

Faculty contracts on hold

BY LUCY ARGAEZ
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The faculty at Citrus College has been working with expired contracts from the district since December. Their contract has been in the negotiation process since last Jan.

A parallel negotiation is underway for an emergency memorandum of understanding, an agreement made outside of contract negotiations for pressing issues, as a result of the faculty having to work from home. On Feb. 22, the district and the faculty association settled the MOU for the spring semester.

“We have agreed to a number of things, including how faculty evaluations are going to proceed and a small stipend for faculty,” Dave Brown, faculty bargaining chair, and automotive tech professor said in a phone interview.

Chemistry professor David Ryba said the Citrus College Faculty Association negotiators requested a detailed account of the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act money before agreeing to set a date to continue the negotiations.

Until their conditions are met, no time and date for a meeting will be set. No date and time have been set as of today.

Director of Human Resources Robert Sammis, the district’s chief negotiator, said he hopes the next round of negotiations comes to an agreement so the union and the district do not end up at an impasse.

In previous years, an impasse has resulted in the faculty picketing to receive raises and other working conditions they did not receive in the mediation process.

“I am deeply disturbed by the level of respect for faculty that I have seen from the district,” Jesus Gutierrez, a mathematics professor, said in an email interview. “In our last contract



PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXABAY

Phantom Owls

Stolen identities and false information used to commit enrollment fraud for financial aid benefits

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Citrus College is tackling enrollment fraud head-on. The college was alerted to fraudulent enrollment patterns and began to resolve the issue on March 10.

Dean of Enrollment Gerald Sequeira said in a phone interview that he believes

a potential group of people organized a large-scale enrollment scheme to commit financial aid fraud by using false information to enroll in classes at Citrus.

In a staff-wide memo sent on March 10, Citrus administrators warned about fraudulent enrollments. “Phantom students,” or students who have shown

suspicious activity in classes and have unusual identifying information, should be monitored.

“It is really complex what they are doing if they managed to fool the department of education and the FAFSA process; it’s sophisticated enough that it is not being flagged as odd,” Sequeira said.

Vice President of Academic

Affairs Joumana McGowan and Vice President of Student Services Rick Rams alerted faculty to the issue on March 10 in an email. They instructed faculty to track attendance on synchronous courses, track assignments and create check-in posts on Canvas to find and drop inactive students to

Read FRAUD, Page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH

Vaccines unlikely

Logistics and red tape makes Citrus’ interest in becoming a vaccination site out of reach

BY MEKHELA GHEBREHIWET
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Citrus College Director of Human Resources Robert Sammis issued a memo to the campus community on Jan. 26 exploring the likelihood of whether the campus should become a vaccination site.

In order for Citrus to become a vaccination site, it would not only have to enroll in the federal COVID-19 Vaccination Program, but also follow complex rules and regulations such as emergency

management of adverse reactions, record-keeping and waste and disposal.

“Currently, the college does not have the capability to meet all requirements to be a vaccination site,” Sammis said.

The major issue at hand is still the number of vaccines available for use.

“In conversation with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, we have been told that the current issue is not a limited number of vaccination

Read VACCINE, Page 4

Opinion

Taking care of brother: the days I love the most

BY LUCY ARGAEZ
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Laughter erupts from his pizza-filled mouth as we watch the Disney movie *Zombies* on the couch. Gavin stuffs his mouth with another slice of pizza before his favorite song comes on, jumping onto the couch while singing and dancing to the song "Someday."

The sounds of laughter and the look on his face when he remembers all the words make me burst out laughing. He lets himself fall back on the couch, waking his now-cranky cat Oliver. Gavin takes yet another bite and looks at the screen, anticipating his favorite scene in a movie we have seen a thousand times.

When he is done eating, he picks up Oliver and watches the rest of the movie wrapped up in a blanket with him. These are the times that make taking care of my 10 years younger brother all worth it. It reminds me that not everything is bad, and that for these small moments nothing else matters but having fun with my little brother. He makes me feel normal.

Gavin is like other kids for the most part. He has dreams, expectations, sadness, anger, worries, curiosity and happiness constantly swirling around in his head. The things that make him different make him special.

Things have been hard for him from the beginning. He was born with a cleft lip and palate and has undergone various surgeries. As a result, he has speech and hearing issues. Gavin also has ADHD, so I do my best to keep up his confidence and make sure he's comfortable.

