

December, 2025

## Primavera Monarrez Named 10th President of Porterville College



After a nationwide search and competitive process, Porterville College and the Kern Community College District (KernCCD) announced the selection of Primavera Monarrez as the next President of Porterville College. Ms. Monarrez most recently served as the college's Interim President. Her appointment to the permanent role is a testament to her dedication and the positive impact she has made throughout the campus community.

*"President Monarrez will lead Porterville College into a future built on student results: more completions, more transfers with junior standing, and more industry-recognized credentials that lead to good local jobs. As the trustee representing the Porterville College area, I'm focused on what this means on a practical level. Under her leadership, we will deepen partnerships with employers and universities, align programs to regional opportunities and ensure that every student, whether coming straight from high school or returning to upskill, can see a clear, supported path to success," said John Corkins, the President of the Kern Community College District Board of Trustees.*

A proud Central Valley native, first-generation college student, and product of the California community college system, Ms. Monarrez brings over 20 years of experience in higher education leadership. She deeply understands students' challenges and aspirations and is dedicated to advancing student success while ensuring higher education remains responsive to student and regional needs.

Since assuming the role of Interim President in July 2024, Ms. Monarrez has led Porterville College with a focus on transparency, inclusion, and collaboration. This has led to significant momentum across key institutional priorities. Under her direction, Porterville College has strengthened enrollment, expanded dual enrollment programs to benefit K-12 students, addressed critical facility needs, and enhanced participatory governance. She has also advanced the college's efforts to improve access, persistence, and regional economic mobility for students in Tulare County.

Prior to her interim role, Ms. Monarrez was Vice President of Student Services at Porterville College and Dean of Student Success at Taft College. Her earlier leadership experience includes roles at Bakersfield College and CSU Bakersfield. She has secured competitive grants, improved accreditation processes, and built strong partnerships with K-12 schools, universities, and community organizations.

Ms. Monarrez holds a BA in Sociology and an MS in Counseling/Student Affairs from CSU Bakersfield and is currently pursuing a doctorate. She is deeply committed to the Central Valley, Tulare County, and Porterville communities.

Kern Community College Chancellor Dr. Steven Bloomberg expressed his excitement over the appointment,

stating, *"We are thrilled to formally appoint Primavera Monarrez as the next President of Porterville College. Following a rigorous national search that drew an exceptionally strong pool of candidates, Primavera Monarrez rose to the top of a highly competitive process. Her student first leadership, commitment to equity, and record of forging partnerships will position Porterville College for its next chapter of growth and impact. I extend my sincere thanks to the search committee for its thoughtful, inclusive work, and to the faculty, classified professionals, students, and community partners who contributed their insights."*

On her official appointment to the position, Ms. Monarrez said, *"I am profoundly honored and excited to serve as Porterville College's tenth President, especially as we begin planning for the college's upcoming centennial celebration. As a proud product of the California community college system, I believe deeply in the transformative power of education. At Porterville College, we start small and go big. Empowering students to achieve their dreams, strengthen our community, and shape the future of the Central Valley. Together with the faculty, staff, and partners we will focus on expanding access, accelerating student success, and strengthening the economic mobility of Tulare County."*

*"At Porterville College, we start small and go big. Empowering students to achieve their dreams, strengthen our community, and shape the future of the Central Valley."*

**-Primavera Monarrez**

# The PC Art Gallery Presents: The Cigarette Box Project



This month, the PC Art Gallery featured the work of Artist and PC art professor Angel Lesnikowski for the opening of The Cigarette Box Project, a haunting look at themes of foresight, the desert, and death - using cigarette boxes as the primary medium. Take a look at the video at [https://youtu.be/aType09\\_iY](https://youtu.be/aType09_iY) for more on this amazing show from the artist herself.

Angel Lesnikowski's paintings blend emotional clarity with formal precision, balancing the urgency of lived experience with rigorous composition. Her practice is deeply committed to truth-telling—exploring themes of erasure, feminism, and identity—while equally embracing joy, beauty, and refuge. This orientation allows her compelling and accessible work to inhabit a space of both critique and inquiry.

