

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

MAY 2024

Dr. Henry D. Shannon



VISION STATEMENT
Chaffey College:
Improving lives
through education.

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A Message from Superintendent/ President Shannon

Dear Chaffey College and Community Members,

It is the season of new beginnings and at Chaffey College we have been embracing the excitement and energy that graduation season brings. This time of year is always special, as we get to partake in numerous celebrations that recognize hard work and achievement.

Chaffey College's class of 2024 earned about 3,300 degrees and certificates this year. At our 107th commencement ceremony on May 16, we filled up an entire arena full of family, friends and community members to witness 2,300 Chaffey Panthers become graduates. During the ceremony, we were also graced by best-selling author Reyna Grande, who delivered an inspiring keynote address about turning struggles into success.

Getting to witness each student come on stage to receive their degree or certificate never gets old. Graduation symbolizes not only knowledge gained, but personal growth and resilience. Whether you participated in or attended Chaffey's commencement, a high school graduation or even a kindergarten promotion, know that every milestone is important and worthy of celebration!

At Chaffey College we are gearing up for Summer Term which begins June 3. Students can choose between 3 sessions offered: **First 6-Week, 8-Week, Second 6-Week.** [View summer class schedules and class offerings here.](#) Students can also register now for Fall Term, which begins August 2.

I want to take an opportunity to thank all those who made the 2023-24 academic year a success - thank you to our Governing Board, executive leadership, faculty and staff for all your contributions and all that you do for our students.

We have much to look forward to!

Go Panthers!



Henry D. Shannon, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President



Youngest Graduate in Chaffey History Motivated by Love of Learning

Angelina Flores just graduated from Chaffey College.

And she's not even old enough to get a driver's license.

The 15-year-old Upland High School sophomore earned enough credits to graduate from Chaffey College in May with a certificate in real estate sales. She is the youngest student to graduate from Chaffey, with the oldest being 94-year-old Charlotte Timmons of Pomona, who earned a certificate in gerontology in 2016.

"I thought it would be cool to try something new," the Upland resident said. "I thought it would open new doors of opportunity." Angelina said she heard about Chaffey's dual enrollment program before she started her freshman year. She enrolled in an online introduction to business course right after completing middle school in Claremont.

"It was a college course so it was much more difficult, but my professor was very welcoming and calm, and she made everything super smooth," she said.

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More than 2,300 Students Graduate from Chaffey College

Nearly 10,000 people including graduates, family members and friends filled Toyota Arena in Ontario on May 16 for the 2024 Chaffey College Commencement ceremony, marking the completion of academic programs for 2,300 students.

Chaffey College's class of 2024 earned about 3,300 degrees and certificates. The class includes seven valedictorians and 29 high school students graduating from Chaffey through the [dual enrollment](#) program.

"Whether you are going on to a four-year college or university or entering the workforce, you are taking your Chaffey education with you and making our communities and our world a better place," said Chaffey College Superintendent/President Henry D. Shannon.

[Reyna Grande](#), bestselling author of the 2012 book "[The Distance Between Us](#)" shared her story of crossing the U.S. border at 9 years old, and the struggle to find self-confidence as a



writer. With the encouragement of teachers and other mentors, she turned her struggle into a successful career.

"In some way, you are all storytellers yourselves. Aren't you? You get to be the author of your own story - not your parents, not your teachers, not the voices on social media clamoring to shape your narrative," she said.

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Once she began taking classes, Angelina started watching the Netflix reality show "Selling Sunset" and that led her to explore Chaffey's real estate program. What began as an introduction to college coursework turned into a quest to finish an academic program.

"I think what made me want to finish was the feeling of accomplishment - to have an impact on my life and to make my family proud," she said.

Professor Jeanette Darby describes Angelina as a proactive student who earned an A+ in her real estate principles and real estate practice courses.

"She is interested in real estate and urban sustainability," Darby said. "I have no doubt that she will make this world a better place."

Angelina also wants to be an inspiration to her younger sister, who is currently in the seventh grade. Angelina plans to encourage her to take dual enrollment courses, too.

But her biggest motivation is simply a love of learning new things. She wants to study linguistics, health and gerontology, in addition to business and real estate, as she continues college and high school coursework.

Angelina plans to continue on at a four-year university after graduating high school, focusing on business and real estate with the goal of opening her own brokerage.

"I have always felt that age doesn't matter," she said. "You can do anything you want as long as you set your mind to it - no matter how old or young you are."



The class of 2024's cumulative GPA was 3.23, a slight increase from 2023. The oldest graduate is 78 years old, while the youngest is 15.

Chaffey's student speaker Alexis Yrigoyen, an [anthropology](#) major from Chino Hills, shared her story of struggling with bullying in high school, and how it affected her confidence as a college student. After attempting five previous times to earn a college degree, she finally finished what she started.

"Here I am on this stage today, standing before you as a college graduate," she said. "And here you are! You know that voice in our head that says we can't do it, that we aren't smart? We defied that voice."

Yrigoyen is transferring to Cal Poly Pomona to major in anthropology.

California Institution for Men Celebrates Commencement



James Menefield stood inside the gymnasium of the California Institution for Men (CIM) before a gathering of fellow students, faculty and staff in graduation regalia.

Though his experience as a Chaffey College student has been unique in prison, he said the professors and staff never made him feel different.

"You never treated us like prisoners," he said. "Instead, you treated us like students and held us to a higher standard."

Menefield, and 20 other students in CIM's third graduating class, celebrated completion of academic programs, earning 30 associate's degrees and 47 certificates. Two of the students who had been paroled were expected to walk in Chaffey's commencement ceremony at Toyota Arena.

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Mission Statement

Chaffey College improves lives and our communities through education with a steadfast commitment to equity and innovation to empower our diverse students who learn and thrive through excellent career, transfer, and workforce education programs that advance economic and social mobility for all.

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Chaffey College Superintendent/President Henry D. Shannon praised graduates, saying that their achievements will make a profound difference on their lives.

"You're changing the dynamic of your own families," he said. "You're role models."

Chaffey's Rising Scholars program, previously known as Turning Point, has served nearly 1,000 students in CIM and the California Institution for Women (CIW). The program began in 2004 with 26 students in CIW, with the goal of helping women earn an associate's degree in three years, and eventually expanded to CIM. Since it began, Rising Scholars students have passed 94 percent of the classes they have attempted.

CIM Acting Warden Travis Pennington congratulated students on their achievements and urged them to continue to learn and grow.

"This is one of my favorite occasions," Pennington said. "Graduations are such a positive celebration and we don't have a lot of those here."

Bryan Shepherd, who served as class speaker with Menefield, said Chaffey faculty and staff changed his perspective on life. He encouraged his classmates to keep learning.

"The future belongs to those who persevere," he said.



Save The Date

June 5

Canvas Orientation
[LI-08](#)

June 6

Pride Celebration
[Rancho Campus Quad](#)

June 17

[Second six-week session begins](#)

June 20

Juneteenth Celebration
[Rancho Campus Quad](#)

June 3

Student Expo
[Wignall Museum](#)

June 3

[Six- and eight-week summer sessions begin](#)