

RAMS

MONTHLY

JULY 2025



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**VICTOR VALLEY
COLLEGE**

Victor Valley College Inducts New Members into Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society



In mid-June, Victor Valley College proudly celebrated the academic excellence, leadership, and character of its students during the Spring 2025 Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society Induction Ceremony. The event, held on campus, welcomed the newest members into one of the most prestigious international honor societies for two-year colleges.

Robert Sewell, VVC Associated Student Body Advisor and Public Information Officer, opened the ceremony with a powerful message about the meaning behind the Greek letters Phi, Theta, and Kappa—representing phronimon (wisdom), thumos (aspiration), and katharotes (purity). “These aren’t just symbolic ideals,” Sewell said. “They are qualities we see alive in each of our graduates today.” He emphasized that wisdom is more than book knowledge—it’s the thoughtful application of learning. Aspiration is the spark that pushes students beyond limitations. And purity represents unwavering integrity and character, even when it’s difficult.

Dr. Henry Young, Dean of Business, Law, Academic Resources and Distance Education at VVC, followed with a heartfelt reflection from his 26 years as a professor. “True learning doesn’t just shape your intellect... it shapes your character,” he

said. Echoing the sentiment that education transforms not just the student, but families and communities, Dr. Young called on the inductees to “keep showing the world what happens when brilliance meets resilience.”

Founded in 1918, Phi Theta Kappa is the official honor society for two-year colleges and the largest of its kind in the world, with more than 3.5 million members across 1,300 chapters in 10 nations. Membership is extended to students who demonstrate high academic achievement and embody the principles of scholarship, leadership, service, and fellowship.

PTK is more than academic recognition—it’s a launching pad for leadership and lifelong success. The organization offers dynamic leadership development programs designed to build confidence, communication, and collaborative skills. Through workshops, honors coursework, and community service, members are prepared to lead in college, in their careers, and in the communities they serve.

This spring’s inductees join a global network of scholars committed to excellence and social impact. As Sewell reminded them, “Phi Theta Kappa is not just a line on a résumé—it is a call to action.”

Victor Valley College celebrates each new inductee, knowing that their light, leadership, and resilience will help shape a brighter future for all.

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ICE CREAM MONTH

Every July, Americans across the country come together to celebrate one of the most beloved desserts of all time—ice cream. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan officially designated July as National Ice Cream Month, with the third Sunday of the month recognized as National Ice Cream Day.

The declaration was made to honor the popularity and economic significance of ice cream in the United States. Since then, it has become a time to indulge in all things sweet, creamy, and frozen—from classic vanilla cones to adventurous flavors like lavender honey or mango chili.

National Ice Cream Month isn't just about enjoying a treat; it's also a chance to support local ice cream shops, discover new favorites, and bring people together during the heat of summer. Whether served in a cone, a cup, or blended into a milkshake, ice cream remains a timeless symbol of fun and celebration.

So grab a spoon (or a waffle cone) and enjoy the chill—July is the perfect excuse to treat yourself.

Photo Source: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum (enhanced)



VVC Foundation Awards Over \$262k in Scholarships to Students at Annual Ceremony



Victor Valley College proudly honored student achievement and community generosity at its annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony, where \$262,600 in scholarships were awarded to 300 unique students through 332 individual scholarships. The event celebrated not just academic success, but the transformative power of educational access, fueled by the generosity of local donors.

"Today we celebrated student success at our annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony," said

the Victor Valley College Foundation. "Thanks to the generosity of our donors, \$262,600 in funding was awarded through 332 scholarships to 300 unique Victor Valley College students. Your investment in education makes all the difference—thank you for believing in our students and their futures."

The VVC Foundation plays a central role in this annual tradition. As the nonprofit, philanthropic arm of Victor Valley College, the Foundation's mission is to remove financial barriers for

students while fostering educational excellence and access. Through donor partnerships, community engagement, and stewardship of resources, the Foundation ensures students can pursue higher education regardless of their financial circumstances.

