

PC UPDATE

May 2018

Red Sea



Members of the PC class of 2018 patiently wait for their names to be called.

Jam-Packed Jamison Stadium Takes in PC's 90th Commencement

Before they graduated, they spent hours upon hours in the classroom and the library, poring over notes, reading textbooks, and studying for tests. Before all the hard work, they believed in themselves and their abilities. Before they believed, they dreamed of what they could do and become.

And on Friday night, May 11, all the dreaming, believing, and hard work paid off as Porterville College's 90th graduating class took center stage at a jam-packed Jamison Stadium to be celebrated by friends and family members for what they accomplished at PC and what they are sure to accomplish going forward.

Some will transfer to four-year universities. Others will join

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the workforce right away. But all will have a PC degree as their foundation.

“Graduates, tonight, you start a new chapter in your lives,” PC interim President Bill Henry told the 287 commencement participants (the total number of graduates was 436). “For some of you, that means continuing with educational goals. For others, tonight is the realization of a goal that just a short time ago you may have thought wasn’t possible. ...Whichever category you fall in, being here tonight has set an example for others.”

Samuel Underwood, who was selected by PC’s academic senate as the scholar of the year, certainly set an example for others. To even be considered for the scholar of the year honor, a student must have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.7. Underwood will be transferring to California State University, Bakersfield, in the fall to study English literature. Long term, he would like to teach at the high school or college level.

“Look around. See what we have done.



A graduate receives her diploma from PC interim President Bill Henry.

We have succeeded here at Porterville College,” Underwood told his fellow red-clad graduates. “We have succeeded in taking a step - not the first step and certainly not the final step. But it is an important step. We still have a long road, because learning never really ends.”

After speeches by Henry, PC English professor Kathryn Benaender, and Underwood, the honor graduates, Phi Theta Kappa members, and students of distinction were recognized. The 287 degrees were then conferred, each name eliciting a “That’s my son!” or “That’s my daughter!” and other loud cheers from various sections

of the stadium.

After all the names had been read and the ceremony had ended, friends and family members hustled to find their graduates to hug and congratulate them.

So how did the graduates feel and what’s next for them? Let them explain...

“I feel amazing. I feel accomplished,” said Alicia Dabney, who earned two associate in arts degrees - one in liberal arts: math and science and the other in biology and physical science.

Dabney will be transferring to either California State University, Fresno, or California State University, Sacramento, in the fall

to study kinesiology. She wants to become a physical therapist one day.

Isaiahs Vargas graduated with an associate in science for transfer degree in administration of justice and will continue his studies at Fresno State in the fall.

“I’ll be studying criminology,” he said. “I want to be a probation officer for either juveniles or adults.”

As for Caelum Peyron, who was the student government’s parliamentarian, a tough decision lies ahead. He’s been accepted by both the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California, Los Angeles.

“Right now I’m leaning toward Berkeley,” said Peyron, who obtained AA for transfer degrees in history and philosophy. “I want to study pre-law and then hopefully go to law school.”

Whether his educational pursuits take him north to Berkeley or south to Los Angeles, PC will always hold a special place in Peyron’s heart.

“The professors and staff here really do care about you. It’s a close-knit community,” he said. “I love this college so much.”

More Scenes From PC's 90th Commencement



A jam-packed Jamison Stadium was ready to greet its graduates.



Members of the PC class of 2018 prepare to make their way over to Jamison Stadium, where an estimated crowd of 4,000 was waiting for them.



A graduate waves to her family and friends.



The graduates were all smiles after receiving their diplomas.

Two High School Seniors Graduate From PC

Of the 287 participants in Porterville College's 90th commencement Friday night, May 11, two were from high school.



Hernandez

Jesus Hernandez and Tay-

lor Ruffa, from Summit Charter Collegiate Academy, also graduated from PC that night - 19 days before their high school graduation.

The two took advantage of



Ruffa

SCCA's College Express Pathway, which allows high school students to earn up to 60 transferable college units from PC.

Hernandez earned an associate in science for transfer degree in business administration while Ruffa graduated with an associate in arts for transfer degree in history.

