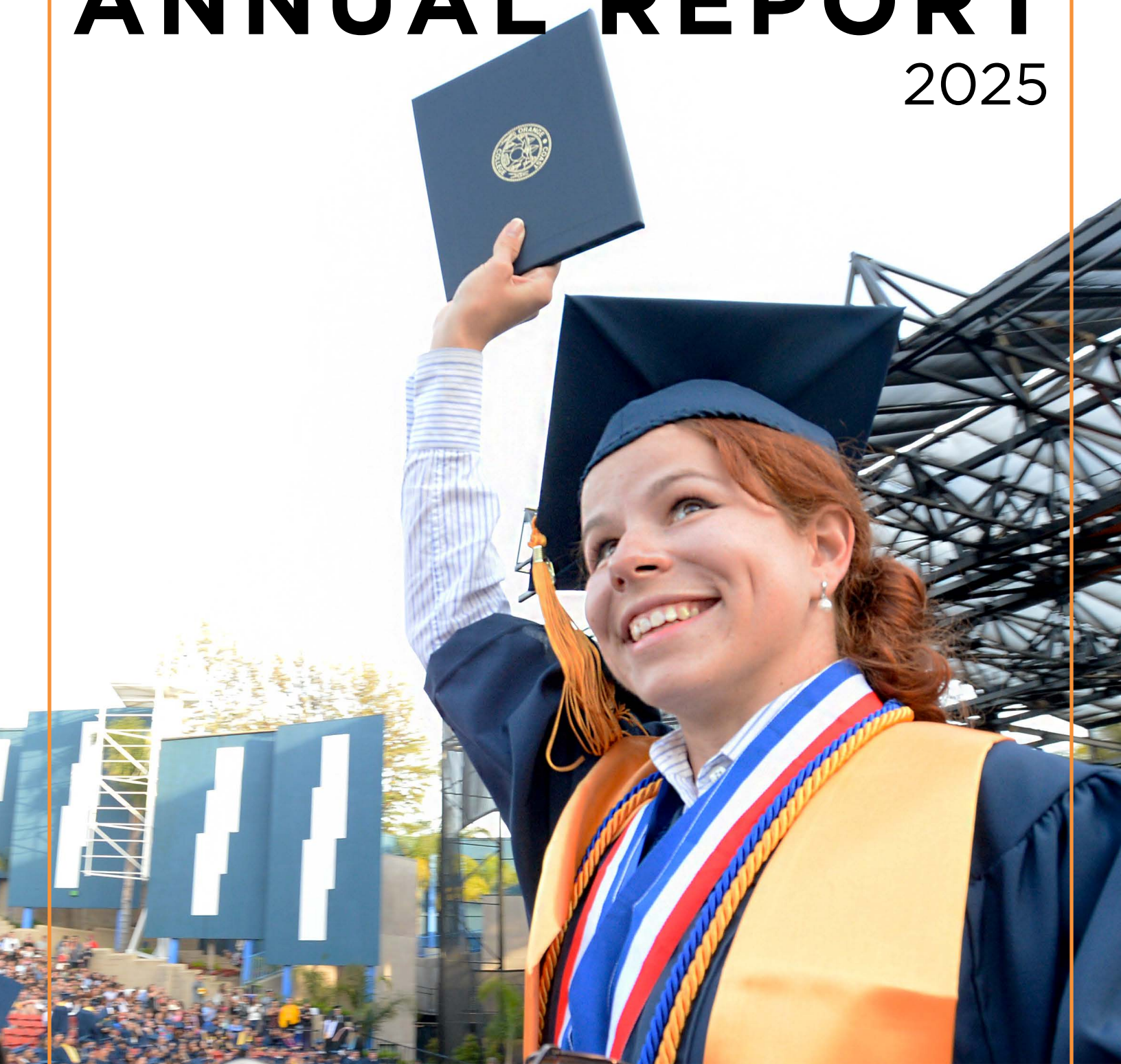


ORANGE COAST COLLEGE FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



ORANGE
COAST
COLLEGE

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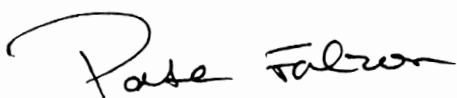
LETTER FROM PATRICIA FALZON/ JEFF HYDER

Great things happen when people come together.

At the Orange Coast College Foundation, we see that truth every day. Great things are happening because of the people who are part of our Pirate community — dedicated faculty, supportive classified professionals, visionary donors, generous volunteers, and, most importantly, students whose drive and determination fuel everything we do. Together, we share a belief in the power of education to transform lives, strengthen our workforce, and build a more vibrant community.

This year's Annual Report highlights stories of generosity, innovation, and success that remind us what's possible when we work toward a common purpose. Each story reflects the collective potential of our remarkable community — and the great things we can continue to achieve, together.

With gratitude,



Patricia Falzon

*Executive Director, College Advancement
Orange Coast College Foundation*



Jeff Hyder

Chair, Orange Coast College Foundation

SETTING THE COURSE

Empowering the Next Generation of Mariners

"The more we provide, the more comprehensive our training becomes, opening doors for students to pursue exciting opportunities after graduating from OCC."

At the Orange Coast College Waterfront Campus in Newport Beach, visitors to the Brad Avery Professional Mariner Training Center will notice a modest display of certificates on the wall, each representing a federally approved U.S. Coast Guard course that can be applied toward licensure and credentialing as a professional merchant mariner. Under the leadership of Waterfront Campus Director Justin Dion, the vision is to further increase the opportunities available to both enrolled students and industry professionals.

Since joining OCC in November 2024, Dion has brought a wealth of experience from his maritime career, both as a U.S. Navy officer and a licensed merchant mariner with Crowley Maritime Corporation. Holding U.S. Coast Guard credentials as Master 1600 GRT and Second Mate Unlimited, he applies practical seagoing expertise to strengthen the program. Dion remains committed to expanding career pathways for students in the maritime industry, ensuring they are well prepared to meet the workforce demands of a dynamic and evolving sector.

Dion envisions a thriving educational environment where mariners can obtain their initial license at the center and return throughout their careers for advanced training, license renewals, or to transition to four-year maritime schools.

"The more we provide, the more comprehensive our training becomes, opening doors for students to pursue exciting opportunities after graduating from OCC," says Dion.

However, expanding course offerings presents challenges, particularly regarding funding and equipment, which are essential for hands-on training. For example, while the theoretical portion of firefighting training occurs at the Newport Beach campus, practical exercises take place in San Diego, highlighting the logistical hurdles faced due to limited resources.

"I'm trying to build networks within the maritime community for donation of equipment, and community relations for that financial piece to buy necessary equipment down the line," explains Dion.

