



Unis Fulton rides the horse, Linus, accompanied by trainers July 25 at the Ride On Ranch.

PTA students learn hippotherapy at Ride On

The first thing to know about hippotherapy is that it's not done with hippos.

"You'd be so surprised at how many times people want to know why I would put their child on a hippo," said Joanne Benjamin, a physical therapist and hippotherapy expert.

"Hippopotamus," she then explains, is ancient Greek for "river horse." Hippos=Horse, and potamus=river. But these creatures have shunned their "potamus," and are the hoofed horses that the cowboys ride and the Greeks thought of when they said the word "hippos."

You would be hard pressed to find any cowboys around Southern California; yet on a small ranch tucked away in the hills of Chatsworth you will enter a world unknown by most. You will catch sight of beautifully well trained horses moving effortlessly with each step providing the rider with an experience that cannot be replicated in a clinical setting.

This is the "therapy" part of "hippotherapy," and it's what brought Casa Loma College's Physical Therapist Assistant Class to the Ride On Therapeutic Horsemanship Ranch July 25. There are different types of physical therapy, all of which focus on different goals and purposes. Hippotherapy, as Joann Benjamin explained to the

students, is one tool that is part of a larger physical therapy tool kit. Individualized therapy programs must be tailored to each patient. Hippotherapy is the use of the horse's movement for rehabilitation and is one type of physical therapy that therapists are becoming more aware of and using more frequently to create responses in patients, where often other non-living stimuli fail.

These horses aren't just any old sorrels that the kids can ride at Griffith Park. They're trained to interact with riders to develop their vestibular (balance) and proprioception (self awareness) systems. The horses are simultaneously responding to the rider and the trainer, taking commands from the trainer and translating those commands into actions that bring about cognitive responses in the riders. But it's one thing to talk about riding a horse to induce physical responses. It's quite another to actually be on the horse.

Unis Fulton, a PTA student who rode a horse named Linus, said the hands-on experience helped him learn, and gave him new perspective about the options available for patients with varying degrees of physical responsiveness.

"I would have never thought about using a horse from a physical

Coming up in August:

- Campus Open House
8.6.12 @ Anaheim

**"I had to
get on that
horse."**

-Unis Fulton



Linus, a hippotherapy horse, strolls July 25 at the Ride On Ranch.



Iliya Tabarovskiy rides Mirage, a hippotherapy horse at the Ride On Ranch in Chatsworth, Calif.

therapist standpoint," said Fulton. But the up-close-and-personal learning format of the horse ranch was incredibly conducive to Fulton's learning style, and intrigued him with the possibilities of hippotherapy. "That's why I had to get on the horse," he said.

The students in Casa Loma's Physical Therapist Assistant program are privy to a wide array of therapy tools. With their introduction to the local Ride On Ranch, not only are they more familiar with the benefits and possibilities of incorporating a horse into a therapy program, but they also have a local connection to hippotherapy services, should they need them for a patient in the future.

Ride On is located at two locations in Newberry and Chatsworth. To contact Ride On, visit www.rideon.org.

Play Day

Play Day is probably the most fun the vocational nursing students have in their entire program - - - they get to bring their kids to school. But did we mention with the fun comes a lot of hard work and planning. Margaret Freel, an Instructor, said the play day requires a lot of planning and coordination in order to get everyone's kids to class, but that it is worth the extra effort because the opportunity to work with the kids and learn from them is so strong.

Play Day takes place in Level 5 Pediatrics . No one argued how fun it was to bring their kids to class, and Play Day did come toward the end of the level; nonetheless, students also did not lose sight of the fact that they had not yet crossed the finish line.

"We still have a big test on Monday," said Jeff Alvarado, an LVN student on the cusp of graduation. He said the play day was a cheerful diversion from the day-to-day classroom and lab hours, as well as an opportunity for students to show their children the important work they've been learning while they were away at school.

"The kids can come and they get to see where you've been all year," said Alvarado.

Alvarado talked about how the theories of Freud and Erickson became more evident to him in his children as he progressed through the pediatrics. "My kids are 3 and 1. I have a toddler and a preschooler," he said. "My daughter is three, she's a preschooler; you can see that she wants to color and write - she's ready to be in school. My little one wants to still be daddy's girl, and you can see she's not ready for preschool yet."

"The students are here to observe and compare the various ages, genders and interactions of the children ... what are they saying? What are they doing? Is it age appropriate? They get to observe children from 8 weeks to seven years old," said Freel.

While students paid special attention to their own children, they also gained perspective by comparing development with other kids.

"I had one of my students say to me, 'Ms. Freel, there's a little boy who's 1 year old and a little girl who's 1 year old. The girl who is one year old is more



Jeffrey Alvarado, a Level 5 Licensed Vocational Nursing Student at Casa Loma College, holds his daughter Nataly after lunch time July 19 at the Van Nuys Campus. Alvarado brought two daughters to class for "Play Day," a day during the pediatrics section of the course.

eloquent; she's talking more than the little boy, but the boy is able to walk more."