Scholarships awarded range from merit-based academic recognitions to need-based awards, honoring students from diverse backgrounds and academic disciplines. Many awards also reflect the wishes of families, local organizations, and businesses who have established named scholarships in memory or celebration of loved ones and community leaders.

Beyond the numbers, each scholarship represents a life changed, a dream within reach, and a student empowered to move forward with confidence. The impact of these awards is not only felt in the classroom but will ripple into the workforce, local economy, and community at large.

The event serves as a reminder that when a community comes together to support education, the results are lasting. Thanks to this year's scholarship donors and the tireless efforts of the VVC Foundation, hundreds of students are closer to achieving their goals and building brighter futures.

To learn more about how to support Victor Valley College students through scholarships or to get involved with the Foundation, visit www.vvcfoundation.com or contact the VVC Foundation Office directly.

Skip the Hangover, Keep the Aesthetic: What Gen Z Is Pouring

Burlington, MA/Frisco, TX, — A new national trend report from Keurig Dr Pepper (KDP) is spilling the tea—and the coffee—on how Americans, especially Gen Z, are choosing their drinks in 2025. The State of Beverages 2025 Trend Report, released this summer, dives deeper than just hydration and caffeine. It unpacks why we reach for that iced coffee, energy drink, or soda—and how our generation is reshaping the beverage industry.

According to the report, 72% of Gen Z try a new drink at least once a month. That means we're leading the charge when it comes to customization, flavor-chasing, and making our sips part of our style. More than half of Gen Z consumers say they even choose drinks to stand out. It's not just about taste—it's about identity.

Some other standout stats:

Coffee is life: 52% of Americans say it's the first thing they reach for daily, and 73% would rather give up alcohol at night than skip their morning caffeine.

Soda stays supreme: 58% call it the most refreshing treat, with soft drinks still a go-to for indulgence.

New flavors reign: 59% say the #1 reason they try a new beverage is an exciting flavor—not just health perks.

Wellness wins: 82% of Americans say drinking their favorite beverage boosts their mental health, and 66% look for drinks that help their physical health, too.

Non-alcoholic vibes: 58% now prefer booze-free drinks in social settings, and that



number jumps among Gen Z.

So what does this mean for Rams on campus? Whether you're pulling an all-nighter with your favorite cold brew or sipping a matcha to stay mellow, your drink says a lot about you. And brands are listening—offering more personalized, better-for-you, and aesthetically pleasing options.

In other words, beverage culture is having a main character moment—and Gen Z is writing the script.

Victorville Leads San Bernardino County with Groundbreaking Gunshot Detection Tech



PHOTO: CITY OF VICTORVILLE

In a major step toward enhancing public safety, the City of Victorville has become the first municipality in San Bernardino County to implement ShotSpotter, a sophisticated gunshot detection system designed to rapidly identify and locate firearm discharges in real time.

Last month, ShotSpotter was deployed in two of Victorville's most impacted neighborhoods—Brentwood/Hook and Old Town/Midtown—where data shows the highest volume of gun-related calls for service. The system uses acoustic sensors to detect gunfire and triangulate its precise location within seconds, allowing for faster law enforcement and emergency medical response, as well as more accurate investigations and improved outcomes for victims.

In just three weeks, the system has already assisted the Victorville Police Department in solving three separate gun-related incidents that were never reported to 911. National data suggests that only about 20 percent of gunfire incidents are ever called in, highlighting the critical role this technology plays in bridging the gap between reality and reported crime.

"The City of Victorville is investing in advanced technologies to increase the

effectiveness of our law enforcement for a safer Victorville," said Mayor Liz Becerra. "We're giving our public safety personnel the equipment they need to be more proactive, quicker to respond, and better able to investigate and solve crimes."

ShotSpotter, developed by Sound Thinking, offers law enforcement unique forensic advantages—it can detect how many shooters are involved, the types of weapons fired, and the precise location of gunfire. This intelligence allows officers to respond tactically and safely.

