

OCC

magazine

2023 EDITION



ORANGE
COAST
COLLEGE

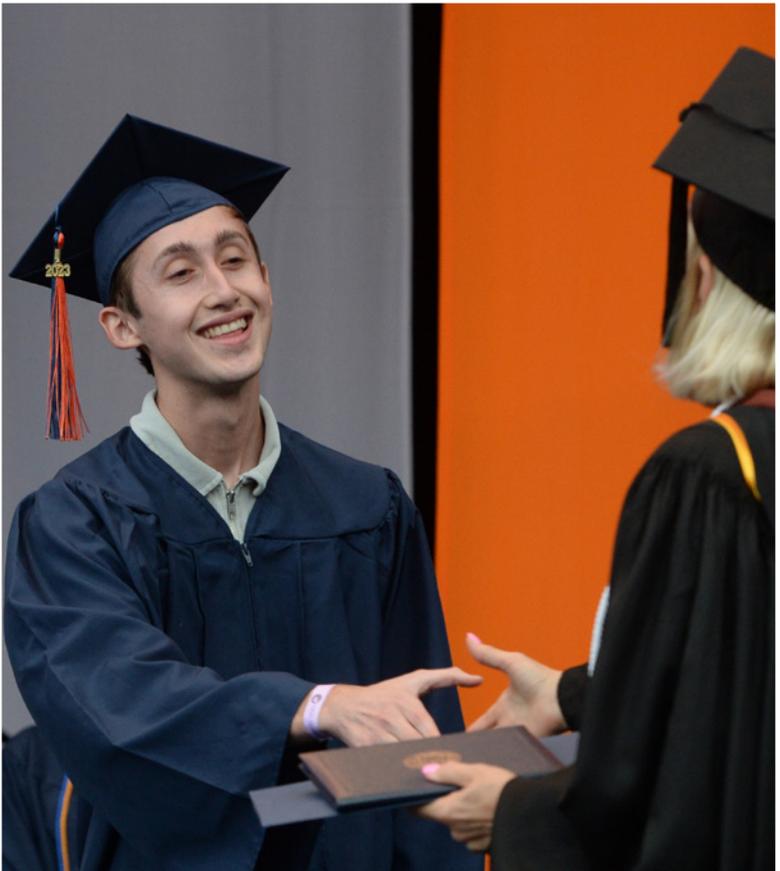


Commencement



Orange Coast College's 75th commencement exercises featured pomp, pageantry and celebration. The event marked the culmination of the mission of the College to foster student success.

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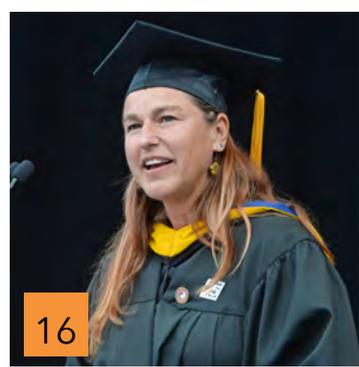


and joyous celebration.
success and achievement.





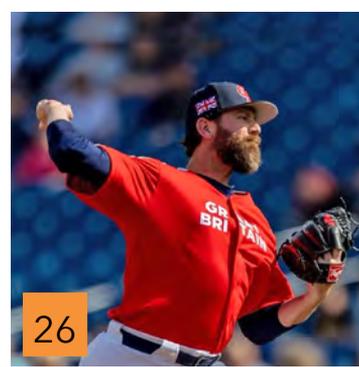
11



16



20



26

contents 2023 EDITION

features

Mendez v. Westminster..... 2
The family of OCC alum Sylvia Mendez fought back against segregation.

The 2024 Teacher of the Year 6
Professor Kelli Elliott earns recognition and credits her team's support.

A System of Sustainability 11
OCC Horticulture Department converts greenhouse for a new aquaponics project.

OCC at 75 12
OCC starts a year of celebration honoring the past, present, and future.

Explore Coast 14
Ten cool things at OCC that are open to the community.

Dennis Kelly Aquarium Celebrates 50 Years at OCC..... 22
California's only student-run aquarium creates professionals and welcomes guests.

OCC Recovery Kitchen Earns National Award 26
The food service management program was recognized by EPA for education, and outreach efforts.

Women's Basketball Team Captures State Championship..... 30
The team crowned victors with a 32-1 season showcasing resilience and talent.

A Winning Attitude..... 32
Get to know head coach Sammy Doucette!

Former Pirate shines at World Baseball Classic 35
Pitcher Daniel Cooper credits Altobelli with success.

Finding Her Way..... 38
Carmen Chavez reflects on her road to OCC and beyond.

Family Affair: Mother and Son Graduate Together 40
Nancy Estrada uses family tragedy as inspiration to graduate from OCC.



2



Orange Coast College, founded in 1947, is one of the nation's top transfer schools. With a student population of 22,000, OCC provides exemplary programs leading to Associate in Arts degrees, Associate in Science degrees and 145 career programs. As a multicultural and multinational institution, OCC is a qualifying Hispanic Serving Institution and an Asian American Native American and Pacific Islander Serving Institution, and serves more than 1,000 international students representing more than 56 countries. The College's 164-acre campus is located in the heart of Costa Mesa, just minutes from Southern California's beautiful beaches. For complete details about OCC, visit www.orangecoastcollege.edu.

Dear Orange Coast College colleagues and friends,

Traditionally, the gift for a 75th anniversary is a diamond. Good things that are valuable and beautiful take time. Great things, however, take more than time—they require perseverance, commitment, and flexibility. They need to adapt and respond to a community's changing landscape and needs. This is the story of Orange Coast College, providing 75 years of educational excellence, building upon a story of success and transformation, and creating a place that inspires students to dream, learn, and thrive.



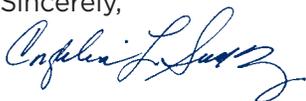
It is my honor to serve an institution alongside dedicated faculty, classified professionals, and administrators whose commitment to students' success is unwavering. This issue of the OCC Magazine is a testament to those successes—achievements from our past, present, and future.

- In the past: Read about OCC alum Sylvia Mendez and the case of Mendez, et al. v. Westminster School District. This local case led to the desegregation of public schools in California and the nation.
- In the present: This issue is replete with stories about our student and program successes, from dance students performing at the American College Dance Association's 2023 National College Dance Festival to a plethora of championships and awards—Pirates women's basketball, men's volleyball, the forensics team, and the Coast Report student newspaper.
- In the future: Elementary schoolers develops skills at OCC's Rocket School. This program introduces children to trigonometry and rocket science to attract future students to OCC.

The success of our programs and, most importantly, our graduates is a testament to OCC's extensive student support services and stellar academic programs.

As the College celebrates 75 years of educational excellence, a diamond anniversary, we are thrilled to share these inspiring stories with you and invite you to join us in celebrating this important milestone.

Sincerely,



Angelica L. Suarez, Ph.D.



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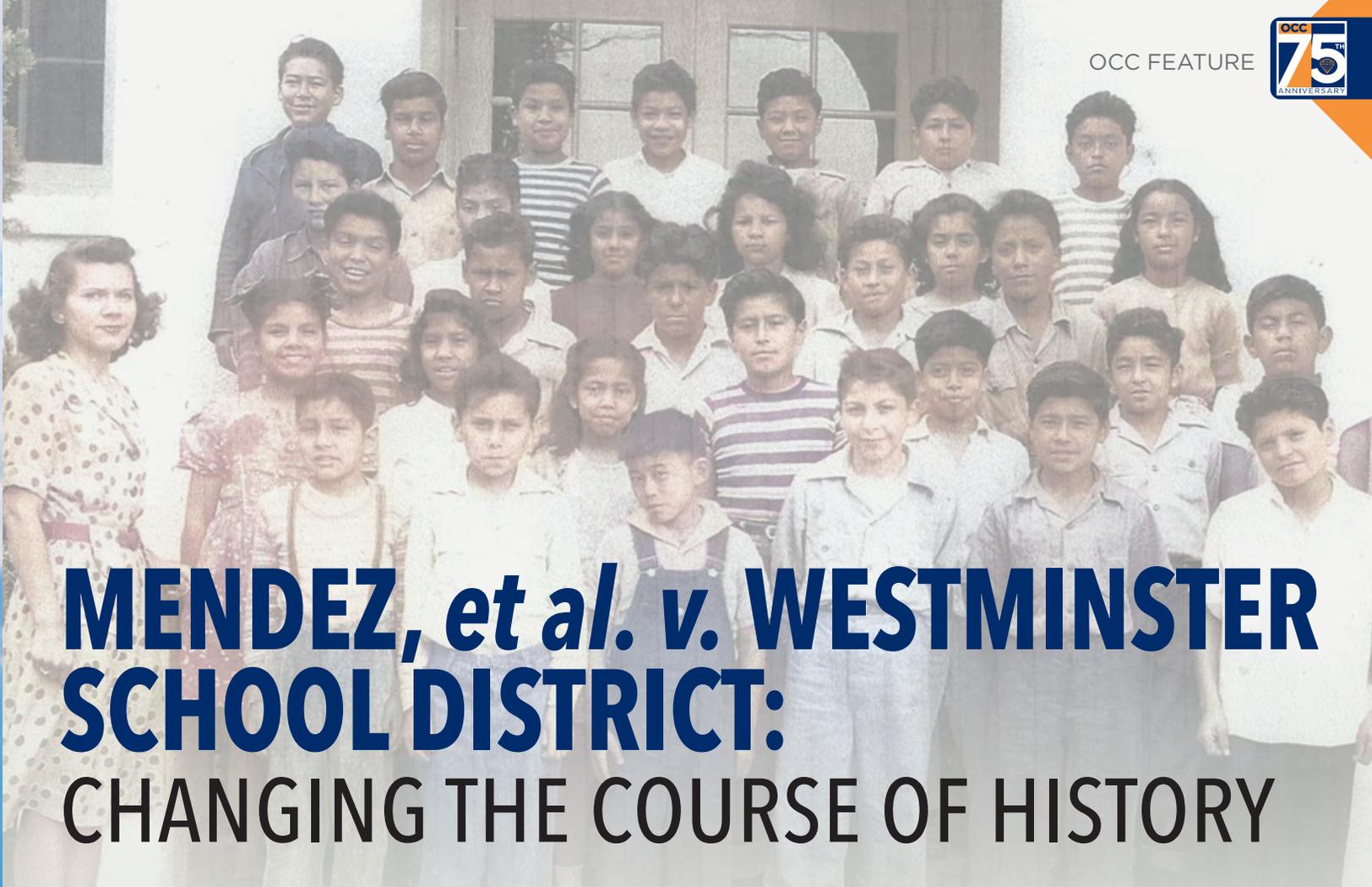
MISSION STATEMENT

Orange Coast College serves the educational needs of a diverse local and global community. The College empowers students to achieve their goals by providing high quality, culturally responsive, and innovative programs and services through pathways leading to degrees, transfers, certificates, foundational skills, workforce development, and lifelong learning. The College promotes student development, learning, and equitable outcomes by fostering a respectful, inclusive, caring, and participatory campus climate of student engagement and academic inquiry.

