

JUNE 2024



Taft College Employee of the Month

Taft College Administrative Specialist **Diana Duran** was named May Employee of the Month.

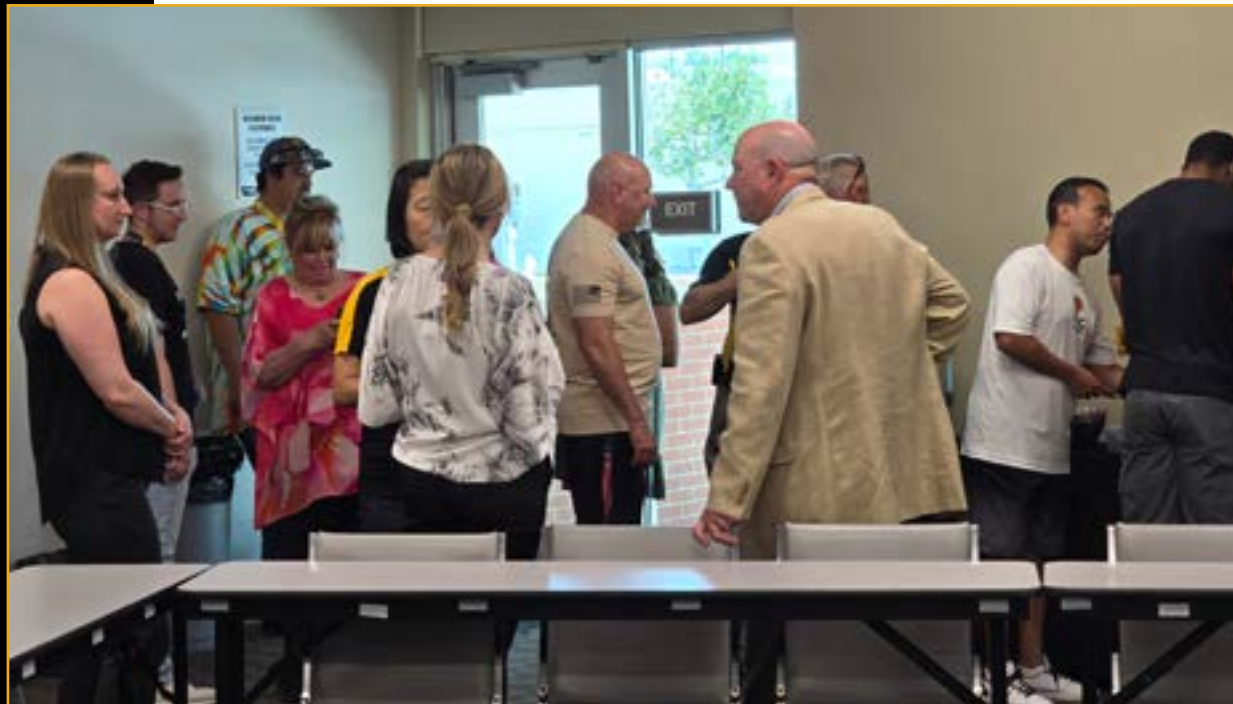
**THANK YOU,
DIANA!**

New Superintendent/President Dr. Rafe Edward Trickey, Jr. Wants to Continue Inspiring People



Dr. Rafe Edward Trickey, Jr. says he is here to continue inspiring students, staff, and faculty to even greater heights of success as our new Superintendent/President of Taft College. Currently, he is meeting with people on campus and service community members at length.

Above: As he shakes Dr. Amar Abbott's hand, Dr. Trickey is all smiles at his informal meet and greet event on June 6. Below: Dr. Trickey listens to Vice Presidents Dr. Xiaohong Li and Heather del Rosario, as ITS' Krystal Allikas looks on. BTW, Chef Oli's spread was delicious!





Taft College Service Recognition Awards Luncheon

At a luncheon in the Student Center on May 9, Taft College honored employees who reached years of service milestones. Taft College is better because of your many contributions! *Thank you!*

Key to Photos:

- 1) Employees were recognized for five years of service;
- 2) Employees were recognized for 10 years of service;
- 3) Employees were recognized for 15 years of service;
- 4) Employees were recognized for 20 years of service; and,
- 5) Employees were recognized for 25 years of service.



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2024 Scholarship Awards Luncheon

Retiring Taft College Financial Aid Director Barbara Nicholas oversaw her last Scholarship Awards Luncheon at which a record \$208,281 was doled out to Taft College students who were thrilled to receive the funds on Graduation Day 2024. Trustees, faculty, and staff took turns calling awardees' names. AERA Energy, LLC gave \$15,000 for internships!



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2024 Commencement Ceremony

On May 17, Taft College graduated its Class of 2024 with great fanfare! At Taft Union High School's Marion Martin Memorial Stadium, Taft College candidates for graduation, as well as their families and friends, shared in the joy of the moment, mission accomplished, and threshold crossed for new opportunities. 2023-24 ASO President Clementine Morales welcomed Dental Hygiene Major Viviana Duenas to the podium for her heartfelt speech to the Class of 2024. This commencement was retiring Superintendent/President Brock McMurray's last one to lead.



Top, left: Trustees pose with Cogie and retiring Superintendent/President Brock McMurray. *Left:* Faculty and counselors celebrate 2024 graduates getting over the finish line! *Bottom, left to right:* Student-athlete graduates radiate with joy! Student-athlete graduates flash smiles before the event. Students of the TIL Program enjoy the camaraderie of a small cohort.