Connor Carson: From PC Pirate to USC Trojan

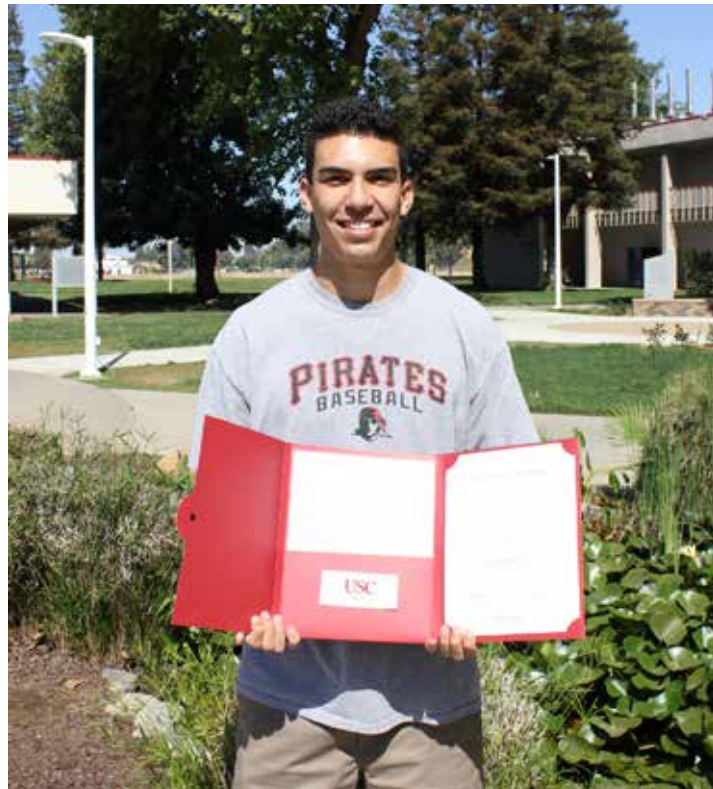
Wednesday, April 25, was an emotional rollercoaster of a day for Porterville College student and now graduate Connor Carson.

He'd had that date circled on his calendar for a while because that was when he expected to hear back from the University of California, Los Angeles, on whether he'd been accepted by the prestigious school in Westwood.

So Carson walked outside to the mailbox at his parents' home and peered inside.

Nothing from UCLA.

Disappointed, Carson walked back inside and - probably not so gently - put the mail down. Then he looked a little closer at everything he'd just been carrying. There was a box. The sender: Another school only 14 miles away from



Connor Carson holds his acceptance packet from USC.

UCLA - the University of Southern California, UCLA's longtime rival.

Carson opened the box and saw the words, "Welcome to the Trojan family!"

And just like that, disappointment gave

way to elation.

"I was shocked. I couldn't believe it. I didn't think there was any way I was going to get in," Carson said. "My mom had actually just come home for her lunch hour and

she was screaming in excitement."

The University of California, Berkeley, California State University, Fresno, and California Polytechnic State University all wanted him as well, but Carson wasn't about ready to turn down USC. He was also accepted by the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Fresno State out of Porterville High School.

At USC, Carson will study accounting at the university's Leventhal School of Accounting, which according to the U.S. News & World Report is the nation's seventh-best accounting school.

"I'm not totally sure what I want to do long term - something in business or account-

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Dozens of PC Student Athletes Honored

At Porterville College's 10th annual Academic & Athletic Achievement Awards ceremony Monday night, April 30, inside a packed PC Student Center, dozens of PC student athletes were honored for their academic and athletic accomplishments.

"As a student athlete, you have developed skills that will help you be successful in life no matter what you choose to do," PC interim President Bill Henry told the student athletes before the awards were presented. "Those skills include discipline, setting goals, and the importance of teamwork."

The awards and winners were:

Freshmen of the Year, presented to first-year student athletes for demonstrated excellence in their sport:

- Chelsea Ramos,



PC Director of Student Programs and Athletics Joe Cascio addresses the student athletes and their families.

softball, third-base- man.

- Elijah Cardenas, men's basketball, guard.
- Andres Garza, baseball, shortstop.

Sophomores of the Year, presented to second-year student athletes for demonstrated excellence in their sport:

- Ashlyn Miller, volleyball, libero.
- Brandon Lozano, baseball, outfielder.

Pirates of the Year, presented to student

athletes who demonstrate a team-first attitude and show heart, spirit, and dedication:

- Shantae Gutierrez, softball, shortstop.
- Tevin Howell, men's basketball, forward.