The OCC Foundation has also been a steadfast partner in generating funds for the Waterfront Campus' academic and community programs through its boat donations program. This initiative allows community members to donate various vessels, and over time, the Foundation collaborates with the Waterfront Campus to find buyers for these boats. Proceeds from the sales go directly to supporting the program, ensuring that it can continue to offer top-notch training.

"The partnership with the OCC Foundation is instrumental to our success," explains Dion. "It enables us to provide resources and training necessary for our students to thrive in maritime careers. With their support, we can ensure our programs remain robust and our students are well-prepared for the future."



OCC'S BOAT DONATION PROGRAM

A National Model for Excellence

Orange Coast College's Boat Donation Program has earned a national reputation as one of the premier models for managing yacht and marine vessel donations in support of maritime education. Among a select group of leading U.S. programs — including those at Cal Maritime, Maine Maritime Academy, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and Texas A&M University at Galveston — OCC's program stands out for its impact in the local community and for providing access to quality, affordable maritime education.

From its humble beginnings in the late 1980s, when local boating enthusiasts donated vessels to help launch OCC's fledgling "Sailing Academy" in Newport Beach, the program has grown into a cornerstone of the College's renowned Waterfront Campus. What began as a small community effort has evolved into a well managed model for supporting both academic and professional training for future generations of sailors and mariners.

(See sidebar for a brief history of the Waterfront Campus and link to OCC's Waterfront Campus timeline.)

Today, the Boat Donation Program continues to thrive, providing vital funding for programs based at OCC's flagship

facilities on Newport Beach's iconic Mariner's Mile — the David A. Grant School of Sailing and Seamanship and the Brad Avery Professional Mariners Training Center. Since 1998, the program has generated nearly \$10 million to support staffing, operations, and maintenance for the campus' extensive educational offerings — from community sailing and boating classes in Newport Bay to professional training for aspiring commercial captains and ongoing certification programs for maritime professionals along the West Coast.

A key to the program's success is its trusted partnership with boat owners throughout California and beyond. Vessels are handled with the highest professional and ethical standards — managed and maintained with care and expertise that honors their legacy and benefits future mariners.

OCC's Boat Donation Program is more than a fundraising initiative — it's a national model for how marine education and community partnerships can work hand in hand to keep America's maritime traditions alive and thriving.

If you have an interest in learning more about the donation process, please contact Patricia Falzon, Executive Director, OCC Foundation at pfalzon@cccd.edu

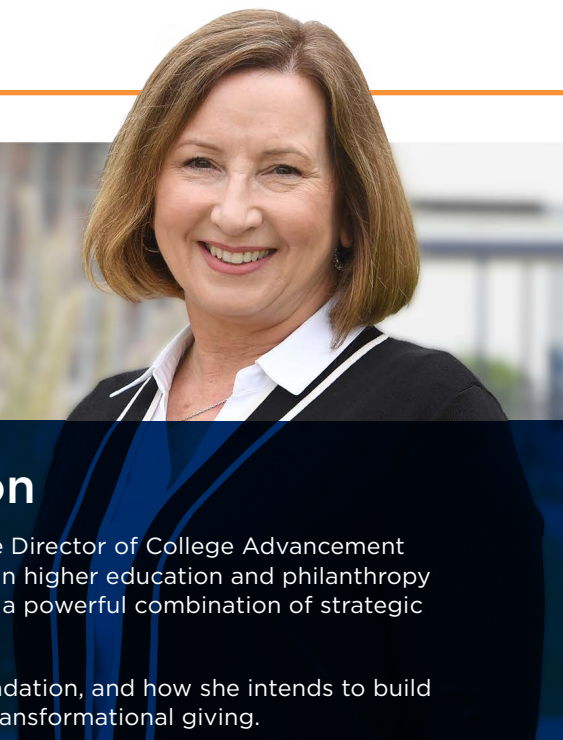
OCC'S WATERFRONT CAMPUS - A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY

- 1950 – OCC Sailing Club defeats Berkeley (Ray Rosso coach)
- 1954 – Superintendent Basil Peterson negotiates rent free land lease with Orange County First sailing courses launch off a sandy beach. Tent erected. OCC Crew formed
- 1955 – WWII Quonset hut brought to Base from OCC (air station building)
- 1967 – Strand steel building erected for rowing program
- 1970 – Seawall, new docks, and crew facility built. Donation of 12 Shields sloops
- 1975 – Second rowing bay added on east side of building.
- 1975 – Gift of 60' sloop Sally is first big boat donation
- 1976 – Gift of 47' sloop Saudade
- 1980 – Prop 13 result: First non-credit/fee based sailing courses offered to public
- 1984 – Alaska Eagle sail training programs begin
- 1988 – Addition of two classrooms, office and kitchen – private funding.
- 1992 – Youth at Risk summer sailing program begins – grant funds
- 1993 – Women's Crew forms
- 1996 – Planning and fundraising begins for nautical library
- 1997 – Gift of Wide Waters launches large powerboat instruction program
- 1998 – "Outstanding Program of the Year" by the National Community Sailing Council
- 1999 – Approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for licensing instruction, testing
- 2000 – Completion of nautical library, bookstore, offices and conference room Name change from "Sailing Center" to "School of Sailing and Seamanship at OCC"
- 2000 – Completion of nautical library and office building – private funding
- 2001 – Students sail aboard Alaska Eagle to Antarctica
- 2002 – Summer community youth sailing program launched
- 2005 – John Kilroy donates 80' sloop Kialoa III
- 2005 – Roy Disney donates 86' sloop Pyewacket
- 2007 – CCCD enters into option agreement to purchase land across PCH
- 2007- Marina upgrade, dock rebuild, fire system and ADA gangway (measure C)
- 2007 – New 30-year site lease signed by County and CCCD
- 2008 – 15-unit Professional Mariner vocational program launched
- 2008 – \$800,000 in private giving to seed OCC Maritime Training Center
- 2008 – Elevations & layout produced for proposed OCC Maritime Training Center facility
- 2009 – EIR and preliminary engineering complete for proposed MTC
- 2010 – Completion of \$4 million crew facility expansion/upgrade (measure C)
- 2012 – Donation of Nordic Star / Complete refit begins for training/charter vessel
- 2015 – Nordic Star certified by USCG as instructional and charter vessel
- 2019 – Ground breaks for the construction of the PMTC with funding provided by OCC Foundation and Measure M.
- 2020 – The "Mariner's Mile" pedestrian skyway over PCH is erected
- 2020 – Sarah Hirsch named Director Maritime Center
- 2021 – Coast Community College District recognizes the Sailing/Rowing Base and soon-to-open PMTC as the Orange Coast College Waterfront Campus
- 2021 – Orange Coast College is designated as a Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE) for 2021
- 2021 – The Professional Mariner Training Center (PMTC) opens
- 2024 – Teaching a new batch of youth and adults lifelong boating

Learn more!



