

# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

APRIL 2022

**Dr. Henry D. Shannon**



VISION STATEMENT  
*Chaffey College:  
Improving lives  
through education.*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Commencement Returns .....	2
U.S. Secretaries Visit .....	2
Theatre Returns to the Stage .....	3
National and Local Awards .....	4
Phi Theta Kappa .....	4
Disability Speaker .....	4
Save the Date .....	5

## A Message from Superintendent/ President Shannon

Dear Campus Community,

I trust that you are enjoying the spring season as we inch closer to the end of the semester. It is a busy time of the year with many important events filling our calendars. As we make space for project deadlines, meetings and celebrations, I encourage you to find quiet moments to reflect on all we have to be grateful for this season.

At Chaffey College, we are looking forward to honoring our graduates through a series of upcoming [multicultural celebrations](#) and of course at our [105th Commencement Ceremony](#) taking place at the Toyota Arena on Thursday, May 19th. It will be a joy celebrating our students' accomplishments with their families both in-person and virtually.

It has been an exciting month with many reasons to show our Panther Pride. The U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and the U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh joined other respected government leaders on a tour of the InTech Center to learn about how Chaffey is preparing students for skilled trades in the region. This is a great example of how Chaffey's impact in the community is being recognized at the national level.

I would also like to acknowledge and recognize our Theatre Department for putting on their first live on-stage production in two years with "Airness." So many students, faculty, staff and families were reminded of the magic that live theatre brings to the stage with this performance and we look forward to many more in the near future.

Lastly, I would like to extend congratulations to four Chaffey College Phi Theta Kappa students who recently received the All-California Academic Team Award by the Community College League of California. You make Chaffey proud!

We are almost at the finish line of the spring semester, Panthers. Let us finish strong!

Sincerely,



Henry D. Shannon, Ph.D.

# Commencement Returns to Toyota Arena



Thousands of students and their family members will gather at Toyota Arena in Ontario on May 19 for Chaffey's first in-person graduation ceremony in three years.

Chaffey had not been able to hold commencement in person due to state and local health guidelines related to the pandemic. But the return was possible due to the availability of the vaccine and COVID-19 cases dropping.

"We consider commencement one of the most important days of the year, and we know our students and their loved ones value the experience of a traditional graduation ceremony," said Chaffey College Superintendent/President. "We are so excited to see this tradition back where it belongs."

Chaffey will be taking safety precautions by reducing event capacity, as well as requiring vaccination and masks for students, faculty and staff at the event.

As of early April, students had applied to receive more than 4,600 certificates and degrees.

More information about commencement is available [online](#).



## U.S. Secretaries of Education and Labor Visit InTech During Southland Tour

When Rachel Wolfe first came to the Chaffey College Industrial Technical Learning Center (InTech) in 2019 to pursue a career in welding, she described herself as a single mother scraping by on public assistance.

Now she has a lucrative career helping to build people movers at Los Angeles International Airport.

"I owe it all to InTech," Wolfe said.

Wolfe and other graduates of InTech shared their success stories during a tour and roundtable discussion with U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, Rep. Norma Torres and California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond on March 29.

"Vice President (Kamala) Harris called this a model for this country and I can see why," Cardona said. "This is economic development and community development at its best."

Cardona's stop at the Fontana center was part of a Southern California tour of schools and colleges. He sought to learn more about how students are recovering from the pandemic through high-quality workforce opportunities.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh also toured the center and met with students on April 20.

College leadership, including Superintendent/President Henry Shannon and members of the Chaffey College Governing Board, also attended the event.

Eric Nunez, a 2021 graduate of the program, said he was living paycheck to paycheck when he came to InTech. Now he works as a technician for Amazon.

"I'm now able to make a living for myself and my family," he said.

Cardona commended students on their achievements and InTech for leading the way in preparing students for skilled trades.

"Yours are the stories of the American people that we want to lift up," he said.



## Theatre Students Return to Stage with 'Airness'

Chaffey College's theatre students put on 1980s glam attire, showed off scissor kicks and did their best guitar shredding pantomime in "Airness" – the college's first live on-stage production in two years.

The play, centered on the cultural phenomenon of competitive air guitar, aired via livestream in early April.

"It ties into this joy of performance, and that's what I thought we needed – a way to feel joyous and connect with each other," said Sheila Malone, play director and professor.

Like colleges across the country, the Chaffey Theatre Department had to [pivot its teaching approaches](#) to a virtual format in the wake of the pandemic. Students have rehearsed with green screens on Zoom, filming themselves with cell phones and loaned audio equipment, so the show could go on.

"We were ready to be back in the same space together," Malone said. "It's very hard to act in a rectangle. The Zoom box is very limiting and in

most of the shows we have done online, the students didn't have the space to do more with their bodies."

Cyera Ellis, a theater major playing the main character, Nina, said she connected with her character because Nina makes mistakes, but overcomes them by being stubborn and focused. She also feels a connection to the play as a whole.

"The concept of 'Airness' is really about letting go, not worrying about what other people think, and enjoying yourself," Ellis said. "This is what resonated with me the most."

The college purchased professional camera equipment to livestream "Airness," but the equipment gives Chaffey the ability to livestream future productions so that audiences around the world can tune in.

"It's definitely an investment for the future," Malone said. "And the future is now."

