



Calendar

APRIL 15 & 16

Sexual Assault Awareness Month: LGBTQIA2S+ Summit, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m., OCC Rainbow Cove, Clark Center 102

APRIL 16

Caring Campus Open House Series: Adult Education, 10:30 a.m.-Noon., C&L 117

APRIL 17

Annual Spring Plant Sale, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., OCC Horticulture, Park in Lot H or G

APRIL 21 & 22

Friends of the Library Spring Book Sale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Library Lecture Room

APRIL 23

Caring Campus Open House Series: Science & Engineering Tutor Center, 10-11:30 a.m., Mesa C & L 101

APRIL 29

Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Denim Day Photo, 11 a.m., OCC Main Quad

APRIL 30 & MAY 1

Spring Dance Celebration, 7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 1

Giles T. Brown Symposium, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

MAY 6

Piano Honors Recital, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall (MUS 102)

MAY 8-10

A Midsummer Night's Dream, 7:30 p.m., Drama Lab Theatre

MAY 9

OCC Chamber Singers present Poulenc's "Gloria," 7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 12

Top-Notch Pop, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall (MUS 102)

MAY 12

OCC Symphony: Movement in Music, 7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 14

Honors Night

MAY 15 & 16

A Midsummer Night's Dream, 7:30 p.m., Drama Lab Theatre

MAY 17

A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2:30 p.m., Drama Lab Theatre

MAY 17

Wind Ensemble Concert, 3 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre



Orange Coast College Earns Gold Level Status in 2026-2027 Military Friendly Schools® Designation

Orange Coast College has earned the 2026-2027 Military Friendly® Schools Designation and is recognized as a Gold Level School.

This honor of 2026-2027 Military Friendly® School Gold and 2026-2027 Military Spouse Friendly® School validates the work of the specially trained staff in our Veterans Services department, who go beyond assisting the veteran community in achieving their educational goals. The journey begins with utilizing VA education benefits to earn an associate degree, certificate of achievement or transfer to a four-year university. It continues with support for community and on-campus resources. Students become part of a community that understands this path and opportunity requires unique support. Our military population receives one-on-one support with a veteran counselor, priority registration and access to the Veterans Resource Center (VRC), which provides student veterans and their dependents a place to study and connect with each other.

"We are proud to serve those who have served us. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to our veteran community—students, faculty, classified professionals, and managers—for their service to our country," says Dr. Angelica L. Suarez, President of Orange Coast College. "OCC is committed to supporting our student veteran community through numerous services and resources including our Veterans Resource Center space, dedicated counseling support, and referrals to on- and off-campus resources."

Institutions earning the Military Friendly Schools® designation were

evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. Over 3,200 companies participated in the Military Friendly® survey.

OCC will be showcased in the 2026-2027 Guide to Military Friendly Schools® in the April issue of G.I. Jobs® magazine and on MilitaryFriendly.com.

Military Friendly® is the standard that measures an organization's commitment, effort, and success in creating sustainable and meaningful benefits for the military community. Over 3,200 organizations compete annually for the Military Friendly Schools® designation. Military Friendly® is a service-disabled, veteran-owned small business. Military Friendly® is not affiliated with or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Defense or the federal government. Results are produced via a rules-based algorithm.



Two Orange Coast College Honors Students Named Semifinalists for Prestigious National Scholarship

Two students from Orange Coast College have been selected as semifinalists for the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship. OCC students who were named as semifinalists are Parsa Bashiri and Cher Scarlett.

Bashiri is a premedical student preparing to transfer for fall 2026 to study biomedical engineering. She is a member of the Mu Delta Rho pre-health professions honor society and the OCC Honors Program. She will present research mentored by Dr. Erin Gratz at the upcoming Giles T. Brown Symposium.

Scarlett is an astrophysics major who will earn degrees in astronomy, physics, mathematics, liberal arts and natural science from OCC this spring. She is a member of Alpha Gamma Sigma, Phi Theta Kappa and the OCC Honors Program. She has presented her research at several conferences including the Honors Transfer Council of California Student Research Conference and the Giles T. Brown Symposium at OCC.

The OCC students are two out of 115 California nominees and 485 national students selected as semifinalists for the 2026 Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship. In 2025, three OCC students were chosen as semifinalists, and one OCC student won the national Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship in 2024.

"We are extremely proud of our student scholars' academic achievement," says OCC President Angelica Suarez. "OCC has a proven record of being a transfer leader, and we are excited to learn about their future transfer plans."

The Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship is a prestigious national award that supports high-achieving community college students as they transfer to top four-year institutions to complete their bachelor's degrees. Semifinalists are chosen from a pool of nearly 1,300 applications attending 224 community colleges in 37 states.

The finalists for the Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship will be announced in May. Each selected scholar will receive financial support for up to three years, college planning services, ongoing advising, and the opportunity to connect with a community of fellow Cooke Scholars.

Orange Coast College Named #1 in Orange County for College Transfers



Orange Coast College has once again earned recognition as Orange County's top transfer college, leading community colleges in combined transfers to California State University and University of California campuses. Known for its exceptional student support and wide range of academic programs, OCC continues to be the premier starting point for students pursuing four-year degrees.

Data from CSU and UC systems has placed OCC at the top in total transfers - 1,274 students to CSU and 469 to UC for a combined total of 1,743 students - validating its proven track record of getting community college students to the next level.

At OCC, students have access to exclusive guaranteed transfer agreements and priority consideration with several colleges and universities, including UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, UCLA, Loyola Marymount, Chapman University, Arizona State University, and more.

