OC Parks
and
Santa Ana College Criminal Justice Academies

GRADUATION PROGRAM

May 15, 2012

OC PARKS RANGER ACADEMY CLASS #3

OC Parks

In Affiliation With

Santa Ana College Criminal Justice Academies

Announces the Graduation of

2012 OC Parks
Ranger Academy Class #3

Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:30 p.m.

Irvine Ranch Outdoor Education Center
at Irvine Regional Park
Orange, California

PROGRAM

Welcome
Todd Daniel, Training Manager

Procession
Ranger Academy Class #3 and Training Staff

Presentation of Colors
Orange County Sheriff's Department
Explorer Post #449

National Anthem
Annie Ruygt

Invocation
Kelly N. Lewis, Class Chaplain

Introduction of Guests
Todd Daniel, Training Manager

Orange County Board of Supervisors Address
Bill Campbell, Third District Supervisor

Class Video

Class Sergeant's Address
Dennis G. Shaffer

Keynote Address
Mark Denny, OC Parks Director

Awards and Badge Presentations
Mark Denny, OC Parks Director
Todd Daniel, Training Manager

Oath of Office
Mark Denny, OC Parks Director

God Bless America
Annie Ruygt

Dismissal

A Message From OC Parks Director Mark Denny

OC Parks' Ranger Academy started in 2009 as a way to provide the best possible training to current and prospective park rangers. Tonight our third class, RA #3, graduates after completing 18 intensive weeks of training.

Currently, 14 ranger academy graduates work as full-time OC Parks rangers. Additionally, three full-time OC Parks rangers graduate tonight as part of OC Parks Ranger Academy Class #3.

Rangers serve as ambassadors for the parks. They help children understand and appreciate the natural world around them. They guide visitors to sights they've never seen before or let them see those sights in a brand new way. They help ensure that every visitor's experience in OC Parks is enjoyable, safe and positive. This is why our new rangers need the best possible training designed specifically for this job.

I'm proud of all the graduates of this year's ranger academy for completing this challenging training and look forward to seeing them help connect more people with the beautiful parks and open space of Orange County.

RANGER ACADEMY

CLASS OFFICERS AND AWARDS

The OC Parks Ranger Academy was developed in partnership with OC Parks and Santa Ana College Criminal Justice Academies. The academy incorporated 260 hours of ranger-specific training in a moderate stress environment over a period of 18 weeks.

The academy training offered a wide array of modules, including: First Aid, CPR and AED, Radio Communications, Off-Highway and Emergency Vehicle Operations, Southern California Wilderness Training, Fire Training, Tactical Communications, Customer Service, Patrol Tactics and Duties, National Association for Interpretation, Laws of Arrest (POST Certified PC 832-A), Animal Behavior and Handling, Traffic Enforcement, Facility Inspections, Introduction to Project Management, Computerized Maintenanace Management System, Ranger Safety, Park Ranger Duties and Responsibilities, Chemical Agents, Park Incidents, Firearms Awareness, and Crimes in Progress.

HONORARY CLASS OFFICERS

Honorary class officers are selected by the academy recruit members based upon demonstrated leadership, inspiration and overall academy performance.

CLASS SERGEANT: DENNIS G. SHAFFER
CLASS ASSISTANT: KELSIE L. ANDERSON
CLASS CHAPLAIN: KELLY N. LEWIS
ALPHA SQUAD: VLESYDI A. LOVELAND
BRAVO SQUAD: MICHAEL J. WILSON
CHARLIE SQUAD: MATTHEW A. STEGNER
DELTA SQUAD: BENJAMIN S. ROGERS

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

OUTSTANDING RECRUIT

This award is the top honor and is presented to the recruit who earned the highest overall score.

INTERPRETATION

This award is presented to the recruit who earned the highest combined score in both the National Association for Interpretation and the Southern California Wilderness classes.

FIELD PROBLEMS/SCENARIOS

This award is presented to the recruit who earned the highest overall score in Field Problems/Scenarios.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

This award is presented to the recruit who earned the highest overall academic score.