The students, instructors and children, shared snacks, activities, and of course, nap time after lunch. Instructors Delina Johnson and Shirley Stanley talked about the importance of sleep in a child's development, but also mentioned that a child's actions can be misleading as to how tired they really are.

“What are they saying? What are they doing? Is it age appropriate? They get to observe children from 8 weeks to seven years old,”

- Margaret Freel

“Some parents don't realize when it's time to get the kids to bed, and the 2-year-old is still up, and all hyper ... It's because he's tired,” said Johnson. “Some kids get cranky, a lot of kids just get hyper, and parents have a problem putting them down,” she said.

At nap time, there was no cajoling to get kids to sleep. “You could hear a pin drop,” said Shirley Stanley.

At the end of the day, the students went home for the weekend, and continued to juggle, family work and school, preparing for their big, test. As they went into the weekend, Mrs. Johnson shared one final piece of information for the student-parents to apply and to share with their fellow parents. “Know your limits,” she said. “Know your boundaries with your children. Set those limits and stick to them. You will have a happy child. Once they know their boundaries, they're happy, and everybody gets along. That's true to adults too.”



Razelee Fernando poses with her family during Play Day July 19 at the Casa Loma College Campus in Van Nuys. Fernando took her final test the following Monday to graduate from Casa Loma's Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) program.



(Above) Level 5 Licensed Vocational Nursing students pose with the sleeping baby July 19 at the Van Nuys Campus. (Below) Students play with and observe their children during "Play Day," a part of the pediatrics section in Level 5 of the Licensed Vocational Nurse course at Casa Loma College.





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Van Nuys Students sign up to Be The Match

Be The Match, the National Bone Marrow Donor Registry, isn't modest about who they're looking for, or why they need them. They actively look for people from “diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds between the ages of 18 and 44,” because these are the heroes that will save the lives of people with leukemia, lymphoma, sickle cell and other life-threatening diseases.

Every year, 10,000 patients with life-threatening diseases need a marrow transplant from an unrelated donor, but only half receive one. Half is not enough and that is what brings Janet Higgins, a local Be The Match Registrar, to Casa Loma College.

“One of the reasons I come to Casa Loma College is there are a lot of students from different ethnic backgrounds,” said Higgins. “And for us in Be The Match Registry, it's critical to have diversity. Patients are more likely to match someone within their same race or ethnic background. We're critically short of minorities on the registry. We really need Hispanics, African-American, Asian, American-Indian; and we need mixed races also on the registry. Today we have about 10 million people registered on the national marrow registry. Most of the registry is made up of Caucasian White. About 10 percent of the registry is made up of all the other races. So if you happen to be Asian and you or a family member are diagnosed with a blood cancer like leukemia, you have a less-than 7 percent chance of finding your match on the registry. We need to really change that. That's why I go out to schools, and I like to talk to the students. I don't think people are really aware of the need.”

When Janet comes to Casa Loma College, her quest to find specific races is quite different from blood donations, which require the donor and the patient to be the same blood type.

“Blood type actually does not even come into play here. It's more HLA (Human Leucosticte Antigen) typing, which is a tissue typing,” said Higgins. “It really is a matter of a part of your DNA; your cells, matching a patient - your tissue markers. We test the first ten tissue markers. Everyone has five markers from their biological father and five markers from their biological mother.”

Higgins said that since markers come from



Janet Higgins talks with students about the cheek-swabbing procedure potential donors do to enter themselves into the registry.

fathers and mothers, patients in need of a marrow transplant will usually look to siblings first. However the success rate for finding a marrow donor match within siblings is only about 20 percent.

“Most people have to turn to the registry for their match – 70 percent of the people,” said Higgins.

When she comes to Casa Loma College, she has the students swab the inside of their cheeks, so their tissue typing can be logged and they can be contacted in the future if they are a match for someone in need of a marrow transplant.

“They try to match 12 markers. If you are contacted, say and you have 10 out of 10 markers for our patient – or you have 8 out of 10 markers – you're a pretty good match. They will want to want to test you further. You come in for a blood test and they really break it down, and really test you,” she said.

The testing is to try to get the closest match possible between the patient and the donor, so that the patient has less assimilation to do during the transplant.

According to Higgins, patients “will have their donor's blood type and their donor's immune system. That is why it is very tough on the patient to have a transplant; their body has to accept a whole new immune system; a whole new blood type. That's why you have to be such a close match. In order for another person's body to take on a completely different blood type and a completely different immune system, you'd better have very close tissue markers.”