FOLLOW US







MENDEZ, *et al.* v. WESTMINSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT:

CHANGING THE COURSE OF HISTORY

While Sylvia Mendez was taking nursing classes at Orange Coast College, she followed the news as Ruby Bridges became the first Black child to desegregate an all-white school, in 1960.

It was an historic moment. Bridges was a civil rights leader and icon in the making and Mendez got to watch it happen. Today, 63 years later, she still doesn't understand why the two women aren't taught together in history classes.

Seven years before *Brown v. Board of Education*, which found that racial segregation in schools is unconstitutional, came *Mendez v. Westminster*, the nation's first successful case to desegregate a school.

Challenging and changing, the law

"Mendez" as named in the court case is Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez, Sylvia Mendez's parents. She was 9 years old and, she says, she remembers everything from those days, including the day she tried to attend a "whites only" school. She was with her cousins, who were lighter-skinned than Mendez.

"When we arrived to the school, they told my aunt she could leave her children and to say she's Belgian," Mendez says via phone from her Fullerton home. "So the school said, 'Just say you're Belgian and you can stay here and your (brother-in-law's) kids go to the Mexican school.' My aunt got so upset. 'I'm not leaving my children here if you don't take my brother's kids.'"

Mendez had previously attended a Mexican school before her family moved to a white neighborhood and their home was right next to the "whites only" school. She remembers that her father said, "No matter where we live, they're not going to accept us." The family's lawyer, David Marcus, found other families unable to attend a "whites only" school and turned the case into a class action suit.

What Mendez remembers most from the time in court, however, is the swing set.

"I was in court every day in the front row," says Mendez, who was 9 at the time of the case. "I was not thinking about integration. I was thinking about the playground. The playground was right next to the entrance into the school."

She remembers that the bus would pick up Mendez, her cousins and her white friends and drop them off at the "whites

Sylvia Mendez stands with statues of her parents at the Mendez Tribute Monument Park in Westminster.



BEAUTY OF THE COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN FAMILIES

Janice Munemitsu has known Sylvia Mendez for over 20 years, but the connection between their families dates back much further than that, to World War II.

Munemitsu was born in Orange County, where she still lives. Her grandfather, Seima Munemitsu, moved to California in 1916 from Kochi, Japan. Seima was a farm laborer; however, due to alien land laws, he was unable to own the land he farmed.

When the woman who owned Seima's farm died, she gave the Munemitsus the first right to buy the land and Seima "Tad" Munemitsu—Seima's son and Janice's father—purchased that land in a lease-to-own agreement that was filed to Tad in 1944, though it took years for the purchase to finalize.

During the forced evacuation and internment of 120,000 Japanese-Americans during World War II, Tad faced losing the farm and his livelihood if no one could tend it. While the Munemitsus were sent to a Department of Justice facility in New Mexico in 1942, Tad leased the farm to Gonzalo Mendez, Sylvia's father. Tad and Gonzalo shared a banker, who connected the two men.

"When I found those lease documents, that put an end to all of that speculation or those things that people said to try and pull down her story," Munemitsu says. "It's sad, but people get jealous."

Munemitsu wrote of her family's connection to the Mendez family in her book, *The Kindness of Color*,



which tells of the Mendezes' and Munemitsus' family stories and their experiences with racism.

The two women met in the early 2000s, when Sandra Robbie called Munemitsu. Robbie is the writer/producer of the documentary *Mendez vs. Westminster: For All The Children*, which won an Emmy. During work on the

documentary, Sylvia and her brothers had wondered what happened to the Munemitsus over the decades; it turns out, they couldn't locate the family because they had been misspelling "Munemitsu," Janice says. Robbie said she'd help in the search.

While Robbie looked, Janice says, she happened to ask a Japanese-American person who knew of the Munemitsus, who said, "I think you're looking for the wrong name."

"Sandra called me one day," Janice says. "I picked up the phone, (and) all those facts lined up."

Today, Janice speaks with educators who want to include her family's story in their lesson plans.

She points to one particular class of third to sixth graders in a local school—they asked some amazing questions.

"'Why do they do this? How did your family survive? This is terrible.' They get it," Janice says. "Kids need to know this history of what happened. When you don't tell all history, you get one side."

KELLI ELLIOTT: THE 2024 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Kelli Elliott, a professor in biology and environmental science at Orange Coast College, has been named the 2024 Teacher of the Year by the Orange County Department of Education. She is one of the county’s six winners, selected from 62 nominees. The award is available to K-12 and community college teachers and professors who have at least eight years of experience.

What does the Teacher of the Year award recognize?

They asked me to write my philosophy of teaching and I had to submit a résumé and some personal quotes. Those are to be used later on (at a recognition gala this November). I have an appointment where I have to go read my quotes and be recorded.

How did you find out you’d won?

I was in my class. My students that particular day in lab were finalizing projects. I was just sitting at the front desk and they walked in. A large group of people—colleagues and then a whole camera crew and reporters were there. It was very overwhelming for me. I generally don’t like to be in the spotlight.

How did your students react?

They were kinda funny. It was the same class (who saw me receive) the OCC Faculty of the Year. I don’t know

if they were just like, “Oh, this is that again?” But when they heard about the money, then they all cheered. The Orange County Department of Education people, they thought that was hilarious, that that’s what they cheered (for).

Congrats, as well, on your OCC Faculty of the Year award.

They’re giving me three minutes to speak at commencement, which I’m really nervous about as well. But it’s such an honor. I’m rehearsing tonight and for the next two weeks. If you are nominated for Faculty of the Year, then you can apply to be considered for the OCDE Teacher of the Year. Each of the Orange County community colleges sent their faculty of the year forward as well. Then it’s a step process. They call us the six finalists for Orange County and we can apply for California state teacher of the year. The five that are chosen there can apply for national teacher of the year.

How much award money is attached to the Teacher of the Year award, that got your students so excited? And how will you use those funds?

\$25,000. I was like, “Oh, my gosh, we have supply money for next year,” and they’re like “No, no, no. This is for you.” I’ve been wanting to get a new pair of

binoculars for quite some time. My pair is a little broken, but functional, so I'm looking to replace those. And then, my spotting scope and I was going to donate my spotting scope to the school and then I have some big field trips coming up in the fall and I'm going to fund the students (and) cover their costs.

What does this award mean to you?

It's taken me a while to feel comfortable with it. I felt a little awkward being singled out. But I feel honored that I'm being represented for the group of people that I work with. I think we all feel that we work better together and they've all been very supportive and I feel like maybe this round is just my turn to be recognized. All of us that work together, we lift each other up and support each other and can't do this alone. I feel honored being recognized as a representative of all of us.



OCC DANCERS SELECTED TO PERFORM AT NATIONAL COLLEGIATE FESTIVAL

The dance is a spin on the Jets vs. Sharks rumble in West Side Story. Both leads are women and they spend the 10-minute performance facing off, crouching low, in the air, lifted high.

It's called Strategy and it was choreographed by Mike Esperanza, a New York-based choreographer who looked at the 12 Orange Coast College dance students who showed up to practice back in January and understood that some of these dancers would go on to dance professionally after their time



at OCC. Some would move on to a four-year university to get their bachelor's degrees. And some would do neither; they were taking dance classes for the exercise or the fun of it, studying other programs and reaching for different goals.

The result got the group invited to the American College Dance Association's 2023 National College Dance Festival, where they performed with dancers from 34 other community colleges and universities. The association is the largest organization in the United States to serve dance in higher ed.

"It's so validating for them, that they're on the right path," says Rachel Berman, OCC's dance department chair, who first invited Esperanza to work with her students.

Selected for nationals

Over spring break, Berman attended the American College Dance Association's regional conference, which includes southern California, with OCC students and other dance instructors. Attending the conference, which was hosted at the University of California, Irvine, gave colleges the opportunity to submit dances to be adjudicated, or judged for possible selection to perform at the national festival.

The conference drew over 500 attendees and 47 performances spread over four concerts. Judges selected 10 of those 47 to perform again at the conference gala on the event's final night. From those 10, they selected four to move on to the national conference, competing against colleges from across the country.

Dancers are selected to perform at the festival based on their artistic excellence, according to a news release for the national festival: "(Strategy) exhibits a relentless commitment to choreographic invention realized through compelling performance," the judges wrote about the OCC performance.

In an effort to keep the judging process fair and blind, conference attendees aren't permitted to wear any school gear, Berman says. That way, if a judge sees a dancer in the hall, they won't be able to figure out the dancer's school.

"All they know is the name of the dance," Berman says. "They don't know if it's a community college or private university or state university. They don't know if the choreographer is a student, faculty or guest," like Esperanza.

Performing at the national conference

The last time OCC dancers were invited to dance at the national festival, which was just before Berman started at OCC, was 2018.

And the last time anyone attended an association conference was in March 2020; Berman says the performances at the regional conference were the last live thing she saw before everything shut down for the pandemic—dancers never even received any judges' comments or learned if they had been selected to perform at the national festival.

This created perhaps even more excitement and anticipation around the 2023 festival, hosted this year at California State University, Long Beach. The producer of the Jacob's Pillow dance festival, which the New York Times has called "the dance center of the nation," attended and selected works for the western Massachusetts festival.

At the association's festival, Berman is looking forward to introducing a larger audience to Strategy—and to OCC dancers.

"This is what we as dancers work for," she says, "all that training day in and day out so that we can perform and show the world our artistry."

"It's so validating for them, that they're on the right path."

~Rachel Berman, OCC dance department chair



OCC celebrates 65th Annual Honor's Night: "Diamonds are a Pirate's Best Friend"



Orange Coast College celebrated its 65th Annual Honor's Night this past May at the Robert B. Moore Theatre.

Nearly \$640,000 worth of scholarships were awarded to OCC students to recognize their academic achievements, service and leadership to the college and community.

As a nod to OCC's 75th anniversary, "Diamonds are a Pirate's Best Friend" was appointed this year's theme. Honors Night is a long-standing tradition that acknowledges the community of OCC learners and educators that leave a lasting legacy.





A SYSTEM OF SUSTAINABILITY

One of the most sustainable projects found at Orange Coast College is located inside a greenhouse that used to house poinsettias. The aquaponics greenhouse opened in early 2022 and it uses about a bucket of water a day to grow 300 heads of lettuce.

