

LINK

VICTOR
VALLEY
COLLEGE

A VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE FOUNDATION PUBLICATION | SPRING 2016

CHEMISTRY comes to life

VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
RECEIVES PORTABLE NMR THIS SPRING

new MATH

VVC IS CHANGING MATH WITH HELP FROM
STATEWIDE GRANT TO HELP STUDENTS SUCCEED



FOUNDATION LINK

HALL OF FAME

PAT SILVESTRI INDUCTED

Annual event celebrates service

PAGE 8

ALUMNI UPDATE

VVC ALUMNI GOING PLACES

Alumni share their stories

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SAVE THE DATE - 5.5.16

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Ph.D.
Lecturer, Department of
Political Science
CSU San Marcos

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SPRING 2016

at VVC
I LEARNED



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LECTURE SERIES

Renowned astrobiologist, Dr. Penelope Boston headlines upcoming lecture series.



You don't have to come here with a specific major. Your classes will guide you to your passion.

Julianna Morales
Major: Child Development

QUICK LINK

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I learned the fundamentals of vector mechanics during my Physics class which is beneficial to my future in automotive.

Jason Kaiser
Major: Mechanical Engineering



As a double major I have learned to juggle school and personal life.

Brooke Sanchez
Major: Math and Liberal Arts



The LINK is a publication of the
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Emeritus

Percy Bakker, 2006	Jerry Klein, 2014
Patricia Caldwell, 2015	John Kroencke, 2015
Val Christensen, 2015	Robert Kniss, 2015
Mike Davis, 2015	Janice Olson, 2012
Steve Davison, 2014	Diana O'Malley, 2015
Bruce Fay, 2013	Joe Range, 2010
Mike Jasberg, 2015	Thurston 'Smitty' Smith, 2015

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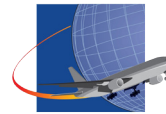


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Vice President Level



Dean Level



Professor Level

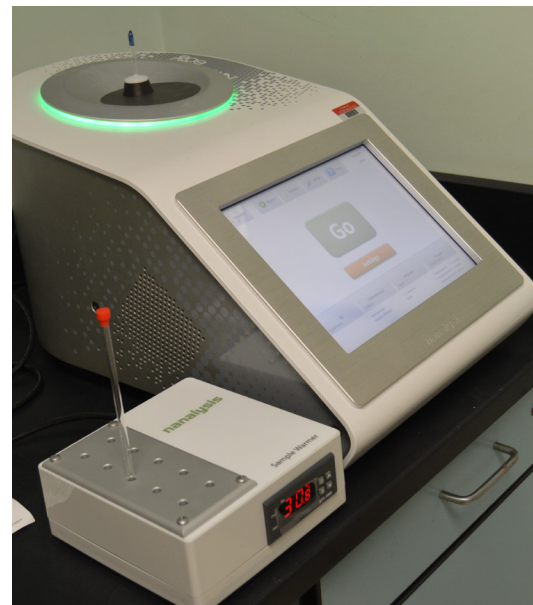


Student Level



Chemistry comes to life at Victor Valley College

Students in the Victor Valley College Chemistry program can now analyze samples using a new piece of equipment similar to the way physicians use an MRI machine to look at what is going on inside the human body. Thanks to a collaborative effort by Mitsubishi Cement, Cemex, A Family Pharmacy - Apple Valley, the Mojave Environmental Education Consortium (MEEC), the VVC Chemistry Department, and Southern California Edison, a Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) machine will now make learning more meaningful for students pursuing future careers as chemists, doctors, quality control analysts or even pharmacologists.



The Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) machine will give students the opportunity to advance their skills prior to transferring from VVC to a university.

“I feel my education is a lot more balanced and puts me at the same level as my university counterparts”

- Daniel Garcia

“The beauty of this machine is that it requires little to no maintenance and can run tests in a matter of seconds compared to some of our other machines which can take hours and even days,” said VVC Laboratory Aide John Hoskins. “Already it has greatly improved our teaching methods and we are excited to accelerate VVC students’ understanding of high level chemistry.”

A unique feature of this equipment is its portability. Weighing approximately 55 pounds, it can easily be moved from tabletop to the field unlike other NMR spectroscopy units, which are usually found in very large and environmentally protected laboratories. If you have ever been inside an MRI, what you may not know is the machine is spinning around you capturing high resolution images. Most NMR’s also spin the organic matter inside the machine, however, VVC’s new machine does not, lending to its lightness and transportability.