Victorville Police Chief, Captain Jerry Davenport, praised the tool: "ShotSpotter is a beneficial tool that is helping our deputies solve crime quicker and take guns off the street. Many gunshots go unreported, and the reports we do receive typically have incorrect locations, so this technology is helping us step up our game."

The deployment of ShotSpotter follows Victorville's earlier implementation of a network of 123 automatic license plate readers (ALPRs), which are already helping law enforcement identify suspects and solve crimes faster. Looking ahead, the City also plans to launch a public safety drone program and integrate all this intelligence into a real-time crime center that will

centralize and streamline crime-fighting efforts.

Victorville's \$470,000 ShotSpotter agreement with Sound Thinking covers a three-year initial period and is funded entirely through Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Funds made available by Assembly Bill 3229—resources specifically designed to enhance frontline municipal police services.

As Victorville continues to grow, so does its commitment to leveraging innovation for community safety—proving once again that the city is not only watching but listening.





Victor Valley College Podcast “Ramplifi” Partners with Victorville Cadillac for Season Two



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VICTORVILLE — Victor Valley College is proud to announce a new partnership between its groundbreaking podcast Ramplifi and local automotive sponsor Victorville Cadillac. As Ramplifi prepares to launch its highly anticipated second season, this collaboration reinforces the college’s commitment to bridging students with the local community.

“We’re excited! As a college, it’s important to be part of the community. So bringing in partnerships strengthens our mission and shows students that there’s always a place for them in the heart of the community,” said VVC ASB President/Student Trustee Hailey Reyes.

The Ramplifi podcast, hosted by former television and radio personality Andrew Caravella, completed a successful first season and is now streaming in audio format on all major podcast platforms. A video version is also available exclusively through the VVC Mobile App.

Caravella, whose broadcast career includes former roles with KFI AM 640 and iHeartRadio, now serves as the college’s Public Relations and Marketing Coordinator. An award-winning journalist, he brings his signature wit and deep interviewing skills to every episode of the show.

“Every story we do at this college is pure heart. The goal of the show is to connect people to people. We want to spotlight challenges, struggles and triumphs of our students, but bring a tear or a smile to your face while we do it,” said Caravella. “To my knowledge, no one in higher education has created a podcast with this kind of raw, human-centered approach. That’s why it’s resonating so strongly with our campus community.”

The partnership with Victorville Cadillac is rooted in mutual values—highlighting authentic experiences, building trust, and fostering connection.



“Partnering with Victor Valley College reflects our deep commitment to the High Desert. Here at Victorville Cadillac we believe it is our duty to support the High Desert and that begins with empowering others to become all that they can be. Victor Valley College embodies that mission with their commitment to academic advancement, building careers and supporting personal success. We’re excited for what the future holds and the impact we can make together,” explained Victorville Chevrolet Cadillac President Jacob Soares.

Created and produced by the Associated Student Body of Victor Valley College, Ramplifi has already featured powerful real-life stories from members of the campus community. Highlights include:

A mother and daughter who graduated together, side-by-side.

A 9/11 first responder at Ground Zero who now attends VVC to rebuild a new chapter.

A former student turned Emmy Award-winning filmmaker.

A single mother of five pursuing her dreams against all odds.

A student raised in a family surrounded by gang violence who earned multiple degrees and a full-ride scholarship to a university.

And the list continues to grow.

Season two of Ramplifi is currently in pre-production and is accepting a limited number of sponsorships. Interested businesses or organizations are encouraged to inquire early, as space is expected to fill quickly.

Podcast interest has seen a significant rise over the past decade, evolving from a niche medium into a mainstream form of content consumption. According to Pew Research Center, the percentage of U.S. adults who have ever listened to a podcast grew from 22% in 2006 to over 75% by 2023. This growth has been fueled by greater smartphone accessibility, streaming platforms like Spotify and Apple Podcasts, and a desire for on-demand, personalized content. Podcasts offer a wide variety of topics—from true crime and comedy to education and news—allowing listeners to engage deeply with subjects that resonate with their personal interests.

