

MAY 2024



Taft College Employee of the Month

Taft College Counselor and Academic Senate President, **Candace Duron** was named April Employee of the Month.

**THANK YOU,
CANDACE!**

Taft College CTE Hosts Successful Sixth Annual AWS Welding Open House and Competition



On April 16, the Taft College Welding Facility on Black Gold Court opened its doors to supporters and participants seeking to win the AWS Open House welding competition and take a turn on our popular welding simulator. Delicious tacos were served and raffle prizes were awarded at the event.

Above: CTE and Program Technician Allisa Tweedy led the team who welcomed more guests and competitors than ever to the annual event. *Below:* Attracting quite the interest in the welding simulator, Welding Instructor Bryan Payne works hands on with several students.



AWS WELDING OPEN HOUSE

Phi Theta Kappa Beta Lambda Zeta Chapter Induction Ceremony

On April 18, PTK Beta Lambda Zeta Chapter Advisor Dr. Sharyn Eveland welcomed guests to the induction ceremony of six Taft College students: Alex Anguiano, Olivia Eveland-Rea, William Maness, Breanna Oliva, Anaruth Sanchez, and Heidy Valenzuela Torres. Taft College President Brock McMurray gave the keynote speech.





2024 Al Baldock Annual Memorial Golf Classic

Friday, April 19 was a perfect day for a golf tournament at the Buena Vista Golf Course in Taft! The Golf Classic honors the enduring legacy of Coach Al Baldock and provides direct support for Taft College Athletics. Taft College future student-athletes benefit directly from the funds raised at this annual event. Cash prizes were awarded to the first four teams, including \$1,200 for 1st place, \$800 for 2nd place, \$600 for 3rd place, and \$400 for 4th place. Dinner was sponsored by the Taft College Alumni Association. Raffle sponsors were True Value Home Center, Dr. Damon Bell, and the Taft College Bookstore.

Left: Golfers line up for the shotgun start to begin the tournament. *Below, left:* Al Baldock's daughter, Erin Baldock Hopkins welcomes the crowd before competition begins. *Below, right:* Taft College Bookstore Manager Bill Norris and Counselor Darcy Bogle sell tickets for a chance to win one of the many raffle prizes after dinner at the Golf Classic.



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Taft College Athletic Director Kanoe Bandy Wins National Award

The National Alliance of Two-Year College Athletic Administrators named Athletic Director Kanoe Bandy the winner of its 2024 L. William Miller Award, an annual award presented to a NATY-CAA member who demonstrates excellence in leadership, service, and integrity in an athletics program at a two-year college.



Taft District Chamber of Commerce 2024 State of the City Luncheon

Taft District Chamber of Commerce Board President Jan Ashley welcomed community members to the 2024 State of the City Luncheon at OT's Cookhouse on April 25. Chamber Executive Director Dr. Kathy Orrin introduced speakers City of Taft Mayor Dave Noerr, City of Taft Police Chief Damon McMinn, and Kern County Fire Department Division Chief Cary Wright to address issues of homelessness and safety in our community. Also serving as Secretary of the Taft College Board of Trustees, Dr. Orrin introduced new Taft College Superintendent/President Dr. Rafe Edward Trickey, Jr. to the audience.



2024 Taft College Retiree Dinner

On April 25, 10 of Taft College's best employees were duly honored as having just retired or as they get ready to retire from Taft College. Historical photo collage tributes were shared along with the memorable accomplishments and unique attributes of each retiree as he or she was honored over the course of the evening. The 10 retirees honored include: Wei Hill, Susan Wells, Rori Blackwood, Jennifer Edmaiston, Richard Treece, Barbara Nicholas, Dr. Vickie Kimbrough, Sherry Helms, Dr. Sharyn Eveland, as well as Superintendent/President Brock McMurray. President McMurray spoke at length about each of the nine other honorees, whereas Board President Billy White honored McMurray. The entire Taft College Board of Trustees was present to honor these special retirees.



H O N O R I N G O U R R E T I R E E S

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Students Eat Pizza with Superintendent/President Brock McMurray on April 30

Superintendent/President Brock McMurray began the custom of inviting students to drop in for lunch at the Student Center as each spring semester comes to a close. The effort breaks down the barrier of communicating with the Superintendent/President directly and benefits both students and the President alike. Students get a rare chance to have quality time with the Taft College leader and the President can better understand students' needs.



Taft College First-Ever Latinx Recognition Event on April 26

Taft College has debuted a new celebration of our Latinx students on campus as part of ongoing efforts to commemorate the accomplishments of all the diverse populations across campus. This ceremony was hosted by the ASO, DEIAA, Student Services, and Leading from the Middle Academy in collaboration with our campus programs and departments.

**FIRST LATINX CEREMONY**

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Lavender Ceremony Proudly Recognizes Contributions of LGBTQA+Students

The Lavender Ceremony honors Taft College lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and ally students for their strength, courage, resilience, achievements, and contributions to the college. ASO, DEIAA, and Student Services sponsored the event on May 2.



Taft College Dean of Instruction and CTE Hosts 2024 Industry Advisory Dinner on May 1

Taft College Dean of Instruction and CTE Dr. Devin Daugherty hosted the 2024 Industry Advisory Dinner. Annually, business and industry representatives are invited to the college for dinner and round table discussions about their current needs, future needs, and ideas on how Taft College might develop or assemble specialized degree and certificate programs to help mitigate any employees' skills and knowledge gaps. Table discussions centered on public safety, business, education, and the medical field.

**INDUSTRY ADVISORY DINNER**



Taft College Promise Program and EOPS Graduate Recognition Luncheon on May 7

Superintendent/President Brock McMurray welcomed Promise Program and EOPS graduates, as well as their families and friends, to the Student Center Cougar Café for lunch, speeches, and special presentations on May 7, 2024. Promise Program graduate Mason Stepp spoke to the audience about the value of the Taft College Promise Program and graduating with no debt. Dr. Vicki Jacobi recognized the Promise Program graduates, and Lourdes Gonzalez recognized the EOPS graduates. EOPS Alumna and current Distance Education staff member Heather Cash spoke about her EOPS college journey and now being employed at Taft College. Her daughter also graduated on May 17.

