

June, 2025

## PC Honors the Resilient Class of 2025 at 97th Commencement



A wave of excitement and pride swept through Jamison Stadium on Friday night as Porterville College celebrated its 97th Commencement Ceremony, honoring the remarkable achievements of the Class of 2025. Over 400 graduates marked the culmination of their hard work and dedication, ready to embark on new chapters in their lives.

The evening air buzzed with anticipation long before the 7 p.m. start, as families and friends eagerly secured their spots, ready to cheer on their loved ones. The ceremony commenced with a procession of the graduating class, their faces alight with a mixture of joy and accomplishment.

Interim Vice President of Student Services, Erin Wingfield, delivered a warm welcome, setting the stage for an evening of reflection and celebration. The Porterville Military Academy color guard presented the Nation's colors, followed by a stirring rendition of the National Anthem by the Porterville College Chorale.

Dr. Steven Bloomberg, Kern Community College District Chancellor, addressed the graduates, sharing his own journey as a first-generation college student – a path familiar to many in the graduating class. “I want you to think about your journey through education, the path that brought you here tonight,” Dr. Bloomberg remarked. “Graduates, this night is all about you. We are gathered here to celebrate this milestone with you and as you sit here ready to turn the page and write your next chapter, I encourage you to reflect on the power

you hold to shape not only your life but the world around you.”

The distinguished platform party, including Interim President Primavera Monarrez, VP of Instruction Dr. Thad Russell, KernCCD Board President John Corkins, KernCCD Board Trustee Dan Diaz, PC Academic Senate President Dr. Rebecca Baird, Classified Leadership representative Kristi Covington, and ASPC Student Speaker Selena Monzon, was present to honor the graduates.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Distinguished Alumni award to Dr. Dakota Jackson-Guzman, a newly licensed small animal veterinarian practicing at Sierra Veterinary Center. A Porterville native, Dr. Jackson-Guzman’s passion for animal welfare began with local volunteering and research, leading her to a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from UC Davis. In her inspiring speech, she acknowledged the multifaceted challenges faced by students, often juggling academics with jobs, family, and life’s hurdles. “I was once in your spot, sitting where you are now,” she shared, underscoring her understanding of their journey.

The ceremony also recognized over 30 students with the Porterville College Academic Senate Distinguished Student Awards. These individuals – Shawn Abeloe, Elisa Alvarado, Elizabeth Alvarado, Briana Arciga, Joseph Blue, Fernando Carranza, Alejandra Cervantes, Adrian Corona, Clayton Dignam, Samantha Flores,

## 97th Commencement Continued

Vincent Flores, Jaymes Fusick, Tristin Galvan, Tanya Gorgonio, Loretta Lynn Harris, Jordan Higareda, Serenity Higareda, Lindsey Lanning, Abigail Mejia-Alvarez, Matthew Moreno, Sammy Mounivong, Cinthia Navarrete, Xavier Nunez, Arlyn Pagtama, Jesus Perez, Jessica Ramos Torres, Kambria Rohrbach, Audrey Scheer, Christopher Tank, Nicholas Torres, Stephanie Gayton Villanueva, Jasmine Villegas, Faith Wynn, and Abigail Zedda – were lauded for their exceptional academic achievements.

Student Speaker Selena Monzon captured the collective spirit of the evening, acknowledging the excitement for both graduates and their supportive families. She highlighted the perseverance each student demonstrated in overcoming challenges during their time at Porterville College.

The pinnacle of the ceremony arrived as each of the graduates walked across the stage to receive their hard-earned diplomas, their names met with cheers and applause from the proud audience. The symbolic turning of the tassels, led by Mr. John Corkins, officially

marked their transition from students to alumni.

As the graduates exited the field, the celebration continued with joyous reunions, photographs, confetti, and heartfelt embraces, a fitting end to a memorable night celebrating the bright future of Porterville College's Class of 2025.



## Celebrating Our Future Healthcare Professionals: Nursing and Psych Tech Graduates Honored



Saturday, May 17th, marked a momentous occasion as Porterville College celebrated the dedicated graduates of its esteemed Nursing and Psychiatric Technician programs in back-to-back Completion Ceremonies.

The Nursing program held a traditional and poignant pinning ceremony. Families of the nursing students had the honor of presenting their graduates with a special stole, which proudly displayed pins signifying the successful completion of their rigorous studies.

Each graduate from the PC Nursing Program earned an Associate of Science Degree in Nursing, with the pin symbolizing their significant transition from student nurse to professional nurse.

A particularly moving moment for both ceremonies was the entrance of the students. Both the nursing and psychiatric technician candidates entered holding candles, a timeless symbol of hope and enlightenment in their chosen professions. The nursing graduates further affirmed their dedication by rising to recite the Florence Nightingale Pledge, a time-honored vow of commitment to ethical and compassionate patient care.

The Psychiatric Technician students also experienced a memorable and meaningful conclusion to their program. At the close of their ceremony, each graduate was “pinned” by faculty members during a touching processional, acknowledging their hard work and readiness to enter the mental health field.

Congratulations to the Porterville College Nursing Class of 2025 and the PC Psychiatric Technician Class of 2025! We wish you all the best as you embark on your rewarding careers, providing vital care and expertise to our communities.