Additionally, Edison Research’s “Infinite Dial” report notes that in 2023, an estimated 90 million Americans listened to a podcast monthly, with younger audiences (ages 18–34) making up the largest demographic. The flexibility of audio content—allowing users to multitask while driving, exercising, or working—makes podcasts especially appealing in today’s fast-paced world. As educational institutions, businesses, and independent creators continue to embrace this format, podcasts are increasingly seen as powerful tools for storytelling, brand building, and community engagement.



Victor Valley College's RAMPLIFI

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Pat's Passionate Patchwork: Quilting Queen Retires from VVC after 40+ years

By: Andrew Caravella

Patricia Adams, better known at Victor Valley College as Pat Adams, has been a beloved part of the VVC community since 1984. Originally from Ohio, Pat moved to the area in the 1960s. In fact, VVC runs deep in her veins—she and her husband, Larry, were part of the college's second graduating class back in 1963. Larry served as student body president, while Pat was the ASB Secretary. Sharing a fond memory with Rams Monthly, Pat joked about their first date at the San Bernardino County Fairgrounds off Seventh Street: "I bought a corn dog and told my husband not to overdo the mustard. Well, he did—and it dripped on my brand new sneakers."

A couple of decades later, Pat joined the VVC staff in the 1980s. By 1987, she was already stitching her legacy as the college's quilting queen. Over the years, students became people, and people became lifelong friends—like an 82-year-old woman who took Pat's very first class.

One afternoon, as Pat sat in our office surrounded by her entourage of lifelong friends, Rams Monthly asked about the recent surge of younger Z and Millennial students crafting their way into her quilting classroom. Pat credits Eleanor Burns, a popular television quilter who has been revolutionizing the quilting world and bringing in many younger people. Pat laughed and shared Burns's famous catchphrase, "Still stripping after all these years," which always draws a memorable crowd of quilting and sewing enthusiasts. "Seeing younger students is great," Pat said. "We need to keep it going so the craft doesn't die out."

With 62 years of marriage under her belt, Pat is now looking forward to a happy retirement. Most of all, she's excited to spend more time in her garden. However, she says the best part of VVC, which she will miss dearly, is the people she has met along the way. Rams Monthly asked her closest friends and VVC alumni to describe Pat in one word, and their responses were heartfelt:

Sedi – "Caring"

Audrey – "Cheerful"



Professor Pat Adams started her VVC journey in 1984.

Trish – "Friendly"

Debbie – "Fantastic"

Beverly – "Exuberant"

Marilyn – "Loving"

Lisa – "Giving"

Aside from gardening, Pat looks forward to canning food—a method of preservation that involves sealing food in airtight containers and heating them to destroy microorganisms and enzymes that cause spoilage. This process creates a vacuum seal, extending the food's shelf life. Pat and her friends laughed about a recent canning mishap last year when one jar exploded, dropped to the floor, and rolled down the hallway. "I found a giant kitchen, and I taught the entire group how to can," Pat recalled with a smile.

Surprisingly, Pat shared that her work at VVC was also a way for her to unwind.

Going to class was her best way to de-stress from daily anxieties. "It's also a way to get away from our husbands," one of her friends shouted during the interview, causing everyone to laugh hysterically. Pat quickly reined in the moment, adding, "We call it therapy—be yourself, nobody judges."

As our time with Pat came to a close, we asked her to leave us with a bit of advice. She said, "Life is not what it's supposed to be, it's the way it is. The way you cope with it is what makes the difference." For the sake of this article, I'll break the fourth wall and address you, the reader. After Pat shared that intimate, heartfelt message, there was a hush in the room. I put my pen down and said, "Wow, that was a very deep and thought-provoking message. Thank you so much." Pat simply smiled and replied, "I stole it from somewhere, I'm sure." Cue more laughter from the entourage.

