

September 12, 2024



## Our Caring Campus welcomes students for fall semester

Porterville College (PC) demonstrated its commitment to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment as it welcomed new and returning students for the start of the fall semester. The campus quad was full of activity as students explored various information booths, enjoyed refreshments and met faculty and staff.

One of the standout features of PC's opening day were the numerous resources available to students of all backgrounds. Disability Resource Center program technician Lurdes Bolaños provided information on essential services and accommodations for students with disabilities. Bolaños went above and beyond, offering Pedro Aispuro, a freshman engineering major, an eye cleaning kit for his glasses. This small gesture exemplified the center's dedication to meeting students' individual needs.

For students who have been incarcerated or involved in the justice system, the Rising Scholars program offers a path forward. This program, available at over 80 community colleges in California, aims to reduce recidivism by providing educational opportunities. Dean of Instruction Michelle Miller-Galaz emphasized the program's non-judgmental approach, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds. Rising Scholars program manager Cur'neisha Osborne encouraged potential participants to reach out for more information.

PC also showcased its vibrant student life community through various student organizations and clubs. Kimberly Espinoza, the professional expert for student life, provided information about available groups, ranging from academic clubs like MEChA and Phi Theta Kappa to recreational activities like pickleball and Esports.

Beyond academic and extracurricular opportunities, we also offered information about essential resources such as financial aid, tutoring, and career counseling.

The library/innovation center provides student access to a wide range of tools, including laser scanning, 3D printing, and drone flight safety education.

As the day progressed, the campus quad filled with students eager to explore various resources and connect with peers. PC's commitment to creating a caring and inclusive campus was evident in the welcoming atmosphere and the wide range of support services available to students.



## A Bridge of Knowledge: Porterville College and the Tule River Tribe



An historic partnership is brewing between Porterville College and the Tule River Tribe. A memorandum of understanding has been signed by the Kern Community College District, outlining a collaborative effort to provide educational services to the tribal community and strengthen the relationship between these two entities.

At the heart of this partnership is a shared vision: to create a pathway for tribal members to advance their education and career prospects – and in the process, enhance the working population of Porterville.

The program, a joint venture between Porterville College and the Tribe, will offer a variety of courses, including restaurant management, hospitality, bar management, and other culinary arts specialties. The goal is to provide residents, both tribal members and non-tribal members, with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the various industries.

One of the most innovative aspects of the partnership is the decision to convert the Tribe's former restaurant, "Landing 13" (located in Porterville), into a unique venue for various hospitality and culinary arts programs provided for the Porterville community. This space, once a gathering place for locals and visitors alike, will now be transformed into a state-of-the-art kitchen and bar where students can learn the skills needed to succeed in the hospitality industry.

This amazing space will be transformed into a culinary laboratory, where students can learn from experienced chefs and industry professionals. The program will also offer opportunities for hands-on experience, such as internships and apprenticeships at local restaurants and hotels.

In addition to these hospitality programs, the partnership will also involve other educational initiatives. This MOU allows Porterville College to offer a variety of degree and certificate courses on the reservation, making it easier for Tribal members to access higher education. These courses would cover a wide range of subjects, including business, technology, and healthcare to name a few.

The partnership will also include outreach efforts to promote the educational opportunities available to the Tribal community. The Tribe and the College will collaborate on events such as "Launch Day", various workshops, and information sessions to inform tribal members about the programs and services offered by PC.

This partnership is more than just an educational initiative. It is a symbol of what is possible with collaboration between two communities that have a long history of shared experiences. The partnership will strive to break down barriers and build bridges between the Tribe and the broader community.

At PC, we're incredibly excited to bring programs to the "Landing 13" building and the Tribe. These programs will provide opportunities for growth and employment at restaurants, hotels, and casinos throughout Tulare County.

PC Interim President Primavera Monarrez stated, "This historic partnership between Porterville College and the Tule River Tribe is a testament to the power of collaboration and the importance of education. It is a big step towards reaching our goal of helping our community improve by providing opportunities for growth and a means by which people can achieve their dreams and do BIG things right here at home."



## Flex Day Prepares Faculty and Staff for the Start of the Fall Semester

In preparation for the Fall Semester, PC Faculty and Staff participated in professional development and trainings at our bi-annual FLEX day event.

The entire campus gathered to celebrate our mission and the people we serve - Porterville College Students!



## PC Welcome Day gives first look at PC for many incoming students



On Friday, August 23rd, Porterville College held the second **PC Welcome Day** event for incoming freshman.

