

West Hills College All Class Reunion, Celebrating 75 years

West Hills Community College District will host an all class reunion on Saturday, April 26, 2008, in the West Hills College Coalinga gymnasium from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“We are really excited about the all class reunion,” said Barbara Caganich, executive director of the West Hills Community College Foundation. “Our hope is to create an event where individuals affiliated with West Hills can come together and celebrate the history of our district.”

The reunion will include tours of the two campuses and the North District Center, Firebaugh, lunch and key note speakers. All West Hills’ alumni, faculty, staff and friends are invited to participate in this day of celebrating 75 years of service to the San Joaquin Valley.

Admission to the all class reunion is free. A buffet style lunch will be served. Lunch tickets are on sale now and can be purchased through the West Hills Community College Foundation by calling Karen at (559) 934-2127. There is a discounted price for early bird purchases until Feb. 29, 2008. The last day to purchase lunch tickets is April 11, 2008.

The all class reunion is sponsored by Educational Employees Credit Union, Pepsi and West Hills Community College Foundation.



Coalinga College Class of 1939, graduates pose in front of Coalinga High School, the college’s home until 1954

WHCCD Considering School Facility Districts

Making plans for the future is always on the agenda for the West Hills Community College District Board of Trustees and, as one of the fastest growing districts in the state, those plans include new buildings and facilities.

Paying for those new improvements is a challenge that the district is exploring with the help of possible school facility improvement districts, according to Mark McKean, a Riverdale farmer and president of the board.

Essentially, McKean said, a SFID is a designated area of the district where voters decide on a possible tax increase in their area with all funds generated staying in that area.

“At this point,” McKean said, “the board is considering creating three SFIDs in WHCCD district—one centered in Firebaugh, another in Lemoore and one in Coalinga.”

At its November and December meetings, the board heard presentations by representatives of Dale Scott & Company, a firm from San Francisco specializing in SFIDs.

Ray Giles outlined the process for trustees and presented a timeline for actions that would take the district up to a June 8, 2008, election.

McKean said that if the SFID method is pursued, the district would probably place the measure on the Firebaugh/Mendota area ballot first. If approved at a projected tax rate of \$18.75 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation, the district could raise \$12 million. That money would be used for a local match, which would probably be combined with State higher education bond monies to provide \$36 million for construction at the North District Center, Firebaugh and in other communities in the area.

The board heard additional information at its December meeting from Jon Isom from Dale Scott but no action was taken. Board members asked for additional information from Isom.



Mark McKean, Riverdale farmer and president of the WHCCD board

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Stratford Women Share Journey to Become Teachers

Four Stratford women have an exceptional, and emotional, tale to tell about their road to becoming teachers for the Reef-Sunset School District, which serves Avenal and Kettleman City.

Zariana Camacho, Rafaela Llamas, Adelina Mora and Christina Meza are all neighbors and related not just by blood and marriage but also by their voyage to become teachers—a voyage with a send off that they attribute to Tom Hewitt, the now-retired principal at Stratford Elementary School where they all worked as teachers' aides.

A fifth woman, Cynthia Mora, is mid-way through the process of becoming a teacher and is a close part of the group.

Rafaela, the first to begin the journey, was working as an aide when Mr. Hewitt encouraged her to apply for a Kings County para-professional program that would pay all college expenses for her to become a teacher.

With two young children and a husband who counted on her being available, she was hesitant—but Mr. Hewitt persisted. She enrolled in classes at West Hills College Lemoore, found success in the education classes taught by James Preston and the rest is history—repeated four more times.

Adelina was next. She missed the deadline for applying for the para-professional program and Mr. Hewitt reminded her the following application cycle.

She, the group contends, is the rock. Through the tough times of dealing with marriages, small children, working long hours in two and sometimes three jobs at a time, Adelina was the shoulder to cry on, the person who took extra notes, or the one who drove them when they had car trouble.

"No matter how tired she was," Rafaela says, "she was always there for us."

She was also the least confident that she could succeed in college.

"I knew I wanted to be a teacher but I didn't think I could do it," she said. "I took classes right out of high school and I didn't succeed."

But succeed she did.

She said she kept hearing about this Mr. Preston. "Mr. Preston did this and Mr. Preston did that. I didn't think I was ever going to be able to take a class from him because I worked mornings when he taught."

