University Center Construction Begins

College Officials Planning for Summer 2009 Completion

Construction has begun on the Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook University Center, College of the Canyons’ solution to the Santa Clarita Valley’s lack of upper-division, graduate school and continuing education programs. The center is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2009.

With a common goal to improve student access to advanced degrees – while making the pursuit of higher education more convenient for students balancing classes, jobs and child-care responsibilities – the college has forged partnerships with a growing number of four-year colleges and universities that have agreed to make their academic programs available to COC students through on-campus classes. Located near the college’s south parking lot.

Environmental Forum, Concert Slated for ‘08

While many SCV citizens will spend the first few months of 2008 trying to make good on their New Year’s resolutions by dieting, exercising, and making other lifestyle changes, the College of the Canyons Sustainable Development Committee is inviting everyone to “go green” by attending the nationwide Focus the Nation: Global Warming Solutions for America conference.

Designed as a way to focus the growing concerns about the country’s global warming problems, the Focus the Nation (FTN) conference will be held at the Interim University Center at College of the Canyons. Representatives from partner universities (see Page 6) will discuss their programs.

Opening of New Campus Attracts Crowds

Hundreds of community members joined college personnel Oct. 6 to celebrate the opening of the new Canyon Country Campus. The event, similar to an open house but on a grander scale, served to introduce the full-service campus, which opened for classes on Aug. 27, to an eager community.

The second campus marks a historic first for the college, which recognized the needs of Canyon Country residents nearly a decade ago by offering classes at Canyon High School. The response was strong, and the demand grew steadily, leading to the development of the ACCESS Center at the Canyon Country Library and now a brand-new 70-acre campus.

Located on Sierra Highway, about 1.7 miles north of Soledad Canyon Road, the campus sits on rolling hills in an area that is undergoing significant change. New residential neighborhoods are popping up along Sierra Highway, and more homes are expected.

The campus is composed of 28 modular buildings housing two science labs, two computer labs, a library, bookstore, PE facility, early childhood education facility, food services and 24 “smart” classrooms. More than 300 classes were offered during the inaugural semester.

A variety of demonstrations (see CELEBRATION on Page 5) were held on the opening day as well as during the celebration at the Canyon Country Campus on Oct. 6.

INSIDE THE NEW CAMPUS
- More photos from event
- Amphitheater planned

See UNIVERSITY on Page 4

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SAVE THE DATES
Focus the Nation JANUARY 31
Green Up Concert FEBRUARY 1

See FOCUS on Page 4
College, President Honored for Staff Training

- National Award Recognizes Professional Development Efforts

Having long since established itself throughout the state as a leader in staff development excellence, the College of the Canyons professional development program and Superintendent-President Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook were honored for determined efforts in the advancement of employees by the National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development (NCSPOD).

During awards ceremonies held at the NCSPOD’s annual international conference in Buffalo/Niagra, New York, in October, Van Hook was presented with the annual College President/Chancellor’s Award in recognition of her outstanding leadership in support of professional development programs at College of the Canyons and throughout the state.

“I am so thrilled to be honored with this award,” Van Hook said. “I encourage everyone in higher education to dream of what they can accomplish for our students and our communities, and then I work creatively to support them as they develop the skills they need to bring their dreams to reality.”

Throughout her 19 years of service to the Santa Clarita Community College District and College of the Canyons, and her 35 plus years in higher education, Van Hook has played a major role in helping to create and implement professional development programs – which have served as models for other colleges to adopt.

“Professional development is not a program – it is not a one-time thing – it is, rather, a long-term commitment to innovation, to change, to people, to programs and builds on a belief in possibilities, dreams, the power of teamwork, and the potential of our greatest human resource – the people in our profession,” Van Hook said.

Under Van Hook’s leadership COC has added professional development to the college’s mission statement, instituted a full-time staff development director position, and provided funding for the college’s wide-scale professional development program.
Three Generations Make it a Family Affair

With three generations being represented on two campuses, one Santa Clarita Valley family has turned getting an education at College of the Canyons into a true family affair.

"This is my first venture back to school," said 82-year-old Jack Mehterian of Canyon Country, a retired metallurgical welder with more than 30 years experience in the aerospace industry. "I’m taking an old man computer class," he says with a smile and a chuckle about the free extension course geared toward the older adult student offered at the college’s Canyon Country Campus (CCC). "I want to get educated back to the point where I feel like I’m caught up with everything. Everyone in my family is computer-literate except for me."