2024 Dental Hygiene Pinning Ceremony

On the day after graduation, the Taft College Dental Hygiene Program ceremoniously awarded and pinned its Class of 2024 graduates. These Dental Hygiene graduates showed videos of their emotional journeys through our rigorous academic program that allowed them to gain the knowledge, skills, and competence required for licensing as a Registered Dental Hygienist. Not a dry eye was seen among the graduates, nor their friends or family members. Retiring Dental Hygiene Director Dr. Vickie Kimbrough was also recognized. *You did it! We wish you much success in your careers!*



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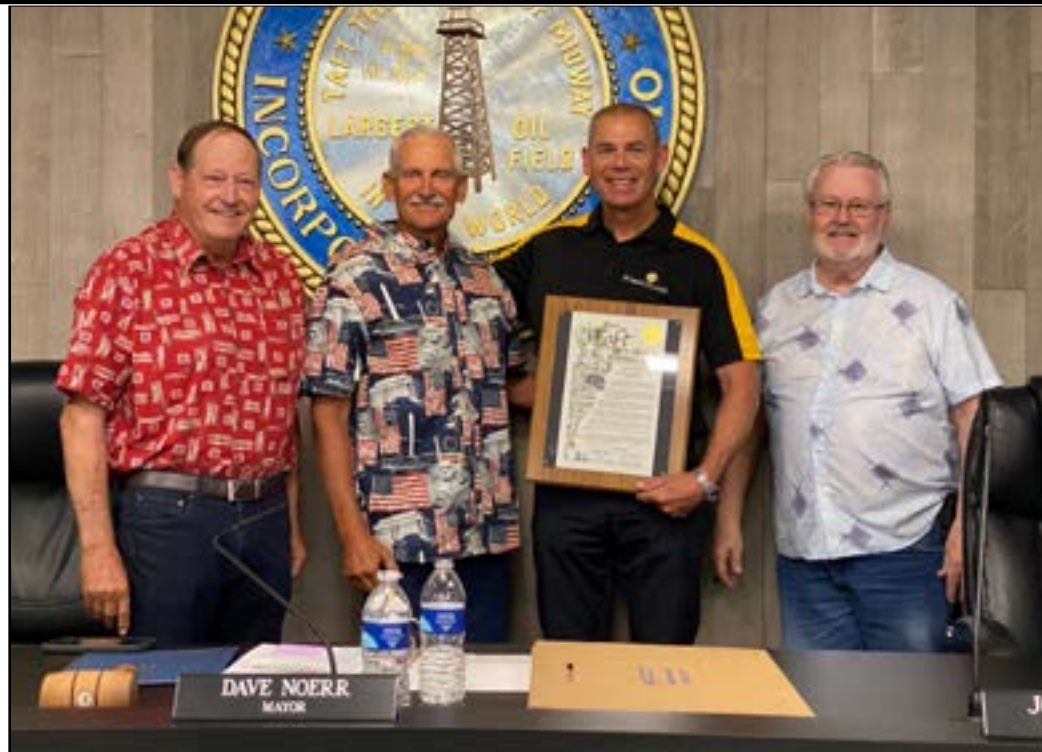
2024 Transition to Independent Living (TIL) Program Employer Luncheon

Vice President of Student Services Dr. Damon Bell welcomed local employers who hire TIL student interns, as well as TIL faculty, staff, and students to the student center for lunch. TIL student internships are vitally important to learning how to live independently.



Superintendent/ President Brock McMurray Honored by City Council of Taft

The City Council of Taft gave a Certificate of Recognition to Superintendent/President Brock McMurray as he retires. Mayor Pro-Tem Orchel Krier, Mayor Dave Noerr, and Councilmember Ron Waldrop spoke about Brock's many contributions to Taft over his 24 years at Taft College.



Rotary Club of Taft Claims Three Taft School District Superintendents as Members

Taft College Superintendent/President Brock McMurray's turn as President of the Rotary Club of Taft yielded at least one enviable outcome. At this time, all three Taft School District Superintendents are Rotarians! This is the first time, ever. *Well done, Brock!*

Left, left to right: Retiring Taft College Superintendent/President Brock McMurray, Taft City School District Superintendent Dr. Lori Slaven, and Taft Union High School Superintendent Dr. Jason Hodgson.



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Bon Voyage Love Boat Casino Night Raised Funds for TIL Program

At a fundraiser on June 1, Taft College officially honored retiring Superintendent/President Brock McMurray for his leadership, longstanding tenure, and many contributions to the community of Taft. Brock asked that raised funds benefit the Transition to Independent Living (TIL) Program.



FAREWELL CAPTAIN BROCK

JUST OFF THE COUGARTOWN PRESS



Bon Voyage Love Boat Casino Night Raised Funds for TIL Program

continued

Nearly 300 people from Kern County, and beyond, attended the cruise ship-themed casino night showcasing important milestones in McMurray's life, as well as celebrating the success of TIL graduates and students. TUHS art students created set panels for four "ports of call," and the TUHS jazz band played music, including for an opening Mardi Gras parade. Former Taft College Superintendent/President and Emcee Willy Duncan expertly navigated everyone through fond memories of his long friendship and working with Brock. The Taft College TIL Program may use the more than \$33,000 raised that night to purchase an ADA-compliant vehicle to transport two wheelchairs along with students and staff.