BUILDING ON A LEGACY OF GIVING



A Conversation with Patricia Falzon

We are delighted to welcome Patricia Falzon as the new Executive Director of College Advancement at Orange Coast College. With over two decades of experience in higher education and philanthropy — including roles at Cal State Fullerton and UC Irvine — Falzon brings a powerful combination of strategic vision and donor-engagement expertise to our community.

In this Q&A, we will explore her ambitions for the College and its Foundation, and how she intends to build on a strong legacy of student success, community partnerships and transformational giving.

1. Welcome to Orange Coast College! What drew you to this role, and what excites you most about leading the OCC Foundation?

As a longtime resident of Orange County, I was very aware of Orange Coast College and the work of the Foundation. My family has deep ties to the campus, from my kids attending the Early Childhood Education Lab School to participating in Science Nights and Book Festivals over the years. I am passionate about the power of community colleges to transform lives through education, so when I saw the job posting I didn't hesitate to throw my hat in the ring. This is also what excites me the most — the opportunity to create those life-changing opportunities for students, in partnership with community members who share this passion.

2. Every leader brings their own vision and energy to the table. How would you describe your approach to leading the OCC Foundation and advancing the College's mission?

My approach has focused on building partnerships and initiating conversations with my campus colleagues, the Foundation board and staff, donors, and community members. I rely on our College mission — the "why" behind our efforts — to guide our work priorities. I feel energized by everyone's genuine desire to work together to create the best educational experiences for our students.

3. The OCC Foundation has made such a difference for students and the campus over the years. How do you hope to build on that momentum?

The OCC Foundation has already distinguished

itself as a leading community college foundation in California, in terms of donor relationships and donations raised, so that is a great question. I see many ways to build on our momentum — from broadening the types of donor opportunities available to support not only students but our incredible faculty and student services teams, to increasing our community engagement and developing partnerships with businesses who share our interest in cultivating future generations of scholars and employees.

4. Community and connection are at the heart of the Foundation's work. What ideas do you have for engaging donors, alumni and community partners in new way?

So many ideas! But in a nutshell, many of the ideas come down to meeting our donors, alumni and community partners where they are today — or will be tomorrow. That entails building our digital presence, responding to what we hear from others, and creating win-win or even win-win-win opportunities.

5. Looking ahead, what's one goal or project you're especially excited to tackle?

I'm truly excited to explore the potential to plan a comprehensive fundraising campaign to support the College's programmatic, capital and other priorities. It would be an opportunity to build on the success of past capital campaigns that helped fund amazing buildings like the Planetarium and the Waterfront Campus, and to unite our community of supporters toward a common goal.

OCC STUDENT CHAMPION

Leading with vision and a focus on OCC students

OCC Foundation Board Chair Jeff Hyder's affinity to Orange Coast College was forged by happenstance yet has grown into a remarkable journey of commitment and philanthropy. In 1985, Hyder was coaching football at Edison High School alongside Bill Workman. When Workman transitioned to take the head coaching position at OCC a year later, he invited Hyder to assist him during the spring before assembling his new coaching staff. This opportunity not only introduced Hyder to OCC but also ignited a passion that would shape his future.

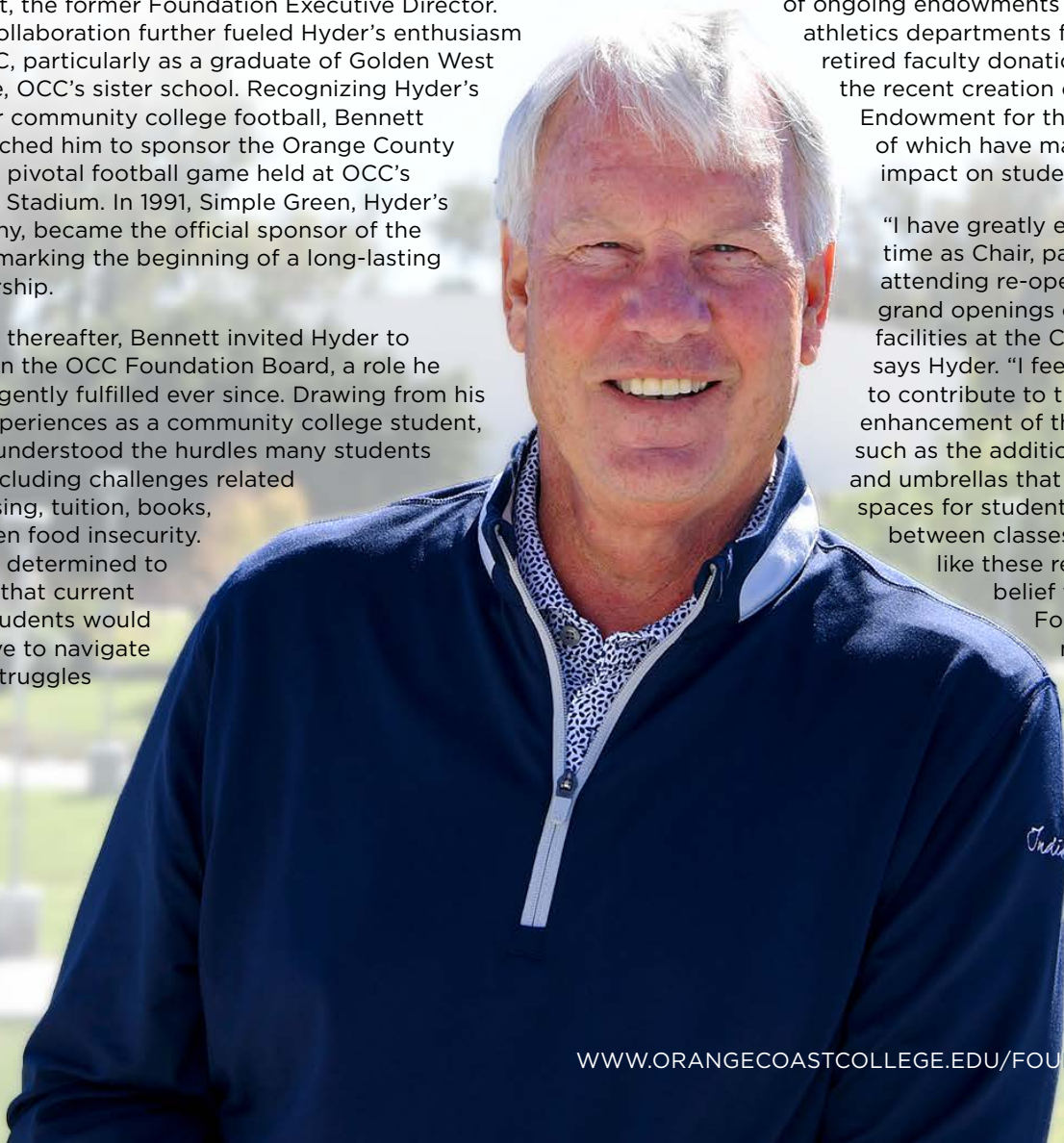
During his time as a coach at OCC, Hyder met Doug Bennett, the former Foundation Executive Director. Their collaboration further fueled Hyder's enthusiasm for OCC, particularly as a graduate of Golden West College, OCC's sister school. Recognizing Hyder's love for community college football, Bennett approached him to sponsor the Orange County Bowl, a pivotal football game held at OCC's LeBard Stadium. In 1991, Simple Green, Hyder's company, became the official sponsor of the event, marking the beginning of a long-lasting partnership.