That family includes Mehterian’s daughter Cathy Martin, and granddaughter Tara Martin, who are both fellow COC students taking classes together at the college’s Valencia Campus.

But while going to class and doing homework is already familiar to 22-year-old Tara, for Mom and Grandpa the experience has been both challenging and highly rewarding.

"It’s been really interesting just because she hasn’t been to school in 30 years and I’ve been going to school my entire life," said Tara, who began taking classes at COC while still in high school, about the experience of attending a food and wine pairing course with her mother.

"We share the book, but she studies a

PROPOSITION PROMISES TO REDUCE FEES

• Prop 92 to Appear on February Ballot

A ballot measure instituting fundamental changes in community college funding will be placed before voters during the Feb. 5, 2008 election.

Proposition 92, known as the Community College Initiative, has several components that will change community college funding statewide. It will reduce fees without raising taxes or affecting K-12 public school funding.

The measure establishes in the state constitution a system of independent public community college districts and a Board of Governors; requires minimum levels of state funding that grows along with the community college student population, sets fees at $15 per unit and limits future fee increases to no more than the cost of living.

“This initiative is designed to make community college education in our community and in the state even more affordable by cutting enrollment fees at a time when many students are struggling economically, and it will stabilize funding for community colleges,” said Dr. Dianne Van Hook, superintendent-president of College of the Canyons and the Santa Clarita Community College District. “It gives every Californian a chance to go to college or access workforce training – without raising taxes or hurting our public schools.”

The California Community College system offers affordable and accessible academic and vocational education for both recent high school graduates and Californians returning to school. More Californians attend community college than attend California State University or University of California campuses.

Community colleges strive to advance California’s economic growth by continuously improving the state’s workforce and providing a gateway to a better life for millions of Californians.

Additional factual information is available in the college’s Public Information Office.
Fourth-Graders to Perform Play About Environment

As a fitting conclusion to the Focus on the Nation: Global Warming Solutions for America conference being held at College of the Canyons on Jan. 31, one environmentally minded class from North Park Elementary School fourth-graders will take the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center stage in dramatic fashion.

Performing the original play “A Time Capsule Can Save the Word and Other Tips...” to present a variety of pertinent messages about recycling and conservation, Joanna Trafecanty’s fourth-grade class hopes to engage their classmates in a way that allows them to interpret the messages in their own unique way.

The performance is the end result of a service learning project between North Park Elementary School and the COC Students for Sustainability Club, whose members have been working with Trafecanty’s class since early October.

The project was seeded by 17-year-old COC student Lacey Ehrlich, included a series of weekly classroom visits in which students were presented information on environmental issues such as “reduce, reuse, recycle.” The class then launched its own recycling program.

“I feel that a play would be a great way to get the kids involved and thinking about environmental issues, so it’s my hope that when they are doing awareness about the issue, students will understand their importance and want to do something to bring about that change.”

The play was written by Ehrlich and coaches from the COC Speech and Debate Team, Drew Ferrandini and Michael Leach. Trafecanty’s class will perform the play on 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 31 in the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center at College of the Canyons, during the Focus on the Nation (FTN): Global Warming Solutions for America conference.

Admission is free, with a suggested $5 donation to help offset event costs. For more information about the conference, call (661) 362-5806. Registration is also available at www.cscoc.org.

Focus

FROM PAGE 1

include millions of students, educators and environmen- tally minded citizens simultaneously meeting at various localities. Local FTN’s will place from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 31 on the College of the Canyons Valencia campus.

“The whole goal of this conference is education,” said Dr. Jui-Yi Cheng-Lee, chair of the College’s Sustainability Council. “Our college wants to give back to the community by offer- ing the knowledge and guidance to help build a future for all.”

The conference, which hopes to generate discussion and potential solutions to global warming, will be divided into two environmentally themed breakout sessions featur- ing more than 80 speakers, including COC Superintendents-President Dr. Dianne Van Hook and City Council Member Marsha McLean. They will discuss the historical roots of environmental problems and the role education plays in building a sustainable future.

“College of the Canyons is pleased to host this event and give our community an opportunity to ponder and dis- cuss solutions that we can implement right now,” Van Hook said.