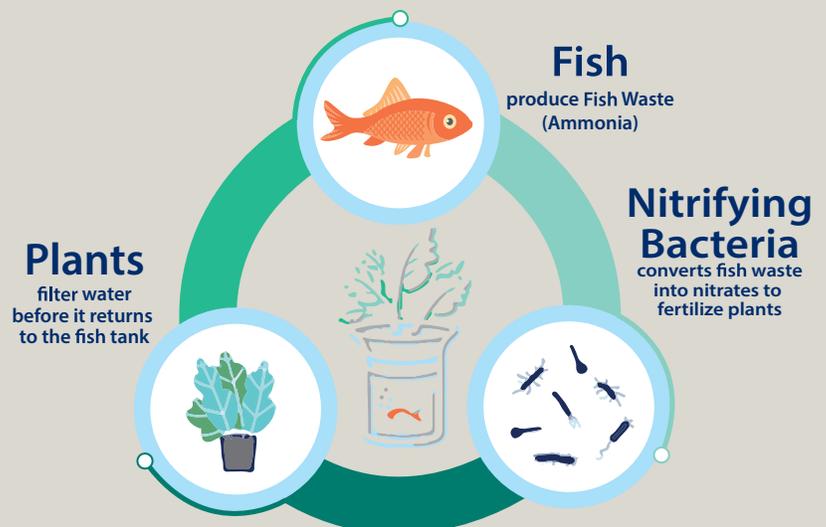
Aquaponics is a marriage of aquaculture (raising fish) and hydroponics (growing plants in water) that creates a sustainable cycle: In OCC's case, lettuce, goldfish and tilapia. The waste products from the fish are filtered and used as nutrient for the plants. The plant water then is recycled and syphoned back to the fish. Their waste is then filtered and ... The cycle continues.

In addition to lettuce, the greenhouse has also produced basil, strawberries, shallots and carrots, says Joe Stead, horticulture lab coordinator. The food is used on campus, including Pirates' Cove, OCC's food pantry.

"It's been a really cool project," says Magali Martinez, marine science major. "We use so much less water in our system to grow so much."



Aquaponics Cycle



OCC AT 75: CELEBRATING THE PAST, EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Orange Coast College is proudly celebrating its 75th anniversary. With a rich history of academic excellence and a commitment to student success, the College stands tall as a testament to the transformative power of education.

Founded in 1947 with classes beginning in 1948, OCC has grown to become one of the premier community colleges in the nation. Its mission to provide accessible and high-quality education has attracted students from diverse backgrounds, enriching the campus with a vibrant tapestry of cultures and ideas.

The college has nurtured countless talents and future leaders, from rigorous science and technology programs to outstanding arts and humanities departments. Graduates have gone on to excel in their chosen professions, positively impacting their communities and beyond.

Its unwavering commitment to innovation and progress sets Orange Coast College apart. Embracing the latest advance-

ments in educational technology, the college has continuously evolved its teaching methods, ensuring students receive a cutting-edge education that prepares them for the challenges of tomorrow.

Beyond academics, OCC takes pride in its thriving campus life. Student organizations, championship athletic teams and artistic endeavors provide a well-rounded college experience, fostering personal growth and lifelong friendships.

As the 75th-anniversary celebrations continue, events honor the institution's legacy and those who have contributed to its success. Distinguished alums, esteemed faculty and current students will come together to reminisce and envision the future.

The college administration, faculty and staff thank the community for its unwavering support. Orange Coast College's journey would not have been possible without it.



1947



Orange Coast College is established on Jan. 27, 1947, with Dr. Basil H. Peterson as the first president.



1948



OCC is awarded 243 of the Santa Ana Army Air Base's original 900 acres and Newport Harbor Union High School's night program becomes OCC's first active classes.



1953



OCC leases land adjacent to the Lido Channel to serve as a base for the College's crew program.



Looking ahead, Orange Coast College remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering academic excellence, diversity and inclusivity. With a renewed determination to stay at the forefront of education, the college is set to embark on the next chapter of its illustrious history, empowering generations to come.

Join us as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of Orange Coast College and honor a remarkable journey of learning, growth and community.

Happy 75th anniversary Orange Coast College.



Angels Host OCC Night as Part of 75th Anniversary Celebration

The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim hosted “Orange Coast College Night” in May as part of OCC’s yearlong campus and community-based 75th anniversary celebration.

An OCC-inspired village met OCC attendees at the gate with photo ops, prizes and game hats. The community could purchase special seating for the college to enjoy the game together. Each ticket holder received a customized Angels and Orange Coast College co-branded hat featuring the 75th anniversary logo in OCC’s original colors of maroon and gray.

Besides the Angels beating the Twins, the game was highlighted by OCC President Angelica L. Suarez throwing out the game’s first pitch.

For more upcoming OCC 75th anniversary events, go to www.orangecoastcollege.edu/75years



1955



OCC’s football stadium opens. It is renamed Harry R. LeBard Stadium in 1967.



1956



More Richard Neutra-designed structures on campus are completed, including the Science Building and Planetarium.



1963



Orange Coast Junior College District’s Board of Trustees votes to become a multi-campus district.



Explore Coast



1963

1965

1971

OCC wins a victory at the Junior Rose Bowl, beating Northeastern Oklahoma 21-0.

"Tumbleweeds to Roses," a history of Orange Coast College is published. Dr. Basil Peterson holding Tumbleweeds to Roses book.

The campus radio station begins broadcasting.



Did you know you don't have to be a student to enjoy what Orange Coast College offers? From engaging art and science exhibits to entertainment and culinary experiences, OCC has something for everyone! Please take a moment to check out some of the attractions at OCC that are open to the public.

1. SEE THE STARS

Visit a galaxy far, far away at OCC's **Planetarium**! Catch a show in the Planetarium's state-of-the-art immersion theatre, or witness the earth's rotation with OCC's Foucault Pendulum, the only one of its kind in Orange County! You can find OCC's Planetarium in the "Science Quad" near OCC's Library and parking lot E.

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/ocplanetarium

2. BARGAIN HUNT

As one of the best deals in town, OCC's **Swap Meet** is a hidden gem in Orange County. To find your way there, go to the northern corner of Orange Coast College's campus, just off Adams and Fairview, on any Saturday or Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/swapmeet

3. CATCH A PERFORMANCE

Music and theater lovers will find their fix at OCC's **Robert B. Moore Theatre** or **Drama Lab Studios**. OCC's theatre program offers multiple performances each academic year. The Moore Theatre is located on the corner of Fairview and Merrimac Way, near parking lot C.

www.occtickets.com

4. BRANCH OUT

OCC's not-so-secret **Horticulture Garden** is truly a wonder to behold. Visitors will delight in seeing a wide variety of native and exotic

plants in a beautiful and serene garden space that offers plenty of shady spots for relaxing. Find the gardens on the northwest side of campus, near the Adams parking lot.

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/horticulture

5. GET YOUR COFFEE FIX

If you can't function without your morning cup of brew, then you're in luck – there's a **Starbucks** Coffee shop located conveniently on campus! OCC's on-campus Starbucks is located adjacent to the OCC Library, near parking lot D.

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/ocstarbucks

6. DIVE UNDERWATER

The only student-run public aquarium in the United States, Orange Coast College's **Dennis Kelly Aquarium** is a must-see stop when visiting campus. Here you'll see learning in action, as marine science students care for rainbow-hued, sharks, leopard eels, seahorses and, of course, fish! OCC's Aquarium is located in the Lewis Center for Applied Sciences, near parking lot E on Merrimac Way. Visit

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/aquarium

7. APPRECIATE ART

From airplanes made entirely of cardboard to installations of shattered glass representing the cosmos, OCC's **Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion ("The Doyle")** invites visitors to stretch their curious minds and to embrace new and different ideas, people and places. Find The Doyle next to OCC's Starbucks, near parking lot D.

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/doylearts

8. GRAB A BITE

Gourmet Foodie Alert! OCC's **Captain's Table** offers a four-course gourmet dining experience for a fraction of the cost of fine-dining restaurants. The Captain's Table is learning lab is staffed by OCC's culinary and hospitality students, with servings for lunch and dinner on select Thursdays during the academic school year. Reservations fill up fast, so make yours at the beginning of each semester by calling (714) 432-5876, ext. 22.

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/thecaptainstable

9. SAVE THE PLANET

Sustainability at OCC began with the first Earth Day in 1970, spawning a small-scale, student-led recycling effort. Today a new state-of-the-art three-acre recycling center facility boasts the title of the only recycling center in Costa Mesa. Proceeds go directly to fund student resources. The OCC Recycling Center can be found along Adams Avenue on the East side of campus. Hours of operation can be found at

www.orangecoastcollege.edu/community/recycling-center

10. CELEBRATE THE CHAMPS

The championship tradition of OCC athletics has been etched by past athletes and carried on by future athletes. With 98 state and national championships, OCC continues its journey towards its eighth decade; the Pirate athletic program is bigger and better than ever. Catch a game and cheer the Pirates on to victory! Game time and venues can be found at

www.occpirateathletics.com

1977



OCC's competitive surf team is formed and captures the state surfing championship in its first year.



1979



The men's basketball team wins the state championship and the College's speech team wins its first national title by a record-breaking 45 points.



1982



The College's public sailing program begins.



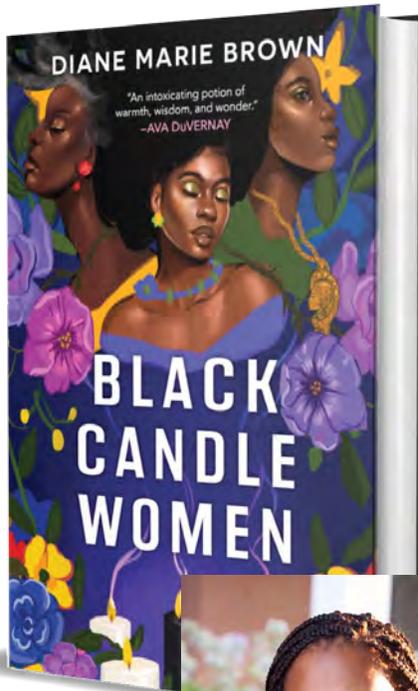
THE MAGIC OF DIANE BROWN

When OCC Assistant Professor Diane Brown's editor sent her an email in August 2022 asking for some time to chat, saying, "I have some nice news to share," she didn't know what to expect. She'd spoken to her editor only once before, and the editor included Brown's agent in the meeting. So Brown knew whatever was going on, it must be important.

"Are you sitting down?" Brown's editor said. "Do you have some champagne?"

Brown — a first-time author whose book, "Black Candle Women," hadn't even come out yet -- learned her novel had been selected by Jenna Bush Hager for the Read With Jenna Book Club on the TODAY show. It was the first time Hager had featured a debut author on the list.

"This has been a lesson in not letting go of your passions," Brown said. "I wrote this book 10 years ago and I had put it away, but I couldn't let it go. I loved the characters so much."



Brown's journey started in Stockton, California, as the only child of educator parents. She remembers running around with the camcorder and self-editing her creations with two VCRs. "I like to tell stories," Brown said. Believing it was the professional choice, she went through UCLA and USC to study business and had a fulfilling albeit busy career in the public health industry for over 20 years.