But Mr. Hewitt stepped in and allowed her the flexibility to take a class from Mr. Preston and she joined the chorus of Mr. Preston's singers of praise.

Mr. Hewitt held graduation parties for the women and even sent them money when times were tough.

"I couldn't quit because of Mr. Hewitt," Adelina said.

Zariana says she always knew she wanted to be a teacher.

"My grandmother was a teacher in Mexico," she says. Now her son aspires to be an astronaut and she tells him that college makes anything possible.



Stratford teachers (l. t. r.) Zariana Camacho, Cynthia Mora, Rafaela Llamas, Adelina Moya and Christina Meza.

Christina, the quietest of the group, says that she and her friends are now giving back some of what they got.

"Our teachers cared about us. They stayed in touch. We became a family and now it's time to give some of that back.

"We knew we were going to be good teachers because we cared so much. We are so much more than teachers out in that community (Avenal). It feels good to be that way.

"We love the kids and the community. The parents are appreciative. We understand them because we came from the same place—our parents were low income farm workers. We want to give back."

Cynthia, the youngest in the group, is now enrolled in an 18-month liberal arts program offered by Fresno Pacific University on the campus of West Hills

College Lemoore. No surprise. Mr. Preston told her about it.

"My goal was to go to Chico State," she says. She did go to San Francisco State for a while but came back to Stratford. After all, it's home. And it's where her sister, Adelina; her sister-in-law Zariana and her cousin, Christina, are all there to support her in her quest to be a teacher.

Spring semester classes start Jan. 14th—enroll today

A new semester kicks off Monday, January 14th, at West Hills College but there's still time to apply for admission and enroll in classes.

The district website, westhillscollge.com, offers 24/7 service to students including admissions applications, college catalogs and class schedules.

For those who need a more personal touch, Xtreme Registration is planned for Friday, Jan. 11th from 6 p.m. to midnight at West Hills College Lemoore. Faculty and staff members will be on hand to assist students with the enrollment process and counselors and advising specialists will meet with students on a first come/first serve basis. Placement tests will also be given that night.

This will be the third Xtreme Registration event at WHCL. As with the previous two, food and entertainment will also be featured along with a host of prizes including iPods, gift certificates and pen drives.

Comedian Phil Van Tee will appear at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m.



Discover the enriching experience of learning and improve your Spanish in **Costa Rica**

March 13th - March 22nd

Immerse yourself in the beauty, history, culture and language of Spanish in Spring 2008. Short term classes will begin at West Hills College Lemoore, Coalinga/Firebaugh and continue in Heredia, Costa Rica.

Program Fee \$1,795, includes round trip air and ground transportation, hotel and two meals per day

For more information contact Raquel Rodriguez at 934-2218 or raquelrodriguez@westhillscollge.com or Connie Flores at 934-2223 or connieflores@westhillscollge.com



Greg Delano is a Teacher who is Making a Difference

His classroom looks like someone's living room and his students recite Delano's Code about their own self-worth on a daily basis.

The values inherent in his Jesuit-based Georgetown University undergraduate education shine through in

conversation and in his quest to have his Coalinga High School students develop a sense of their own worth.

Delano was recently honored by Teacher's Insurance Plan of Connecticut as California's "Teacher of the Year."

As an adjunct instructor for West Hills College, those values also following him to college philosophy and comparative religion classes that he teaches. He's one of about 170 part-time WHC teachers who bring their outside experience into the college classroom.

Knowledge, spirit and enthusiasm are evident in Delano, and his youthful appearance belies a 25-year teaching career that started in Harlem. He has also taught in his native Connecticut and in San Diego.

His wife, Katie, is a Hanford native and the daughter of retired Kings County Superior Court Judge John O'Rourke. Their quest for reasonably-priced housing brought them to Coalinga almost 20 years ago.

Speaking about his experience as a teacher he says, "An enormous part of the struggle is inspiring students to have some vision for their lives and to have them understand that they have power within them."

His "Delano's Code" was established to help inspire them.

"The cardinal virtue of ancient Greece, as well as our present day democracy, is the power within the individual," he says.

"There is potential within every human being. We should teach this."

He talks of dealing with troubled students on a daily basis and using the words of the code to empower them and give them hope for a better future.

"I saw dead bodies as I walked to school in Harlem," he adds, "and I had students recite the code."

His Coalinga students are also challenged with hurdles in life. On a daily basis, he says, he tries to help students whose families are impacted by drugs and alcohol, physical abuse and poverty.