More importantly, this event gives us the opportunity to walk away with practical ideas that we can implement as individuals to make a col- lective difference.”

Workshops will focus on audience participation and brainstorming of ideas.

“It’s very easy to sit at home and complain that the problem is too big and there is nothing we can do, or why not assign the responsibility to ourselves to do something practical and effective,” Cheng-Lee said. “Come and learn how to get started, and from there look at what we can do now, and what we can do collectively to help move society for- ward from an environmental standpoint.”

Admission to the conference is free, with a suggested $5 to $10 donation to help offset event costs. Other costs are offset by the “Giant Sequoia” title sponsor, Southern California Gas Co. “Early Bird” registrants will receive tote bags full of goodies at the conference.

A benefit concert featuring classic rock tribute bands Ticket to Ride (Beatles) and 5150 (Van Halen, the Sammy Hagar era) will be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 1, at the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center to raise funds for student scholarships and internships. Tickets are $15, $20, $25 and $30 with a $5 discount for students with identifi- cation, children 12 and under and seniors 60 and older.

University

FROM PAGE 1

and overlooking the existing campus, the roughly $38 million, 110,000-square-foot facility will be paid for with a collection of private donor, state, federal and Measure C funds. Measure C is the $82.1 million general obligation bond voters approved in 2001.

During groundbreaking ceremonies held last spring, U.S. Rep. Howard “Buck” McKeon, who served as the project’s hon- orary campaign chair and helped secure $2.3 million in federal funding for the project, spoke to the value of higher education.

“Here in the Santa Clarita Valley we honor our students, education,” McKeon said to those assembled for the event.

“We understand that it is the great equalizer. It’s the way for people to get on the ladder, to really achieve the ultimate American honor, we value, education,” McKeon said.

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New Educational Program ‘Measures Up’

The ancient Romans, Thomas Jefferson and Henry David Thoreau mastered it. Walt Disney and Daniel Boone learned its principles. Without it, the national project to search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) wouldn’t be able to expand and reach out to the stars. What do these unlikely bedfellows have in common? We’ll give you a hint. If something needs to be straight, level, precisely measured and placed, the skills of land surveying and land surveyors are required to determine property boundaries and the proper placement of utilities as well as to specify road alignments for all new development and construction.

The College of the Canyons Land Surveying program is designed to provide students with the tools and skills they need to be successful in an entry-level surveying position. At COC, students can obtain either an Associate in Science or a Certificate of Achievement. With these credentials, careers with public or private agencies are possible in fields including geographic information systems, mapping, construction surveying, aerial surveying, and general surveying.

The depth and breadth of the profession is largely misunderstood by the public even though it has its roots in ancient cultures and is a necessary element of growth and development throughout the world.

The Romans and other ancient civilizations perfected land surveying and land surveyors. Precise surveying can also benefit the public even though it has its roots in ancient cultures and is a necessary element of growth and development throughout the world.

Modern experts in the field can often be found, standing with their international orange vests in the middle of this profession need to be mastered.

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Since the beginning of the SETI project in the 1960s, scientists have had to compete for radio telescope time with other researchers. That will change in the near future when a new 350-antenna array is completed in northern California. But there’s a catch. The 350 antennas have to be precisely placed for optimal listening. So the work is much more difficult than you guessed it – the land surveyors! The need for exact GPS observations, specific measurements of the earth’s crust, precise locations of buried optical fiber and power cables and a million other details are dependent on how well the land surveyors do their work.

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Van Hook’s efforts have not been limited to College of the Canyons, as her extensive involvement in statewide staff development programs is equally impressive. She started the Association of California Community College Administrators and for its longevity and continued promotion of such programs on surrounding college campuses.

We are honored and thrilled to receive this award recognizing our outstanding professional development professionals, said Carr Stringer, vice president, which places the College of the Canyons professional development program among the best in all of North America. ‘We work hard to provide quality programs and lots of choices for development activities because we place great value on the advancement of our employees.’

Dedicated to seeing the improved professional growth of its faculty, staff and administrators, the college operates under the expectation that all employees will engage in professional development activities each year through the college’s Flexible Calendar (FLEX) program.