Shortly thereafter, Bennett invited Hyder to serve on the OCC Foundation Board, a role he has diligently fulfilled ever since. Drawing from his own experiences as a community college student, Hyder understood the hurdles many students face, including challenges related to housing, tuition, books, and even food insecurity. He was determined to ensure that current OCC students would not have to navigate these struggles alone.

"My mother always told me to never forget where you came from," says Hyder. "The community college system provided me with an opportunity to advance my education through a scholarship after my football career at GWC. I felt a strong responsibility to give back and help students access the same opportunities."

During his time on the Foundation Board, Hyder has proudly overseen significant initiatives aimed at enhancing the student experience. Among his proudest accomplishments are the refurbishment of the Robert B. Moore Theatre, the establishment of ongoing endowments for various athletics departments funded by retired faculty donations, and the recent creation of the OCC Endowment for the Arts — all of which have made a lasting impact on students.

"I have greatly enjoyed my time as Chair, particularly attending re-openings and grand openings of new facilities at the College," says Hyder. "I feel fortunate to contribute to the social enhancement of the campus, such as the addition of tables and umbrellas that provide spaces for students to gather between classes. Initiatives like these reaffirm my belief that the Foundation is making a real difference."





IGNITING PASSION

The Impact of the Giles T. Brown Student Project and Research Symposium

Every spring semester, dozens of students gather to present their research findings to their peers and the campus community at the annual Orange Coast College Giles T. Brown Student Project and Research Symposium. Established in 2016, the symposium was created to provide students with an opportunity to gain exposure to independent research and to present their findings in a manner similar to that of a professional conference. The idea was conceptualized by former Dean of Math and Sciences and current Vice President of Instruction Tara Giblin, along with former Dean of Kinesiology and Athletics Michael Sutliff. A committee was formed to help establish the first symposium, and they laid the groundwork for what has now become an impressive presentation of student projects and research.

Approaching its 10th year, the symposium has expanded significantly, growing from 30 student participants in its inaugural year to over 100 students in 2025. The symposium offers tremendous benefits to participating students. For many, being part of this event is a valuable addition to their resumes and enhances their applications for transfer to four-year universities. Additionally, several students have continued their research at four-year institutions, with some going on to earn master's degrees and Ph.D.'s in their fields; many credit the symposium for inspiring their passion for research.

"Students gain so much being a part of this," says OCC Astronomy Department Head and Symposium Chair Jerome Fang. "They learn how to conduct

independent research and develop the confidence to collaborate with faculty mentors. The challenge of developing and executing a project within a limited timeframe allows them to develop vital skills for oral presentations or poster displays. It's about overcoming fears and improving public speaking skills. It's truly a powerful experience for the students involved. They often express how valuable it has been for their personal and academic growth."

To participate in the symposium, students can choose from various presentation formats, including poster presentations, oral presentations, exhibitions or performances. These diverse options encourage participation from students across all disciplines at OCC, and the committee has particularly enjoyed witnessing growth in Visual and Performing Arts presentations.

"The symposium brings the campus community together and makes the environment feel more personal, allowing students to interact with their peers in ways that typically don't happen in a classroom setting," says Fang. "They experience firsthand what it's like to conduct research. I often see students inspire each other, making it a unique experience that few community colleges offer."

The Giles T. Brown Student Project and Research Symposium is generously funded in part by the Giles T. Brown Research Symposium Endowment Fund, which was established through a bequest from one of OCC's best known founding faculty members and professor of history, Giles T. Brown.

FLIGHT READY

Ensuring Student Success for Future Aviation Technicians

For more than three decades, Orange Coast College's Airframe & Powerplant (A&P) Technology Program has been a cornerstone of excellence in aviation education — preparing the next generation of highly skilled, FAA-certified technicians who keep the aerospace industry flying safely and efficiently.

Developed in collaboration with educators and industry leaders, the program's hands-on, experience-driven curriculum equips students with the knowledge and technical expertise required to inspect, maintain and return aircraft and powerplants to flight-ready condition. Graduates of OCC's A&P Technology program are in high demand, going on to careers with major airlines, aerospace manufacturers, and maintenance organizations nationwide — companies that depend on precision, safety, and deep technical proficiency.

The program is one of only five community college-based FAA Part 147 programs in Southern California, and the only one in Orange County, which continues to support a thriving aerospace industry where demand for qualified technicians continues to grow. Currently, the program enrolls approximately 130 students.

A standout feature of the program is its aviation yard, a unique, immersive "learning laboratory" where students gain invaluable real-world experience by building, repairing, and maintaining aircraft systems and components under real-world conditions.

While all college students face the costs of tuition and living expenses, aviation students encounter unique financial challenges. Specialized tools, technical equipment, and professional certification exams are essential for training and employment readiness — adding significantly to the cost of education.

Recognizing this need, an anonymous donor has established the Airframe & Powerplant Endowed Fund, ensuring students are not held back from their dream careers because of financial barriers. This fund will provide student scholarships, reimbursement for the cost of tools, certification exam fees and related expenses, and program support to maintain labs and equipment over time.

"This new fund will have a profound and lasting impact on student success and the aviation industry," says Rodney Foster, Professor of Aviation Maintenance Technology. "It removes barriers for our students and ensures they are fully prepared to enter a field where precision, safety and skill are everything. I am so grateful to this donor for having the vision and understanding of our students' passion for aviation mechanics and their unique needs to join the workforce."