"There is potential within every human being," he says, noting that his Delano's Code is a foundation for teaching. "Our job is to inspire students and plant seeds. It's wonderful to have your students surpass you."

Notes from current and former students give a hint of his gift in the classroom:

"I want to tell you thank you for being such a great teacher and encouraging me to be better than I thought I could be...I hope your students value the rare instruction they are receiving from you."-Avril, now a Ph.D. student at the University of Memphis who is taking courses on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Global Ethics and Plato's Republic.

"Thank you for giving us the ability to feel like an adult, and for everything you are teaching us,"-Amber.

But Delano claims to be no different from his peers.

"I can't differentiate myself from other members of the staff (at Coalinga High School). They have energy, a love of learning, depth to their study and they pursue excellence."



Greg Delano, Coalinga High, named California Teacher of the Year—Adjunct at WHCC

Al Graves Returns to WHCC 40 Years after Graduation

Al Graves moved 19 times between the third and eleventh grades. Before he graduated from Riverdale High School in 1963, he had attended four different high schools—one of them at three different times.

From 1950 to 1955 his family lived in a homemade trailer with no bathroom. "But only six kids were still at home at the time," he says. The three oldest were already gone.

His sister's favorite statement is, "We weren't poor when we were kids--everyone else was."

Despite the poverty, the moving, living in a trailer until he was 21 and the other challenges faced by the Graves family, Al says education was always valued. If he didn't do well his mother yelled.

"She made me learn to spell Europe when I was six," he fondly remembers.

Maybe learning to spell the name of one of the continents at an early age helped but he says he developed a love of geography from Mr. Bennett, his middle school social studies teacher in Gardena, in Southern California.

That love of learning led him to West Hills College Coalinga, Fresno State and eventually to a Ph.D. in geography from UCLA.

After finishing the Ph.D., Al taught at Northern Arizona University for a year before leaving academics for a career in agriculture, fund development and investment advising.

In 2002, he dusted off the doctoral dissertation and turned it into a book on the migration and settlement of the Azorean Portuguese in the San Joaquin Valley, which was published by Portuguese Heritage Publications.

The first half of the book, he says, comes from his dissertation but the second half is more humanistic and attempts to introduce families and explain the essence of Portuguese settlement in California.

Over the years, Graves dabbled in teaching. After finishing the book, he decided he would spend the rest of his life teaching part-time rather than returning to the

bank. He started teaching online classes at West Hills. That led to a full-time position he accepted last October at West Hills College Coalinga.

"I mix sales and teaching in everything I do," he says. "It's part of who I am. You have to sell students on the idea of doing a good job and then you have to teach them how to do it."

Reflecting on his student days at West Hills, Al said that Rodney Fitch, for whom the WHCC library is named, made a huge impression. He also remembers serving as associated student body president in 1965, about the same time as now-retired WHCC geography instructor Dave Hedgecock, who had followed him as ASB president in 1966.

The campus exterior doesn't look much different from when he graduated back in the mid-60s. "It looks as clean and neat as it did then. But inside you notice the difference. Everything is modern with up-to-date technology in every classroom."

The students he finds in today's classrooms at West Hills are open to learning but young and inexperienced. When they leave, he wants them to be inquisitive and energized.

While starting a new career at a time when most people are planning retirement, Al says that his main reason is, "I like people. I don't care whether they're young or old. I believe that every person is capable of doing 10 or 12 times more than they are aware. I like to think that I have a faithful view of the student's capabilities—not a cynical view."



WHCC Launches Career of U.S. Forest Service Manager

Abel Camarena was a Coalinga boy who had never ventured far from home. In 1968, when it came time to go to college, West Hills College Coalinga seemed like a good fit.

“My family didn’t travel much,” he said, “I was a home body and so it was good to start out there. It was just right for me.

“It was a place where I could be at home and figure out what I wanted to do.”

But the college motto, “Once you go here, you can go anywhere,” certainly held true for the small-town boy who was very competitive academically but wasn’t ready to take on the world.

West Hills helped launch Camarena’s 34-year career with the U.S. Forest Service. That career has taken him throughout the western U.S. as a Forest Service wildlife biologist and manager. He is retiring this month as a deputy regional forester—one of three executive team members watching over forest and grasslands in six national forests covering 21 million acres in Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma and his now home state of New Mexico.