The next opportunity Casa Loma College students will have to sign up for the Be The Match Registry will be October 9 at the Hawthorne Campus.

Lean On Me: 1st AS, DMS Class finds support in each other

On the first day of orientation, one of the DMS (Diagnostic Medical Sonography) students, Carolyn Torres, got everyone's name, phone number and email address. This is common among classes. Some contact lists get used more than others. But this list would get an invaluable amount of use.

Tyisha Traylor, Maria Ramirez, Maggie Gomez, Alexis Benson, Micole Thompson, Carolyn Torres, and Yvette Obasi - the students making up the first DMS class ever to tackle an Associate of Science Degree in DMS through Casa Loma College's Hawthorne Campus - are no strangers to challenge. And challenge, as it turns out, can be a strong adhesive.

For starters, they've taken on an associate of science degree program in DMS (an immense two-year endeavor) at one of Southern California's best nursing and allied health schools. The newly-implemented associate degree program requires the students to learn and test for a more extensive body of knowledge. More knowledge means a more experienced sonographer, capable of drawing critical-thought conclusions from data, and ultimately more money for the sonographer. But all of that is not earned without arduous hours of work. Second, learning the way around an ultrasound machine or muscle tissue is one thing. But they also faced challenges unique to programs that are brand new.

"There were some glitches in the beginning," said Alex Gelfand, a DMS instructor in Hawthorne. "There were changes in orientation," he said. "Then there were changes three or four times in the first part of the program."

The changes in the beginning were related to the associate's program being in its inaugural course. Casa Loma College prides itself, among other things, in offering multiple learning formats to meet students' needs. For the math portion of this course, the school sought to save students time by offering the course online. However, the numbers don't lie, and neither did the students. And poor marks in the class' math work, and the feedback from the class both indicated that the format needed to change.

"As soon as we found that they were having issues and they weren't passing the quizzes, we changed that instantly," said Director of Compliance Sharon Dugan. "We maintained the same math teacher; she just taught on campus."

But that wasn't without the class feeling stress about the math grades. The students and school were soon trying to achieve the higher grades without losing any more time. The students worked with math tutors at the school, and built on the support of each other to get grades up. None of it came easy. The students put in many long hours of studying before they began meeting and exceeding the standard.

Math was only one added requisite for the associate's degree. The students also tackled physics and, in the process, a whole new set of trials with the new physics instructor.

"We had a physics teacher," said Yvette Obasi. "The first day he came in, and everyone complained. So when they went on break, I stayed behind and spoke with the teacher. I told him, 'you know, you're everywhere, you're really scattered, and a couple of the students are really complaining.'"

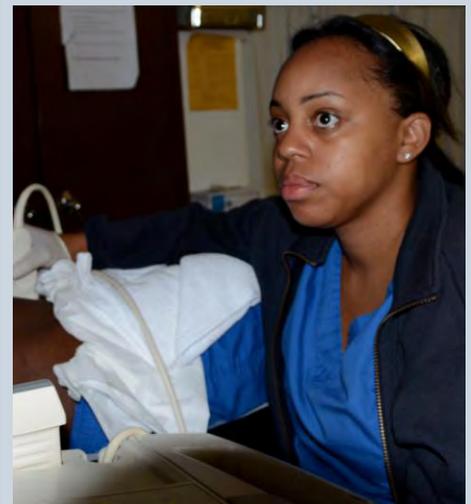
"We just didn't understand him - and we knew it wasn't just because of his accent," said MicoleThompson. "That was already a hurdle, but we can work with that."

"They were legitimate problems that these students were complaining about," said Dugan, the compliance director. "We knew they weren't just saying, 'oh, we don't like the teacher.' They had legitimate reasons why they didn't like him teaching physics."

The school takes the voices of its student body very seriously. When students have grievances, the school sees those as an opportunity to improve and serve the students better. However, there is no room for knee-jerk reactions in school administration. So there's also the need to follow due processes.

Dugan said the policy of the college is to work with an instructor and give them the opportunity to improve. However, she said, when it became clear that the physics instruction was not improving, the school replaced the teacher.

Casa Loma's President, Greg Malone, had an informal meeting with Alexis Benson, Maggie Gomez, Tyisha Traylor, and Carolyn Torres about the opportunities for improvement in the program.

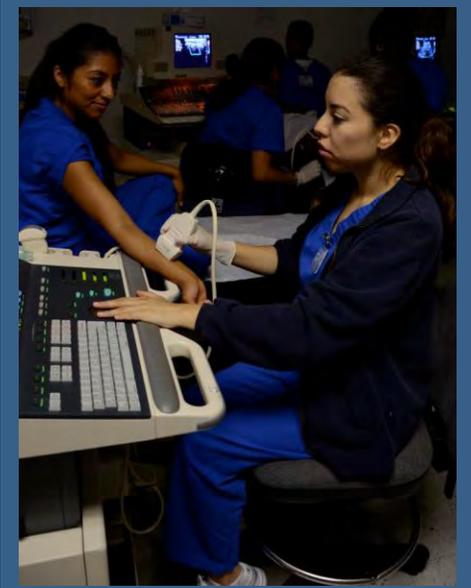


Tyisha Traylor, a DMS student at the Hawthorne Campus, conducts a scan of her fellow classmate's abdomen during lab Day July 3 the Casa Loma College Hawthorne Campus.