Brown chose to switch lanes and move into education to have the time to "nurture this writing thing." She is in her fourth year at OCC as a assistant professor of public and health education courses and loves it.

"I want my students to know that they can have multiple passions, that they can have multiple careers."

It was announced in March 2023 that "Black Candle Women" had been optioned by Bush Hager's production company to be made into a television series.

1983

The College holds its inaugural Alumni Hall of Fame event.



1989

Bill Gates visits campus to give a talk titled "The Future of Computing" at the Moore Theatre.



1991

OCC's farm, which originated with the birth of the College, is closed to makeway for the new Technology Center.



OCC AND PARTNERS COMBAT FOOD INSECURITY

Orange Coast College partnered with Kaiser Permanente and Abound Food Care for a volunteer event last summer to address food insecurity in the community.

Kaiser Permanente staff and their families visited OCC's Recovery Kitchen to make and package ready-to-eat meals using recovered food. Volunteers cooked and packaged 648 meals and 200 cookies, half of which was delivered to the Pirates' Cove.

An estimated one in nine Americans are food insecure and 30% of edible food ends up in a landfill, says Mike Learakos, CEO at Abound Food Care. It's a statistic that highlights the importance of the partnership.

Using excess food keeps sustenance out of a landfill and aids the work of hospital care providers, improving health outcomes.

About Food Care's work in delivering medically tailored meals is an important step in addressing the health needs of a particularly vulnerable population.

Volunteers received a tour of OCC's new state-of-the-art facilities and the College's Pirates' Cove food pantry.



"As we work toward eliminating food waste and food insecurity, having partners like Kaiser Permanente and Orange Coast College is invaluable," Learakos says. "Bringing them together provides an opportunity to grow the network of organizations committed to improving the health of our communities."

1998

2002

2004

OCC's Harry and Grace Steele Children's Center is dedicated.

A small island off the coast of British Columbia named "Rabbit Island" is donated to OCC.

The first Orange County Children's Book Festival held on campus draws 10,000 people.



OCC STUDENTS HELP CONSTRUCT HOME FOR FAMILY IN ARMENIA

Thanks in part to architecture students at Orange Coast College, a family in Armenia has a place to live.

In December 1988, the Spitak earthquake killed approximately 50,000 Armenians and left more than half a million without homes. Governments around the world rallied to assist the USSR nation, which was in the middle of a freezing winter. The country received shipping containers filled with rescue equipment, food, water and other aid items; and Armenians left without homes were moved into temporary housing units for families with nowhere to go. Today, more than 4,000 families remain in these temporary housing containers, called Domiks. “Domik” is Russian for “tiny home,” which is a generous term, OCC architecture instructor Joseph Sarafian says.

“These homes are ramshackle corrugated steel structures often built on a slab of dirt that freezes into a block of ice in the winter and becomes unbearably hot in the summer,” he says. “Domiks by law can’t be connected to municipal gas supply, so residents must heat their homes using other means, including burning of cow manure.”

Sarafian is one of the organizers of Homes of Hope, a program to help those families. Students in OCC’s Architecture A158 BIM Project Integration course participated, too; the project dates back to June 2021 and the Armenian family moved into their new home this April.

Students worked in tandem with the Armenian Relief and Development Association (ARDA), as well as Form Found Design, an architecture firm; Walter P. Moore Engineering; and Piur Panels. They also coordinated with a local architect in Armenia.



Students used a FRAMECAD machine—which forms, punches, labels and cuts custom, steel studs for rapid manufacturing of homes—to create a cost-effective, efficient and dignified housing structure. After manufacturing and assembling the home locally in Los Angeles, the panels were shipped to Armenia for the home in Ghukasavan, a small neighborhood outside of the capital, Yerevan.

“As an Armenian-American, born in the U.S., it was particularly impactful for me to visit Armenia,” Sarafian says. “I wasn’t sure how I’d be received, especially not knowing the language, but that question was answered when an elderly lady whose house we toured asked me, ‘How does it feel to be in your homeland?’”

2009

2012

2016

OCC’s Sailing Center is renovated with improvements including wheelchair accessibility, a women’s locker room and seismic safety upgrades.

Local voters pass Measure M, a \$698 million bond to be distributed among the Coast Community College District’s three campuses in order to improve facilities.

Orange Coast College is ranked number two among 50 colleges nationwide by valuecolleges.com based on educational return on investment.



JUAN GUTIERREZ RECEIVES CCPRO ALL PRO AWARD

Juan Gutierrez, director of public relations and marketing at Orange Coast College, received the Community College Public Relations Organization (CCPRO) 2023 All Pro award this April in Los Angeles. This lifetime achievement award honors the outstanding work and service to CCPRO of a California community college communicator.

“I am honored and humbled to receive this award from my peers and from an organization I love,” Gutierrez said. “I have the best job in the world.”

In his role, Gutierrez shares college news with local, state-wide and even national audiences, celebrating student accomplishments and promoting OCC programs that change lives and improve circumstances.

Gutierrez started in his position at OCC in 2014 and has been the school’s chief spokesman for the past nine years. He has led his team in community relations and multiple award-winning media campaigns in communication, design, marketing and social media. Gutierrez has more than 21 years of experience in higher education in the California Community College system, including OCC, Pasadena City College and Bakersfield College.

“It’s hard to think of a more deserving person for the All Pro award than Juan,” said Andrea Rangno, director of

marketing & public relations at Golden West College. “He understands how important it is to stay at the forefront of marketing and public relations trends in higher education and OCC has really benefited from that knowledge.”

Gutierrez has held leadership and board roles in organizations including CCPRO, National Council for Marketing & Public Relations, Association of California Community College Administrators and the Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce. He is a graduate of the Leadership Pasadena program; and in 2013, the Magazine of Pasadena honored Gutierrez as one of its 50 inspiring leaders.

“My heartfelt congratulations to Juan on receiving this well-deserved prestigious award,” OCC President Angelica Suarez said. “It serves as a testament to his remarkable commitment to exhibiting the highest standards of excellence in the field of public relations, marketing and communications.”



2017



OCC opens its new Recycling Center, with the hopes that it will be the first building in the world to receive LEED, SITES and TRUE Zero Waste designations.



2018



OCC’s new AstroTurf® baseball field is funded by an anonymous gift of \$1.9 million.



2018



OCC kicked off the new year with the grand opening of its Pirates’ Cove food pantry.



FORENSICS TEAM WINS 13TH NATIONAL GOLD

This spring, the Orange Coast College forensics team won the national championship at the Phi Rho Pi National Tournament for the 13th time.

The 14-student team won by 40 points over their competitors from schools nationwide and scored 282.5 points, which makes it the winningest team in community college forensics history.

River Mishow and Campbell Gorlinski received top awards and tied for the Bovero-Tabor Award, which is presented to the outstanding student speaker at the national tournament. David Ekelem placed fifth overall at the tournament.

Phi Rho Pi is a non-profit organization to increase the knowledge and appreciation of forensic arts at the junior and community college level. Phi Rho Pi is the only full-service national tournament in the United States for community college and junior college students. It includes 11 individual events and three forms of debate.



OCC STUDENT PAPER RECEIVES NATIONAL SECOND-PLACE HONORS

Coast Report, Orange Coast College's student-run newspaper, received second-place honors among two-year colleges last fall at the College Media Association Pinnacle Awards in the Media Outlet of the Year and Website of the Year categories.

The awards, which honored work done during 2021-22, received more than 2,900 entries from two- and four-year colleges and universities across the country.

"We are so proud of our student journalists for this recognition of their hard work and professionalism as they report on

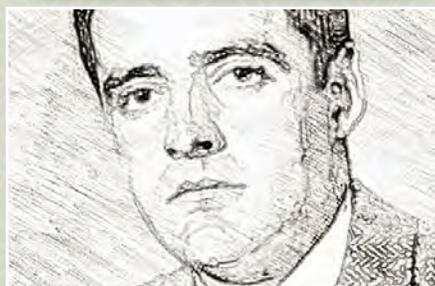
campus and local news," says OCC President Angelica Suarez. "OCC has one of the top journalism programs among two-year colleges in the state, with hundreds of students receiving mentoring and gaining hands-on experience throughout the Coast Report's 74-year history."



2018



The OCC Foundation receives the largest donation in its history — a gift of \$1.8 million from the estate of late philosophy professor David Johnston.



2019



The new Orange Coast College Planetarium opens to serve the community.



2019



Angelica Suarez, Ph.D., is selected to serve as the 11th president of Orange Coast College. She is the second woman and the first Latina to take the helm at OCC.



Coast Report received its recognition during the Fall National College Media Convention in Washington, D.C., which took place from Oct. 27 to 30. MediaFest 2022 brought together three major journalism organizations – the Society of Professional Journalists, College Media Association and the Associated Collegiate Press – for a multi-day conference that included a keynote address by legendary Washington Post reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, who broke the Watergate story that led to President Richard Nixon’s resignation.

Coast Report also received ninth place in the Two-Year College Website category in the Associated Collegiate Press Best of Show Awards, which honored work at institutions who attend the convention.

Coast Report staff members Kate Bent, Kate Meyers and Khalid Alsadek attended the convention, where Jeremy Shermak,

OCC journalism instructor and Coast Report faculty advisor, presented on the paper’s recent town halls.

The Coast Report operates out of a newsroom – located on the first floor of the college’s Literature & Languages, Social & Behavioral Sciences building – which opened in fall 2021.

“The construction of a new state-of-the-art newsroom at a time when the industry is under attack sends the message to our students that we are committed to the field of journalism,” says Michael Mandelkern, dean of Literature and Languages. “This most recent recognition highlights the bright future ahead for Coast Report.”

Coast Report has been the “student voice of Orange Coast College” since 1948.

COAST COLLECTIVE CO-LAB HELPS FASHION STUDENTS BUILD ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

As part of Orange Coast College’s yearlong 75th Anniversary celebration, the Coast Collective Co-Lab opened this spring on the first floor of the College Center, providing students in Orange Coast College’s fashion program a chance to showcase and sell their merchandise.

This retail lab, which lets students develop their entrepreneurial skills, plans to build on the success of the box pop-up shop concept, says Lauren Becker, OCC’s fashion department program coordinator. Students will have the opportunity to create products and conduct market research for their brands,

helping them gain valuable insights into their businesses.

The space will host events ranging from talks from industry experts and brand collaborations.



Coast Collective Co-Lab hours

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday to Thursday



2020

2020

2022

Due to COVID-19, OCC temporarily moves all of its classes to an online format, in order to protect the health and safety of its students and employees.

OCC suffers an enormous loss, with the passing of Head Baseball Coach of 27 years, John Altobelli, who perished alongside his wife and daughter in a helicopter crash.

Orange Coast College dedicates a new Student Union building.





