

Dr. Daniels' monthly update for faculty and staff

Intersegmental Pathways Symposium: Meeting California's 2030 Baccalaureate Completion Goals

On November 15, Bakersfield College hosted an educational symposium in California's Central Valley to focus on statewide intersegmental pathways that enhance baccalaureate completion. According to California Department of Education data, Kern County's baccalaureate attainment rates are roughly half the statewide rate. Taft College's senior leaders attended the event to discuss best practices and policy to further advance the agenda of student completion.



Above, left to right: Academic Senate Vice President and Articulation Officer/Counselor Dr. Victoria Jacobi, Vice President of Student Services Severo Balason, California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley, High-Tech Access Specialist Dr. Amar Abbott, Dean of Instruction and CTE Dr. Jessica Grimes, Academic Senate President and Psychology Professor Dr. Sharyn Eveland, Pre-Collegiate Success Coordinator Lori Sundgren, and Vice President of Instruction Dr. Leslie Minor attend the Intersegmental Pathways Symposium at Bakersfield College on November 15, 2019.



Taft Union High School Oil Technology Academy AADE BBQ Dinner and Program

On November 18, Holmes Western Oil Corporation Chairman Fred Holmes sponsored the Student Section of the American Association of Drilling Engineers (AADE) Technical Forum BBQ at which Taft Union High School (TUHS) Oil Technology Academy Honor Roll recipients were announced and attendees were treated to an inspiring speech by Taft College Adjunct Energy Technology Professor Terry Davis.

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Fifth Annual Taft College Hall of Fame Awards Banquet

On November 17, Taft College held its annual Hall of Fame Awards Banquet at OT Cookhouse and Saloon. Five extraordinary individuals and one entire football team were inducted into the Taft College Class of 2019 Hall of Fame: Dante Scarnecchia for Outstanding Male Athlete; Debbie Hegeman for Distinguished Classified/Management; Otis Smith for Outstanding Male Athlete; Patricia Bench for Extraordinary Service; Thomas Harrell for Outstanding Coach; and the 1966 Championship Football Team for Outstanding Team.

Above: Taft College student athletes, Elisa Brown, Daniela Flores, Keala Skeelee, Abygail Olejnik, Kaycha Maramba, Jasmine Chipen-li, Brady Wilson, Ben Boelter, Jackson Van Roekel, and Payton Norman, prepare to serve dinner to nearly 150 guests at OT Cookhouse and Saloon.

Right: Taft College Trustee of the Board Billy White (right) chats with many honored guests at the Taft College Hall of Fame Awards Banquet on November 17.



Above: The 1966 Championship Football Team is inducted into the Taft College 2019 Hall of Fame. 1966 Assistant Coach John Downer (back row, third from left), family members of 1966 Coaches Tom Harrell and Dene Hillygus, 1966 Cheerleader Christine Pernire-Goodell, and 1966 Football Players Tom Estes, Dick Morgan, and Joe Pistoria strike a pose with their awards.

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2019 Taft College "Ask an Administrator" Fall Forum

On November 20 in the Cougar Room, Superintendent/President Dr. Debra Daniels and Taft College Administrators held an open forum for Faculty and Staff to ask any and all questions they may have of Taft College Administration. Before the forum, Superintendent/President Dr. Daniels sent out an e-mail soliciting questions anonymously via SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool. Survey respondents asked clarifying questions about campus notification of resignations/terminations, Zoom interviews, how decisions are made over summer, and how terminated staff leave campus. Attendees also asked questions of Taft College Administration directly at the forum. Superintendent/President Dr. Daniels and Taft College Administrators look forward to seeing more Faculty and Staff at the next forum in spring of 2020.



Top: Superintendent/President Dr. Debra Daniels leads an important question and answer session with Faculty and Staff in the Taft College Cougar Room.



Above: Administrative Services Executive Vice President Brock McMurray fields a question from Taft College Faculty on next steps in the Student Center construction efforts.