He used to ask my mother and me why he was born different and why he couldn't be like the other kids. Since I began taking care of him, I got him to embrace his differences. He doesn't want to be anyone else anymore: he just wants to be Gavin.

I get to see his normal childhood in bits and pieces. I wonder how different it would be if we could safely go outside. How different would he be if he got to visit friends or be in a classroom?

The bond we have grew stronger as a result of everything we went through. Taking care of him made me stronger. I don't know what I would do without him.

As the older sister, I was supposed to be a built-in babysitter and watch him grow up. It reminds me of growing up and being cared for by my grandmother.

When she got sick and we lost her last July, everything in my life changed. She took care of me for the majority of my life. I had never known a life without her.

I remember she would tell me, "Me recordarás cuando tengas a alguien a quien cuidar."

(You're going to remember me when you have someone to take care of.) I never got to tell her how right she was, or how many times a day I think of her and the lessons she taught me.

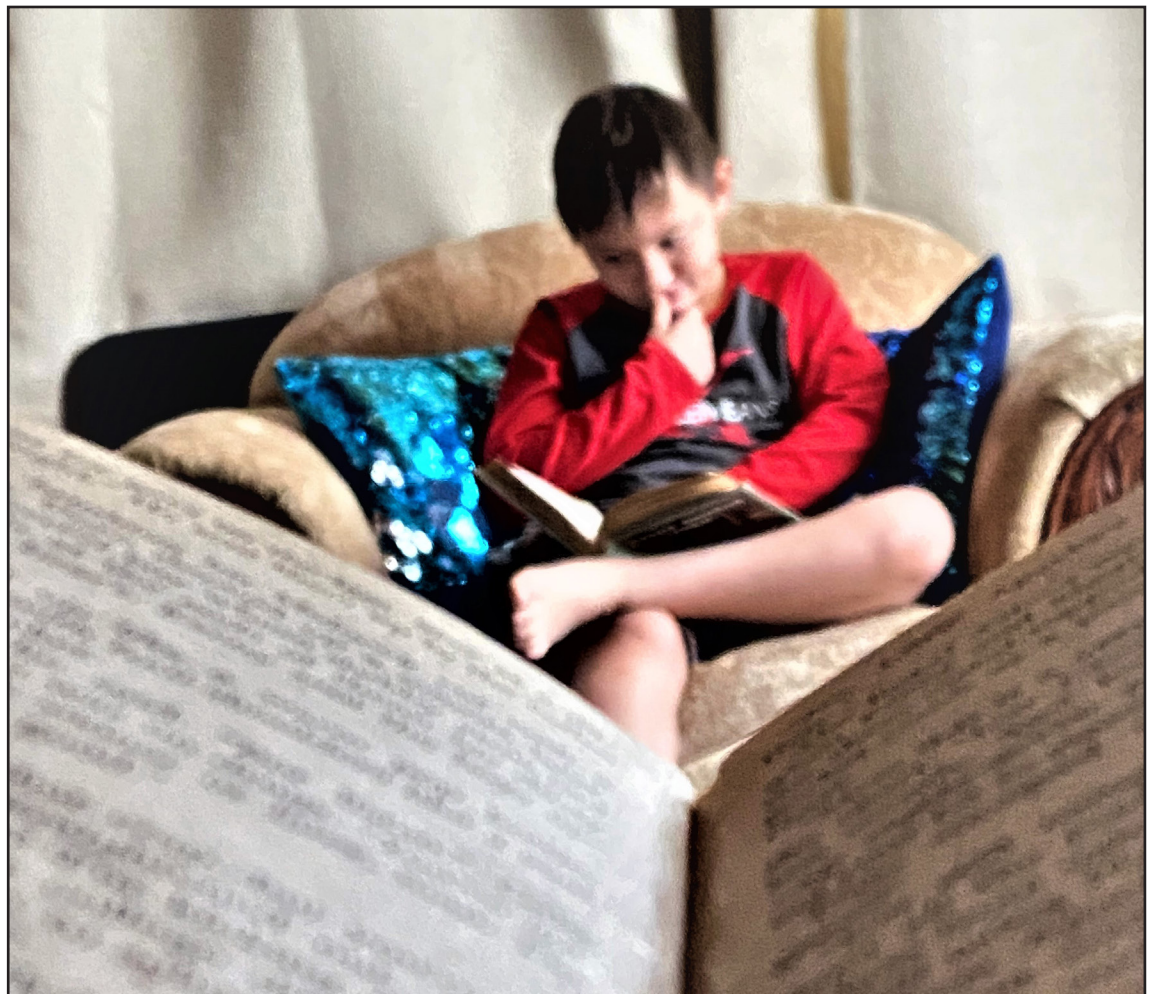
After her passing, the responsibility of taking care of my brother fell onto me. My family now relies on me to feed, nurture, teach and take care of my brother while my parents are working.

