

## **A bold step for career-tech education at Banning High School**

**By Dean of Students Dr. Michael O'Neill, Banning High School and Carpentry Teacher Steven De La Portilla, Banning High School**

Career and Technical Education has taken a quantum leap at Banning High School.

On March 28, groundbreaking ceremonies were held on campus for a new \$26 million project to build a Performing Arts Center and a Construction Academy for the building trades. Career-tech education offers students college prep classes and real-world technical training so they are college and career ready.

In about two years, career-tech education students will study and stage productions in a new 27,000-square-foot Performing Arts Center with a professional stage, orchestra pit, dressing rooms, green room, 670-seat theater, classroom space, and media and TV production facilities. Career-tech education students will also learn about the trades at a nearly 12,000-square-foot Construction Academy with the latest equipment, work areas, and classrooms. The academy will also have its own outside auto lift.



Bond money is financing the projects, which will be located side-by-side at the western edge of campus.

### **Growing popularity**

For about a decade, Banning High has stressed career-tech education programs that offer students a variety of career paths. They can pursue a college degree, earn certifications in fields like cybersecurity and robotics, and graduate high school with marketable technical skills.

These programs are gaining in popularity across the United States and are showing results, experts say.

About half of all boys and girls in US high schools take one or more career-tech education courses, according to the latest data provided by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. The classes help keep students in school who



are otherwise not motivated by the regular curriculum, experts say. Finally, career-tech education courses prepare students for fast-moving changes in the job market. By next year, nearly two-thirds of all jobs in the United States will require some education beyond high school, according to a new

report from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

### **Choosing a career**

At Banning High, career-tech education students start by sampling classes leading to careers in film, business, medicine, law enforcement, construction, theater, and the armed forces. Once they take interest in a particular profession, they complete course sequences for that field combined with college prep classes in English, math, science, and foreign language. Students can investigate nearly 60 careers involving more than a dozen industries in California.

### **Student focus**

Students are the driving force for the success at Banning High. Each school year reveals new examples of young people with promising futures. Students interested in careers ranging from stage production and TV news to the building industry will find the training and education they need.

Senior Angel Rios is studying construction and hopes to become a carpenter just like his dad, so they can go into business together. Like good carpenters who

measure *twice* and cut *once*, Rios carefully examined his career options before choosing construction.

“I am confident about my future now,” he said. “With help from my teachers and the Career and Technical Education program, I’ll reach the goals that I’ve set in life.”