The NMR is being used for the first time in the 2016 spring semester for students in the upper level organic chemistry classes and will make a huge difference for students intending to transfer to the university system like Cal State San Bernardino. Because of the investment of our industry partners, students who already have hands on experience with the NMR and who are also pursuing a degree in Chemistry, will be better prepared for the advanced classes once they reach a university.

Daniel Garcia is currently in the Nursing Program and double majoring in Biochemistry. An ambitious student, he says he eventually wants to also pursue being a doctor later in life. “Having the NMR here at Victor Valley College definitely puts us on the map. I feel my education is now a lot more balanced and puts me at the same level as my university counterparts,” Garcia said. “Our research projects will now also be equally comparable.”

“In the Victor Valley, about 10 percent (10%) of the population has a bachelor’s degree or above and every day we are losing top talent to employers outside of the area,” said Victor Valley College Foundation Board President, Eric Schmidt. “Employees born and raised in the region, and who have a degree in Chemistry now have the opportunity to seek careers closer to home as well as secure higher paying jobs with competitive wages. Inevitably, this will contribute to the viability of our High Desert economy.”



Daniel Garcia, Nursing Process 1 student, tests a sample tube during his Chemistry 101 class.



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VVC receives math grant to improve student success

April Fool's Day ended with a late night award to support a plan Victor Valley College developed to improve student outcomes in math. The California Community College Chancellor's Office selected 44 grant recipients, including Victor Valley College, to participate in its Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program. The program supports implementation of evidence based projects to change remedial education and help more students overcome challenges inhibiting completion of college degrees and certificates statewide.

"Our students are the real winners here," said Stephen Toner, Victor Valley College Math Department chairperson and chief architect of the plan that won support. "We have studied successful programs and are rebuilding ours to remove barriers that our students face in math so more will graduate."



The Victor Valley College Successful Advancement in Math (SAM) project accelerates implementation of a plan the math faculty have been developing to improve student outcomes in four key ways:

- 1.** Students were previously placed into remedial math courses based primarily on their assessment test scores. SAM will add additional measures such as performance in high school math to determine student placement into math courses.
- 2.** Students who assessed into remediation often found themselves required to complete a lengthy sequence of courses before they would take college level math. SAM will allow students to participate in remediation alongside or within select college courses.
- 3.** All students regardless of their educational or career plans were required to master algebra in order to graduate. SAM introduces a statistics-based pathway which many find more applicable to their goals.
- 4.** Support services such as tutoring have been available to math students in a remote Math Success Center. SAM will relocate these services to a space adjacent to math classrooms to ensure more students take advantage of them.

To make these changes happen faster, this grant makes a significant investment in staff training and planning activities. With grant resources, Victor Valley College will be able to invite area K-12 math teachers to participate in professional development activities as well.

"We know that education is important, even for teachers," said Toner. "Unfortunately, until now the opportunity to participate in training programs has been limited to only a few faculty members. This grant allows faculty to meet together, share effective teaching techniques, and develop new curriculum and teaching practices together."

Victor Valley College is one of 113 community colleges statewide providing Associate Degree, University Transfer and Career Technical training. For more information about Victor Valley College and its programs visit www.vvc.edu.

The grant proposal that secured the award was developed by the Victor Valley College Foundation in its ongoing effort to help Victor Valley College better serve the local community. The Foundation is the college's primary resource development, alumni outreach, and public relations partner. For more information about the Foundation and how you can help make higher education more available and effective for Victor Valley College students, visit www.vvcfoundation.com.



2016 Alumni Hall of celebrates Student

THE

SKY'S

THE

LIMIT!

On February 27, 2016, the Victor Valley College Foundation held its annual Alumni Hall of Fame Celebration. For over 40 years, the Foundation has been helping to bring the College and community together. With the help of the event's presenting sponsor, Desert Valley Hospital, the Foundation honored five notable award recipients and raised funds to support education during an exciting celebration aimed at "Elevating" education in the community.

This year was particularly notable as the Foundation raised the most dollars in the history of the event. More than \$100,000 was brought in to support Victor Valley College and a newly developed Student Success Fund. The fund is aimed at providing resources VVC can use to increase tutoring capacity, fund more hands-on educational experiences and provide additional services, giving students the hand up they need to finish their degree or certificate programs.