Left: Superintendent/President Dr. Debra Daniels looks on as Human Resources Vice President Heather del Rosario discusses the details and benefits about the soon-to-be-rolled-out electronic time card system given the green light by California School Employees Association (CSEA) the same day the forum took place.

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2019 Thanksgiving Potluck for Taft College Employees

On November 22 in the Cougar Room, Taft College employees shared an early Thanksgiving potluck meal with colleagues and friends. Brilliantly orchestrated by the new-this-year Taft College "Celebration Committee," this luncheon kicked off the 2019 holiday season with great flair. For those of you who contributed a dish, we are grateful from the bottom of our hearts (and stomachs). Special heartfelt thanks to Superintendent/President Dr. Deb Daniels who prepared three whole turkeys that morning to feed the many folks who celebrated together.



Top, left to right: Executive Director of Institutional Research and Planning Xiaohong Li, English Department Chair and Professor Kamala Carlson, TIL Intake Technician Victoria Waugh, and TIL Director Aaron Markovits enjoy the pleasure of each other's company.

Above: The aftermath of our Thanksgiving potluck . . . Many thanks to the Taft College "Celebration Committee" for the potluck setup and cleanup!

Left, left to right: Human Resources Assistant Makayla Payne and Student Equity Technician Breanna Payne, also Sisters-in-Law, are all smiles as they finish their early Thanksgiving potluck meal with peers and colleagues.

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WSPA's SJV Holiday Party

At Luigi's in Bakersfield on December 2, Western States Petroleum Association held its SJV Holiday Party. TC Board President Dawn Cole, TC Board Trustee Billy White, TC Foundation Executive Director Sheri Horn-Bunk, Development Associate Mahea Maui, Vice President of Instruction Dr. Leslie Minor, Executive Director of Institutional Research and Planning Xiaohong Li, and Executive Director of Marketing and Community Relations Susan Groveman attended the event to benefit the Taft College Foundation.



First-Ever Taft College Data Summit

On December 3, Executive Director of Institutional Research and Planning Xiaohong Li led the first-ever Data Summit presentation, "Introducing MIS Data: A Data Discovery and Integration for Supporting Student Success." She was very well received. The next Data Summit will be held again in the Cougar Room in the spring.



Above and left: Executive Director of Institutional Research and Planning Xiaohong Li introduces Taft College employees to a new way to review and understand data about our students so that we can stay razor focused on student success. Dean of Student Success Dr. Windy Martinez joined Executive Director Li at the podium to outline the metrics that Taft College tracks to measure our student success.

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Dr. David Cothrun

Taft College Superintendent/President 1980-2001

With profound sadness, Taft College announces the passing of Dr. David Cothrun, Taft College Superintendent/President from 1980-2001. Dr. Cothrun's important contributions can still be felt widely on the Taft College campus. He expanded the Taft College Child Development Center, was instrumental in creating the Westside Energy Services and Training Education Center (WESTEC) in 1983, established the Taft College Dental Hygiene Program in 1993, and created the nationally-recognized Transition to Independent Living Program (TIL) in 1995. As a 35-year Rotarian, he always offered a helping hand to anyone in need. He will surely be missed.

Right, left to right: Bilingual Instructional Assistant/Interpreter Edna Muy, Early Childhood Education (ECE) Student Michelle Millar who submitted a PSA on "Trauma," ECE Club Vice President Lizandra Mejia, ECE Club President Lilia Velázquez, and ECE Professor Rebecca Roth. ECE Club Officers Mejia and Velázquez took third place in the PSA competition.

Early Childhood Education Wins Third Place at PSA Film Festival

On November 21, Early Childhood Education (ECE) Professor Rebecca Roth joined Taft College ECE Club Officers Lizandra Mejia and Lilia Velázquez as they took the third place prize for their Public Service Announcement (PSA) "Technology" entry at the Child Development PSA Film Festival at Bakersfield College. The competition, a collaborative effort between Bakersfield College, Taft College, and California State University, Bakersfield, evaluated PSA student entries submitted by November 2. Winners were announced from each college with the objective to create awareness in our community about critical topics in Early Childhood Education.