Daniel is Driven: **Determined to Defy Doubt**



(left to right) - Father, Daniel, older brother
Photo Credit: Daniel Ramirez

By: Andrew Caravella

Daniel Ramirez, Class of 2025, walks into a room with a bright smile and an even brighter outlook. A newly minted graduate with his Associate of Science in Business Administration, Daniel is now preparing for the next leg of his journey: transferring to Cal State San Bernardino to pursue a bachelor's degree in Business with a concentration in Marketing.

You wouldn't know it by his cheerful demeanor, but Daniel's path hasn't been the easiest. "Negative thoughts don't change the outcome of situations," he says. "The world keeps going, whether I like it or not—so why dwell on things that hold me back?" Instead, he channels those moments into personal growth, always pushing forward.

Although he grew up in Orange County, Daniel now proudly considers the High Desert his home. "It's grown on me," he says, crediting the area's new developments and opportunities. "I feel like if I didn't move up here, I wouldn't be in the position I'm in today."

His journey included time working at

Disneyland as a server—mainly to help pay for school. But when his dad bought a larger home in the High Desert and encouraged the kids to start thinking about investing in real estate, Daniel saw a shift in his path. "At first, I didn't really know what I wanted to do with my life," he admits. But pushing past that uncertainty and stepping outside his comfort zone led him to pursue real estate and business with new determination.

Finding that balance between school and life was one of his biggest challenges. "I had priorities and bills to pay—they didn't stop just because I was going to school," he shares. "Figuring out that middle balance is what helped me find my happy medium."

Daniel's background is rooted in a hardworking, blue-collar family. On his dad's side, construction was the norm—and college wasn't necessarily encouraged. "I didn't have the biggest motivation to keep going when it got hard," he says. That struggle was only made harder by the fallout with his mother, who once kicked him out of the house after he expressed a desire to visit his grandparents on his dad's side. Today, the relationship with his mom is non-existent. But from his father and paternal

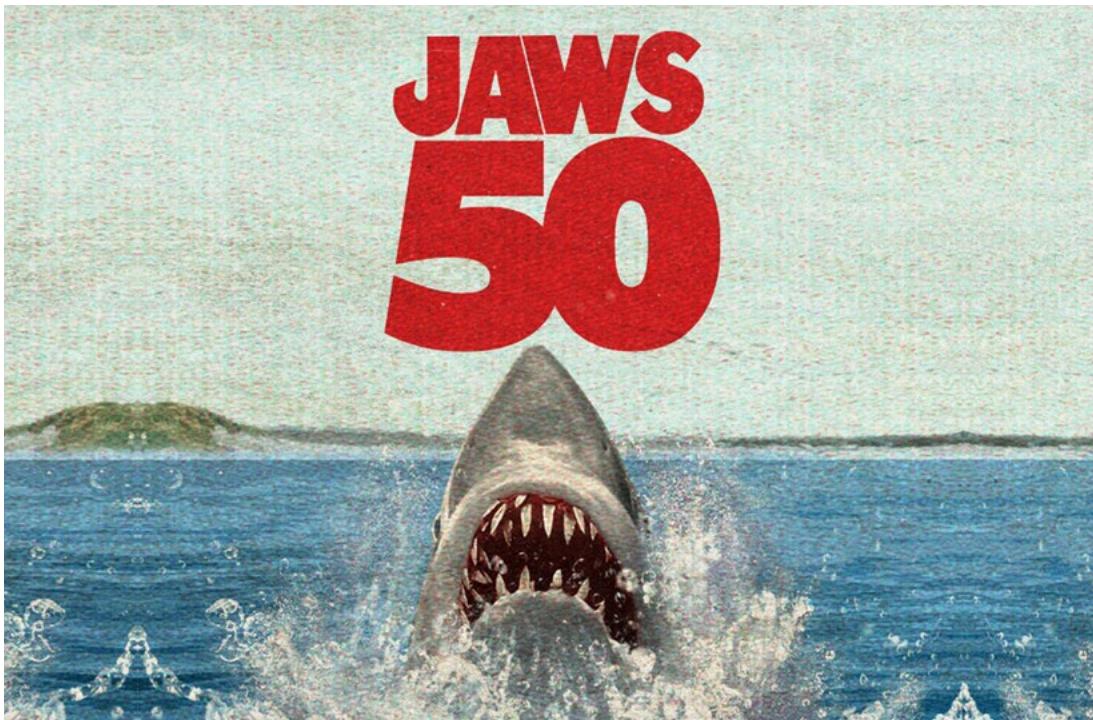
relatives, a new bond has formed. "My dad now asks me so many questions about where I'm going next. There's a new level of support."