Camarena reminisced about his memories of attending his hometown college.

“It was the late 60s,” he said, “and it was small with a homey environment. Several of my high school classmates were also there but it also gave me an opportunity to connect with students from all over the world.

“There were these two guys from Hong Kong, both Chinese, who were real pistols (academically). The got straight A’s and I tried hard too.

“There were Hawaiians who did traditional dances,” a memory he recalls while talking about his role in the Falconaires, a musical group that traveled to high

schools in the area showcasing West Hills and its programs.

Music has always been important to Camarena and he says that West Hills nourished his passion for music.

It also introduced him to his wife of 38 years, the former Kathryn Chase, who grew up in Avenal and was a music major at West Hills.

“I didn’t marry her for her voice but she sure can play the flute,” he jokes.

From West Hills, Camarena transferred to U.C. San Diego for a year and then on to Humboldt State where he obtained a degree in wildlife management.

He joined the Forest Service as a summer seasonal worker in 1973 in Klamath National Forest and rose through the ranks over the years at positions in Northern California, Oregon and New Mexico.

Moving to New Mexico in 1994, he served for six years as supervisor of Gila National Forest, one of the nation’s largest and most scenic year-round recreation areas. It is famous for being the home of Apache leader Geronimo.

He started his current assignment in the regional Forest Service office in 2000 and plans to continue to live in the area after retirement.

“New Mexico has become our home,” he said, “but we have seven grandchildren and spend time with them in Tucson and Mesa, Arizona.”

Camarena said they also frequently visit the San Joaquin Valley. His mother, Mary Nevarez, lives in

Lemoore now and Kathryn’s parents, Mary Lou and Hillis Chase, live in Hanford.

And he also plans to pursue his musical passion. He’s taken up fiddling and looks forward to taking his talent to shut-ins in nursing homes.

And then there are the “his and hers” motorcycles.

“There are lots of open roads,” he says of New Mexico.

West Hills provided a good launching ground for

Abel Camarena. Hard work and determination have taken him over many miles in a career of public service. Retirement offers new adventures.

“Once you go here, you can go anywhere,” has certainly held true.



Abel Camarena remembers the 60s at WHCC

International Students Enjoy Small College Atmosphere

Jozef Mondec and Martina Ivarsson make up two-thirds of the student government leadership team at West Hills College Coalinga and they represent a group that is becoming more and more visible on campus each semester—international students.

Far from their homes in Sweden, Jozef and Martina, at 29 and 24, are a little older than most of the 120 WHCC international students but their ages reflect the average local student age of 27. “When I was 17 or 18, I didn’t realize the importance of education,” Jozef says.

Jozef, who is ASB vice president, learned about West Hills from his best friend, Frank Sjoberg, who graduated from WHCC and is now a student at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. Jozef and Martina are hoping to follow him there.

“I have had one of the best experiences of my life at West Hills,” Jozef says. “Being involved with associated student body, planning events, making new friends, meeting new people...It has far surpassed what I expected.

“Even though it’s a small college, the opportunities are actually bigger if you want to do things. This is a great place for your first year—especially for international students who want to experience American society.”



International students Jozef Mondec and Martina Ivarsson

Martina adds, “This is a good school because classes are small and you get a lot of help if you want it.”

Tutors, disabled students services and instructors who are willing to help outside of class are all things Martina says make the West Hills’ experience special. She also notes that working on campus has been a good experience too.

The couple, who first met in Sweden, has also enjoyed the opportunity to go on field trips—Gilroy for shopping, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Yosemite.

“These are places I’ve read about but I just couldn’t imagine that I could be there. We’ve experience so much in two years,” Martina says.

“What I’m going to remember are the people,” she adds. “I will be in touch with them for a long time. We were invited to Thanksgiving with a local family—you can never replace that.”

Jozef, who hopes to one day own his own company, says that his business classes at WHCC have been amazing.

While listing several favorite instructors—Sarah Shepard, Scott Sutherland, Jim Grant, David Reynolds, Mark Arce and Ken Sowden, Jozef and Martina say that all teachers have given them something.

“It’s like the saying (Once you go here, you can go anywhere), says,” Jozef notes, “I’m ready for the next step.”

Future of Special Needs Children is WHCL Workshop Topic

Planning for the future of special needs children will be the topic of a workshop at West Hills College Lemoore on Saturday Feb. 23rd from 9 a.m. until noon.