This exhibition offers a deeply personal meditation on memory, inheritance, and mortality, centered around Angel Lesnikowski: The Cigarette Box Project. Through painting, installation, and mixed media, Lesnikowski transforms discarded objects and personal history into intimate reflections on fear and remembrance.

The core of the project features hundreds of hand-painted cigarette boxes depicting desert landscapes. These vistas symbolize both beauty and threat, drawing from her father's life as a desert cowboy and her mother's Middle Eastern upbringing. Each box becomes a small vessel of memory, connecting individual experience to cultural loss and the story of stolen land.

Lesnikowski's works meditate on resilience and the fragile negotiations of living. She extends a lineage of landscape painting, where the scene is a site of metaphysical encounter, akin to Caspar David Friedrich. By choosing discarded cigarette boxes as her substrate, she brings this tradition into the present, reflecting the conditions of the Anthropocene—where consumption, extraction, and waste are entangled with the landscapes we inherit. Transforming refuse into images of beauty and memory, Lesnikowski reveals how the fragile, the disposable, and the sublime are part of the same world.



## Pirates Soar! Baseball Program Celebrates Unprecedented Student-Athlete Commitments



The pride of our Pirate baseball program has never been stronger! Following an outstanding 2025 season, our student-athletes are turning their hard work on the field and in the classroom into incredible opportunities at the next level.

### We're proud of our Pirates! Ten Athletes Sign Scholarships to the Next Level.

A massive round of applause is in order for the ten student-athletes from the 2025 squad who officially signed scholarships to continue their academic and athletic careers. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our players, coaching staff, and the entire Pirates community.

#### Please join us in celebrating these exceptional young men:

- Hank Allred: Alcorn State University (D1)
- Nick Torres: Fresno Pacific University (D2)
- Rafa Jimenez: Barber-Scotia College (D2)
- August Malom: Florida National University (NAIA)
- Braden Parmley: Florida National University (NAIA)
- Jonah Ward: Milligan University (NAIA)
- Jimmy Martinez: Midland University (NAIA)
- Gio Chavez: Midland University (NAIA)
- Nolan Arnold: Evangel University (NAIA)
- Ricky Perez: Oregon Tech University (NAIA)

#### Louie Torres Commits to Fresno State Bulldogs (D1)

The good news continues into the fall of 2025! We are incredibly excited to announce that another one of our own, senior Louie Torres, has committed to play for the prestigious Fresno State Bulldogs (D1) after he graduates this spring.

Louie is a true standout—a PHS grad, born and raised right here in Porterville, CA. His commitment is a major source of inspiration for our younger athletes and a fantastic representation of the quality within our program. We couldn't be prouder of Louie and can't wait to cheer him on at the next level.

Congratulations to all of these exceptional young men. **The future is bright for our Pirates!**

## Community Gathers to Celebrate “Start Small, Go Big” Vision at Reception for President Monarrez

On the crisp evening of November 19th, the Porterville College community, along with the Kern Community College District (KCCD) Chancellor and Board of Trustees, and nearly 200 attendees gathered at the SAGE Building to honor Primavera Monarrez as the 10th President of Porterville College.

The reception served not only as a celebration of Monarrez's official appointment as President, but also as a reaffirmation of the college's guiding philosophy: **“Start Small. Go Big!”**.

The evening's program highlighted the broad coalition of support Monarrez has built during her tenure as Interim President. Following welcome remarks from Dr. Steven Bloomberg (KCCD Chancellor) and Mr. John Corkins (KernCCD Board of Trustees President), attendees heard from representatives across the campus ecosystem. Speakers included Isaac Juarez (ASPC President), Ms. Kristi Covington (CSEA President), Mr. Rick Elkins (Foundation President), and Dr. Sherie Burgess (Academic Senate President).