DENNIS KELLY AQUARIUM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS AT OCC

Rob Ellis is nearly certain that the Dennis Kelly Public Aquarium at Orange Coast College is the only aquarium within a 1,000-mile radius of Costa Mesa to be student-run. The next closest? Oregon Coast Community College, says Ellis, marine sciences professor and former aquarium director.

2023 marks the OCC's aquarium's 50th anniversary, which it celebrated with an open house in April. However, college



and community guests can tour the facility year-round, getting up close and, sometimes, hands-on with the 75 species of marine life onsite, which come from habitats including cold water, tropical, freshwater and brackish estuaries, which is a mixture of seawater and fresh water.

This is another reason OCC's aquarium is unique among its peers: Most focus on only one type of animal, such as all local animals, Ellis says. The variety of animals—and duties—gives the student managers a range of hands-on experience to prepare them

for a variety of jobs upon graduation. Program graduates are in high demand in the industry because of the well-rounded education they gain, also covering necessities like working with a budget, inventory, community outreach and communications. Some students even return after earning their bachelor's and master's degrees to supplement that education with more practical, hands-on learning, Ellis says.

Aquarium managers are enrolled in OCC classes and are responsible for facility maintenance, species planning and husbandry decisions. They have the opportunity to influence the types of systems and species displayed, new projects and developing local collaborations to increase aquarium diversity.

"Our students after one semester are making decisions," Ellis says. "They have to do a little bit of everything right off the bat," and student managers are overseen by paid staff.

Past students and graduates have started their own businesses in aquarium design and maintenance, participated in research at facilities like the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium and worked as aquarists at major aquariums like the Aquarium of the Pacific and the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

The experience, too, benefits the community and region, who need employees with the skills OCC students hone in their programs. Nancy Caruso, founder and president of Get Inspired Inc., an Orange County-based program focused on getting students involved in conservation, has partnered with OCC for four years. Students have worked with Caruso in a variety of ways, including releasing white seabass and green abalone for the Orange County Ocean Res-

toration Project in Newport and Laguna Beach. Green abalone is a federally listed species of concern.

"This kind of hands-on experience is amazing," she says. "Students are actually doing something to change the world."

Aquarium Science students are not the only ones to benefit from the Dennis Kelly Public Aquarium. It collaborates with

degree and certificate programs as varied as horticulture, culinary arts, marine biology, art and photography, Ellis says.

The aquarium is located in Lewis Center for Applied Sciences. In addition to public hours, it also hosts private tours for local schools, educational groups, potential OCC students, visiting dignitaries and any other organization interested in learning more about local marine life and the science of aquarium-keeping.

"This kind of hands-on experience is amazing. Students are actually doing something to change the world."

~ Nancy Caruso, founder and president of Get Inspired Inc.



Coast



4 miles to the closest beach

#1

top transfer college

for combined transfers to CSU/UC schools in Orange County



1,841

students transferred to four-year universities

CSU
1,166

UC
488

ISP/OOS*
187

*In-state private/Out-of-state

\$12.3 million

given by donors to OCC Foundation (2020-21)



\$619,446

awarded in student scholarships by OCC Foundation (2020-21)



\$23,537,984

provided in Financial Aid (2021-22)



AA= 1,096

AS= 1,274



2,132

Total number of students who received Associate in Arts, Associate in Science degrees or Certificates of Completion (2021-22)



First Community College in Southern California to offer **student housing**

Most Popular Majors (2021-22)

1. Business Administration
2. Liberal Arts
3. Psychology
4. Biology
5. Computer Science

Facts



72° is the average daytime temperature

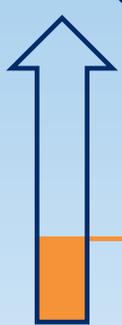
\$46/unit

3,487 first generation college students (Fall 2021)

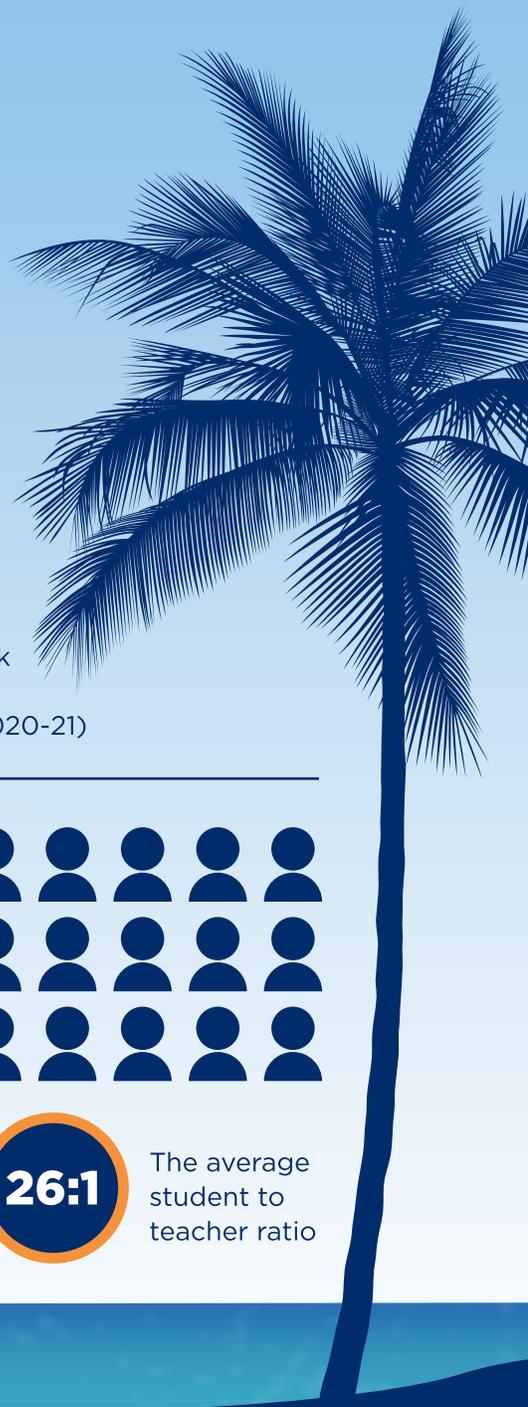
98 state athletic team championships, most of any community college in California



870 International Students (Fall 2021)



Median earnings change **18%** for students who complete CTE coursework with no degree awarded (CCCCO Launchboard, 2020-21)



Only public community college with a **Professional Mariner Program and Sailing Center**



26:1

The average student to teacher ratio

Pete the Pirate is Orange Coast College's mascot since 1947. Go Pirates!



OCC RECOVERY KITCHEN NAMED EPA 2021 NATIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT FOR EDUCATION, OUTREACH

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected Orange Coast College's Recovery Kitchen as a recipient of its 2021 Food Recovery Challenge National Award for Education and Outreach.

"Reducing food waste represents an environmental and economic benefit for communities in our region," said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha Guzman. "The Food Recovery Challenge Awardees in California are leading the way, modeling how organizations across the state can address food insecurity, prevent methane emissions that contribute to climate change and make cost-saving business decisions."

OCC's Recovery Kitchen was founded in 2019 as part of the food service management program at the College. The recovery kitchen was formed to help end student hunger and food waste on campus. The kitchen also helps students in the food service management, culinary arts, baking and pastry and nutrition programs gain experience working in a commercial high-volume kitchen, with emphasis on proper handling and processing of recovered foods.

"Orange Coast College is honored to receive this award from the EPA in recognition of the incredible work being done by the students, faculty and volunteers in our Recovery Kitchen," said College President Angelica Suarez. "As one of the largest college campuses in Orange County and in the state of California, we are committed to lowering our carbon footprint while also addressing inequities in food security and public health."

The OCC Recovery Kitchen collaborates with the College's on-campus food pantry, the Pirate's Cove and its Food Services, culinary arts, nutrition and dietetics and horticulture programs to recover food for the student body and local food banks. In 2020, OCC's Recovery Kitchen distributed 212,392 meals and recovered 609,541 pounds of surplus edible food that would otherwise go to landfill. The recovered food was used



to create pre-packaged meals that benefited students and community members experiencing food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our main purpose is to lower food insecurity among our students and reduce our campus's food waste through curriculum and collaboration," said Alexandra Yates, Faculty Director of the Food Service Management Program at OCC. "No student should ever go hungry. If we can tie it to curriculum so that we can train our future leaders, we can all work towards finding a solution to this problem."

Nearly 600 businesses, government agencies and organizations across the country participated in EPA's Food Recovery Challenge in 2020-2021. Through the Challenge, EPA has worked with organizations and businesses for the past decade to set data-driven goals, implement targeted strategies to reduce wasted food in their operations and report results to compete for recognition.

To see the complete list of 2020-2021 California awardees visit the EPA website.

TAKING OFF WITH ROCKET SCHOOL

This smallest rocket takes about 10 minutes to make. Erik Bender holds up his hand, palm out and the rocket. They're about the same length, which is the perfect complexity for third graders.

Sixth graders make a larger rocket. This one is about a foot tall and takes students maybe an hour to make—but that's because Bender completes some of the more intricate parts of the build beforehand, like ensuring the parachute and launch attachments are secure. The oldest students work on a rocket that's closer to two feet long and it has a special payload (basically rocket cargo) that measures altitude.

"It's a little liquid-fuel rocket," Bender says and he asks the campers, "Tell me how this worked." They discuss Newton's laws and they contrast how Bender's example differs from a real rocket.

Bender runs Rocket School at OCC. In its third year, the three-hour program for students, third grade through high school, is run in conjunction with the Planetarium, where students learn how rockets work.

"They'll actually learn some trigonometry where they can calculate visually how high the rocket went and the altimeter that's inside the payload will tell them exactly how high the rocket went, how fast it went, et cetera," says Bender, an Orange Coast College geology professor.

After the lesson, it's launch time

The overarching goal of Rocket School is to attract the next generation of scientists, technicians, engineers and mathematicians; and to show kids that they can become scientists, that there are fields where they can excel. Orange County has a number of aerospace industries, with companies including Lockheed Martin and Boeing nearby. OCC graduates have found employment at these companies, Bender says and Rocket School helps introduce that possibility to future prospective students.

Because the program is still young, no campers have yet enrolled at OCC, but Bender knows it's a possibility. He points to Rover Camp, where students build rovers with Legos and compete and some of those students have gone on to attend OCC. As OCC students, they would have the opportunity to



participate in OCC's Rocketry Club and, as Bender points out, "launch some really big rockets".

Because of the nearby John Wayne Airport and Federal Aviation Administration restrictions, rockets on campus are restricted to a height of 400 feet; rockets that reach higher apogees, or peak height reached, are launched in the Mojave Desert. Depending on their rocket builds, club members could potentially compete against major colleges across the country at NASA's Student Launch.

In the future, Bender would like to see Rocket School grow into a multi-day program, building rockets similar in size and scale to what's built by the Rocketry Club.