As Daniel looks ahead, he sees a life built with intention. "Being able to say I was just trying to figure out life—and now I'm working toward a career I can look forward to, one that includes retirement—that's everything," he says.

From Disneyland to real estate and from doubt to direction, Daniel Ramirez is proof that with perspective, balance, and drive, you can build the life you once only imagined.

Meyers on Movies: Spielberg's Shark Still Bites After Half a Century

Rams Monthly is proud to present its newest column; a movie review for our campus community



By: Richard John Paul Meyers

The original summer blockbuster film *Jaws* (1975) is coming back to the big screen for its 50th anniversary on Friday, August 29th, through Thursday, September 4th, 2025.

Steven Spielberg's 1975 classic monster-horror shark film, *Jaws*, hardly needs an introduction for moviegoers.

With a lifetime box office gross of more than \$260M (the equivalent of \$1.6B in today's market), this masterpiece about a great white shark stalking and devouring beachgoers in New England changed the nature of the film industry.

It struck so much fear in audience members at the time of its release that visitor attendance at beaches, lakes, and even public pools plummeted.

The critically acclaimed sea adventure starring Roy Scheider, Richard Dreyfuss, and Robert Shaw currently holds a 97% rating on Rotten Tomatoes and a solid 8.1/10 according to the Internet Movie Database (IMDb).

However, perhaps the greatest feat of *Jaws* was that the movie was made at all. Spielberg and his crew struggled with technical issues with the titular mechanical

shark; so much so, in fact, that the film was nearly cancelled due to scheduling and budgetary issues.

Despite all of the setbacks, Spielberg and Universal Pictures were able to complete and distribute the film which has now become a staple of American cinema.

Without the monumental success of *Jaws*, there would be no *Indiana Jones*, no *Jurassic Park*, no *E.T.* and no *Saving Private Ryan* as Spielberg likely would've been canned and blackballed by all of the major studios.

Watch it and experience it in person at your local cinema as it was meant to be viewed between August 29th-September 4th, 2025.

For those interested in attending a live screening at a movie theater near you, be sure to book your tickets well in advance so you can experience the screams, shrieks and thrills that etched *Jaws* in the history of global cinema.

Jaws (1975) is currently streaming on Netflix and Peacock and is available on demand (VOD) on YouTube, AppleTV, GooglePlay, Fandango and Amazon Prime Video.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Richard John Paul Myers is a Victor Valley College alumnus, commercial and film producer, and co-founder of Myers Marketing. A former film critic whose work has appeared in respected outlets such as *The Film Stage* and *Film Courage*, Richard brings industry insight from years of storytelling and media analysis. He has worked on major productions including the Academy Awards Viewing Party and national campaigns for Chevrolet. Alongside his wife, Stephanie, he leads creative projects through their production company, collaborating with Emmy and Grammy-winning professionals. Passionate about storytelling and community, Richard continues to support local causes and arts initiatives while contributing film reviews and commentary to RAMS Monthly.

More info on Richard
[@richardjohnpaulmyers](https://twitter.com/richardjohnpaulmyers)
info@myersmarketing.net



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