It is common in Latino communities for the oldest sibling to become like a third parent. I just thought it would be different; I didn't know how big the responsibility would be. Just babysitting him wouldn't seem so bad, but I understand why parents pull their hair out after being locked inside with a kid for a year.

In addition to his classes, Gavin has occupational, speech and deaf or hard-of-hearing therapy three times a week. He also has dental appointments every month to check his progress for braces.

I struggle to get him to go to everything all the time because it is a lot for a kid. As much as I hate it, we fight a lot. A big part of it is having two big personalities locked in a room together.

As a result, I am often torn



LUCY ARGAEZ - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gavin Argaez reads "Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark" by Alvin Schwartz on the couch.

between being a sister and acting as a parental figure. I have a responsibility to my mom and to Gavin to get him through his classes, meetings, homework and just the day sometimes.

Growing up during a pandemic will have traumatic effects on everyone, but I want my brother to come out stronger than I will. I will worry more. I feel like I will always have a sense of panic when things don't seem right and feel like something bad is always around the corner.

I won't let him come out with those same worries and fears. My job as his big sister and his unofficial third parent is to make sure he comes out OK. He will be stronger than anyone I have ever known.

Through all the pain he has been through, Gavin always

comes out smiling. I let him play video games and make a TikTok so he can feel more connected to kids his age. I think under all the stress people face every day like loss, money problems, sickness and school, we forget that kids see it all.

I convinced my mom to get him a cat, which surprisingly doesn't like anyone but him. He won't know what it's like to make friends at the park that you never see again or hug his best friends on the last day of second grade, but he will know what it is to have a companion and be loved very much at home.

Gavin copes by learning about the world around him, and that is one of the things I enjoy teaching him. He has learned about the pandemic and politics and even went up to my mom when she

got home one night to yell "Black Lives Matter!" before abruptly walking away.

The hardship makes it worth it if I can keep teaching him how to be a good person. I will teach him to care a little more about other people, just like my grandma taught me.

Through all the craziness, I still want him to be a kid. I still want him to have campouts in the living room, stay up too late, pig out on junk food, go on adventures, skip school on his bad days and just have fun.

These are the days I love most because I don't feel the crushing weight of familial responsibility to contribute to his development. These are the days I can just be his sister, and I can feel how much these moments truly matter.

Opinion

Academic Pathways remove flexibility from community college

En route to an educational journey, is one way the right way?

BY LUCY ARGAEZ
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College is meant to be a time of discovery where you can dive into new opportunities, careers and vocations. The new guided pathways program could potentially take that away from students.

Guided Pathways is a new academic program that would allow students to get through their classes, graduate and transfer faster by detailing what classes they need to take, a course map, and counseling for those courses.

The only problem with that is students are not allowed to explore other careers or



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH

interests. Should leaving community college quickly be the goal? Or should it be to really decide what you want to do while taking the time to grow your interests?

Although the new academic pathways program could help people who have selected majors they are certain about graduate faster, it does a disservice to those students who are not completely

married to their majors.

With this new program, students will have to undergo check-ins with counselors and have meetings to ensure they stay on track with their curated

class schedules. However, there is no room for students to find other interests if they are sticking to a plan.

We have seen college as a place to continue education and prepare ourselves for a career, but maybe we need to see it as a place where you can take time to decide on what you want. You should be able to be a political science major who also wants to take a human genetics course.

Students should take the time they need and go at their own pace to find what makes them happy and pursue it. College should be a place where we pursue our varied interests and prepare ourselves for careers.

Without taking different courses and having the flexibility to pursue other interests, how will students discover what they want to pursue as a career if they haven't decided yet? What if they change their minds later and regret it?

Citrus decides to opt out of spring sports

BY JUSTIN GEORGE
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Due to health and safety concerns caused by COVID-19, Citrus College decided to opt out of Spring II California Community College Athletic Association 2021 sports competitions.

The Spring II competitive season starts on April 10 and ends on June 23.

Assistant Athletic Director and Head Softball Coach Jackie Boxley said that baseball, softball, men's golf and swimming would normally be in session right now.