During this fun and inviting event, students had a chance to tour the campus, have conversations with their instructors, and familiarize themselves with the Career and Academic Pathways at PC.

The day started with a pep rally inside the gym for the over 450 students in attendance, and ended with lunch for everyone.

On behalf of all of the staff and faculty in attendance, we want to once again welcome our incoming students and wish you a **WONDERFUL** semester!



## PC Promise Days welcomes another class of students



Porterville College welcomed its newest class of PC Promise Students to campus this August. During the four-day orientation, students received tours of campus, listened to motivational speakers, including Comedian and Radio Host Andre Covington, and attended panels providing tips for success from our financial aid staff, faculty, and student ambassadors.

As part of the program, students receive free tuition and books as well as academic and employment help. The **Porterville College Promise Program** serves first-time college students through their first year with a comprehensive plan of financial and academic support.

“Our goal is to help remove barriers to success for students while they are completing an associate’s degree, career technical certificate, or transfer requirements while preparing for employment in their field of study,” said PC Director of Financial Aid, Tiffany Haynes.

We can’t wait to see what the future holds for these amazing students!

## The New AmberBox Detection System



On Friday, August 2nd, as part of our ongoing efforts to keep our campus as safe as possible, we conducted a successful training session/test of the campus' recently installed AmberBox gunshot detection system.

AmberBox is a detection and response system designed to protect lives in an indoor active shooter incident. By automating the emergency process, first responders arrive on the scene faster, with the vital information needed to contain threats and mitigate casualties.

AmberBox provides immediate and accurate responses from internal and law enforcement teams.

With the cooperation of local law enforcement, the Campus Safety Office and the Porterville Police Department conducted "live fire" tests throughout campus. We were immediately able to detect the location and caliber of weapons fired anywhere on campus.

Emergency dispatch was immediately notified of the details of each simulated incident, meaning that in the unlikely event of this type of emergency, first responders can be dispatched as quickly as possible and arrive faster, ensuring maximum protection from an active shooter threat.

The addition of the AmberBox System to our campus, along with other safety measures already in place, will keep our students, faculty, and staff as safe as possible in the unlikely event of an attack on campus.



## 8 PC Students Complete NASA Program

*by Dr. Paden Burgess (Engineering Professor)*

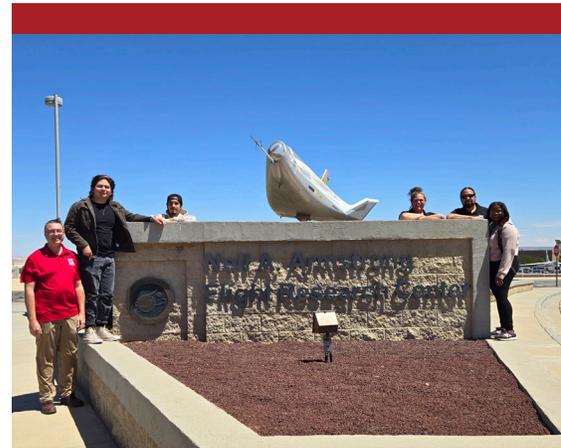
On August 21st, eight Porterville College students completed a California Space Grant Consortium (CaSGC) project.

Porterville College is one of only 14 selected community colleges in California to participate in the program. Students were selected based on their interest in STEM, teamwork skills, and willingness to work on their own time to learn programming and basic electronics to solve a NASA relevant problem.

Led by our engineering professor, Dr. Paden Burgess, our two teams worked on demonstrating a LIDAR system and simulating astronaut's time on the moon or Mars. During the summer they worked on their projects and attended NASA webinars with actual NASA engineers and scientists.

The eight PC students are Isaac Ceballos, Luke Shimer, Edgar Zavala, Nathanael Garcia, Julian Mendoza, Carl Cellan, Franky Olague, and Talon Bailey. Their projects culminated in a virtual symposium as well as a poster session at the Neil Armstrong Flight Research Center within Edwards Air Force Base.

The experience culminated with a tour of the NASA facility. Unfortunately, only two of the eight students, Isaac Ceballos and Franky Olague, were able to attend the trip to NASA. Behind the scenes, the project was made possible by Reagen Dozier (Director of Student Success Programs), Mallory Brown (Learning Center Technician), and Joe Romero (Lead Makerspace Technician).



*Pictured in above Photo: (left to right) Dr. Paden Burgess (Engineering Professor), Isaac Ceballos, Franky Olague, Mallory Brown (Learning Center Technician), Joe Romero (Lead Makerspace Technician) and Reagen Dozier (Director of Student Success Programs).*