The evening's agenda emphasized that President Monarrez is the “living definition” of the college's mission. As a Central Valley native and first-generation student whose journey began in the community college system, speakers noted that her leadership is rooted in a deep understanding of student challenges and forging partnerships that will help us tackle challenges together.

Since assuming the interim role in July 2024, Monarrez has already driven significant momentum by strengthening enrollment, expanding dual enrollment for K-12 students, and addressing critical facility needs.

In her closing remarks, President Monarrez addressed the attendees, highlighting Porterville College's strong community partnerships and growing future opportunities. As the college approaches its 100th year, the evening celebrated a leader dedicated to ensuring that even a modest start remains the perfect foundation for immense achievement at Porterville College.



## Inspiring Stories Shared at Panel to Honor Our Veterans



In a powerful tribute to those who have served, Porterville College's Cultural and Historical Awareness Program (CHAP) and the PC Veterans Resource Center (VRC) hosted a special Veterans Day Panel on Thursday, November 6th. The free event was open to the public and offered the community an opportunity to hear firsthand accounts from individuals who have served across multiple branches and conflicts.

The panel, designed to honor local veterans and reservists and share their unique experiences serving in the U.S. military, was hosted by PC History Professor and CHAP Coordinator Leslie Keele.

The community gathered to hear firsthand accounts from four diverse local military veterans who have served across multiple branches and conflicts: Assemblyman RET **Devon J. Mathis**, a United States Army Veteran (2001-2013), Sergeant E-5; **Angel Benavidez**, a United States Marine Corps Veteran (2014-2020), Sergeant E-5; **Cody Ridenour**, a United States Coast Guard Veteran (2011-2017), E4 Maritime Enforcement Specialist; and **Nicholas Johnson**, a United States Navy Reservist (2021-2025), Master at Arms Petty Officer Third Class. Their diverse experiences provided valuable insights into military life.

# PC Band Marches in Veterans Parade: A Community Effort!



The Porterville College Band returned to the Porterville Veterans Day Parade this year after a long absence, delivering a spectacular performance thanks to a fantastic collaborative effort between the Music Department, the Art Department, and the student Art Club!

Under the direction of Music Professor Matthew Galinn, the PC Band was fully prepared and energized to pay tribute to our veterans. Professor Galinn's efforts extended beyond the music, as he secured a generous donation from Walmart—a flatbed trailer and a driver—which served as the band's mobile stage, ensuring they stood out during the procession.

The vibrant presentation was a true cross-campus success! Fine Arts Instructor Jackie Buttice and the student Art Club were instrumental in creating the parade's amazing decorations, transforming the flatbed into a patriotic masterpiece.

Making the band's participation possible required careful planning and coordination. Jackie Buttice, Matthew Galinn, and Music Instructor Sarah Rector handled all the necessary logistics, ensuring the event ran smoothly from preparation to parade route.

It was an incredible achievement and a wonderful way for the Porterville College community to honor our local veterans. We look forward to seeing the PC Band participate for many years to come!



## PC Students Lead the Way at Inaugural CREL Fall Forum



On Tuesday, November 4, 2025, the California Renewable Energy Laboratory (CREL) hosted its inaugural Fall Forum at the Bakersfield College Renegade Event Center. This pivotal event brought together leaders from community colleges, industry, government, and community-based organizations for a day dedicated to collaboration and shaping the future of clean energy in California.

We are incredibly proud to highlight the involvement of our own students—Jair Ramirez, Jade Andrade, and Isaac Ceballos—who served as official CREL Student Ambassadors for this significant occasion.

These students played an integral role in the success of the forum. Beyond simply attending, they were the face of the event, welcoming distinguished guests and facilitating activities throughout the day. Their professionalism and engagement showcased the high caliber of leadership developing right here on our campus.

Following the morning sessions, the afternoon offered attendees site visits throughout Kern County to view technological innovations and workforce development in action. The day concluded with the official launch of the new CREL Center of Excellence on Smart Buildings, marking a major step forward for the region's energy sector.

Please join us in congratulating Jair, Jade, and Isaac for their outstanding representation of our college at this statewide event!