(Above) DMS students scan each other during a lab day at the Casa Loma Campus in Hawthorne.

(Below) Maria Ramirez scans Maggie Gomez with an ultrasound machine July 3 at the Hawthorne Campus. The students make up the first class to achieve an associate's degree in Diagnostic Medical Sonography at Casa Loma College.



Lean On Me (Continued)

He then worked with administrators and Dr. Bahaa Karatahan, the incoming program director, to ensure that the students were on track with everything they needed to succeed, including additional afterschool tutoring.

The students collectively found resolution with their school. But they found constant, lasting support in each other. Beyond having close study-buddies, the classmates learned they could depend on each other for transportation, emotional support, childcare, and even spiritual support, taking time to gather with each other and pray before important classes and tests.

Would the students be so closely-knit if they hadn't

encountered the challenges in the beginning of the program? That's tough to say. They've already encountered the challenges, and they are now closely knit. But to ask them yields an unwavering response.

"Yes," said Micole Thompson, matter-of-factly. "We still would be classmates."

It's not uncommon for strong bonds to develop in the DMS classes; they don't exceed 12 students per class. But Alex Gelfand said this class is remarkable for its complete group cohesiveness, and how the group has used its members as a support system.

"This class does stick together," said Gelfand.

And they do. Gelfand has

seen the class stick together through the challenges in the first part of their program; he's seen them support each other with life outside of school; and he sees them in their study groups before each quiz and each exam.

The DMS Class at the Hawthorne Campus is approximately 11 months into their program and on track to graduate in 2013. The road has not been unfettered up to this point. But through the support of each other, and open communication with their school, the students have found their footing and are advancing swiftly toward their goal.



(Left to Right) Carolyn Torres, Maria Ramirez, Maggie Gomez, Yvette Obasi, Alexis Benson, Micole Thompson, and Tyisha Traylor goof around for a photo during their break July 3 at the Casa Loma College Hawthorne Campus.

Who's that Instructor? ... Dr. David Pevsner.

Dr. Pevsner's professional credentials include Licensure in Physical Therapy (CA), a Masters Degree in Orthopedic Manual Therapy, Residency in Orthopedic Manual Therapy (Ola Grimsby Institute), Fellow of Applied Functional Science (Gray Institute), and a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree (A.T. Still University, Arizona School of Health Sciences). His professional career spans over three decades of competitive west coast private physical therapy practice, specializing in orthopedic and athletic rehabilitation, and sports conditioning. He began as an athletic trainer working with NBA

trainer Del Tanner and the famed Ducky Drake at UCLA. His professional interests lie in manual and movement medicine research and evidential practice. He was a Founder, Owner, and CFO of JMP Rehabilitation Group, with 4 locations in the San Fernando and Conejo Valley areas. Prior to coming to Casa Loma, Dr. Pevsner lectured extensively to both student and graduate physical therapists throughout the United States for nearly 35 years. He is also an adjunct lecturer for the Physical Therapy Department in the College of Health and Human Development at California State University,



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Finance Tips for August

1. Get Paid What You're Worth and Spend Less Than You Earn

It sounds simplistic, but many people struggle with this first basic rule. Make sure you know what your job is worth in the marketplace, by conducting an evaluation of your skills, productivity, job tasks, contribution to the company, and the going rate, both inside and outside the company, for what you do.

Being underpaid even a thousand dollars a year can have a significant cumulative effect over the course of your working life. No matter how much or how little you're paid, you'll never get ahead if you spend more than you earn. Often it's easier to spend less than it is to earn more, and a little cost-cutting effort in a number of areas can result in big savings. It doesn't always have to involve making big sacrifices.

2. Stick to a Budget

Budget: It's not a four-letter word. How can you know where your money is going if you don't budget? How can you set spending and saving goals if you don't know where your money is going? You need a budget whether you make thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

3. Pay Off Credit Card Debt

Credit card debt is the number one obstacle to getting ahead financially. Those little pieces of plastic are so easy to use, and it's so easy to forget that it's real money we're dealing with when we whip them out to pay for a purchase, large or small. Despite our good resolves to pay the balance off quickly, the reality is that we often don't, and end up paying far more for things than we would have paid if we had used cash.



Working and saving money are still the best ways to improve finances.

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