With a little arm twisting and a lot of convincing, five teams made up of Foundation board members and the College president competed in the first ever Lip Sync Competition. This newly created fundraiser within a fundraiser added a new and fun entertainment element as teams partnered with a campus club to raise money through \$1.00 votes. In two months, the competition yielded \$30,000 adding to the success of this year's Hall of Fame celebration.

Every year the Foundation recognizes Victor Valley College Alumni whose success reflects positively on their alma mater, honors a community servant, highlights an advocate for education and acknowledges a friend of the College. This year the five recipients include a World War II expert, a Vice President of Facilities and Construction, a female pioneer and business owner, a business whose focus is to give back to the community, and the former "Mr. VVC".

Willie Davis Pringle was posthumously honored and inducted into the VVC Alumni Hall of Fame. Willie truly valued education and after attending Victor Valley College he attended Northern Arizona University



Mary Pringle and family representing 2016 Alumni Hall of Fame inductee, posthumously, Willie "Mr. VVC" Pringle.

on a scholarship. He then spent the rest of his life contributing time and energy toward future generation's education. Willie worked at VVC for over 30 years and was proud to assist in preparing students to make the world a better place for incoming students. His roles at VVC ranged from Associate Student Body Council Activity Advisor to Athletic Director, head football coach, and finally Director of Students Services.



2016 Alumni Hall of Fame inductee Patrick Silvestri and his wife Jennifer.



Fame Gala Success

With these positions under his belt he became the first recipient of the Student Services Employee-of-the-Year at Victor Valley College. This accomplishment truly went to a deserving man since some fondly referred to him as "Mr. VVC".

The Victor Valley College Foundation also honored and inducted, Patrick Joseph Silvestri into the Alumni Hall of Fame. Silvestri graduated with honors from Victor Valley College in 1980 with an Associate's of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering. He is the current Vice President of Facilities and Construction for Prime Healthcare Services, managing 39 hospitals in 12 states. He is well known for his integrity and dedication to his positions and the causes he is passionate about. A long supporter of education and animals, Patrick serves on the Board of Directors for the Robert Mack Scholarship Foundation, a statewide organization that provides scholarships to high school and college students pursuing studies for careers in healthcare engineering.

This year, the Distinguished Community Service honor recognized the contributions of Regina Weatherspoon- Bell. Weatherspoon-Bell is the owner and President of Gi & Associates, a boutique marketing, consulting, and event production company. She has extensive experience in entertainment management. Regina works tirelessly for many causes in the High Desert including Today's Woman Foundation, Better Way Domestic Violence Shelter, and the Salvation Army among many others. She was also the Director and visionary for the "Women Over 50" documentary, book, and photo exhibition.

The Distinguished Education Service Award

recipient recognized Victorville Motors and desertFIAT for their "It's a Gas" campaign. The "It's a Gas" program started as a celebration of education in the High Desert. Victorville Motors and desertFIAT wanted to change the landscape of education by providing an incentive for students to increase attendance. Now in its fifth year, more than \$10 million in additional apportionment and charitable support has been generated for our local schools and districts. Over 8,500 students have been eligible to win based on attendance, in addition to over 1,600 teachers that have been eligible since "It's a Gas to Teach Class" started two years ago.

Finally, the Presidents' Award for 2015, which recognizes a person or organization for their impact on the College, honored the Victor Valley College Foundation's 2009-2011 President, Janice Olson. It is fitting for this award to acknowledge the transformation Olson created during her tenure as president. In addition to her commitment and profound work in education, Janice has had many successes both personally and professionally. She was one of the first women to break the glass ceiling by becoming the first female department head at Homart Development Co, a development arm of Sears Roebuck. She also served as the General Manager at the Mall of Victor Valley, has been a notable speaker at women's history events that inspire and empower future women leaders, and maintains strong ties to the community through her roles at the Victor Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Victorville Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs. She is also a renowned expert on the B-17 Flying Fortress in the Pacific Theatre.



The 2016 Lip Sync Competition supported the Student Success fund. Pictured left to right: Paul & Amy Stanton, Roger & Stacy Wagner, Eric & Cindie Schmidt, Caroll & Denny Yule, and Anna & Gabe Lovato.

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Student representatives advocate for VVC

ASB travels to Washington D.C. by Abigail Ledesma



2015-2016 ASB Council with Congressman and VVC Alum, Jeff Denham.