Dean of Kinesiology and Athletics Junior Domingo did not reply to requests for comment between Feb. 26 and March 17.

The decision was made in accordance with state and county guidelines to protect the health of student-athletes and coaches, Citrus College

Athletics said in a Feb. 26 press release.

"It's a bummer for our student-athletes," Boxley said in a phone interview. She said student-athletes have expressed both frustration and understanding for the current COVID-19 situation.

Boxley said that some student-athletes are tasked with balancing work and athletics. "Priorities are starting to change for some of them as well, which is tough because this is a huge part of their life," Boxley said.

Having a routine is a crucial part of student athletics and without it, Boxley said many student-athletes are struggling to stay motivated.

"A lot of it is reminding ourselves that our body is our tool and we need to maintain it," Boxley said.

The press release states that Citrus College Athletics continues to work with Citrus College's COVID-19 workgroup



CLARION FILE

with hopes of developing a plan to safely resume competitions later in the spring semester.

"We apologize for the inconveniences that this decision poses to each of our student-athletes," Citrus

College Athletics said. "We understand the implications and impacts that this has on our student-athletes, both with their academic and athletic goals."

Boxley wants student-athletes to remember that their

coaches are still there for them.

"Hang in there," Boxley said. "Use us, reach out to us, call us, stay in contact. Stay active, there's still going to be a future. Remember what the big picture is."



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE HAUGH

Review

We Banjo 3 debut new song in livestream concert

Haugh Performing Arts Center sold tickets to live virtual concert performed by an Irish and bluegrass string quartet

BY BRANDON JATICO
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After a year of not performing, the traditional Irish and bluegrass string quartet We Banjo 3 played a virtual concert on March 13 at the Pearse Lyons Distillery in Dublin, Ireland.

A portion of the proceeds from tickets purchased through the Haugh website went towards supporting that venue.

We Banjo 3 gave a stellar performance with high-quality audio and video, which made the virtual concert a great experience. The group had remarkable vocal harmonization and performed with great synchronization, giving the audience a great show.

We Banjo 3 and their production company Tiny Ark were able to create a virtual event that avoided feeling as lonely and isolated as other virtual events.

The concert was livestreamed, allowing fans from all over the world to join. Fans shouted out their locations in the live chat, making what would have been an isolated show a welcoming and connected international experience.

"You are tuning in from a lot of different parts in the world," guitarist David Howley said. "We have people from England, Ireland, Scotland, America; we even have

some people over in Japan and all across Europe as well."

Not only was the audience connected with each other, but with the help of a live screen of the chat being shown in real time, We Banjo 3 was able to connect and interact with the audience as well.

They did so by playing song requests from fans including "Little Liza Jane" and "Pressed for Time." Fans enjoyed hearing their song requests, and many of them

commented about dancing at home and how happy they were to finally see some live music.

We Banjo 3 even surprised their audience with a new song "Hummingbird Love," as their fans praised and cheered.

If you are looking for a great Irish experience to celebrate this St. Patrick's Day, make sure to check out and support We Banjo 3.

Preview

Citrus College hosts first virtual Men of Color Conference

BY MEKHELA GHEBREHIWET
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The Citrus College Men of Color mentor program plans to provide male students of color with support, guidance and encouragement. The first annual Men of Color conference will be

held on March 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Being involved in such a program could provide pathways to opportunities such as college support services, internships and leadership possibilities. The deadline to register to attend is March 19.

The mentor program's statement

of purpose is to empower, inform and value students through the development of a network within the college community. All gatherings are said to be a safe space for male students of color to express their experiences and make meaningful connections.

The panelists are: Jorge Acosta and Rafael Herrera from

Counseling; Kinesiology and Athletics Dean Junior Domingo; mathematics and business faculty member Levi Richard; automotive technology faculty member Mariano Rubio and Raul Sanchez from EOPS/CARE and CalWORKS.

Multiple scholarships for \$500 will be awarded at the conference to students who are enrolled in a

minimum of 6 units and have a commitment to be kind and lend a helping hand to others.

For more information on the conference, please email menofcolor@citruscollege.edu.

CONTRACT from Page 1

negotiation, not this negotiation cycle, we had to picket to just see a temporary raise. A temporary raise that is now expired since we refused to approve the last, best and final offer."

The district extended a contract offer in December and the faculty voted against it by a 2-1 margin. As of today, the current proposed

contract from the district provides no raises for the next three years and does not allow the faculty union an opportunity to negotiate for raises for the next two years.

