

What's in the news!

Featured School: Sweetwater Union High School



Gerardo Chavez
Director, CTE/ROP

We recognize that our students must be given the proper tools to succeed in the challenges that face them in this ever-changing global workforce.

We want all businesses to be a part of this innovative, creative and future educational initiative of our High School/Middle School Redesign. By exploring the possibilities of **internships and job-shadowing** in your particular organization, we will meet the fundamental obligations of society to prepare our high school students to lead a prosperous future.

Dr. Edward Brand, our superintendent, believes that all students in the Sweetwater Union High School District must be college and career ready in order to become contributing citizens in a multi-cultural, global society. Additionally, he believes that these students must have technical, mathematical and communicative skills in order to stay competitive in our modern labor market. By offering internships and job shadow opportunities, local businesses offer relevance to our existing rigorous curriculum.

to 15 major wild land fires, raging throughout California.

Firefighting entails many skills: I am certified as an Emergency Medical Technician 1, as well as holding certifications in HazMat First Responder Operations, Rescue Systems 1 and Confined Space Rescue, among others. I feel that all this training has enabled me to be a much better resource for my class, which centers on instruction in basic fire skills. My students learn how to prioritize and organize tasks efficiently; they are taught that a safety-first atmosphere is crucial. They learn to master hand tool use, rescue systems, extrication, and how to analyze challenges as well as how to create and implement effective solutions.

Few careers are as self-sacrificing or as personally rewarding as firefighting. I believe our course prepares young people to advance into one of the noblest careers they could possibly choose.

I can't imagine a greater responsibility: educating others to save lives.

The Sweetwater Union High School District is an urban community composed of 13 senior high schools and 11 middle schools that serves approximately 43,000 students. Our district serves a diverse student community that spreads from the Mexican border to approximately eight miles north. Our district's complexity challenges us to provide a learning environment that addresses the learning styles of all our students

On June 11th, 2012, our school board approved a Career Technical Education (CTE) initiative entitled, "High School/Middle School Redesign." This model has four main components:

- Career Pathways
- CTE Certifications
- Core-academic/ CTE collaboration
- Internships/Job Shadows

With support from the city of National City, the city of Chula Vista and South County Economic Development Council, we are reaching out to our local businesses that they may provide internships and job shadowing experiences to many of our students.



Mike Diaz
Fire Science Instructor

I have the privilege of being the newest addition to SUHSD's Health and Fire Science Program of Study, where I currently serve as the Fire Science Instructor.

This two-semester course is designed to enable the students to successfully compete for a career as a firefighter. For the past 27 years I have been a firefighter with the Escondido Fire Department. During that time, I have responded



Nicole Kranzberg
Sports Medicine Instructor

I graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, with a Bachelor's Degree in Athletic Training/Kinesiology. During my time in college and as part of the three-year ATEP program (Athletic Training Education Program) at PLNU, I spent much of my time caring for the college athletes' injuries, including emergency management on the field, injury prevention, rehabilitation, evaluation, and education. After PLNU, I worked for an orthopedic surgeon

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and sports medicine specialist in South Lake Tahoe, California. While in Tahoe I worked for South Lake Tahoe High School as the Head Athletic Trainer, caring for and treating 44 different athletic teams. I returned to my roots in the South Bay when I came to work as the Head Athletic Trainer at Sweetwater High School. In addition to working to care for the athletes of Sweetwater High School, I began teaching Sports Medicine as part of a four-year Medical Academy Program of Study at the Sweetwater High School Health and Fire Science Academy.

What brings me real joy is seeing how my experience and background has opened new channels of success for the students I teach, as they bring the curriculum to life. What we are teaching not only increases their ability to secure a job upon graduation, but also helps them discover their potential in areas they may not have previously explored, which sets the ground-work for further educational opportunities they can pursue with confidence.

I devote all my energy and experience to creating career-qualified students who can enter the health field directly, upon high school graduation. They also will have earned credits transferable to Southwestern Community College, which helps them prepare to attend a four-year university already equipped with foundational skills.

I am proud of the fact that I have contributed to a Career Technical Program that has grown from one teacher, focused on a single elective course in health offered through Sweetwater's Business Department, to a fully funded California Partnership Academy in Health and Fire Science, housing twelve teachers, (both academic core and Career-Technical), and two hundred-fifty students participating in any one of three Programs of Study.

My commitment: to continue being a catalyst of success for my students in the health field of their choice.

relationship with the San Diego community I serve. These are real life experiences that I am able to share with my students—which, along with their career technical training, has helped them acquire the initiative and background knowledge to seek advanced career opportunities.

Being a mother, a full time teacher and an EMT, as well as shouldering other professional demands, forces you to draw resources from your innermost strength. But my goal remains undefeated: to inspire my students to reach for the stars and remember that nothing is impossible if you want it to be real.

Working at Granger Junior High and Sweetwater High School has given me the opportunity to see a diverse group of exceptional young people who are able to build incredible futures for themselves by succeeding in their Medical Health CTE courses, making wise choices in life and the wide-open career options ahead.



Esther Diaz
Medical Instructor



Rebekah Hancock
Medical Instructor

I have been teaching Health Care Essentials, Medical Terminology, Medical Assisting: Administrative and Clinical, at Sweetwater Union High School in National City since July of 1999. Twenty years in the health care industry has afforded me the expertise needed to teach in a collaborative environment that integrates academic knowledge with essential workplace skills vital to students enrolled in the Sweetwater High School Medical Academy Program of Study.

For the past two years I have been a part of the staff within Sweetwater High School's Medical Academy Program of Study, teaching students the principles of medicine in various subjects such as Medical Terminology, Health Care Essentials, Medical Occupations, and First Responder, as well as CPR/First Aid. Working on an ambulance for the last eight years, six of those years with the 911 system of San Diego as a Bridged Emergency Medical Technician for Rural Metro, has allowed me to build a strong