In preparation for the American Student Association of Community Colleges (ASACC) Conference in Washington, D.C., the Victor Valley College Associated Student Body Council engaged with and advocated on behalf of the students of Victor Valley College. The student government was successful in speaking with the offices of Senator Barbara Boxer and Senator Dianne Feinstein as well as with Congressman Paul Cook and Congressman Jeff Denham.

Students discussed the importance of increasing the Pell Grant award amount to account for current and future inflation, using pre-tax dollars for student loans to decrease student debt, and reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to allow for the continuation of programs absolutely essential to student success,

such as the Pell Grant. The offices of Senator Boxer, Senator Feinstein, Congressman Cook, and Congressman Denham responded positively to the ideas presented and applauded the preparation of the student council.

Model UN receives top honors

by Kevork Kazanjian



2015-2016 Model United Nations in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations.

Victor Valley College's Model United Nations (MUN) Team successfully competed and won the Distinguished Delegation award at the National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference in New York. Sponsored by the National Collegiate Conference Association, the NMUN is the largest MUN Conference in the world.

The VVC MUN team, comprised of 13 students, performed outstandingly in representing their assigned Member State, the Republic of San Marino, in seven respective committees. Acting as delegates for San Marino, VVC MUN team won the Distinguished Delegation Award. The team award places VVC in the top 30 at this conference. VVC delegates were persistent leaders throughout the week, and exemplified models of diplomacy and cooperation.

This conference marks the 13th consecutive year that the VVC

MUN team has won at the NMUN in New York. This year, 200 universities from around the world, with 3500 students from 54 countries, representing UN delegations from 134 countries competed in the most extremely competitive NMUN conference in last 15 years.

To prepare for the NMUN Conference, VVC's MUN team competed in 5 local conferences. Our students have consistently won Outstanding Delegation Awards at the local conferences. ASB Vice President and VVC MUN Team President, Jazmin Gailey, has won two Outstanding Delegate awards at MUN conferences at UCR and the Center of International Trade and Development (CITD) MUN Conference in Riverside. She and her partner, Nathaniel Payne, were also awarded an Outstanding Position Paper Award at the conference. Olivia Warren, this year's Head Delegate for the VVC MUN Team, won three Outstanding Delegate Awards, two of which were in Security Council Committees at the College of the Canyons and the UCR MUN conferences. Warren and her partner, Donovan Shelton, they also won an Outstanding Position Paper Award at the NMUN Conference.

Renowned astrobiologist headlines upcoming lecture

by Linda Kelly

For the second year in a row, the Victor Valley College and its Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Division, will host an exciting lecture series in the Performing Arts Center. Headlining the May 5th event, is Dr. Penelope Boston, a renowned scientist who has recently been selected by NASA as the new director of their Astrobiology Institute.



Dr. Penelope Boston, Director of the Astrobiology Institute for NASA.

When she takes her post, she will be in charge of all operational aspects of the organization as well as a science community of one thousand members! NASA's announcement, made just last month, is the pinnacle of recognition for a scientist who has defined her own career by a broad spectrum of scientific interests.

"Penny" knows the value of an education! Beginning college at age 16, she took time to garner undergraduate degrees in geology, psychology, and microbiology before gathering a Masters and a PhD in both Microbiology and Atmospheric Chemistry. More than 20 years ago, she proposed the best place to look for potential life on Mars would be in the subsurface features of its Martian lava tubes and pit craters.

As someone who has explored extreme cave environments in inhospitable conditions, discovering countless novel strains of life in caves brings a whole new perspective from anything scientists can find on the surface of Earth. Apparently, NASA has taken notice of her quite possibly predictive and synthesizing perspectives about the "alien" life in the tiny planets we call caves, beneath our feet.

