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VVC Foundation celebrates ‘Proud Past’ at Alumni Hall of Fame event

Charity Lindsey, Daily Press

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San Bernardino County Fire Department Captain Travis Aguirre was honored with the Victor Valley College Foundation’s Young Alumni award on Feb. 22, 2020. [PHOTO COURTESY OF VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE]

VICTORVILLE — The Victor Valley College Foundation held its 27th annual Alumni Hall of Fame & Distinguished Service Awards event last Saturday, honoring individuals who’ve made significant contributions not only to VVC, but to the entire High Desert community.

Several hundred guests dressed in suits and evening gowns entered the Hilton Garden Inn on a red carpet entrance to the event themed “Proud Past, Bold Future.”

“It’s been said that the present defines the future, while the future builds on the foundation of the past,” VVC Foundation President Mike Nutter said. “Your attendance this evening ensures that you too have the ability to help build upon that foundation, by supporting the educational aspirations of thousands of students.”

With the help of the presenting sponsor, Desert Valley Hospital/Desert Valley Medical Group, the Foundation honored five notable award recipients, with all proceeds raised benefiting scholarship funds for local students and the college’s educational programs.

The recipients this year were: Young Alumni Hall of Fame awardee Travis Aguirre, Alumni Hall of Fame awardee Joel Lewis, Distinguished Service to Education awardee Tom Hoegerman, Distinguished Community Service awardee Larry Bird and President’s’ Choice awardee Norm Hurst.

To select the recipients, the Foundation first invited nominations from the community. An independent award selection jury panel was assembled to review all nominations and recommend candidates for the awards to the Foundation Board of Directors.

Aguirre, 37, became a first-generation college graduate in 2004 when he completed his Associates in Fire Science at VVC in 2004. Currently serving as Captain with the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department, he was described in his nomination as “a dedicated public servant” who is constantly finding ways to give back to his community, from mentoring youth seeking a career in emergency services to organizing blood drives.

Lewis, who graduated VVC in 2001, is a beloved teacher at Apple Valley High School who has served as a coach to economically disadvantaged students and personally managed numerous booster events and donation drives for AVHS Basketball. Once a basketball star at both AVHS and VVC himself, he has kept his spirit and love for basketball alive by instilling the same passion into his students.

“I feel honored that VVC has provided me with many opportunities as a student athlete, coach, educator and now as an alum,” Lewis said. “Thank you for selecting me for this exciting award.”

Hoegerman started his acceptance speech by saying he was “truly shocked and honored” to be included with his fellow honorees. Recently retired after serving Apple Valley Unified School District for 30 years — the last nine as Superintendent — Hoegerman was an instrumental player to the region’s collaborative effort,

Mountain Desert Career Pathways JPA, through which local districts coordinate with industry and higher education to build better opportunities for local students.

“This region is special because everybody works together,” Hoegerman said. “The fact that we have superintendents, including our college superintendent ... working together to build economic opportunities to ensure that our graduates will stay here is really a wonderful statement for this region.”

Born and raised in the Victor Valley, Larry Bird has followed in the footsteps of both his grandparents and parents by extending himself to his communities, largely through his 32-year career in education with Hesperia Unified School District. As current Principal of Sultana High School and Mayor of Hesperia, Bird credits God, his family and the community for his success.

“Folks, you understand that I am the recipient — past, present and future — of some great, great legacy,” Bird said. “I will accept this award on behalf of our family and all the friends I know who are here ... I will promise you that we will continue to serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and this community for as long as God gives us that breath.”

After serving in the U.S. Air Force, Hurst went into a 32-year-long career in law enforcement with the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department, where he rose through the ranks to ultimately become Deputy Chief. A 1974 graduate of VVC and retired instructor of VVC’s Criminal Justice Department, his service to the college has continued as he joined the Foundation Board of Directors in 2011.

“It’s been a great honor to work with the VVC Foundation as well as many other members of the college,” Hurst said. “Over the past few years, they have coalesced into a fine team — one with a common interest — and that’s serving our students and helping them to achieve success.”

In addition to the awards program, the Hall of Fame event included a silent auction, dinner service and a booth for souvenir photographs. Four teams competed for the final “Golden Mic” Trophy in a lip sync battle that was announced as the last of its kind.

“The Gunsingers,” a team from San Bernardino County Sheriffs Department, won the judge’s choice award, while “Fred and the Prime Times,” a team representing DVH, won the people’s choice, both raising thousands of dollars to go toward student scholarships.

<https://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20200226/vvc-foundation-celebrates-proud-past-at-alumni-hall-of-fame-event>

HI-DESERT WATER DISTRICT TO HONOR DAN MUNSEY TONIGHT

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

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At tonight's meeting of the board of directors of the Hi-Desert Water District, the board will extend its utmost appreciation to outgoing board member Dan Munsey, after a long and distinguished service with the Hi-Desert Water District. Assignment reporter Keith Bailey fills you in on the rest of the agenda...

On February 29, Dan Munsey will conclude his service on the Board of Directors for the Hi-Desert Water District. The remaining directors will honor him tonight by adopting a resolution of appreciation in recognition of Munsey's kindness, leadership, and energy during his work for the District over a decade. Next, the directors are expected to review and approve a proposal to update the district's emergency response plan. Then, the directors will discuss authorizing the general manager to purchase a new steel building for the Wastewater Treatment Facility. Finally, the directors are expected to approve a bid from Match for the final paving on Onaga Trail.

<http://z1077fm.com/hi-desert-water-district-to-honor-dan-munsey-tonight/>