OC PARKS RANGER ACADEMY CLASS #3

OC PARKS RANGER ACADEMY CLASS #3
DEDICATED TO SERVE • PREPARED TO LEAD

2012 OC PARKS RANGER ACADEMY CLASS #3

BAHA ABUHADWAN

Baha was born and raised in Anaheim, where he still lives. He works at Mile Square Golf Course Banquet Center as a server. He attended Cal State Fullerton, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. His career goal is to become a news anchor for ABC 7 Eyewitness News in Los Angeles or a park ranger for OC Parks. One of his favorite academy experiences was attending the academy Animal Behavior class at Caspers Wilderness Park, telling himself how cool it was to be in the academy and having the class at such a cool park.

KELSIE L. ANDERSON

Kelsie was born in Springfield, Oregon and was raised in Aliso Viejo, California. She now resides in Costa Mesa. Kelsie attended UC Irvine, where she earned a bachelor's degree in engineering, and currently works as a civil engineer for a consulting firm in Irvine. She hopes to fulfill her dream and hang up her engineering skills to become an OC Parks ranger. Her most memorable academy experience was learning that she and all her fellow recruits had passed their required PC 832 class.

ARTURO CASTILLO, JR.

Arturo was born in Orange and graduated from Ocean View High School in Huntington Beach. He now lives in Lake Forest. He hopes to become an OC Parks ranger in the future, and is looking forward to volunteering as a Ranger Reserve. His most memorable academy experience was on the first day, when he was looking forward to "Academy Welcome." It wasn't quite the welcome he was expecting.

NICOLE C. CRUSSELL

Nicole is truly an Orange native – she was born, raised, and is still living in the historic town. She earned her bachelor's degree in history from Cal Poly Pomona, and currently works at REI in Tustin. She hopes to become an OC Parks ranger someday soon, and in the meantime will continue to volunteer as a Ranger Reserve for OC Parks and as a volunteer for the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association. Her most memorable academy experience was realizing the teamwork and camaraderie her class had developed right after being pepper sprayed.

SANTINO P. DEFENDIS

Santino was born and raised in Fresno, California and now lives in Huntington Beach. He is the lead server at Duke's restaurant in Huntington Beach. He earned a bachelor's degree in recreation and leisure service management from Cal State Fresno. He hopes to become an OC Parks ranger and work his way through the ranks. His most memorable academy experience was being counseled by the training staff for not securing his Nutter Butters in his duty bag.

KEVIN A. DENAULT

Kevin was born and raised in San Juan Capistrano. He works as a store manager for his family-owned DeNault's True Value Hardware in San Juan Capistrano. He hopes to gain experience as a Ranger Reserve and will seek a ranger job either at OC Parks or another agency. His favorite academy experience was during fire training, deploying his fire shelter in simulated high winds. His most valuable lesson learned from the academy is to never give up, keep studying, push yourself to your limits and learn from your mistakes.

KATE KOHL FANCHER

Kate was born in Long Beach and raised in Irvine. She currently lives in Orange with her husband Peter. She is a professional photographer, and owns a photography business here in Orange County. She earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from Cal State Long Beach. Kate is looking forward to volunteering her time as a Ranger Reserve in the Irvine Ranch Open Space and at Santiago Oaks Regional Park. Her most valuable lesson learned in the Ranger Academy was that every situation must be constantly reassessed. Sometimes you just have to throw all expectations out the window.

GABRIEL LASSALLE

Gabriel was born in Torrance and has lived in Garden Grove since he was 9 years old. He attended Orange Coast College, where he earned his associate's degree in business. Most recently, he worked in electrical design and hopes to one day become a full-time OC Parks ranger. His most memorable academy experience was while he was serving as the Class Sergeant. He was attempting to march the class to the inspection grounds when he marched the class too far. He was then instructed by the highly motivational Training Officers on the correct way to drill the class.