The various professional development workshops incorporated into the FLEX program operate with a goal to allow the college’s staff members the ability to access continuous professional and technological advancement, institutional effectiveness, student services, student learning, teaching and learning, while fostering the importance of creating a sense of community among the staff and faculty, teaching innovation and enabling the development of leadership skills in all staff members.

Other professional development opportunities available at College of the Canyons include College’s Committee for Teaching and Learning, which helps faculty members hone their teaching skills; the Associates Program, designed for adjunct faculty, annual administrative retreats and the college’s mentor program. The NCSCPOD was formed in 1977 through collaboration with the College of the Canyons, faculty, staff and development practitioners across the county. Members share a common need to develop industry knowledge and skills while sharing information and networking within the field.

More information about the surveying program is available at www.canovens.edu

Award

FROM PAGE 2

Vanhook has also initiated an educational incentive program for classified staff, encouraging the pursuit of higher education and professional growth, established classified leadership awards, and organized a management development program — which was awarded the 2001 Outstanding Staff and Organizational Development Activity by the California Community College Presidents Council Staff and Organizational Development.

Vanhook also has supported development of the Theodore Hesburgh award winning Associate Program for adjunct faculty.

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Surveying

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Athlete’s Teams Have Much to Celebrate

W ith the fall seasons in the books, College of the Canyons athletics has a lot to celebrate. The Cougar men’s cross country team earned its first-ever Western State Conference title, and the women’s cross country team made its first of many appearances at the state tournament, and the women’s golf team continued to succeed with a conference title, a Southern California Championship and a State Championship.

GOLF
Head men’s and women’s golf coach Gary Peterson has made significant additions at College of the Canyons and at the Southern California Championship. For the women’s team, the Cougars set their eyes on the Southern California Championships and were led by freshman Jenny Lee, who took home individual medalist honors as she topped the field, the Cougars set their eyes on the Southern California Championships and were led by freshman Jenny Lee, who took home individual medalist honors as she topped the field.

SPORTS
All-American Cougar running back Fred Winborne slashed through the SoCal L.A. defenders on a route to a touchdown and eventual win. The Cougars finished the regular season 9-3.

FOOTBALL
Cougars football returned to the playoffs after an absence in 2006. Interim coach Garrett Tuja led Canyons to a second-place conference finish and a Western State Bowl win against Saddleback, 34-24, in the first round of post-season play. In the Southern California Semifinals, COC faced head coach at Bakersfield College, a team they had lost to by four points and gave the Western State Conference title to with the defeat two weeks earlier. COC looked to avenge the previous loss, and was leading the Roadrunners at the final minutes, but a 1-yard score by Bakersfield sent the game to overtime. The teams exchanged touchdowns again in the first overtime, but the Cougars could not get the ball into the end zone in the final minutes of overtime, losing 26-24.

BASKETBALL
Men’s and women’s basketball are already in full swing and will begin defending their 2007 Western State Conference Titles in early January when conference play begins.

Wissmath Named College’s New Softball Coach

New College of the Canyons head softball coach John Wissmath knows about community college athletics after spending his early career in his native California, which he considers the launching pad for his career. Butte College in Oroville, Calif., that he finally got his chance to know they can succeed too.”

Cross Country
The cougars counted on a lot of triumphs this year in the men’s and women’s programs. The men’s team won its first WSC championship after dominating its competition during the regular season. Sophomore Jonathon Terry was the second runner to cross the finish line at the conference contest, and posted another second-place finish at the SoCal Championships, leading the team to second place overall. At the state meet, COC took fifth place, following the leadership of WSC Men’s Cross Country Athlete of the Year, who had a second-place finish. The men’s team, fresh off their victory, took fifth place, following the leadership of WSC Men’s Cross Country Coach of the Year.

Soccer
The men’s and women’s soccer teams went through a season of rebuilding and unfortunately riddled with injuries. The men’s team finished the season in eighth place, with David Aguilar leading the team with one goal and two assists during the year. Freshman Saul Castanon was named second team all-conference and sophomore Francisco Herrera and freshman Casey Scott received honorable mention. The women completed the year in sixth place, and goalie Danielle Michel shaped up as one of the best goalies in the conference with 1.06 goals against average. Five women earned all-conference accolades: sophomore Sarah Hasenfus (first team), sophomore Ashley Green (second team), freshman Jessica Guerrero (second team), freshman Danielle Michel (honorable mention) and freshman Jessica Vera (honorable mention).