"This is one of the things that really got me excited about science when I was a youngling," he says, "and this is hopefully the sort of thing that will get kids excited."

A HOMEGROWN CHAMPION: VOLLEYBALL COACH CELEBRATES 40 YEARS AT OCC

Chuck Cutenese never doubted that he wanted to play volleyball at Orange Coast College.

The Costa Mesa campus was a staple of his childhood, providing the backdrop for any number of adventures. When his family moved to the area in 1971, Cutenese would cut across campus on his bicycle to get to school. As he got older, he and his friends would dare one another to break into the old army barracks that dotted campus, long abandoned but still standing as a reminder that OCC had once been the Santa Ana Army Air Base.

“We spent a lot of time on campus, not as students but as explorers,” he says. “I grew up at Orange Coast College.”

This year marks Cutenese’s 40th anniversary working at OCC, decades that started as a childhood visitor and hit their pinnacle as a championship-winning coach.

The early years

By junior high, Cutenese discovered his love for volleyball, playing with the same nine teammates all the way through high school. Back then, his coach would take the boys to volleyball games at OCC, where they would shag balls and dream of someday playing in the same gym.

At Costa Mesa High School, Cutenese played for Tim Wetzel, son of OCC men’s volleyball coach Bob Wetzel. Upon graduation, he promptly registered for classes at OCC, excited at the chance to play for both father and son.



By 1984, however, the men’s volleyball team had been eliminated due to budget cuts. Cutenese was disappointed but decided to stay at OCC, earning his associate degree in history and working part-time at the college’s bookstore. He later transferred to Chapman University. When the college reintroduced men’s volleyball in 1987, Cutenese decided to return, too.

“We won the state title,” he says. “For me, it was like winning the World Series, the Superbowl, Wimbledon. It was the biggest accomplishment I had as an athlete.”

Getting on staff

After that year, Cutenese returned to Chapman and finished his bachelor’s degree.

He planned to become a high school teacher and coach, but he was pulled back to his home away from home – aka, OCC. Still working part-time at OCC’s bookstore, in addition to coaching part-time at both Costa Mesa High School and Foothill High School, Cutenese received a call from women’s volleyball coach Jane Hilgendorf. She was planning to retire soon and wanted to know if he was interested in an assistant coach position, with the possibility of taking over as head coach after she left.

By 1993, he was coaching both the women’s and men’s volleyball teams and in 1994, he won his first state title as a college coach with the men’s volleyball team. By 1996, OCC hired him as a full-time faculty member, the same year he made it to the state finals. They came in second. The men’s team would be runners-up in the state title match five times before Cutenese decided to scale back and coach only the women’s team, if only from sheer exhaustion.

“In 2006, I really hit the wall,” he says. “I was in season and training both teams year round, in addition to always recruiting”

Under Cutenese's leadership, the women's volleyball team won the state title in 2005, 2006 and 2009.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of Cutenese's career at OCC was that he was able to get a beach volleyball program up and running, in 2013. Last year, the team won conference and made it to the state tournament as the top-ranked team in the state. They finished the year third in the state.

The next steps

Though it's been 40 years with the college, Cutenese is reluctant to discuss retirement because it brings up painful memories of his assistant coach, Adrian Delgado, who died suddenly in November 2021.

“We were both hired as assistant coaches in 1990 and he had been with me, standing side-by-side, from the moment I started coaching at OCC,” Cutenese says. “We were as close as brothers and I always told him that my success is really our success. It was our program, not my program.”

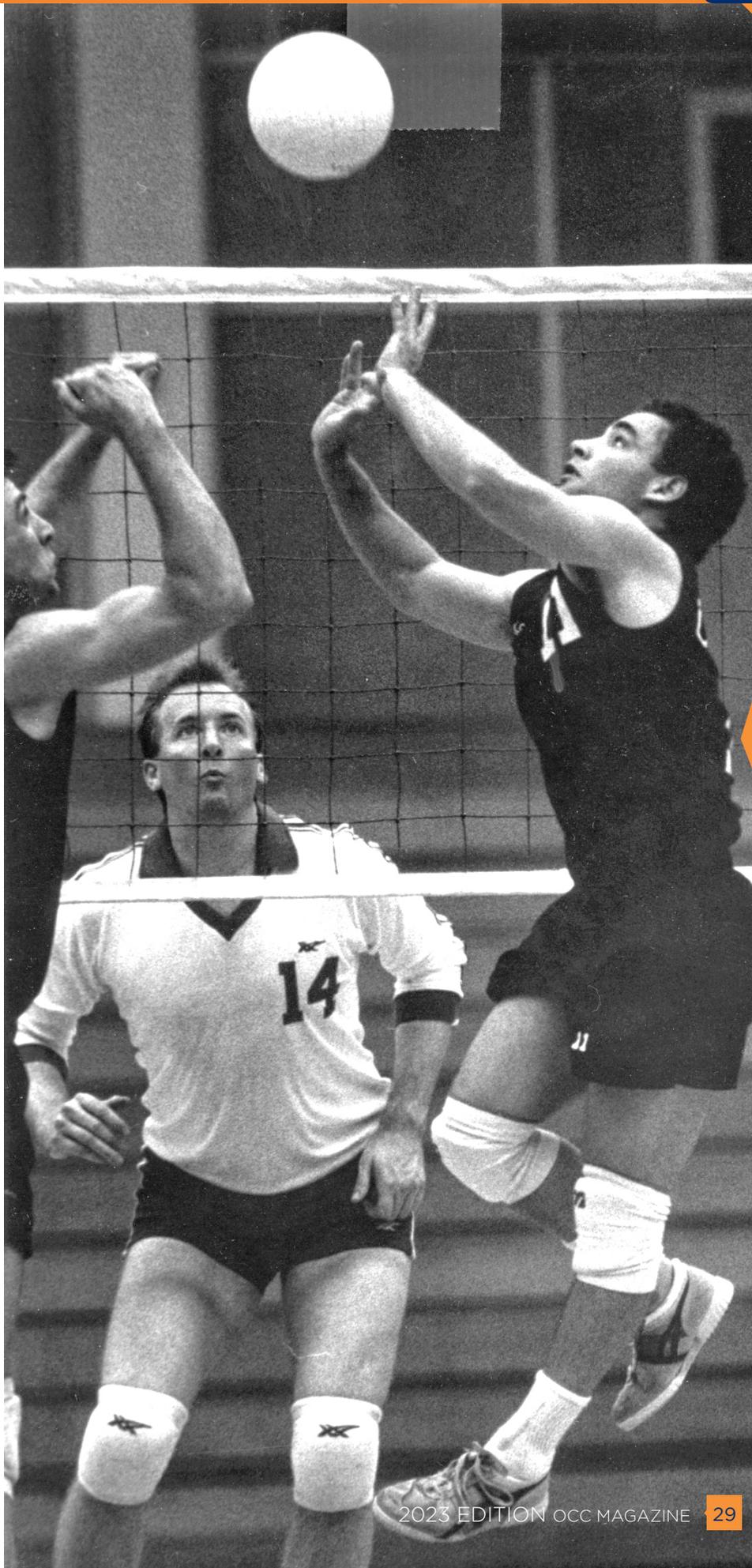
Delgado and Cutenese had a plan for their retirement: They would leave their keys on their office desks and walk out the door together.

“I always had that visual in my head,” Cutenese says.

When considering Cutenese's legacy at the college, his successes seem made for the record books: He's the only person in the school's history to have won a state title as a player and in multiple programs as a coach – four times.

“At the beginning of each season, I challenge my players to leave their mark in the record books,” he says. “I look at the championship banners in our gym and I see my years as a player and then my years as a coach and I know I've left my mark. I'm proud of that.”

Cutenese sets up a teammate in 1987.





WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM CAPTURES STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

After finishing the season 32-1, the Orange Coast College women's basketball team capped the season by winning the California Community College Athletic Association Women's Basketball State Championships this spring.

This win—the second for OCC's women's basketball and the 97th schoolwide—comes just four years after head coach Sammy Doucette started with the team. Her first year coaching saw some considerably different stats.

"If I say I can't believe I'm here, it sounds like I don't believe in my team. Which I do," Doucette said. "But to go from 2-14 to this. Wow. You can't touch this feeling. I love this team."

"Trust, love, selflessness, disciplined fun. Literally, that's us."

~ women's basketball coach **Sammy Doucette**

The team won 78-71 over Butte College to clench the title. State tournament MVP Meghan McIntyre scored a game-best 32 points to go along with eight rebounds and five assists. Annie Trinh and Gabby Samiy each had 14 points, while Karina Cabrera added 11 points and six assists.

McIntyre calls the team a family environment, full of talented and resilient teammates.

"This win is absolutely huge," McIntyre said. "I'm so glad we were able to set goals at the beginning of the year and accomplish them and more. I've had the best experience of my life playing with this team and all of the coaches."

PIRATES STUN LONG BEACH TO RETAIN MEN'S VOLLEYBALL STATE CROWN

For the second year in a row, the Orange Coast College men's volleyball team has won the California Community College Athletic Association Men's Volleyball State Championships. The win is the school's 98th state championship.

"This team likes to grind and has worked as hard as any team I've had at OCC," head coach Travis Turner said. "I'm kinda corny about it, but I truly love the OCC community. We are so proud to be Pirates."

The team beat Long City Beach in five sets at El Camino College.

State tournament MVP Sebastian Lara had 23 kills and just three errors on 54 attempts (.370 hitting percentage) to go

"All these parents traveled too far to watch us go home crying in tears of disappointment. We honestly were doing it for each other and it ended up working out perfectly."

~ setter Brock Henderson

along with five digs, three blocks and two aces. Myles Henderson added 11 kills and Hide Nakamura had eight kills and eight digs.

"I don't think we could have asked for a better match," setter Brock Henderson said. "All of the days we didn't want to be at practice at 6 a.m., all of the days we were tired and sore, but continued to work hard—it meant something and we have something to show for it now and for the rest of our lives."

In kicking off the match with a 1-0 lead, Coast stopped LBCC's streak of 48 set wins in a row, dating back to Feb. 15.

"This is the best win in my 16 years at OCC," Turner said. "This one will stick with me."



A WINNING A

Women's basketball coach uses lessons from injury, co-coaching with Kobe to win the state championship

During Sammy Doucette's four years coaching OCC women's basketball, she's guided the team to monumental leaps over the previous year, topping her brief tenure with a California Community College Athletic Association Women's Basketball State Championship this year.

Doucette's brief history with the Pirates

Year 1: During her first year coaching, Doucette had so few players on the team, the Pirates had to forfeit a number of games. They finished the season 2-14.

Year 2: Doucette and the Pirates played zero games, thanks to COVID.

Year 3: After a gameless year, the Pirates went 20-9 last year, making it to the league playoffs.

Year 4: This year, the Pirate's went 32-1. The state championship win is just the second for women's basketball in the school's history.