OCC HOT FOOD TEAM TRIUMPHS AT NATIONAL COMPETITION

As the OCC Hot Food Team celebrated their victory at the 2025 Western Regional Competition, their real fundraising efforts were just beginning to support their run at the national competition. With the backing of the OCC Foundation, the Culinary Arts Department introduced an innovative fundraising initiative — a delectable dinner hosted at the Captain’s Table. This intimate dining experience allowed donors to savor a four-course dinner crafted entirely by the award-winning OCC Hot Food Team.

Preparing for the dinner was no small feat. The team, accustomed to cooking for parties of four diners, faced the challenge of scaling their culinary creations to serve 60 guests. Their dedication and hard work were palpable, creating a unique experience for attendees.

“It’s a different experience when you’re sitting in the dining room, knowing that a team of students is cooking for you as they prepare for a competition,” says OCC culinary arts instructor Chef Davina Dunner. “Dinner guests become part of the process, helping to shape a menu that we hope will win accolades.”

The dinner successfully raised over \$4,000, significantly contributing to the costs associated with competing at both regional and national levels, including the team’s travel and purchasing the food they would prepare in competition.

The OCC Hot Food Team continues to thrive thanks to the generosity of donors and the success of fundraising events.

The team’s outstanding efforts culminated in a silver medal at the 2025 American Culinary Federation (ACF)’s National Student Team Championships, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, on July 29.

Representing the Western Region, OCC’s Hot Food Team competed against four other top regional teams in a challenging culinary showdown. The five-member team successfully prepared a four-course meal in just 90 minutes, using only limited electric appliances and no gas.

The team, composed of Morgan Downie, Nykolas Peppers, Josias Rodriguez, Georgia Williams, and Khoa To, achieved an impressive score of 88.75 out of 100, narrowly missing a gold medal performance, which requires a score of 90 or higher.

“To earn a silver medal against the top five teams in the nation — and to do so with a menu as inspired and beautifully executed as ‘Las Californias’ — is an incredible achievement,” says Dunner. “From showcasing sustainable local seafood to weaving in the vibrant flavors of Mexican cuisine, these students cooked with both skill and heart, representing the OCC Culinary Program with an outstanding performance and score.”



TRANSFORMATIVE SUPPORT ELEVATES MARINE SCIENCE EDUCATION AT OCC



When OCC marine science professor Karen Baker first learned that a generous couple would be supporting the Marine Science and Engineering Departments by establishing an endowed fund, she was overwhelmed with emotion and broke down in tears. She recognized that this generous gift would be transformative for her students.

The donors had a keen interest in supporting marine science and engineering education, as it connected to their professional backgrounds and personal interests. Motivated after learning about plans for aquaponics and aquaculture, they decided to invest in OCC and its students.

In 2022, the donors made a generous commitment to provide annual funds and establish an endowment for the Marine Science and Engineering Departments. Currently, the two departments are working together to create a remotely operated vehicle, a project that has been ongoing for the past three years.

“We hope to have a final product that can be deployed in the water within the next year or two, potentially equipped with sensors and cameras for research purposes,” explains Baker.

Funds from the Endowment for Support of Marine Science and Engineering has been pivotal in the establishment and ongoing support of the Aquaponics Lab. Previously, OCC faced challenges maintaining the facility over the summer months. The College has now been able to hire staff dedicated to caring for the lab over the summer, ensuring the sustainability of its operations without losing crops or fish. They have since been able to hire a full-time staff member to oversee the program. Building on the success of the Aquaponics Lab, the Marine Science Department is currently developing its aquaculture program this semester.

Moreover, the Endowment will help sustain field study courses, which often carry associated costs for students, especially those that require travel for experiences like whale watching.

“This wonderful couple has provided very meaningful help with the cost of students participating in courses like island ecology and marine mammal field studies,” says Baker.

The ripple effects of their investment in OCC students extends beyond the single course experience. Many students who complete these immersive field courses dive into research projects, exploring areas related to aquariums and aquaculture.

“This type of hands-on learning could not be possible without the donors’ visionary investment,” says Baker. “Thanks to them we are able to expand the scope of our initiatives and immerse students in field study courses, greatly enhancing their educational journeys.”



A BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

Dr. Hue Pham's Commitment to Education

For over four decades, Dr. Hue Pham has been a dedicated advocate for education at Orange Coast College. Beginning her journey as a counselor at OCC, Dr. Pham's unwavering commitment to her students and Orange County's thriving Vietnamese community has made a lasting impact on countless lives.

Dr. Pham's passion for supporting students' lives at the College and beyond became evident during her attendance at Honors Night events. Witnessing the joy and pride of students receiving scholarships ignited her desire to give back. As an advisor to OCC's Vietnamese Student Association, she initiated fundraising efforts that started with modest \$100 scholarships. Thanks to successful events, such as a Vietnamese dinner and show, these scholarships soon expanded to \$500, providing an even greater level of support for students in need.

Her deep roots in the Vietnamese community allowed Dr. Pham to connect with parents seeking guidance for their children. Through her appearances on Vietnamese radio shows, she stressed the importance of a college education, building trust and encouraging families to explore educational opportunities at OCC.

"I advised many parents, especially Vietnamese parents, who dreamt of their children pursuing careers in medicine or engineering," recalls Dr. Pham.

"I wanted to provide them with insights into the various pathways and career choices available at OCC."

In 2000, Dr. Pham became the Dean of Counseling, where she continued to emphasize OCC's mission while engaging with the community.

"Community college is a bridge for those who might or might not have offers to four-year universities," says Dr. Pham. "Beginning your educational journey at a community college and transferring to a four-year university can save you a significant amount of money."

After retiring in 2018, Dr. Pham continued to support OCC students by establishing The Hue Pham and Family Scholarship for Early Childhood, created in late 2022 to address the growing need for early childhood educators.

Her motivation for establishing the scholarship stemmed from her personal experiences as a mother of a daughter with Down Syndrome, through which she realized the essential role early childhood education plays in a child's development.

"It was challenging to find quality preschool programs that were available and accessible," Dr. Pham explains. "I knew I had to help ensure that future educators are prepared to make a difference. It is important to support OCC students because education is the key to being successful in life. Education is foundation."