In December of 2025, OCC formalized a new agreement with California State University, Fullerton designed to expand transfer opportunities and support student success. The partnership provides OCC students with an enhanced admissions pathway compared to standard or local Grade Point Average (GPA) thresholds. The agreement establishes a defined pathway for eligible OCC students who meet

minimum academic requirements to transition to Cal State Fullerton and is intended to strengthen transfer outcomes and degree completion.

OCC offers high-quality education at an affordable cost, with tuition at just \$46 a unit the Coast is one of the most cost-effective paths to a bachelor's degree in California.

Orange Coast College Students Take Second Against Four-Year Universities in Food Science Contest

Orange Coast College's food science student product development team won second place at the 38th annual Student Product Development Competition hosted by the Southern California Institute of Food Technologists (SCIFTs) on March 3 in Anaheim, California.

Morgan Downie, culinary/food science; Anna Jensen, food science; and Hannah Thompson, nutrition and dietetics, made up the first team that OCC has sent to the competition and were the only community college competitors. They competed against universities including first-place winner California State University Polytechnic, Pomona, as well as Chapman University and San Diego State University.

Consumer and health sciences instructor Michelle Tu, a longtime supporter of SCIFT's, introduced the students to the competition and once they were onboard volunteered her time to mentor the team.

"I hope more students at this community college level can be as brave as these girls were, to go up against those other universities. They truly went into this with such willingness to try, learn, and prepare, before they matriculate," Tu says. "It was so rewarding to see the amount of growth, excitement and pride when they finished their presentation. Winning second place was just that icing on the cake for us all."

The team of volunteer students placed for "Girl Juice," a wellness beverage made with plum, acai, spinach and a proprietary blend of nutrients designed to support menopausal health.

"Everyone is constantly talking about GLP and weight loss, protein intake, but no one was addressing the importance of women's health as women are navigating these symptoms," Tu says. "The great thing about this juice too is that it focuses on bone density health. So this drink can be versatile, but focused at the same time."

SCIFTs is the local chapter of the national Institute of Food Technologists industry group. The competition is invitation-only within the schools that the organization consistently supports. It takes place during Suppliers Night, held in conjunction with the Natural Products Expo at the Anaheim Convention Center. Hundreds of people were in attendance and were able to view the student's project.

This is the first time OCC has competed, despite being involved with the organization through volunteer work.

"Our group has been working very hard all through the fall semester, winter break, and February to develop their product - not for credit," Tu says. "They are doing this on their own time or when it is possible to utilize the lab during my office hours."

Sunsweet Growers Inc. provided financial support for ingredients for the project and brainstorming with the team. They will be showcasing this winning wellness shot at the three-day national convention in July and providing OCC with credit for "Girl Juice."

"Girl Juice" will be presented May 1 by the team at OCC's Giles T. Brown Student Project and Research Symposium.

Orange Coast College Awards First Artist Promise Scholarships to 226 Aspiring Art Students

Orange Coast College launched its OCC Artist Promise initiative Thursday, March 12, by officially signing scholarship checks that will go out to 226 aspiring arts students entering the College's Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) programs.



This is the first year of Artist Promise, designed for new students who declare a major in one of our arts departments: art, dance, digital media art and design, film and television, music, photography, and theater arts. Artist Promise is a commitment to ensuring every student has the resources and support they need to grow, create and succeed.

This initiative is made possible through the OCC Endowment for the Arts, established through a transformational \$9.44 million gift from an anonymous alumni donor in late 2024.

OCC Artist Promise Scholarships are available for new students entering Visual and Performing Arts programs such as art, dance, music, digital media art and design, photography, theater arts, film and television, and immersive media.

To qualify, recipients must meet with a counselor to declare their major in one of the VPA programs, and complete at least one class in their major during their first semester.

“This is an incredible opportunity for students who may have thought college – and a career in the arts – was out of reach,” says Dean of Visual and Performing Arts Larissa Nazarenko. “This scholarship is designed to ease the financial burden and send a clear message: your creativity matters, and we believe in your future.”

Additional achievement scholarships will be awarded to OCC students at Honors Night.

Plant Enthusiasts & Gardeners Invited to OCC Horticulture’s Annual Spring Plant Sale



Orange Coast College’s Horticulture Department will host its annual Spring Plant Sale on April 17, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Plant enthusiasts and gardeners are invited to visit OCC Horticulture’s garden nursery to purchase plants produced by students of the Horticulture program.

“It’s full circle for the students,” Horticulture Instructor and Lab Coordinator Joe Stead said. “They’re involved with the plants every step of the journey – from seed to customer.”

The Horticulture students propagate and tend to the plants until they are big enough to take home and sell to the community. The stellar selection includes edible plants such as tomatoes, peppers, and cooking herbs, as well as other household greens and flowering selections that will be available at the sale.

The event is free to the public. All proceeds will go toward student scholarships and projects.

OCC Marketing and Public Relations Earns Two National Awards



Orange Coast College’s Marketing and Public Relations Department received two 2025 Paragon Awards from the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) March 19, at last month’s “We the People” national conference in Washington D.C.

OCC took home two silver awards from the conference for a Foundation thank you card in the category Postcard-Single or Series and OCC Softball trading cards in the Print Wild Card category.

The 2025 Paragon Awards 1,585 entries from 216 colleges across the country and was judged by 67 marketing and public relations professionals.

“It’s an incredible honor to be recognized by the NCMPR with Paragon Awards,” says OCC Marketing and Public Relations Director Juan Gutierrez. “These awards reflect our entire communications team’s creativity, collaboration, and dedication. At the heart of our work is a deep commitment to telling the powerful stories of our students, faculty, and community—and it’s gratifying to see that work celebrated on a national stage.”

NCMPR’s prestigious Paragon Awards recognize outstanding design, strategy, and communication achievements at community and technical colleges. It’s the only national competition that honors excellence exclusively among two-year colleges’ marketing and public relations professionals.