Year 5: Next season, Doucette figures she'll stick with the same plan she used to win last season's title. "I'm going into it with a mindset of being so grateful and appreciative and celebrating what my team did this year," she says.

Lessons from injury

When an athlete gets injured, Doucette says, one of two outcomes tends to take place: Either a player is never the same again because they're scared of getting hurt again, or they're supremely motivated to come back.

When Doucette was out for 15 months in college with a torn meniscus, torn cartilage and a fractured tibia, she used the time to learn—though she was eager to get back on the court.

By the time her doctor told her she was safe to play again, she had already been sprinting and doing noncontact practice.

Doucette played shooting guard for Vanguard University, where she was known as Sammy Buckets. She calls her experience there "the makeup of my entire coaching philosophy and knowledge and leadership."

"I love basketball," she says. "Any coach I have ever worked with will say I love basketball more than anyone they ever met."

Though Doucette couldn't play for nearly a year and a half, she still attended practices, watching from the bench.

"I got to see a lot on the sideline that you don't see when you're playing," she says.

The experience gave Doucette an insight into what it's like to be injured, which has helped her better relate to her players, she says.

"I know what it's like to ride the bench (and be) not as good as the players in front of you. That was huge," she says. "It was one of the best things that ever happened to me. It gave me a whole different perspective."

Lessons from Kobe

Before starting at OCC, Doucette coached high school basketball for a year, at Costa Mesa High School, across the street from OCC, where she won the league championship. Then, she spent 2017 to early 2020 coaching at Kobe Bryant's Mamba Youth Sports, alongside Bryant.

Growing up, Doucette says, "Kobe was like my guy," and getting to coach alongside him "was definitely the experience of a lifetime."

"We were practicing five days a week in the morning and at night during the summer," she says. "I went to every single workout because it's not very often you get the opportunity to see Kobe Bryant twice in one day."

ATTITUDE

At the start, they coached fifth-grade athletes and worked with them through eighth grade, watching them change and improve. During that time, Doucette learned, too. She didn't pick up plays or drills from Bryant, she says, but a way of explaining things to athletes. He was thorough and explained "every little detail" of what he wanted.

"He made every player on the team feel so special," she says. "He was intentional with everyone he knew. He remembered things about you."

An unexpected coaching style

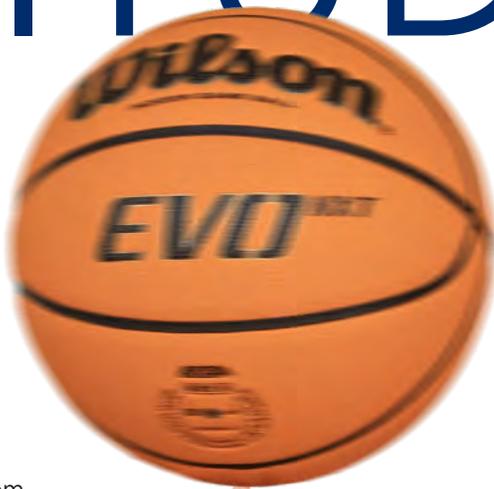
It's easy to see Bryant's influence on Doucette with the Pirates: She also brings a certain kindness to her coaching that, Doucette says, she can't imagine having seen as a college athlete. It's important for her to get on her players' levels and for Doucette, that means allowing players who need a day off to take care of their mental health.

The style is a huge departure from the way Doucette was coached, which included a no-tolerance rule for missing practice. If a player did miss practice, it was because they were deathly ill. If someone used their phone, they had to run extra at practice.

But Doucette has seen how her mindful approach has helped her players. She recalls an instance when a player texted her, "I got into a big fight with my mom. It's been a rough day. I didn't get any sleep last night. I'll do the best I can, but please go easy on me."

And she did. The result wasn't a lazy practice but an amazing one. After, Doucette pulled the player aside and told her so and she thanked her for pushing through.

"The only way I can coach them is if they know that I get them. They know I care," she says. "I really pride myself on being relatable. I think that's something really important that leaders, in general, have to have."



PROUD TO BE A PIRATE: OCC ALUM JOINS TAHITI NATIONAL WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TEAM

Delani Guyot's soccer journey has zigged and zagged, but it all seems to have worked out just as it was supposed to: with the Orange Coast College alum as a member of the Tahiti national women's football team.



Guyot says. "I felt like a kid again playing the sport."

Having regained her confidence and love for the game, Guyot played two years of soccer at OCC before graduating with her associate degree in natural science in August 2020. She'd planned to hang up her cleats and enroll in nursing school, but then she received an email that once again set her on an unexpected path: The head coach of the Tahiti women's national football team asked her to try out.

How it started

Guyot began her journey to Orange Coast College with an unexpected injury: After committing to play soccer at a four-year university in Chicago, she tore her ACL in her senior year of high school. Devastated by the setback, Guyot decided to stay home during her first year of college and take some classes at OCC.

"I was pretty depressed at this point in my life," Guyot says. "No soccer, friends going off to college and life completely turned upside down. I was so down, I didn't think I even wanted to play soccer again."

As Guyot grew healthier and started to make friends at OCC, she also started to get back her mojo.

"I decided to try out for the OCC team," she says, "and it was the best decision I ever made."

It was summer 2018 and Guyot fit right into Coast Athletics' culture. The coaches made playing fun and she was always excited to go to practice—but she was more excited on game day.

"There is no better feeling than walking around campus with your gear on, having faculty and students wish you luck,"

"The time spent at Coast is so short, but it just makes it that much sweeter. I went into Coast not really knowing who I was and left with a clear image of who I wanted to be in the future. So be flexible, trust the process and be proud to be a Pirate."

A pivot to Tahiti

Guyot, who is Tahitian, started training, hard, until the December tryouts.

"I was completely submerged in the culture and it was so surreal," Guyot says. "I have never felt so in touch with my roots and proud to be Tahitian."

Tahiti is the largest Island in French Polynesia, located in the Pacific Ocean north-east of New Zealand and west of South America. Guyot's father is half French and half Tahitian and her grandmother lives in Tahiti along with many aunts, uncles and cousins.

The team offered her a spot and, today, Guyot doesn't know how long she'll be able to play for the Tahitian national team while she balances travel and nursing school. For now, she's cherishing every minute of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"Soccer has given me more than I ever could have asked for," she says. "It has literally brought me around the world and I am forever grateful."

Former Pirate shines at World Baseball Classic

While representing Great Britain at this year's World Baseball Classic, former Orange Coast College pitcher Daniel Cooper gave a heartfelt tribute to his former Pirate baseball coach, the late John Altobelli: Cooper wore the number 14.

"I wanted to show my respect to Alto, so what better place to do that than on national television to really show what he meant to me?" Cooper says.

After a standout prep career at Costa Mesa High School, Cooper wanted to play at the Division I level. His ability caught the eyes of Major League Baseball scouts in the area. Out of high school, he was drafted by the Montreal Expos. When he decided to play college baseball, however, the schools Cooper was most interested in were not, in turn, interested in him.

"So I went with a teammate over to Orange Coast to meet Alto and check things out," he says. "It ended up being the best decision I ever made."

As a 2005 Pirate, Cooper and the team advanced to the CCCAA State Final Four. The reliever and spot starter went 8-3 with two saves and a solid 3.25 ERA, allowing 23 runs in 63 2/3 innings with 57 strikeouts.

"There was something about that team that was so wonderful to play for," he says.

Altobelli instilled a never-give-up work ethic, driving home the importance of working hard and playing for your teammates.

"Playing baseball that year at OCC was like playing with your family," Cooper says.

After playing at OCC for a year, Cooper played for Rice University before transferring to the University of Southern



Carolina to wrap up his collegiate career. At USC, Cooper was drafted by the Seattle Mariners and he began his professional career.

World Baseball Classic

When Cooper trained at USC, a group of athletes used to wonder what it would be like to take a shot at the World Baseball Classic (WBC), the top men's international tournament, which is run by Major League Baseball and its Player Association.

One of those USC athletes found a WBC representative, who contacted Cooper and figured, "Your mom is British. You're on the team."

Cooper didn't know anything about Great Britain and to start, the team had no funding. Now, a member of the British Olympic Committee comes to every tournament and ensures the team is funded.

This year's WBC was in March at Chase Field in Arizona, against Team USA, which won over Great Britain 6-2.

"Walking out onto a big-league field, with 40,000 people in the stands, I felt numb," Cooper said. "Before the game, I heard the National Anthem played for the first time at one of my games in 10 years. Hearing both of my anthems was an experience I'll never forget."

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Open Weekends

Visit galaxies near and far at Orange Coast College's Planetarium. In addition to providing space for college-level courses, the Planetarium will be accessible to the local community with shows, lectures and K-12 field trips throughout the year. Take in a show in the state-of-the-art, 125-seat dome theater, or witness the rotation of the earth with Orange County's first Foucault Pendulum. Weather buffs won't want to miss the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science on a Sphere exhibit, capable of showing weather patterns on Earth in real-time. Find out more at www.orangecoastcollege.edu/ocplanetarium



Photo program receives \$450k to establish Jeff Gross Photography Endowment

Orange Coast College's School of Photography has received a \$450,000 grant from the William, Jeff and Jennifer Gross Family Foundation. The donation will be used to establish the Jeff Gross Photography Endowment and will help fund the purchase and repair of photography equipment for students and pay for advanced photography students to serve as tutors for their entry-level peers.

Jeff Gross is a professional photographer who graduated from the Brooks School of Photography and has worked as a staff photographer for Getty Images since 1988. On a recent visit to OCC, Gross saw how much a donation could benefit the education of photography students.

"Jeff simply was looking to give back to the medium that has given him so much over the years," says OCC photography professor Blade Gillissen. "He felt what better way to give back than to help the next generation of photographers."

The flexibility of the gift means the endowment can be spent on a range of items: new equipment, repairing older equipment, or short-term staffing and tutoring.



"More and more, the photography program is relying on one-time funds to purchase and repair equipment and this leads to a kind of boom or bust situation," Gillissen says. "An endowment like this can provide our students with year-in and year-out consistency."

Finding love at OCC

Mark and Kathi Denny, of San Clemente, met when they were students at Orange Coast College. Here's what Mark remembers:

"This is the late summer of 1988 and I was on the water polo team and she was on the volleyball team. We had a mutual friend who was one of my teammates that she knew because he had dated one of her friends previously. She was with some of her teammates. I was with some of my teammates and (we) sort of ran into each other in the breezeway between what was then the pool and the (practice) gym. I think there were formal introductions: 'This is Mark. This is Kathi.' It must have been right before Labor Day weekend. That was kind of the weekend that we got together and became a couple at one of her teammate's house down on the peninsula. We spent all weekend together hanging out, going to the beach."

Mark's fond memories have spurred him to be involved with the OCC Foundation Board of Directors where the organization raises funds for student scholarships and resources.