OCC FOUNDATION FINANCIAL REPORT

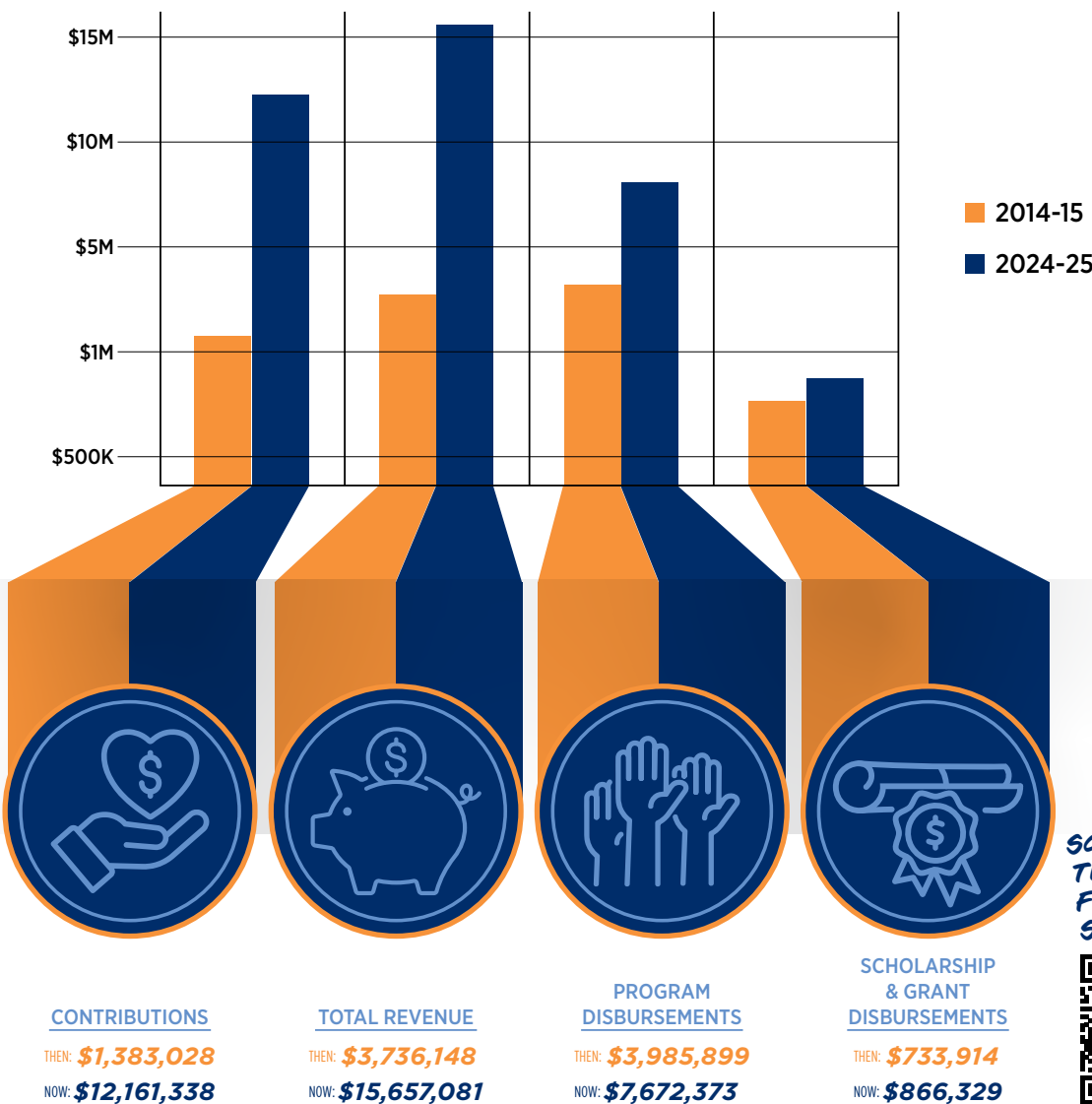
2024-25 Audited Report

Total gifts and pledges to the Orange Coast College Foundation for the 2024-25 year were **\$13,860,400**. Cash gifts totaled **\$12,161,338** and gifts in kind of boats and equipment were valued at **\$1,699,062**.

The total assets of the OCC Foundation were **\$59,913,832** and invested assets, including donor restricted endowments, totaled **\$47,225,800** as of June 30, 2025.

The OCC Foundation invested assets are managed by Northern Trust and for the year ending June 30, 2025 earned **11.25%** net of fees. Since inception in 2012, the funds have earned **7.19%** net of fees.

A Decade of Growth and Impact - 2015-2025



SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CREATIVES & ARTISTS



An anonymous alumni donor with a personal passion for art and arts education is ensuring that Orange Coast College's Visual and Performing Arts students can realize their creative potential for years to come.

In late 2024, this generous individual made a transformative gift of \$9.44 million to the OCC Foundation to establish the OCC Endowment for the Arts. The Endowment will provide annual funding in perpetuity to support scholarships and student grants to fund their creative projects and activities.

The OCC Endowment for the Arts provides ongoing support through generous

annual funding that will benefit students studying Art, Photography, Film/TV, Digital Media and Design, Music, Dance and Theatre Arts.

The Endowment's funding is allocated in three ways:

- Student-led creative projects and activities
- Artist Promise scholarships for new arts majors
- Achievement awards for arts students to continue their creative studies

The Endowment's first Achievement Awards and Student Activities grants were announced in the spring 2025 semester.

Meet three OCC students whose artistic development at OCC was enriched with support from the Endowment this year.

Niko Black

OCC Dance graduate and Achievement Award recipient

Niko Black began their journey at OCC in 2023, where they choreographed pieces for two spring concerts that showcased student work. They also created a short dance for the end-of-semester showcase for Professor Rachel Berman's modern dance class. This particular piece was chosen to be adjudicated at the American College Dance Association (ACDA)'s Baja conference last April. Niko received high praise and constructive feedback from the three adjudicators, and their work nearly made it to the gala performance at the end of the conference.

In addition, Niko participated in faculty work that was presented at that ACDA conference,



which was chosen to advance to the ACDA National Festival. Along with eight other dancers from OCC, Niko traveled to Washington D.C. to perform on the national stage.

After graduating from OCC in the spring, Niko went on to pursue a BFA in dance at Cal State Long Beach.

"The Endowment for the Arts scholarship will be used wisely to support my artistic dance dreams. It will go towards my education at CSULB as I work towards earning my BFA. I am so excited to take this step. I grew so much as an artist and a person at OCC." — *Niko Black*

Shepherd Andre

OCC Entertainment Art student and Student Activities award recipient

As part of one of his entertainment art classes, Shepherd Andre had his artwork displayed for

The Texians, Entertainment Art Project Exhibition, which was held on May 31 inside the Art Center.

A Student Activities grant from OCC Endowment for the Arts provided the funding needed to produce this art show and to publish a book featuring his work and that of his fellow students.

Vanessa Noethe

OCC Narrative Illustration student and Student Activities award recipient

Vanessa Noethe was one of several dozen students who traveled to Kyoto, Japan, during the summer of 2025 as part of the OCC study abroad program. The trip was supported in part by a Student Activities grant from the OCC Endowment for the Arts. Throughout the trip, Vanessa had the opportunity to explore art museums, learn about

Japanese history and participate in various excursions.