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74th Annual Taft Christmas Parade "An Oil Patch Christmas"

On December 9, Taft District Chamber of Commerce held the 2019 Taft Christmas Parade along Center Street. Announced again this year by Taft District Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Dr. Kathy Orrin and Billy Long, the 74th annual parade featured Fred and Barbara Holmes as Grand Marshals who ideally reflected this year's theme, "An Oil Patch Christmas." Approximately 40 student alumni from Taft City school STEM-CiTE Summer Camp enjoyed pizza in the Cougar Room, received Taft College t-shirts, and smiled continuously while walking in unison at the much-anticipated holiday parade. Taft College Dental Hygiene, the Taft College TIL Program, and Taft College Associated Student Organization (ASO) also participated in the evening's joyous festivities.



Top right: STEM Program Assistant/ Technician Allisa Tweedy leads 40 STEM-CiTE Summer Camp alumni.

Above left: Dressed as a Christmas tree, TIL Director Aaron Markovits (center) pals around with Taft College's Cougie and a current TIL student in front of the parade announcers.



Above: Taft College Dental Hygiene students proudly display the banner of their "Gold-Star" award-winning program at the 74th annual holiday parade.

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Taft College Professor Kelly Kulzer-Reyes Named to California Department of Developmental Services Task Force

At a public meeting in Sacramento on December 9, Taft College Professor Kelly Kulzer-Reyes joined 41 other individuals from across the state who have been selected to serve on the Developmental Services (DS) Task Force to provide guidance on the delivery of services to Californians who have developmental and intellectual disabilities. Professor Kulzer-Reyes was named to both the DS Task Force and the Service Access and Equity Workgroup on November 22.



Top right, left to right: California Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly, Kern Regional Center Board Member Dr. Jasmeet Bains, Taft College Professor Kelly Kulzer-Reyes, and California Department of Developmental Services Director Nancy Bargmann meet on December 9 in Sacramento.

Right: 2019 CalWORKs Association Student of the Year and Taft College Student Jourdan Thompson proudly holds her healthy daughter born in 2017.



Taft College Life Sciences Student and 2019 CalWORKs Association Student of the Year Jourdan Thompson

Jourdan Thompson is a 28-year-old single parent, recovering drug addict, and full-time Taft College student. After the painful loss of her first child who was born sleeping, she is now three years sober. She has gone from being a homeless drug addict to a successful college student in a few short years. She says, "I believe that with hard work and dedication, all things are possible."

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Korea's Next Academy Attends Exploratory Meeting

On December 4, TIL Director Aaron Markovits met with visitors from Korea's Next Academy and toured them around the Taft College campus. They also visited briefly with Superintendent/President Dr. Deb Daniels. 10 years ago, 10 Next Academy staff were trained by the TIL Program to work with college students with disabilities. Next Academy may again transact with Taft College to provide training to current Korean staff who work with students with disabilities. They also want training for staff who work with traditional students who may seek work visas in high demand fields.

TAFT COLLEGE FINANCIALS MEET THE HIGHEST STANDARDS

At their regularly scheduled meeting on December 11, the Taft College Board of Trustees approved the District's 2018-19 Annual Financial Audit and Proposition 39 Measure A Audit reports. The audits were performed by independent auditors from CWDL Certified Public Accountants, who issued the highest opinion of the District's financials with an "Unmodified" report with no findings or questioned costs. CWDL Certified Public Accountants further issued an "Unmodified" Measure A audit report with no findings, confirming that the expenditures were consistent with the requirements of the bond as approved by the voters.

Taft College Superintendent/President Dr. Debra S. Daniels said "As West Kern Community College District, we are charged with exercising good stewardship of public funds entrusted to us by ensuring that our tax dollars are spent appropriately and effectively towards the mission of the college. These unmodified audit reports show that Taft College's financials meet the highest standards, and it is our honor to hold the public's trust by remaining fiscally responsible while meeting the educational needs of our community."

Additional information regarding the 2018-19 audit reports may be found on the Taft College website at www.taftcollege.edu