Sylvia Dorsey-Robinson, associate dean at WHCL, says that the workshop is aimed at parents of children who are disabled.

The six topic areas that will be discussed are:

1. Overview of government benefits
2. Future planning including government benefits and eligibility for SSI and Medi-Cal.
3. Legal aspects including wills, trusts, probate, guardianship, special needs trusts and conservatorship, client self-determination and advocacy issues.
4. Financial aspects including housing needs and appropriate funding vehicles to guarantee quality of life.
5. Guardian ad litem/letter of intent.
6. How to get started and the process.

Guest speaker at the event will be Helen Kim Bass, a financial representative with New England Financial and the mother of a special needs child.

With more than 20 years experience in the financial services industry, Bass is a specialist for MetLife's Division of Estate Planning for Special Kids. Her work with the special needs community stems from a traumatic brain injury to her youngest child, Daniel, in 1986.

To RSVP for the free workshop, contact Elva Torrez at (559) 924-3333. Reservations are limited to 100 people.

New AOJ Course Helps Students Identify Careers



Troy Holsonbake, AOJ Instructor

Beyond the Badge—a new administration of justice class (AOJ 12) at West Hills College has been designed to help students identify career opportunities in law enforcement, according to AOJ instructor Troy Holsonbake.

“Basically it is an introductory course set up for students coming into AOJ who don't have the slightest idea about the many different fields and the jobs within those fields that are available,” he said. “The main objective is to have a student identify a position in an agency or area that interests them and map out the path to obtaining that goal. Whether that position is a

head cook supervisor in a maximum security prison or a sniper/spotter on the Secret Service's Counter Sniper Team, I want the student to understand they can achieve their goal, their “dream job.” All they need is a determined mind, the right training and education, and the will to see it through.

“Sometimes, students are told by friends, family and advisors that they need to complete A, B, and C in order to do a certain job when in actuality the job requirements have changed. I am hoping this course will start them in the right direction and give them a plan and a contact person.

“I wish I had been given access to a class like this when I went through college,” Holsonbake concluded.

For spring semester, the class will be offered in Coalinga, online and at WHC centers in Firebaugh and at Naval Air Station Lemoore.

For details visit the class schedule at westhillscollge.com.



NEWS AND NOTES



Skyler Norris, was named to the 2007 JC Grid-Wire Academic All-American Football Team. This is the 11th year in a row WHCC has had at least one player named to the team. Skyler was also the “Dick Woodson Academic Champion” this year for WHCC.



WHCL's wrestling team finished 12th in the state in only their second year of competition.

Bret Land was fourth at 133 pounds and Matt Garcia was fourth at 184 pounds.

Both qualified as All-Americans. John Newton was seventh at heavyweight.

Team members are (front row, l. to r.) Brett Land, Ramon Cabrera, Johnny Coronado, Daniel Navarro, Luis Perez, Vincent Uribe, (middle row) Jonathan Luna, Matt Garcia, Josh Newman, T.J. Weir, Michael Henderson, Mitchell Moralez, (back row) Asst. Coach Justin McIlland, Armando Gomez, Leonard Brown, Derek Sanchez, Adam Taylor, Asst. Coach Jim Macedo and Head Coach Kent Olson. Not pictured is team member Mike Adams.



North District Center, Firebaugh hosts a new automated teller machine operated by Educational Employees Credit Union. WHC students now access their financial aid through debit cards at EECU and the ATM offers a full range of services to community members. Similar machines are in operation on the campuses of WHCC and WHCL.

Not Everything is Pink *By Andres Zamudio*

Not everything is pink for the girls of our small communities. Just ask Laura, a young lady who just finished high school last June. Laura's difficult situation is rather singular, but no less adverse than what other girls are going through: teenage pregnancy, drugs, etc.

It is difficult for me to see that our small communities (communities that any stranger would think of as close and united) face very similar problems as those of the big city. But we can solve them; at least we try.

Laura has had to face a twofold crisis: her family and herself. On one hand, her father, a relatively young man in his 40s, is on disability and cannot work. Physical impotency can make a man explode, and such tension can fragment his family and kids.

On the other hand, now that Laura has finished high school she has to think of the unknown future. She has to think about what she must do and what she wants to do. She can do what many others do-- find a part time job, take it easy at the college and find a significant other to walk with at the park.