# Strategic Communications Office Earns Local, National Awards



Chaffey College received top honors for marketing and public relations projects during the Community College Public Relations Organization's annual awards ceremony on April 7 in Lake Tahoe.

CCPRO presented awards to participating community colleges from across the state. Chaffey College received three bronze awards.

"Chaffey College has a talented team of writers and designers who consistently produce eye-catching content that inspires students to come to our campuses every year," said Mark Vidal, director of marketing and public relations. "We are honored that our peers feel the same way."

The categories for which Chaffey was awarded are as follows:

- Promotional video – short form
- Feature story
- Radio Public Service Announcement (PSA)

*continued on page 5*

# Four Phi Theta Kappa Students Recognized as All California Award Winners



Four Chaffey College Phi Theta Kappa students have received the All-California Academic Team Award by the Community College League of California.

Marwa Mustafa, Raquel Licon, Gurleen Bhinder and Laquita Hurns were recognized for their academic achievements both in and outside of the classroom.

Those selected for the awards exemplify top scholars through their academic grades, leadership and community service.

"It is already competitive to become a PTK member. The requirements are strict, so these are the top-achieving students in California that are selected," said PTK Advisor Nicole Barbari. "To be among the few selected from all that applied just speaks volumes about this group of students, their work ethic and their resiliency."

Phi Theta Kappa helps students with many

different opportunities to reach their transfer and career goals.

Mustafa, a senior in high school and the current president of PTK, has an extensive list of leadership roles. Winning the All-California Academic Team Award is validation for years of hard work.

"I was not with my parents when I found out I won, but I Facetimed my dad. I just started crying," said Mustafa. "I was just so happy I was able to pay them back in this way."

In total, 114 students from different California community colleges were chosen to receive the award. They are considered to be among the best community college students across the state.

Two of Chaffey College's awardees said the money awarded gives them hope to continue their educational journey.

"I am a first-generation college student so any accomplishment I make is important. It is such an honor receiving this and being one of the four students that represent Chaffey," Licon said.



## Disability Speaker Calls for Inclusive Culture

Disabled students have been among the hardest hit by the challenges of the pandemic. And as a result, colleges across the country have faced [enrollment declines](#) by students claiming disabilities.

That's one of the many reasons that colleges need to rethink how they serve disabled populations, said Dr. Charnessa Warren, who served as a guest speaker on the topic "Shifting from Disability Compliance to an Inclusive Culture" on April 12.

Chaffey College's Disability Programs and Services department served roughly 1,600 students per year prior to COVID-19. That number is around 1,000 now, said Jacob Peck, DPS director.

"Access to students with disabilities should be at the forefront of the minds of every educator as they engage meaningfully with the students they serve," Peck said.

*continued on page 5*

# Connect with Us on Social Media



## Chaffey College Governing Board



Gary C. Ovitt  
President



Lee C. McDougal  
Vice President



Kathleen Brugger  
Clerk



Gloria Negrete McLeod  
Immediate Past President



Deana Olivares-Lambert  
Member



Rousselle Douge  
Student Trustee/  
CCSG President

## Serving the communities of:

Chino, Chino Hills, Fontana,  
Montclair, Ontario,  
Rancho Cucamonga, Upland

## Mission Statement

Chaffey College improves lives and our communities through education with a steadfast commitment to equity and innovation to empower our diverse students who learn and thrive through excellent career, transfer, and workforce education programs that advance economic and social mobility for all.

*continued from page 4 - Strategic Communications Office Earns Local, National Awards*

Chaffey also earned 12 awards in the 37th annual [Education Marketing Awards](#) in March, including seven gold, two silver, two bronze and one merit award. The honors span across digital, print, radio, digital advertising and communications pieces.

Chaffey received accolades for its "Report to the Community" book, the "I am Chaffey" advertising series and the "Persevering Panthers" social media series focused on student-athletes, among others.

Other winning colleges honored by the Education Marketing Awards included Princeton, UC Davis, Purdue and Texas A&M.

*continued from page 4 - Disability Speaker Calls for Culture Change in Higher Ed*

Warren, director of University of Chicago's Student Disability Services, said three steps can foster a more inclusive culture for disabled students.

"It all starts with campuses acknowledging the prevalence of disability on campus," she said.

Warren suggested developing an action plan and creating an awareness campaign. Once completed, the last step would include assessing the college's performance and determination on if the original goal was reached.

Peck called accessibility for students with disabilities an equity issue.

"We can all work to create a more inclusive culture for those with disabilities by understanding and implementing principles of universal design, where products, media, environments and even college courses can be accessed and utilized by a much wider range of people without the need for additional adaptation," said Peck.

To move towards creating this new culture, Warren suggested to be aware of your own personal bias of a disability, because many ideas have been socially constructed and broadly spread.

"All of us at any moment in time can experience a disabling experience, and this is normal. It is a normal part of our human experience," said Warren.



## Save The Date

**May**  
[Student Expo 2022](#)

**May 3**  
[A conversation on advocacy with Assemblyman Evan Low](#)

**May 4**  
[How to challenge stigma while being your authentic self](#)

**May 6**  
[Lavender Graduation Celebration](#)

**May 7**  
[Black/African American Celebration of Graduates](#)

**May 15**  
[Nuestra Graduation Celebration](#)

**May 19**  
[Commencement](#)