Tyler Curry Sportsmanship Award, presented to student athletes who consistently display outstanding behavior and conduct themselves with a high degree of character and good sportsmanship:

- Brooklynne Beavers, volleyball, outside hitter.

- Jackson Cascio, men's basketball, guard.

Tiffanee Anderson Most Inspirational Award, presented to first- or second-year student athletes who have overcome adversity and are inspirational and valuable members of their team:

- Alfredo Vasquez, baseball, pitcher.
- Angel Geston, softball, first-baseman.

Scholar Athletes of the Year, presented to second-year student athletes with the highest overall grade-point average:

- Julianne Huerta, softball, catcher.
- Carlos Angel, men's basketball, guard.

Team of the Year, women's basketball, which played most of

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CARSON

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ing," said Carson, who earned an associate in science for transfer degree in business administration from PC and graduated with a cumulative grade-

point average of 4.0. "I think I'd like to either be a CPA (certified public accountant) and work for a firm or manage a business."

Carson was quick to add that PC and its professors helped him punch his ticket to USC.

"The professors here make sure you know the material before they move on to something else," he said. "I'm so glad I came here and everything worked out the way it did."

And as he's walking from class to class

at USC, Carson can always remember this: According to Forbes' 2017 "America's Top College's" list, USC ranked 44th in the country. Which school ranked a few spots behind USC? The school 14 miles away - UCLA, at number 48.

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the season with just five players:

- Sayla Arguelles, guard, freshman.
- Kassy Cervantes, guard, freshman.
- Maria Lopez, forward, sophomore.
- Sierra Perez, guard, freshman.
- Kathy Rodriguez, forward, freshman.

President's Honor List, an honor for those with a 3.5 GPA or higher:

- Illianna Castillo, softball, pitcher.
- Ashley Eyraud, softball, pitcher.
- Leonardo Gomez, baseball, pitcher.
- Jhared Gonzalez, baseball, pitcher.
- Eric Lored, baseball, outfielder.
- Malik McCowan, men's basketball, guard.
- Priscilla Tanguma,

softball, outfielder.

- Angel, Gutierrez, Huerta, Lozano, and Miller.

Dean's List, an honor for those with a GPA between 3.0 and 3.49:

- Emily Baeza, volleyball, outside hitter.
- Ashley Campos, women's basketball, guard.
- Alexis Lafarga, softball, outfielder.
- Emma Poll, softball, first-baseman.
- Cascio, Ramos, and Rodriguez.

"I appreciate everything our student athletes do in the classroom, on the field, and on the court," PC Director of Student Programs and Athletics Joe Cascio told the audience. "They keep on fighting, because that's what we're trying to teach them to do, not just in college, but in life."

PC Nursing Graduates Recognized at Pinning Ceremony



The students wave to their family and friends.

A special ceremony was held Thursday night, May 10, in the Porterville College gym for 19 students who just completed PC's nursing program, each of them earning an associate in science degree in nursing and receiving a nursing pin symbolizing their transition from student nurse to professional nurse.

The graduates

were Waed Aboeid, Jerome Acoba, Elizabeth Barajas-Magana, Nancy Bilotta, Leticia Campos, Eunice Felix, Ashley Fuller, Stephanie Giannetto, Katherine Gray, Perla Hernandez, Maressa Malacara, Carina Martinez, Tineasha Murray, Katlin Ridenour, Alona Rivas, Jazmine Sotelo, Allisa Stockbridge, Linda Sulier, and Jessica Wachter.

Conference at PC Aims to Eliminate Stigmas Attached to Mental Health

Porterville College and the Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, in partnership with Porterville Unified School District, Burton School District, and the Tulare County Office of Education, hosted an "Overcoming Obstacles: Signs, Symptoms and Strategies" mental health conference Wednesday, May 2, in the PC theater.

The conference, which was

free and open to the public, was geared toward educators of and support providers for kindergartners through college sophomores.

The event featured six breakout sessions:

- "Psychotropic Medication and Alternatives," which was presented by Diane Kecskes, the psychiatric medical director at Promesa Behavioral Health in Fresno.

• "Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention," which was presented by Michelle Reynoso, a California certified prevention specialist for the Tulare County Alcohol and Other Drug treatment programs.

- "Individualized Educational Plan Criteria/Process, Student Study Teams, and 504 Plans,"

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which was presented by Heather Rodriguez, the special education coordinator for Burton School District.