# Porterville College Honors Distinguished Students



On Friday, April 25th, the Academic Senate hosted the fourth annual Distinguished Student Awards ceremony. Surrounded by family, friends, and admiring faculty, twenty-seven exceptional students were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the Porterville College community.

This special ceremony, a highlight of the academic year, goes beyond simply acknowledging high grades. It provides a unique platform for faculty members to articulate the profound influence these students have had on them and the wider campus community. As each student's name was called, faculty members shared heartfelt words about their academic achievements, their unwavering dedication to learning, and the positive influence they have on those around them.

The air was filled with stories of students who not only excelled academically but also uplifted their peers, contributed meaningfully to campus life, and demonstrated an exceptional drive for personal growth. Faculty members spoke passionately about the

intellectual curiosity, collaborative spirit, and positive energy these students brought to their classrooms and interactions. It is clear that these individuals have left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of their instructors.

While we often recognize our students' academic achievements, this award presents a chance to tell them what impact they make on the faculty and staff at PC, and to celebrate what they bring to our experiences with them. This sentiment resonated throughout the ceremony, emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the educational experience and the profound inspiration faculty draws from students.

The Distinguished Student Awards ceremony serves as a powerful reminder of the dedication, hard work, and transformative power of education. It celebrates not only the accomplishments of these exceptional students, but also the supportive and enriching environment at Porterville College. Congratulations to all twenty-seven distinguished students – your impact on our campus is truly significant!



## Porterville College Honors Academic and Athletic Achievements



The PC Athletics community gathered for the annual Academic and Athletic Awards Ceremony. The event served as a vibrant testament to the dedication and hard work of PC's student-athletes, recognizing their outstanding achievements both in the classroom and on the field.

The afternoon started with heartfelt opening remarks from new PC Athletic Director Kieth Ford, who lauded the students for their commitment to excellence in all facets of their college experience. He spoke about the unique demands placed on student-athletes, highlighting their ability to balance rigorous academic schedules with the intense training and competition required for collegiate sports.

Numerous awards were presented to individuals across various disciplines, acknowledging their grade point averages, along with their remarkable achievements in sport. Proud smiles filled the room as each honoree was recognized.

The collective sense of accomplishment and pride in the room was palpable, leaving attendees with a renewed appreciation for the talent, dedication, and hard work that defines Porterville College's student-athletes. The annual Academic and Athletic Awards is a wonderful reminder of the development fostered at PC, where success in academics and athletics go hand-in-hand.

# Celebrating Success and Saying Farewell at Access Programs Event



The Porterville College Cafeteria buzzed with celebratory energy as the Access Programs - EOPS, CalWORKs, NextUp, and Foster Youth - held their annual end-of-year celebration. The event was a heartwarming occasion, bringing together graduating students, their proud families, and the dedicated staff who have supported them throughout their academic journeys.

The morning began with a delicious breakfast, providing a relaxed and positive atmosphere for attendees to connect and share in the excitement of the upcoming graduations. The air was filled with anticipation as students reflected on their accomplishments and looked forward to their next steps.

A highlight of the luncheon was the special recognition of the graduating students from each of the Access

Programs. Cheers and applause filled the room as individual students were honored for their hard work, perseverance, and dedication to achieving their educational goals. Their success stories served as an inspiration to all present, underscoring the transformative impact of the support and resources provided by these vital programs.

Adding a poignant note to the celebration was a special tribute to program counselor Kongming Mouanoutoua. After over 30 years of unwavering commitment and service to Porterville College students, Kongming will be embarking on a well-deserved retirement. Heartfelt speeches were shared, highlighting Kongming's profound impact on countless students' lives. His colleagues and former students spoke of his wisdom, his compassionate guidance, and his unwavering belief in their potential. The room resonated with gratitude for his years of dedication and the lasting legacy he leaves behind.

The Access Programs at Porterville College play a crucial role in empowering students from diverse backgrounds to overcome challenges and achieve their academic dreams. The end-of-year celebration has served as a powerful reminder of the importance of these programs and the incredible achievements of the students they serve. As the graduates prepare to embark on new chapters, they carry with them the support and encouragement of the Porterville College community, ready to make their mark on the world. And while we celebrate the accomplishments of our students, we also bid a fond farewell to a beloved counselor whose impact will be felt for years to come.

## PC Student Natalee Martinez Honored With CalWORKs Scholarship!



Please join us in extending a huge congratulations to **Natalee Martinez**, a remarkable EOPS/CalWORKs student at Porterville College, for her well-deserved recognition as a recipient of the CalWORKs Student Voices Regional Scholarship!

Natalee's journey is a powerful testament to her resilience and determination. Just one semester away from transferring to her dream university to pursue a degree in biology, Natalee graduated high school in November 2022 while caring for her 6-month-old baby. Enrolling at Porterville College in Spring 2023, she demonstrated incredible focus and commitment to her goals, balancing the demands of school and motherhood with the unwavering support of her mom and sister.

The CalWORKs and EOPS programs at Porterville College played a crucial role in Natalee's success, providing the essential resources and support she needed to navigate her studies and care for her daughter.

Now, with her two-year-old daughter by her side, Natalee is poised to continue her pursuit of a brighter future for both of them. Her path has not been without its challenges, but through perseverance and the support of her family and Porterville College, she has proven that true strength lies in overcoming adversity and creating a life filled with purpose.