FINDING HER WAY:

CARMEN CHAVEZ FINDS SUCCESS AT OCC AND BEYOND

When Carmen Chavez dropped out of college, her father decided to teach her a lesson. At the time, he was in his 40s and he did not speak English.

“He said, ‘If I could go back to school and graduate, speaking zero English and get my associate degree, (then) you can do it,’” Chavez said.

He did and the lesson took; Chavez was inspired to follow in Venancio “Benny” Chavez’s footsteps. So, when her daughter turned five years old, Chavez went back to school. She racked up certificates, a degree and extracurriculars. She had such a good experience that she says her dream job is to end up back at OCC, working as ... she’s not sure what.

“I was just so involved (at OCC), my internal thinking is, ‘Where do I belong?’ and ‘Where can I connect with the most students?’” she says.

Chavez started at the College in fall 2014 and, by 2018, had earned three certificates, in fashion design, fashion apparel construction and fashion product development.

Despite her love of fashion, those years taught Chavez about the importance of communication. She didn’t always have an easy go of it as a student and she started to reach out for help. She was low-income and she needed books, food and counseling services. It took asking to realize the plethora of support available on campus — support that had been there all along, but she’d had to seek it out.

So she changed majors, from fashion to communication. She joined leadership organizations and honors societies. She worked in the honors office for three years. She focused on communication and recruitment, ensuring others were aware of campus resources available for students. She also ticks off eight groups she joined on campus, including the scholastic honor society Alpha Gamma Sigma, where she served as president for a year and a half.

Terry Scarborough, a student services specialist at the Garrison Honors Center, has known Chavez in a variety of roles: as a student, as a member and then leader of Alpha Gamma Sigma and as a student worker in Scarborough’s office. Over their nearly 10-year relationship, Scarborough has been struck

by both Chavez's interest in learning well — truly understanding the material and not simply memorizing it for a test and forgetting it shortly after — and by her ability to ask for help and inspire her peers.

"She was always involved, always very active about the organization and vocal about how much it meant to her and how much of a difference it made," she says. "I think she was the reason a lot of our other members got involved."

In 2020, Chavez earned her associate degree in mass communication/media studies from OCC and transferred to Chapman University, where she received a full scholarship.

While she was looking into transfer degrees, Chavez hadn't even considered private universities. Due to her financial situation, the price point seemed far out of reach, but Scarborough had other thoughts. Chavez remembers her mentor's encouragement: "Yes, everyone's going to want you. Don't put your eggs in one basket. You have to put them in multiple baskets."

Chapman seemed like a good choice because of her anxiety and she was recently diagnosed with ADHD; the customized, intimate classroom settings of a private college appealed to her.

"Oh, my god, I am so proud of our Carmen," Benny Chavez says. "She is beyond what I am expecting — she went even better because she got her bachelor's (degree)."

Chavez earned her degree in strategic and corporate communications last year and she works today as Chapman's

presidential studies program coordinator, where she's been for more than a year. She enjoys her job, but her heart's still with OCC. Recently, when she was feeling homesick for the College, she tacked up letters around her desk, messages of encouragement she's received over the years from her OCC professors and mentors: I still remember having you in class at OCC, watching you provide strong leadership ... Carmen, You are extra special, as you truly love & care about others ... You are one amazing woman! ... a card that reads the world needs more women like you. There are photos from galas and events and even the children's book — the cover says "for tiny feminists" — *She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World* by Chelsea Clinton.

"It's just amazing how they're constantly motivating me," Chavez says.

The only thing Chavez would change about her time at OCC is graduation: She never got to walk. She finished her associate degree in 2020 and in-person commencement was cancelled due to the pandemic.

"It was a very hard time, for sure," she says. "I worked hard to get so many honor societies under my belt, so many different leaderships under my belt. I used to say, 'I want to walk across stage and have my parents see me with the awards, the recognitions, the pins.' We didn't get the chance."

She pauses and smiles, brushing it off with a flip of her hand.

"It's OK. I'm alive and kicking."

Help Build a Legacy

Are you interested in supporting Orange Coast College's mission but feel overwhelmed by the thought of writing another check or relinquishing your assets today? A simple, flexible and versatile way to make a gift is to include OCC in your will or living trust, known as a charitable bequest.

By including a bequest to the Orange Coast College Foundation in your will or living trust, you will be

leaving a lasting legacy that will benefit Coast students for years to come.

For information on how to include the OCC Foundation in your will or trust please contact Doug Bennett, at (714) 432-5126 or dbennett@cccd.edu, or visit our website at www.occ.gift-planning.org

FAMILY AFFAIR: MOTHER AND SON GRADUATE TOGETHER

When Nancy Estrada graduated from Orange Coast College with her associate degree this spring, she says, she graduated alongside her hero: her son.

Estrada, OCC's 2023 commencement student speaker, is a first-generation graduate who grew up with seven siblings. Her parents migrated from Mexico in the 1970s and there was violence and abuse in the house. The year she graduated high school, she started her own family with her high school sweetheart. She worked multiple jobs to help support the four children they eventually had. In 2010, the family welcomed five siblings into their home after a family tragedy. Determined to keep the children together, they adopted the siblings.

The size of her family, plus her experience in the education system, made Estrada consider returning to school.

"How many lives can I impact if I do this?" she wondered. "Children have always surrounded me. I want to be that source that they can go to and talk to about anything. I'm willing to go the extra mile to help you. I don't care if I must jump through hoops."

Estrada started at OCC in 2016, full of doubt. During this time, her son, Adam, was diagnosed with an untreatable malformation in his brain. Shortly after, he enrolled at OCC. This spring, he graduated with his mother and he has plans to be a pharmacologist. He wants to help others with untreatable diseases.

"His confidence and determination to keep moving forward despite everything he was going through made him my hero,"



"There are no silly questions. Ask all the questions."

Estrada says. "If he could do it with all his challenges and limitations, I had to do it for him, myself and my family."

Estrada plans to transfer to California State University Long Beach to become a Spanish teacher. She hopes to one day become a school superintendent.

"Fear will hold you back," she advises returning students. "Just go for it. Don't be afraid if you look different or sound different. There are no silly questions. Ask all the questions. Take baby steps by taking one class and see how it works. You're a click away."

'DON'T BE AFRAID TO FAIL'

OCC INDUCTS ACTOR PATRICK WARBURTON INTO ALUMNI HALL OF FAME

As the 2023 keynote speaker at Orange Coast College's commencement, actor Patrick Warburton addressed about 1,800 graduates—people who met all their coursework requirements, who received a certificate or associate degree from the college—and said, "I failed out of Orange Coast College. I should have said something earlier."

The graduates shouted a few woos! and gave a smattering of applause while Warburton deadpanned, "but I've never gotten an award for anything. I was very excited."

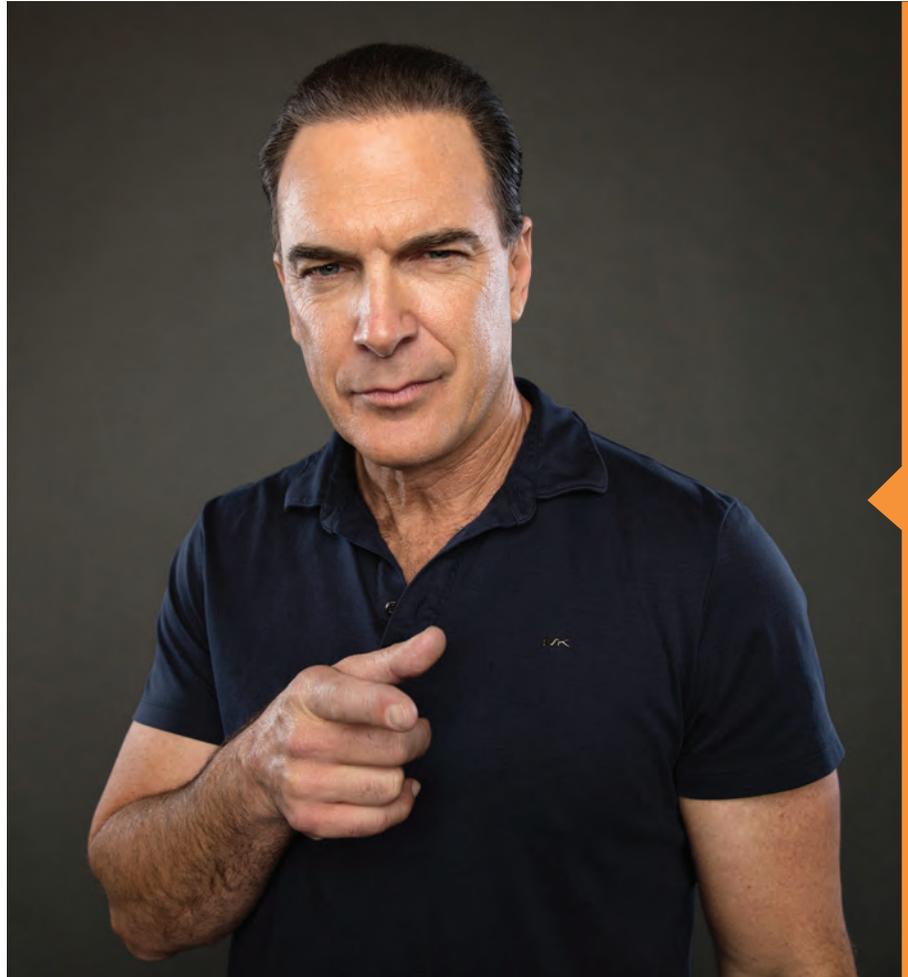
He attended OCC in 1983, during which time he met someone—only one of two, outside of his father—who guided him through his life: Jim Jorgensen, Warburton's crew coach.

"A great coach is much more than a coach. He is a mentor," said Warburton, who was also inducted into OCC's Alumni Hall of Fame. "He had great perspective, and he taught us so much that played into everyday life and who we would be."

Warburton calls his time on crew "a foundation-building experience," and he made it a point to call Jorgensen to say thanks. Jorgensen invited Warburton to an OCC crew fundraiser, and he gifted the actor with his own—Jorgensen's—paddle. Warburton keeps that paddle, a prized possession, on the wall in his bar.

After his time at OCC, Warburton and his father drove to the University of San Diego to meet with the dean of admissions, to show Warburton's paperwork from OCC.

"The dean looked at my paperwork, and he looked at my father and me, and he said, 'He'd have to start all over.' My dad and I both knew that wasn't going to happen," Warburton said.



On the quiet, painful car ride home, Warburton broke the silence after a half hour and said, "Dad, it's OK. I'm going to be an actor."

Today, the acting and voice credits on his resume are lengthy, including *Family Guy*, *The Venture Bros.* and *Ted*.

Warburton wrapped up his speech by congratulating the class of 2023.

"I envy all of you," he said. "You're at such a great, great, great place and time in your life. I miss the '80s. I miss Orange Coast College."

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