The grant helped to cover admission to several art shows, which further inspired her creativity. Upon her return to OCC, Vanessa and other students from the trip had their artwork, which was created while in Kyoto, displayed in art show titled "Reflections from Kyoto." The exhibition took place in the Yoshida Gallery in OCC's Art Center.

"As an artist, witnessing the traditional architecture and the deep history of culture made me reflect on the ideals and symbolism I want in my work. I visited a museum housing artifacts from various temples, some wooden statues over 2,000 years old. The legacy of these pieces struck me. I want my work to carry meaning and evoke feelings for those who may encounter it 100 or 200 years from now, allowing it to speak for itself." — *Vanessa Noethe*

CHARTING A NEW COURSE

Having worked a desk job for the past decade, Lisa Stumph felt it was time for a change. The idea of starting over at the age of 50 seemed daunting, but she decided to take the plunge. She wanted to recapture the sense of wonder she had for nature as a child but wasn't sure how to transition her career.

Stumph had already embraced an active nature life in her personal time, serving as a volunteer whale-watch naturalist with the LA chapter of the American Cetacean Society. After three seasons, she decided to broaden her volunteering opportunities by joining the OC chapter in the spring of 2024, taking their training course which is held on OCC's main campus. Hailing from upstate New York originally, and living in San Pedro since 2020, Stumph had never heard of OCC before, but she was impressed by the experience and enthusiasm of the instructors. Stumph ended up taking an intro marine science class that summer and quickly realized this was the path she'd been looking for. She left her job and enrolled full time for the fall.

"I have attended a number of different colleges in my life, but none have been like this one," says Stumph. "There are so many opportunities for hands-on experience here and the facilities are incredible."

She's really enjoyed the numerous opportunities for hands-on work during field trips and on campus. As part of her education, she is a student manager at the OCC Aquarium, where she cares for an array of marine and freshwater organisms. Last semester, she even submitted her field research to a scientific journal — something particularly unheard of at the undergraduate level, even less so at the community college level.

Working in marine science means spending a lot of time on the water, so Stumph is also taking advantage of the professional mariner classes offered at the Waterfront Campus in Newport Beach. At the encouragement of instructor Captain Karen Prioleau, Stumph applied for and received two scholarships. One that helped cover the cost of her merchant mariner credential and the other that covered some

expenses to help her work towards OCC's Professional Mariner Certificate, which she sees as the perfect complement to a marine science degree. This summer, she used her OCC training to work as a deckhand for a company in Long Beach.

Ultimately, Stumph hopes to pursue this passion as a full-time career doing field work and research in marine ecology and conservation. She is incredibly grateful for the connections and mentorship that OCC faculty members have provided.

"What I love about Orange Coast College is that everyone is focused on connecting you with opportunities, helping you develop job skills, and providing the certifications you need to be a strong applicant," says Stumph.

Next summer, Stumph will be headed off to Scotland for a one-month study abroad trip through the Marine Science Department. During this trip, she will explore native habitats and complete three courses.

"I feel the world has opened up to me in a way that it hadn't before," says Stumph.

"I feel the world has opened up to me in a way that it hadn't before."





A NEW ERA FOR THE OCC PLANETARIUM

Leadership & Innovation

In April 2025, Jessica Artinger stepped into the role of director for the OCC Planetarium, bringing her extensive experience and passion for astronomy to the position. Having led programming in a temporary capacity since the summer of 2023, Artinger is excited about the opportunity to drive the Planetarium's mission forward.

"My roots at OCC and the Planetarium run deep, and I'm truly honored to continue leading this incredible space," says Artinger. "It's a place where people of all ages can come to imagine new possibilities, explore the universe and be inspired by the wonders of science."

The Planetarium has long enjoyed a strong partnership with the OCC Foundation, a collaboration that Artinger is committed to sustaining. Thanks to the Foundation's support, the Planetarium has been able to offer discounted rates for field trips to Title 1 schools, ensuring that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds have a chance to visit the Planetarium and experience the wonders of astronomy. The Foundation also plays a vital role in sponsoring the monthly Skylark Speaker Series an initiative that connects the community with leading experts in the field.

This year has seen significant upgrades at the Planetarium, including a newly enhanced sound system and an upcoming software upgrade to the Dome Theater set to be completed in January 2026.

"If you think our graphics look awesome now, they're about to get even better," says Artinger. "With the new Digistar 2025 software, the Milky Way will come

alive in 3D with no more flat images. You'll see stars with stunning color and realistic surface dynamics, and we'll even be able to zoom in on the Sun to study its sunspots live."

Since assuming the role of director, Artinger has worked diligently to expand access to the Planetarium for OCC students. Previously, busy schedules filled with community events and field trips made it challenging for instructors to utilize the facility. By striking a balance between community programming and educational access, Artinger has ensured that students can benefit from all that the Planetarium offers.

"For our Wednesday night observational class, students can come into the theater to preview what they will be observing later, then head outside to set up telescopes and conduct their observations," explains Artinger.

Looking toward the future, Artinger envisions the Planetarium as a prominent center for scientific inquiry and engagement within Orange County. She aims to expand community involvement through free events and partnerships with local organizations, ultimately making science education accessible to all.

"I'm excited to introduce more interactive exhibits to our lobby that allow kids to engage with astronomical phenomena in a hands-on way," says Artinger. "I look forward to continuing that mission and expanding access to science education in our community with support from our Foundation in funding these projects."

CELEBRATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Honors Night at OCC



2025 Honors Night by the Numbers:

595 Scholarships Announced

434 Student Recipients

\$928,320 Awarded

Since 1958, Honors Night at Orange Coast College has been a celebrated tradition that recognizes students for their academic achievements, service and leadership.

The theme for the 67th Annual Honors Night held in May was “A Night of Academic Excellence.” Nearly a million dollars in scholarships were announced to celebrate and support deserving students, each with a unique and remarkable story of resilience and success. Honors Night remains a cornerstone of OCC’s efforts to foster an inspiring and supportive educational environment.

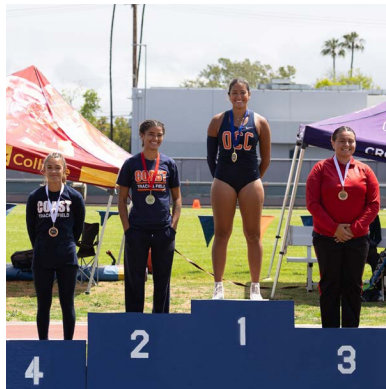
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

Providing a Lasting Legacy of Support

By establishing an endowed scholarship, donors create a lasting legacy that supports Orange Coast College students year after year. With a minimum gift or pledge of \$20,000, an endowed scholarship will generate approximately \$1,000 annually to fund a scholarship in perpetuity. All endowed gifts are invested in the Foundation’s

pooled investment fund, with only the annual earnings used for scholarships — ensuring the original contribution continues to grow and benefit future students for generations. Through their generosity, endowed scholarship donors make a permanent and meaningful impact on the lives of OCC students.