"Faculty is not insisting on more money; they just did not want to agree to not talk about it," Brown said. "What we wanted was a re-opener so that we would be able to talk about potential raises in future years."

FRAUD from Page 1

These "phantom students" use stolen identities and falsified information in an effort to obtain financial aid funds.

Rams said in a phone interview that the school's method of tracking students should help prevent the funds from being received by fraudulent students.

There has been a total of 48 confirmed "phantom students," and the number of classes affected is still unknown, Sequeira said.

Sequeira said someone reached out to Citrus from out of state saying their identity had been stolen, registered to Citrus and had a completed FAFSA application.

Without further information, the financial impact of these "phantom students" is still unknown.

"This is a growing issue of concern to all community colleges and I am especially grateful to our Student Services, Financial Aid, Academic Affairs and Technology leadership teams who with the help of our faculty and staff are addressing this matter in a most proactive manner," Superintendent/President Dr. Geraldine Perri said in a March 12 email interview. "I am confident that they will continue to monitor the situation and take swift action to prevent a growing problem and report the matter to the appropriate agencies for their review and action."

VACCINE from Page 1

sites but the extremely limited availability of the vaccine," Sammis said.

The people being vaccinated are mainly over 65 years old and essential healthcare workers. As of Feb. 25, 1.9 million doses of the vaccine have been issued.

According to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, education and childcare workers and food and agriculture workers residing in L.A. County are eligible to be vaccinated as of March 1 under Tier 1 Phase 1B. This creates an additional million people in line to be vaccinated.

"Even if the college were able to become a vaccination site, it would be unable to focus exclusively on employees and students; rather, the vaccination site would have to open to anyone in the current tier approved for a vaccination," Sammis said.

Although Citrus employees are now eligible to get vaccinated under phase 1B, the number of vaccines available are still very limited.

"Bear in mind that vaccination parameters may very well change over the next few weeks and months, primarily due to the desire to get as many people vaccinated and the reality of a severely limited vaccine supply," Sammis said in the memo.

Johnson & Johnson's vaccine

has been released and is beginning to be dispersed among Americans with President Biden's help in increasing the supply. He invoked the Defense Production Act, expediting materials to assist in vaccine production.

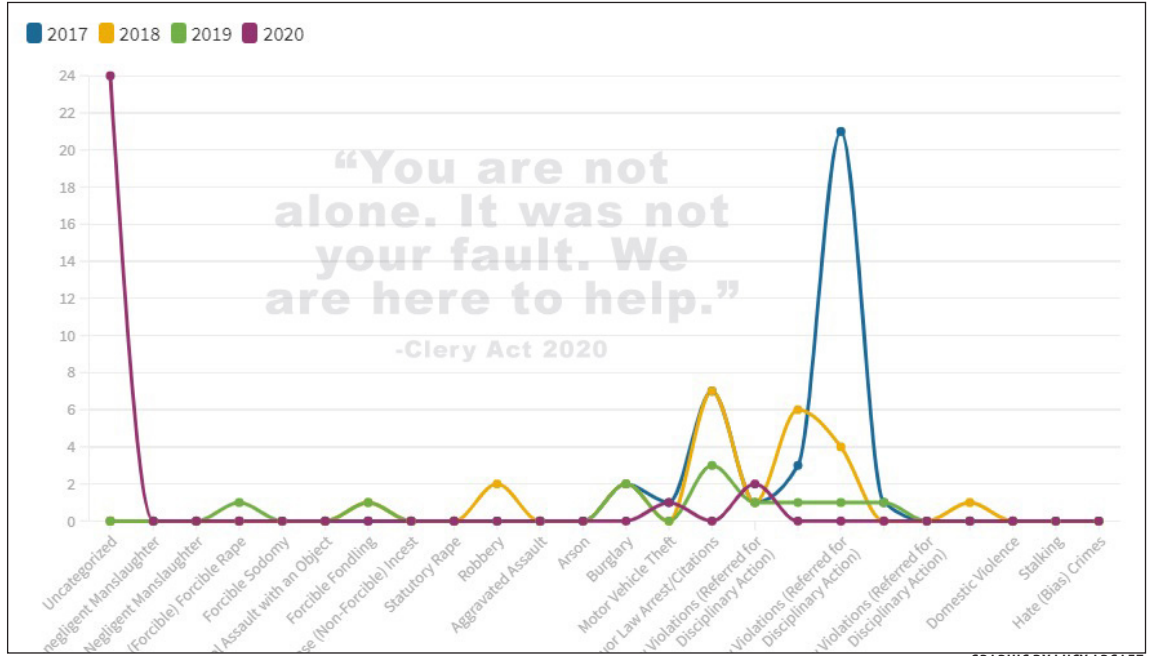
"An administration official said Johnson & Johnson's latest goal is to produce 94 million doses of its single-shot vaccine by the end of May — that is about 7 million doses ahead of the schedule in its contract, which calls for delivery of 87 million doses by the end of May and the full 100 million by the end of June," an article by Christopher Rowland and Laurie McGinley of the Washington Post said on March 3.