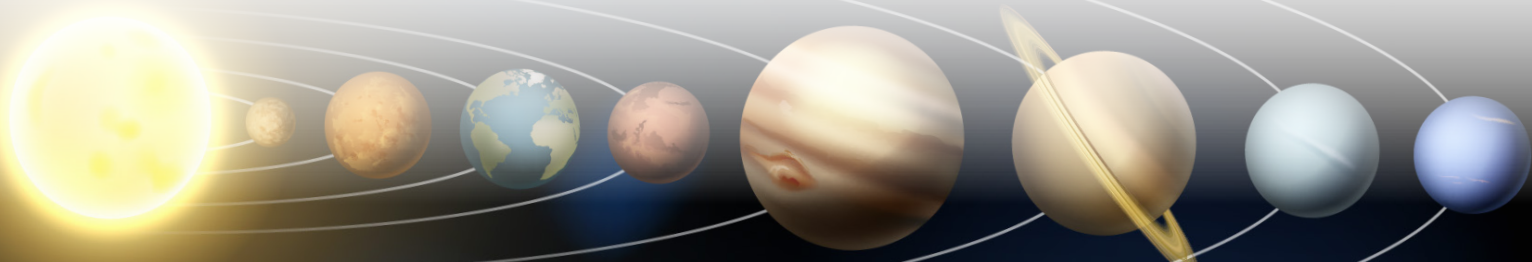
The public also recognizes the trailblazing efforts of this world-leading Astrobiologist in the search for life on alien worlds, and the value of her work. The 2008 National Geographic television documentary on Penny Boston's expedition to Giant Crystal Cave in Naica Mine, Chihuahua, Mexico, is the most highly rated National Geographic special of all time.

You can see Dr. Boston's presentation of



Dr. Penelope Boston exploring caves where she has discovered countless strains of life.

"Taking Your Family to the Subsurface of Mars to Meet ET the Extraterrestrial" at Victor Valley College's Performing Arts Center, on May 5, 2016, at 7 pm. Parking and admission are free. Arrive early as seating is limited. To learn more visit www.vvc.edu/Mars and RSVP with the number of people in your party, so accommodations can be made for overflow.



ALUMNI UPDATES

going places

Frank Castanos community education manager

VVC 2008



It's not often alumnus return to their alma mater for employment, however, Frank Castanos did just that and he is now a part of the Victor Valley College Foundation team. Frank's new position is the Contract and Community Education Manager and his responsibilities include brokering partnerships with local businesses and the community to provide a variety customized training and special interest classes. "I am proud to be working where I was once a student. I loved receiving my education at VVC and the faculty here helped keep me on my path of one day becoming a teacher." Like most students who attend VVC, Frank needed to work to pay for his tuition and books. "I really liked the flexibility of the class schedules. It helped me graduate on time." Before coming to the Foundation, Frank taught for five years at San Joaquin Valley College and was also a Technology Coach and Division Manager. He was the natural choice to fill his current role as he was already leading VVC's classes with the California State Reentry Initiative (CSRI) program for Contract Education. "It was one of the most rewarding jobs I have ever had. Being able to work with parolees who want to turn their life around was incredible to be a part of," he said. "Watching these men and women grow through the curriculum we offered, such as General Education Development (GED) or computer skills was inspiring. Many went on to secure jobs or even enroll at Victor Valley College to finish their education."

Glennis Duncan executive assistant

VVC 1990



Staying within our theme of alumni who return to work for their alma mater, next we highlight the incredibly talented Glennis Duncan. Glennis majored in Business Administration while attending Victor Valley College with an Accounting emphasis. Since 2006, she has been the Executive Assistant at the Victor Valley College Foundation, and handles all of the complex bookkeeping for the Foundation. "It is really rewarding for me to work with students and faculty," she said. "I love when they come into the Foundation office because I love helping people and seeing students excited about being awarded a scholarship or faculty and staff being awarded a campus grants to help improve their programs." Glennis was the recipient of a scholarship for business majors, provided by her professor Dr. Daniel Gossai. "I used the money to purchase books because I wasn't eligible for financial aid. So, I understand how helpful scholarships are for students today. It truly is a financial relief." One of her most memorable moments was during business and accounting classes. "When the material finally clicked, I finally knew what I wanted to do in life!"

Career LINK dream jobs

Pediatrician



NAME: Jennifer Garcia

MAJOR: Psychology

CAREER DESCRIPTION:

Pediatricians are doctors who treat babies, children, and adolescents. This role requires a specific medical knowledge and understanding of how treatments affect these different age groups. It is very important for a pediatrician to rely on visual and auditory indicators because many of their patients haven't yet fully developed communication skills. Duties include providing physical exams and recommended immunizations, along with treating illnesses, infections, and injuries. Pediatricians may work in several work environments such as private practices, hospitals, or public health clinics.

