

Dr. Janis Cavanaugh, a renowned Southern California educator, is one of the most energetic and positive role models you are likely to meet and has left her mark on innumerable students that she has come into contact with over the course of her career in public safety and education. Professor Cavanaugh has been instrumental in creating visionary programs in the forensic science field. Always one to lead the way in new, exciting directions, Cavanaugh was one of the first female officers on patrol in El Monte, California in the early 70's. In the late 70's Cavanaugh took to the rails, apprehending rapists and drug dealers as a federal police officer for Amtrak. Cavanaugh later returned to Rio Hondo College to teach and to work as assistant range master at the Police Academy . In her spare time she worked with Whittier PD's Narcotic Task Force program.

Cavanaugh taught Administration of Justice and Introduction to Forensic Science classes at Rio Hondo College for many years, always promoting her best students to area agencies in need of qualified candidates. Shortly after the surprise verdict in the O.J. Simpson case, Cavanaugh developed the Forensic Identification Program at Rio Hondo College, hoping to thwart any future miscarriages of justice by providing hands-on training by forensic experts currently working in the forensic science field. After ten semesters of successful and effective forensic training, with standing room only classes, Cavanaugh began looking for a new home for her beloved forensic program after attempts were made to discontinue the popular program.

With the wholehearted endorsement of then Superintendent Patricia Frank and the Board of Trustees, Cavanaugh started the Forensic Science Academy at La Puente Valley Regional Occupational Program. It is a testament to Cavanaugh's integrity and honor that nearly every forensic professional who had worked with her in the Forensic Identification Program at Rio Hondo College, then joined her to teach at LPVROP's Forensic Science Academy and all have continued to improve and refine the Forensic Science Academy's rigorous training program.

Ms. Cav (as she is fondly referred to by her students) is not one to rest on her laurels. She retired as Police Chief of Rowland Unified School District, and now teaches full time at East Los Angeles College, after having advised students completing their theses for the Masters Degree in Forensic Science at National University, serving as President of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Whittier. Cavanaugh is writing an autobiography based on her experiences as a female pioneer in law enforcement, public safety education, and forensic science education.