gerontology, College of the Canyons will introduce its new Skills for Healthy Aging Resources and Programs (SHARP) certificate program this fall.

Representing a program format not currently offered anywhere else in the nation, the college’s 12-unit SHARP program is designed for students to be able to complete in just one semester, with classes scheduled in the evenings and afternoons to accommodate working adults. Geared toward those interested in careers in aging services or the larger health-care industry, the SHARP program will provide the skills and knowledge needed to begin delivering various types of evidence-based health promotion (EBHP) strategies to older adults, in a variety of health care settings.

The SHARP program’s use of EBHP programs for older adults emphasizes both disease prevention and treatment, with strategies focused on topics including self-care, physical activity, fall prevention, substance abuse, nutrition and depression.

According to recent projections, more than 10,000 adults from the baby boomer generation will join the ranks of “older adult” each day, until 2029 – representing approximately 25 percent of the United States population by 2025.

Although various EBHP programs are already being offered to older adults in more than 30 counties by the state’s various community service providers – in settings such as senior centers, hospitals, health clinics and senior housing facilities – program leaders and facilitators are now required to undergo specific training in order to be certified for such work.

According to a recent Aging Labor Force Study conducted by the California Social Work Education Center, most public social services employees do not have any formal training related to aging and older adults.

The SHARP pilot program was designed in collaboration with College of the Canyons, Santa Barbara City College, Partners in Care Foundation, National Council on Aging, California Geriatric Education Center and the California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

Upon completion of the program students will be able to pursue employment in the aging services industry in positions that require individuals to plan, administer, evaluate and/or teach such programs.

For more information about the SHARP program or the courses being offered, contact Patty Robinson, dean of social science and business, at (661) 362-3992.