- “Trauma-Informed Practices for Schools,” which was presented by Ray Buchanan, the clinical supervisor for the Tulare County Office of Education’s Behavioral Health Services.

- “College Transition and Porterville College Programs, Resources, and Supports,” which was presented by Errin Sullivan Arcos, a certified rehabilitation counselor and learning

“Mental health is an important part of everyone’s overall health. Its importance cannot be underestimated.”

DIANE THOMPSON

PC Director of Student Services

disability specialist for PC’s Disability Resource Center.

- “Suicide Prevention and Intervention,” which was presented by Noah Whitaker and Lisa Williams Hall. Whitaker coordinates the Tulare & Kings Counties Suicide Prevention Task Force and Hall is PC’s safety and security program manager.

Citrus High School

principal Scott Braden, who in 2010 authored an inspirational book for educators titled “Win Their Hearts... Win Their Minds,” was the event’s keynote speaker.

May was Mental Health Awareness Month. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 43.8 million adults experience some kind of mental illness in a giv-

en year. Also according to NAMI, suicide is the third-leading cause of death among people ages 10 to 24.

“Mental health is an important part of everyone’s overall health. Its importance cannot be underestimated,” PC Director of Student Services Diane Thompson said. “As a team, we are committed to increasing public safety through cross-system collaborations and doing everything we can to prevent suicide, destigmatize mental health disorders, and promote help-seeking behavior for all of our students.”

PC’s Sixth Annual Job Fair Draws Roughly 500 Job Seekers



Job seekers speak with an employer.

Porterville College hosted its sixth annual Job Fair on Wednesday, May 2, in the PC gym. Fifty-one employers from Porterville and other nearby cities and approximately 500 job seekers attended the event.

“This has always been a great event because it enables job seekers to speak directly with employers and learn more about them and what they are looking for,” said Maria Roman, chair of PC’s Student Services

division and one of the event’s coordinators.

At the event, job seekers could do mock interviews, receive resume assistance, and complete job applications. Some even interviewed for positions and were hired on the spot. There were also mannequins on display to show attendees how to dress appropriately for interviews.

The job fair took place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The 9-9:30 a.m. time slot was reserved for military veterans and their families.

PC Quick Hits

- On Tuesday, April 24, PC's Job, Entrepreneur, and Career Center hosted an Elevator Pitch Competition for high school and PC students in the college's theater. The winning team consisted of Shayla Floyd, Alexandria Leon, and Daniel Rajwani, from one of Summit Charter Collegiate Academy's dual-enrollment classes. The trio pitched an organic face exfoliate product and nabbed the top prize of \$300. PC student Jose Almanza, who took home the second-place prize of \$200, pitched a product called Power Pack, which was a backpack outfitted with Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and solar-power capabilities.
- On Thursday, May 3, 11 students from PC's Native American Club were recognized for their academic success.
- On Monday, May 14, through Friday, May 18, dozens of Porterville Adult School students participated in PC's Pirate in a Week event. Over the course of those five days, the students completed the PC application and orientation, did an assessment, filled out the FAFSA, completed an abbreviated student education plan, and attended a resource fair.

Community Members Provide Feedback on PC's Facilities Master Plan

Members of the community were invited to participate in a meeting Monday, May 14, to provide feedback on PC's facilities master plan, which provides a comprehensive framework for addressing the needs of the college facilities for the benefit of students, dedicated faculty, and supportive service staff. The meeting was held in PC's Student Center.

"This is your opportunity to take a look at what we are considering and what is being proposed right now," PC interim President Bill Henry told those in attendance.

Two options (see below), which PC Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services Arlitha Harmon explained in detail, are being considered.

Option 1 includes rerout-

ing College Avenue around Jamison Stadium as well as new construction within the campus' existing footprint. Option 2 includes rerouting College Avenue around the stadium and moving the athletic facilities to a parcel of land south of campus.

"PC's focus is on building and maintaining a sustainable infrastructure that provides for an inspiring place to teach and learn," Harmon said.

In November 2016, Porterville and its surrounding communities voted on and approved Measure J, which is providing \$44 million to repair and upgrade the college's facilities.

After celebrating the 90th anniversary of the college last year, a new chapter is being written at PC.



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Option 2 includes rerouting College Avenue around Jamison Stadium and moving the athletic facilities to a parcel of land south of the campus.

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