Laura has no time for all these. She has to help out with the finances of the family and the rest of the kids. And most importantly, Laura wants to be a children's physical therapist. A long way to go, no doubt about it, but not impossible either.

All of us at Workforce Connection know that Laura has a strong character and can strive to reach her goal. But how can someone do such a thing without being indifferent to her immediate family needs? In all honesty, I do not know. What I do



Andres Zamudio and Laura Montaña

know is that Laura can take one step at a time and start at West Hills College where plenty of people will help her.

Her personal situation is difficult. I know Laura. She's a great person. We'll see what we can do for her. But only she can make her dream come true.

No todo es color de rosa

Así es, no todo es color de rosa para las niñas de nuestras pequeñas comunidades. Basta con preguntarle a Laura, una chica que recién terminó la High School en junio. El difícil caso de Laura es muy singular pero no menos adverso al de las otras niñas, quienes a sus escasos 15 años de edad resultan embarazadas o adictas a las drogas. Caray, me



West Hills College Workforce Connection team includes (front row, l. to r.) Omar Mendoza, Ana Espinoza, April Chavarria, Mary Ann Rodgers, Maria Bernal, (back row) Robert Pimentel, Andres Zamudio, Jahel Esparz and Gerardo "Jerry" Escalante

resulta difícil saber que en nuestras pequeñas comunidades (que cualquier extraño pensaría muy unidas) tenemos los problemas de las grandes ciudades. Pero también podemos darles solución.

Sigamos hablando de Laura. Ella más bien ha tenido que enfrentarse a una crisis familiar y personal. Por una parte su papá, un hombre relativamente joven de no más de 50 años de edad, se encuentra deshabilitado y por lo tanto no puede trabajar como algún día lo habrá hecho. Estos casos no son nada fáciles, cobran un caro saldo a las familias afectadas. La tensión de la impotencia física a menudo explota y sobrevienen los problemas familiares que tanto fragmentan a los hijos. Por otra parte la incertidumbre después de terminar algo, en este caso la escuela, ahora tiene a Laura pensando en lo que debe y quiere hacer con su vida. Se puede hacer lo que medio mundo hace: buscarse un trabajo de medio turno, sobrevolar los estudios en el Colegio y buscarse por allí una parejita con quien salir a pasear por las tardes.

Laura no tiene tiempo para todo esto. Tiene que aportar dinero para los gastos de la familia pues hay hermanitos que mantener. Aparte del deber Laura también tiene un sueño: quiere estudiar terapia física infantil. Sin duda alguna un largo camino por recorrer, pero no imposible. Nosotros los que trabajamos para Workforce Connection sabemos que Laura tiene el carácter y empeño para lograr su meta. ¿Cómo hacer tal cosa a pesar de

tanta dificultad, a pesar de no poder ser indiferente a las necesidades inmediatas de su familia? Pues yo no lo sé. Lo que sí sé es que Laura puede empezar el camino académico en West Hills College y dar un paso a la vez.

Es obvio que su actual situación familiar y personal es adversa. Yo en lo personal no creo en esa frase que dice que lo que no te mata te hace más fuerte. La persona humana ya es fuerte en tanto que es persona, simplemente tiene que vivir condiciones adversas que no hacen otra cosa más que humanizar. Conozco a Laura y sé que ella es un gran ser humano.

Editor's note: Andres Zamudio is a graduate of West Hills and Fresno Pacific University. He is now studying at Jesuit University, Guadalajara, Mexico, working on master's degrees in philosophy and social sciences. During vacations, he is a part of the Workforce Connection staff at West Hills College.

Celebrating 75 Years—A Profile of Students from the Past

Priti Patel is living an American dream. Born in London, the young woman arrived in Coalinga in 1987 when her parents, natives of South Africa, were hired to manage the Royal Lodge in Coalinga.

Priti, who considers Coalinga her second home, graduated from West Hills College in 1998 with an AA in liberal studies. She transferred to Fresno State and then to the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF).

The daughter of a family that treasures education, she completed a doctorate in pharmacy at UCSF in May 2004, and then did a one-year pharmacy residency at the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at the Stanford Medical Center in pediatrics. She then took a position as a pediatrics clinical specialist pharmacist at Kaiser Permanente in Oakland.

Even with the specialized training in an exacting field, the Coalinga woman credits WHCC with part of her success. "I had a great time at West Hills and obtained an excellent education-- an

education that enabled me to be successful at Fresno State and UCSF."