KELLY N. LEWIS

Kelly was born in Orange and raised in Riverside, where she now resides with her husband Geoff and their 16-month-old son Riley. Kelly currently works as a field naturalist for the OC Department of Education Inside the Outdoors Program. After graduation, Kelly hopes to become a full-time park ranger for OC Parks. Her most valuable lesson learned from the academy is the amazing fact that 25 strangers can come together to accomplish so much and become so close in such a relatively brief amount of time.

JUSTIN LIM

Justin was born in Los Angeles and raised in South Pasadena. Currently, he lives in Irvine and manages several apartment complexes in Los Angeles and Newport Beach. He earned his bachelor's degree in Asian American studies at UC Irvine, and hopes to continue volunteering his time as an OC Parks Ranger Reserve. Justin tells us that the academy was one of the most difficult undertakings in his lifetime and he is proud of this accomplishment. Motivation from himself and his classmates has helped him to push himself to the limit and to devote 100% of his life and effort to the academy.

VLESYDI A. LOVELAND

Vlesydi was born in Orange and raised in San Clemente. Currently, she resides in San Juan Capistrano with her husband Josh and their daughter Jinger, 6, and son Jack, 5. Vlesydi is working on a degree in environmental science, and hopes to become a full-time OC Parks ranger. She currently works as a groundskeeper for OC Parks at O'Neill Regional Park. Her most valuable lesson learned from the academy is that every mistake made is a window of opportunity preparing one for victory and success.

KORY P. MCCAIN

Kory is a Northern California native, born in Fresno and raised in Arnold, a small town of approximately 3,900 people in Calaveras County. He attended Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Kory and his wife Amanda currently live in Rancho Santa Margarita, and are proud parents to Lily, born May 4. Kory works as an OC Parks ranger, presently assigned to Irvine Regional Park in Orange. His most valuable lesson learned in the academy is that each person, no matter what his or her background and personality, can be a leader in some form and succeed with support from the rest of the team.

TIMOTHY P. NIEBLAS

Tim was born in Newport Beach and raised in Trabuco Canyon, where he still lives today. He works at Oggi's Pizza and Brewing Company, where he works as a host, cashier and expediter. His career goal is to become an OC Parks ranger, and one day own his own bar and grill. He is looking forward to volunteering his time as an OC Parks Ranger Reserve. His most memorable academy experience was picking up a live opossum at Caspers Wilderness Park during Animal Behavior Training, and surviving.

ANDREW S. OGDEN

Andrew was born in Rochester, New York and raised in Irvine, where he still lives. He is a data technician for MacLinear in Irvine. He attended UCLA, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in economics. Andrew's goal is becoming a full-time OC Parks ranger, and in the interim is looking forward to applying his new skills in all OC Parks as a Ranger Reserve. He claims his most memorable academy experience was when Training Officer Noval yelled, "Samaniego, you look like a banana when you do push-ups!"

SUMMER R. PEPPER

Summer was born in Fullerton and raised in the equestrian area of Yorba Linda. She, along with her husband Shawn, still calls Yorba Linda home. She attended Cal Poly Pomona, where she earned her bachelor's degree in animal science. Summer is a self-employed farrier (horseshoe blacksmith) and owns the Village Smithy, a mobile business with clients from Whittier to Temecula. Her career goal is to find a career that she loves, regardless of what field it is in. Summer states that the most valuable lesson learned in the academy is, "Despite how overwhelming the task may seem, we all have the strength within ourselves to accomplish anything we set our minds to, and our only limitation is our self-confidence."

MARK D. RINUS

Mark was born and raised in Orange, and now makes Fullerton his home. Currently, he works as a security guard for South District Patrol in Tustin. He is working on his associate's degree at Santiago Canyon College in Orange. His career goals are to become a park ranger for OC Parks or California State Parks. Mark's most valuable lesson learned at the academy is, "No matter what hardships you face, if you work as a team, you will overcome these hardships and they will only strengthen the bond that holds you together."