The J&J vaccine is a single dose vaccine and does not require the level of refrigeration the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require, making access and distribution easier.

"Unlike the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, it can be stored for up to three months at regular refrigerator temperatures, so it's easier to distribute to more places. And you're fully vaccinated after just one dose," Maria Godoy of NPR said on March 4.

The Center for Disease Control's website has the most up to date information for the latest and most accurate information on COVID-19 vaccinations.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>



Campus crime down

The Clery Act and info provided in the 2020 Campus Safety crime log shows a decline in crimes since 2017

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The Clery Act and the weekly crime log for 2020 released by Campus Safety for Citrus College reveal an overall decrease in reported violations over the past four years.

Head of campus security Benjamin Macias did not respond to interview requests. He was sent four emails from Feb. 2 to 22.

The Clery Act for Citrus College requires higher education institutions to give timely warnings of crimes that represent a threat to the safety of students or employees and to make public their campus security policies. The information is also sent to U.S. Department of Education. The weekly crime log is information disclosed regarding incident reports, occurrences and classifications that happen on campus.

Liquor law arrests: As reported by the Clery Act, the highest number of liquor law arrests totaled seven each year from 2017 to 2018. The number of liquor law arrests in 2019 decreased to three. Liquor law arrests are at

an all-time low as reported by the weekly crime log for 2020 where zero liquor law arrests occurred.

Liquor law violations: Liquor law violations have remained constant, with one case reported each year from 2017-2020.

Drug Arrests: Drug law arrests have increased in the past year. Three drug law arrests were made in 2017, six in 2018, one in 2019, and two in 2020.

Drug law violations: Drug law violations were highest in 2017 at 21 offenses. The offenses decreased over the next two years, with four offenses in 2018 and one in 2019. However, in 2020 there were two violations.

Burglary: Another trend in the data shows two instances of burglaries each year over the past four years spanning from 2017-2020.

Robberies: In 2018, two robberies were reported on campus; these were the only robberies in the past four years.

Theft: Over the past year, the amount of theft on campus has increased compared to previous years. In 2020, seven petty thefts were reported on campus. The Clery Act report shows zero instances of petty theft reported

in the previous three years.

Sexual Offenses: Based on what was reported in the Clery Act, sexual offenses on campus hit a peak in 2019. From 2018-19, there were two instances of forcible fondling, with one case being reported each year. There was also an instance of forcible rape in 2019. One instance of dating violence was reported in 2018.

Other crimes: One motor vehicle theft and one grand theft was in the 2020 annual security report. There was an increase in trespassing and vandalism since the campus closure last March. Also, eight reports of vandalism, one instance of damaging district property, three reports of trespassing, one case of obstruction and another case of resisting arrest were reported. Two weapon law arrests on campus were reported in the past three years: one in 2017 and the other in 2019. In 2020, there was an assault with a deadly weapon and criminal threats on campus. No other weapon law arrests or violations were reported.

MARCH & APRIL WORKSHOPS

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday
22	23	24 2 P.M. STAYING ORGANIZED UNDER PRESSURE	25 2:30 P.M. CANVAS WORKSHOP FOR STUDENTS
29 1:20 P.M. UNDOCU-ALLY TRAINING SESSION 1 PART 1	30 3 P.M. UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY & DEPRESSION	31 1:20 P.M. UNDOCU-ALLY TRAINING SESSION 1 PART 2	01
05	06 12 P.M. SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS WORKSHOP 3 P.M. SETTING YOUR GOALS & GETTING STARTED	07 2 P.M. RECOGNIZING HEALTHY V.S. UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS	08
09	10	11	12
HAPPY SPRING BREAK			

FOR MORE INFORMATION & REGISTRATION, VISIT www.citruscollege.edu/stdntsvr/studentaffairs/Lists/StudentCalendar/calendar.aspx

CITRUS COLLEGE CLARION

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