VVC PROGRAMS:

Victor Valley College can help prepare students for this track by offering a variety of programs and courses in Biology, Allied Health, and Emergency Medical Services. An associate's degree in Math/Science would prepare individuals to continue on toward their bachelor's degree and medical school requirements.

<http://www.vvc.edu/academic/biology/>

Zoologist



NAME: Amanda Callahan

MAJOR: Biology

CAREER DESCRIPTION:

Zoologists are animal biologists who study a variety of species both in their natural habitats and in a laboratory setting. A zoologist may analyze all types of data from a single insect to a band of gorillas. These scientists evaluate animal ecosystems, physical components, and behaviors. There are options of employment for these professionals. Most zoologists work for colleges and universities where they teach and perform their research. Many choose to work with government agencies on wildlife management and conservation. Others may work for private companies, museums, or zoos.

VVC PROGRAMS:

Zoology, or animal biology, is regarded as a major division of biology. VVC offers several courses in biology that could help ultimately lead to an associate's degree in Liberal Arts or Math/Science. Some of the biology courses include topics such as biology of cells, population and environment, and vertebrate zoology.

<http://www.vvc.edu/academic/biology/>

Corporate Lawyer



NAME: Faith Akpabio

MAJOR: Math & Science

CAREER DESCRIPTION:

Corporate Lawyers maintain legality of business practices and operations. To ensure that their clients and companies are operating within the boundaries of the law, corporate lawyers must have an outstanding knowledge of laws and regulations. In most cases, these lawyers work for larger corporations and may have to represent their clients to a judge and jury. To obtain this role, students must earn their Juris Doctor from a law school that is accredited by the American Bar Association along with obtaining their licensure to practice.

VVC PROGRAMS:

The pathway to this career opportunity could begin with an Associates in Arts degree with a major in Liberal Arts. VVC offers Political Science courses which lead towards an understanding of institutions of government, the role of citizens, and contemporary issues.

http://www.vvc.edu/academic/political_science/

Career LINK dream jobs

Nurse Practitioner



NAME: Josiah Salazar

MAJOR: Math & Science

CAREER DESCRIPTION:

Nurse Practitioners provide health care to patients throughout their lifespan, from premature newborns to the elderly. These professionals help promote patients to make smarter health and lifestyle choices while focusing on disease prevention, health education, and counseling. On the job duties include performing physical examinations, treating illnesses and injuries, providing immunizations, and interpreting results from tests such as X-rays, EKGs, and lab work. NPs also have the authority to prescribe medications and establish their practices independently. The demand for nurse practitioners is growing and looking promising in the coming years.

VVC PROGRAMS:

Students can obtain an associate's degree in Nursing through Victor Valley College that will start individuals on the path to be a Nursing Practitioner. This program includes fundamental topics such as risk management, health promotion, and several laboratory hands-on opportunities.

<http://www.vvc.edu/academic/nursing/>

Family Counselor



NAME: David Perez

MAJOR: Psychology

CAREER DESCRIPTION:

Family Counselors play an important role in today's society. When individuals or groups face troubling times and seek guidance, it is the duty of the counselor to help resolve the conflict from an unbiased perspective. Some of the main responsibilities include: establishing trust and discussion, recording accurate information, and prescribing proper treatment for their clients. Effective family counselors possess compassion, excellent listening skills, organization and creativity. Many counselors also supervise subordinates, host seminars, and write evaluations for court cases.

VVC PROGRAMS:

VVC offers a variety of Psychology courses covering topics from family dynamics of addiction and abuse to child development. Students can earn an associate's degree in Liberal Arts, or in Psychology for transfer if intended to complete a bachelor's degree in the related field.

<http://www.vvc.edu/academic/psychology/>

IT Security Specialist



NAME: Ceasar Juarez

MAJOR: Computer Engineering


CAREER DESCRIPTION:

Information security specialists have the main responsibility of ensuring protection to a business's computer systems and assets. These specialists define access privileges, upgrade systems, recognize issues, and make assessments for improvements. Maintaining the latest technical knowledge is important to ensuring security. Students who enjoy troubleshooting, technology, and communication should consider this as a career choice. With a strong dependence on computers and network usage, this occupation's job outlook is growing with opportunities.

VVC PROGRAMS:

An associate's degree with a major in Computer Information Systems would be a great place to start for this role. The College offers a variety of courses including computer ethics, network security, and programming.

<http://www.vvc.edu/academic/electronics/>



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