ERICK T. RODELIUS

Erick was born in Lancaster, South Carolina, and moved to Mission Viejo, California, where he was raised. He now lives in Trabuco Canyon, where he works as a self-employed professional organizer. He holds an associate's degree in history from Saddleback College. His career goal is to gather as much experience as he can as an OC Parks Ranger Reserve, then transition to full-time employment as a park ranger for Orange County or elsewhere. Erick states that his most valuable lesson learned from the academy is, "With the right amount of effort and the right amount of support, you can accomplish whatever you set your mind to. I made the right choice in becoming a part of OC Parks, and I couldn't be more proud of RA #3's accomplishments."

BENJAMIN S. ROGERS

Ben was born, raised, and still lives in Long Beach with his wife Joy. He earned his bachelor's degree in English at Cal State Long Beach. He works as a server at Roman Cucina Italian Restaurant in Sunset Beach and as a park aide at Bolsa Chica State Beach. He hopes to gain more experience volunteering in OC Parks as a Ranger Reserve and to become an OC Parks ranger sometime in the future. Ben's most valuable lesson from the academy was that to succeed as a team, you must always be a good "960" (back-up) to your partner.

GRANT M. SAMANIEGO

Grant was born in Fountain Valley and raised in Corona. He has moved back to Orange County and now lives in Yorba Linda. He works as a veterinary technician assistant for Paws and Claws Veterinary Hospital in Yorba Linda. His education goal is to obtain a master's degree in wildlife biology or ecology. Grant's most valuable lessons learned from the academy were the ranger-related skills, accompanied by the unforgettable memories and friends he made. It is now clear to him how much he has grown through this and hopes to keep growing throughout his life and professional pursuits.

KEITH R. SCHWANEMANN

Keith was born in Orange and raised in Huntington Beach. He now lives in Fountain Valley. Keith holds a bachelor's degree in environmental science and policy, with a minor in Spanish from Cal State Long Beach. His future career goals might include becoming an OC Parks ranger, a high school teacher or opening up a coffee shop and café. When asking Keith what his most valuable lesson learned was, he wrote, "Strive to enhance creativity and critical thinking, as these are amongst the most valuable tools we possess. These tools allow us to be ourselves yet convey our desired message in a unique style, to maintain overall safety, and to have a contagious joy and passion for our work."

DENNIS G. SHAFFER

Dennis was born in Fullerton and raised in the city of El Toro, California. He now lives with his wife and children in Rancho Santa Margarita. Dennis earned his bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Washington and holds a California teaching credential in social science. Dennis claims, "The breadth of abilities required to be a steward of parks is unbelievable. In over 20 weeks, we learned everything from basic law enforcement skills to techniques used by a field naturalist, and everything in between. The amazing respect that I have for OC Parks rangers has grown tenfold after attending this academy, now that I fully understand the knowledge and skills needed to work as a park ranger."

CRYSTAL A. SHELDON

Crystal was born in Westminster and raised in Huntington Beach. Her training is in zookeeping, after earning her bachelor's degree in biology with an option in zoology. Her career goal is to find a job where she can teach others about this amazing world we live in and the animals we share it with. Crystal's advice is to "roll with the punches, take it in stride, and it will get better. Accept leadership; it is thrust upon you at the times you will need it most."

MATTHEW A. STEGNER

Matt was born in Columbus, Ohio, raised in Upper Arlington, Ohio, and now lives in Mission Viejo. He currently works as an OC Parks ranger, assigned to O'Neill Regional Park. He earned his bachelor's degree in political science, with a minor in history from UC Santa Barbara. He hopes for a long and successful career with OC Parks. Matt states that mental barriers resulting from stress and fatigue can be overcome through perseverance, determination and a will to succeed.

TYLOR G. VU

Tylor was born in Saigon, Vietnam, immigrated to the United States as a young boy, and was raised in Rochester, Minnesota. He currently lives in Irvine with Megan, his wife of one month – they married during the academy. He works as an IT consultant for Cal State Fullerton. He earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Loyola Marymount University, and his master's degree in education technology from Pepperdine University. He hopes to one day become a naturalist for a large wilderness conservancy here in Orange County. His most memorable academy experience was having to wear his heavy gloves and academy jacket inside-out all day to drive a point home by the Training Staff. He also says his most valuable lesson learned was how to handle a stressful situation with poise and confidence.