Priti attended West Hills College Coalinga during a time, she remembers, "when programs were expanding,



Priti Patel

the college was on the upswing. The sports programs were back and there was a lot of construction on campus, but the library and other major buildings were in place."

"One of these days I'll take the time to return to see what the campus looks like now and to see the new campus in Lemoore.

"The instructors at West Hills are dedicated and care about their students," Priti said. "Much of the instruction was one-on-one which provided the essential tools for a student to thrive and succeed. In addition

to the classroom, I had the opportunity to be a tutorial

specialist for Upward Bound and as a tutor helping high school students with their classes and providing motivation to obtain a college education."

Some of the instructors Priti remembered as outstanding included Dave Bolt, now vice president of educational services for West Hills College Lemoore; Mary Forth, retired sociology instructor; the late Dr. Bob Holmes, chemistry; the late Norine Oliver, poly sci and history; David Hedgecock, geography and Dr. Jeff Vaughn, retired humanities instructor. She also mentioned counselors Sandra McGlothlin, in Coalinga and Marta Henderickson, in Lemoore.

Apparently Priti's love of teaching continues as she holds an adjunct professor's position with the Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at the University of the Pacific and works with pharmacy students as a preceptor.

Priti, now 28 and engaged to a fellow professional in Cleveland, Ohio, said she would pick West Hills College once again to start her path to her profession.

"Yes, I definitely would start with West Hills and I would continue to push younger people into getting an education-- it's the key to a successful future. Education provides you with the essential skills and training to achieve your goals."

The young woman currently enjoys running, hiking, snowboarding and traveling, but deep down it seems that somewhere in her future the love of teaching – perhaps started with her mentors at West Hills – will move her back into the classroom.

WEST HILLS COLLEGE LEMOORE



Friday, January 11, 2008 Xtreme Registration 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.

- ◆ Comedian Phil Van Tee, show times 7:30 and 9:30
- ◆ Placement Testing
- ◆ Application Assistance
- ◆ Student Orientation
- ◆ Financial Aid Assistance
- ◆ Academic Counseling
- ◆ Drawings (gift cards, IPODS, Pen Drives, and much more)
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Snacks and Fun



**Make this an evening
with the whole family**

West Hills Community College District

Enroll today for spring semester

Classes start January 14, 2008



WEST HILLS COLLEGE LEMOORE

Offering Degrees and Certificates in:

| | |
|---|---|
| Administration of Justice/Law Enforcement | Health Science-Pre-Professional |
| Administration of Justice/Corrections | Hotel, Restaurant and Casino Management |
| Art | Humanities |
| Biology | Liberal Arts |
| Business | Mathematics |
| Business Administration | Office Management & Technologies |
| Chemistry | Physical Education |
| Child Development | Physics |
| Computer Information Systems | Psychology |
| Engineering | Social Science |
| Geography | Teaching Assistant |
| Geology | |
| Health Science-General | |



Sports Programs:

Men's and Women's Soccer
Wrestling
Men's and Women's Golf
Men's and Women's Cross Country

WEST HILLS COLLEGE COALINGA

Serving the west side of the San Joaquin Valley since 1932

New Farm of the Future offering Precision Agriculture Training

Offering Degrees and Certificates in:

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Administration of Justice/Law Enforcement | Health Science |
| Administration of Justice/Corrections | Humanities |
| Agriculture Science and Technology | Liberal Arts |
| Art | Mathematics |
| Biology | Office Management & Technologies |
| Business | Performing Arts |
| Business Administration | Psychiatric Technician |
| Child Development | Psychology |
| Computer Information Systems | Social Science |
| Geography | Teaching Assistant |
| Geology | Technical Theater |
| | Television Production |



Sports include:

Football
Men's Basketball
Men's Baseball
Women's Volleyball
Women's Softball
Coed Rodeo



WEST
HILLS
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
DISTRICT

WEST HILLS COLLEGE COALINGA
300 Cherry Lane
Coalinga, CA 93210
559-934-2000

NORTH DISTRICT CENTER, FIREBAUGH
1511 Ninth Street
Firebaugh, CA 93622
559-659-1473

WEST HILLS COLLEGE LEMOORE
555 College Avenue
Lemoore, CA 93245
559-925-3000

NAVAL AIR STATION LEMOORE
824 Hancock Circle
NAS Lemoore, CA 93246
559-925-3350

westhillscollge.com