EMPOWERING STUDENT ATHLETES THROUGH COMMUNITY SUPPORT



During the 2024-2025 academic year, student athletes at OCC demonstrated the power of community and support through their impressive crowdfunding efforts. Thanks to the generosity of friends, family and supporters, they successfully raised over \$127,127 in campaigns facilitated by the OCC Foundation.

Each crowdfunding initiative was personalized with heartfelt video messages from students. In these videos, they shared their unique experiences at OCC and shared how the contributions would significantly impact their academic and athletic journeys.

For Jessica Williams, Head Track and Field Coach, these campaigns have significantly eased the financial pressures on student athletes. The fundraising efforts particularly aimed at supporting the track and field program helped cover vital expenses, including equipment, travel, uniforms, and meet fees.

"This platform has truly transformed our fundraising efforts, allowing athletes to concentrate on training and performance instead of traditional fundraising methods," says Williams. "Because of your support, our team has grown in size and talent, and many of our athletes have earned opportunities to transfer and compete at the four-year collegiate level."

The positive impact of these fundraising initiatives extends beyond track and field. Kevin Smith, Head Coach of Men's Soccer, echoed a similar sentiment, highlighting the significant advantages they provide to the soccer program.

"The eTeams fundraiser has been an essential part of our team's ability to provide the players an overall great experience," says Smith. "We can provide quality equipment and better support our athletes throughout the season."

PARTICIPATING TEAMS/PROGRAMS FOR 2024-2025 INCLUDED:

- FOOTBALL
- MEN'S AND WOMEN'S WATER POLO
- DANCE TEAM
- MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM
- WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL
- WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
- WOMEN'S CREW
- SOFTBALL
- MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD
- MEN'S CREW
- BASEBALL
- MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TENNIS
- MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SWIM

Thank you!

The Orange Coast College Foundation and Orange Coast College express their gratitude to the many generous individuals, companies and foundations who support our students, programs and campus. This Honor Roll recognizes the following donors whose contributions were received between July 1, 2024 and September 30, 2025.

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Patricia Falzon, Executive Director

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OCC ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACCOLADES

President's Message:

“This past year at Orange Coast College has been a testament to the power of innovation, collaboration, and community. From record-breaking philanthropy and student achievements to impactful community engagement and national recognition, our college continues to lead with purpose and pride. I'm honored to share these highlights that reflect the dedication of our students, faculty, classified professionals, administrative team, and supporters.”

— Dr. Angelica L. Suarez
President, Orange Coast College

Academic Excellence

- Speech, Debate, and Theater Team won its 18th State Championship and the Gold Sweepstakes Award at Phi Rho Pi Nationals.
- Honors student Abner Molina was accepted to the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Abner is among nearly two dozen transfer students admitted to MIT this year, where the transfer acceptance rate typically hovers between just 1-3%.
- OCC ranked among the Top 10 community colleges in California by WalletHub.
- OCC Architecture Club won the Best Construction Award at the annual Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Design Village 2025.

Innovation & Learning in Action

- Launched Travel OCC, a student-run travel agency staffed entirely by student interns from the Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism program.
- Partnered with MM-SEAS, a leading provider of U.S. Coast Guard licensing software, to provide enhanced support for maritime students at the Waterfront Campus.

- The Radiologic Technology program celebrated its 70th anniversary at OCC — the first community college-based radiologic technology program in the United States.

Collaboration & Community Engagement

- Held a lunar eclipse watch party at the Planetarium using OCC telescopes on March 13, engaging the community in STEM exploration.
- Co-hosted RE/GENERATION: A Celebration of Art and Fashion in partnership with The Salvation Army, promoting sustainability in the Fashion Department.
- In response to the L.A. wildfires in January, OCC and Abound Food Care prepared and distributed thousands of relief meals to impacted residents.
- Received the Excellence in Energy and Sustainability – Faculty/Student Initiative Award from the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, recognizing multidisciplinary collaboration in marine science, horticulture, and culinary arts.

ORANGE COAST COLLEGE ALUMNUS CHIEF DAN STEFANO

Honored with Statewide Alumni Award

"This is an incredibly humbling honor on so many levels."

Orange Coast College alumnus Chief Dan Stefano has been honored with the 2025 California Community College Distinguished Alumni Award by the Community College League of California. This esteemed statewide honor recognizes former community college students who have achieved outstanding success in their careers while demonstrating exceptional service to their communities.

"This is an incredibly humbling honor on so many levels," said Chief Dan Stefano. "Orange Coast College played a crucial role in my personal and professional journey, both academically and athletically (football). It served as a vital launching pad for my career in service and my graduate studies at CSULB and USC. This recognition reflects the shared mission of OCC and all community colleges to open doors, uplift students, and help them discover what's possible."

Chief Stefano was jointly nominated by OCC and Santa Ana College, both of which played pivotal roles in shaping his educational journey. He earned his Associate Degree in General Education from Orange Coast College, which provided the foundation for his continued studies, and later completed his Associate Degree in Fire Technology and graduated from the Fire Academy at Santa Ana College. Now serving as Fire Chief for the City of Costa Mesa, Chief Stefano embodies the values of humility, leadership, and service that define the community college experience.

With an impressive career spanning more than three decades, Chief Stefano has served in every rank of the fire service — from reserve firefighter to Fire Chief — and has earned distinction as one of the most respected leaders in public safety in California.



He has served as President of the California Fire Chiefs Association, the Orange County Fire Chiefs Association, and the League of California Cities Fire Chiefs Department. He is among only 32 individuals in California history to earn the Certified Fire Chief designation.

"As an alumnus, Dan continues to be a shining example of leadership and service — a true asset to the community whose commitment uplifts others and reflects the very best of what it means to give back with purpose and heart," says OCC Foundation Board Chair Jeff Hyder.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Chief Stefano's dedication to education and mentorship has been a defining feature of his legacy. He serves on Orange Coast College Foundation Board of Directors, furthering illustrating his dedication to shaping future generations.

"Chief Stefano's story is a testament to the transformational impact of a community college education," says Dr. Angelica L. Suarez, President of Orange Coast College.

Chief Stefano was formally honored at the 2025 Annual Convention of the Community College League of California on November 21 at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Garden Grove.

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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.



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