Volleyball
Volleyball rebounded from a slow start in conference play to become one of the biggest surprises in the state. The Cougars took their lead from sophomore transfer Priscilla Bremer, who tallied 311 kills during the season. Canyons finished the regular season in a tie for second place, but the most important time of the year – the playoffs – is when COC really shined. College of the Canyons easily defeated Orange Coast College of the Canyons to a first round and set its sights on the first-run appearance in the conference. Freshman Saul Castanon was named second team all-conference and sophomore Francisco Herrera and freshman Casey Scott received honorable mention. The women completed the year in sixth place, and goalie Danielle Michel shaped up as one of the best goalies in the conference with 1.06 goals against average. Five women earned all-conference accolades: sophomore Sarah Hasenfus (first team), sophomore Ashley Green (second team), freshman Jessica Guerrero (second team), freshman Danielle Michel (honorable mention) and freshman Jessica Vera (honorable mention).

CYCLES
The Bieber, Calif., native may have gotten his chance to know they can succeed too.”

CROSS COUNTRY
The cougars counted on a lot of triumphs this year in the men’s and women’s programs. The men’s team won its first WSC championship after dominating its competition during the regular season. Sophomore Jonathon Terry was the second runner to cross the finish line at the conference contest, and posted another second-place finish at the SoCal Championships, leading the team to second place overall. At the state meet, COC took fifth place, following the leadership of WSC Men’s Cross Country Athlete of the Year, who had a second-place finish. The men’s team, fresh off their victory, took fifth place, following the leadership of WSC Men’s Cross Country Coach of the Year.

Soccer
The men’s and women’s soccer teams went through a season of rebuilding and unfortunately riddled with injuries. The men’s team finished the season in eighth place, with David Aguilar leading the team with one goal and two assists during the year. Freshman Saul Castanon was named second team all-conference and sophomore Francisco Herrera and freshman Casey Scott received honorable mention. The women completed the year in sixth place, and goalie Danielle Michel shaped up as one of the best goalies in the conference with 1.06 goals against average. Five women earned all-conference accolades: sophomore Sarah Hasenfus (first team), sophomore Ashley Green (second team), freshman Jessica Guerrero (second team), freshman Danielle Michel (honorable mention) and freshman Jessica Vera (honorable mention).

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Hundreds Line up for Drive-Thru Flu Shots

• Free Vaccination Clinic
• Also Tested Response to Bioterrorism Attack

People love the convenience of drive-through flu clinics. Love that too, as evidenced by the hundreds of people who lined up for the second free drive-through flu-shot clinic at College of the Canyons. Approximately 1,200 flu shots were administered during the three-hour event Nov. 16. It was a joint effort on behalf of College of the Canyons, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, the City of Santa Clarita and the L.A. County Sheriff and Fire Departments.

Flu shots are often provided to the public in anticipation of an active flu season, but the event served a secondary purpose. The exercise also tested the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) response to a potential bioterrorism attack. The purpose of the CRI plan is to treat an impacted population with medications within a short time period. Under that plan, the drive-through clinic is considered a “rapid point of dispensing,” or POD. College of the Canyons is a designated POD site for the bioterrorism response plan.

“When you are working with a number of agencies in an exercise such as this, this practice time will enhance how we all respond to a real incident,” said Donna Nuzzii, the City of Santa Clarita’s emergency services director.

“The planning and implementing of the clinic fosters cooperation and communication between agencies that otherwise don’t often work together, who need to be able to coordinate their response in the event of a national emergency,” said Beverly Kemmerling, the college’s director of student health and wellness.

In the event of a large outbreak of disease or a regional terrorist attack, many businesses similar to this one would be needed to serve the needs of California communities.

COC nursing students who helped administer the shots under the supervision of nursing instructors and county personnel, but it provided valuable information on organization, traffic control and other logistics required to serve a large number of people in the shortest amount of time.

Beverly Kemmerling, the college’s director of student health and wellness, addressed those waiting in line for their flu shot.

“Do it, it keeps you active and it keeps your mind going,” Mehterian said, “so you might as well do it now.”

“Just think about all the interesting people you’ll meet,” added Cathy. “I’ve been very pleased to see people of all ages, levels and purposes attending my two classes, and that makes it really neat. If you then something you want to learn, absolutely you should do it.”