MICHAEL J. WILSON

Mike was born in Bellflower and raised in Long Beach, where he still lives today with his wife Chindamony Pak. Mike holds a bachelor's degree in history from Cal State Long Beach. His career goal is to manage a wilderness park, and become more proficient in the area that first sparked his interest in becoming a park ranger – trail maintenance. His advice to future academy recruits: embrace the value of preparation.

ORANGE COUNTY
PARKS

OC Parks and OC Parks Ranger Academy Class #3 would like to thank the following instructors for their time, dedication and expertise.

OC Parks

Stephen Aleshire, Senior Park Ranger
Steve Bonhall, Administrative Manager
Mark Denny, Director
John Gannaway, Parks Division Manager
John Gump, Senior Park Ranger
Jeremy Hampton, Systems Manager
Bill Kirk, Systems and Resource Management Division Manager
Donna Krucki, Senior Park Ranger
Kevin McKeown, Supervising Park Ranger
Marie Moreno, Customer Relations Manager
Barbara Norton, Supervising Park Ranger
Leslie Ray, Parks Division Manager
Adam Shuck, Park Ranger II
Sue Stoffel, Resource Specialist
Jacky Velasquez, Supervising Park Ranger

Orange County Community Resources

Todd Daniel, Training Manager
Tom Townsend, Administrative Manager

Badlands Off-Road Adventures

Tom Severin, President

Irvine Ranch Conservancy

Evelyn Brown, Naturalist
Kelley Reetz, Naturalist

OC Animal Care

Sergeant James Chiampi
Sergeant Jamie Link

Tustin Police Department

Val Villarreal, Master Police Officer

Orange County Sheriff's Department

Deputy Jack Ackerman
Sergeant John Barker
Pat Campobasso, Communications Training Officer
Deputy Joshua Dietrich
Deputy Ronald Dunlap
Deputy Eric Larsen
Deputy Ernest Ragadio
Deputy Anthony Rodriguez
Deputy Thomas Spratt
Deputy Joses Walehwa

Santa Ana College

William M. Blaska, Instructor

Orange County Fire Authority

Jon Muir, Captain

West Cities Police Communications

Josh Goldmark, Dispatcher

California Department of Fish and Game

Ryan Cordero, Warden

California State Parks

Bart Grant, Supervising Park Ranger
Frank Padilla Jr., Chief Firefighter

Academy Photographers

Don Bonsey
Vicky Malton, Senior Park Ranger
Russell Onkka, Ranger Reserve
Jason Suppes, Ranger Reserve

TODD DANIEL, TRAINING MANAGER

KEVIN MCKEOWN, SR. TRAINING OFFICER

JACKY VELASQUEZ, TRAINING OFFICER

RYAN CORDERO, TRAINING OFFICER

ADAM SHUCK, TRAINING OFFICER

ROBERT BECKLEY, TRAINING OFFICER

JOSEPH NOVAL, TRAINING OFFICER

VICKY MALTON, ACADEMY ADMINISTRATOR

RUSS ONKKA, RANGER RESERVE

JASON SUPPES, RANGER RESERVE

OC PARKS RANGER CODE OF ETHICS

As an OC Parks ranger, it is my honor and my duty to provide exemplary service to all people that I come in contact with and treat them with respect and courtesy.

I'm committed to fulfilling the mission and vision of OC Parks by helping park visitors enjoy all that OC Parks has to offer, preserving and protecting the natural and cultural resources of Orange County for present and future generations, and keeping the parks and guests safe.

I will be honest in thought and deed, constantly mindful of the welfare of others, optimistic in times of challenge and adversity, calm in the face of danger, and will always use self-restraint. I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the ordinances of OC Parks and the County of Orange.

I recognize my OC Parks ranger badge as a symbol of public faith and accept it as a public trust to be held while serving as a park ranger. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself fully to my chosen profession as an OC Parks ranger.

www.ocparks.com
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