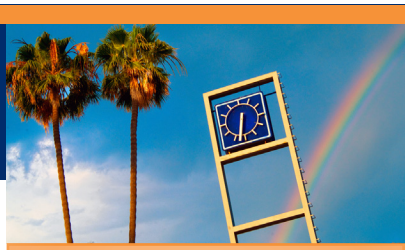
Orange Coast College
UPDATE
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Orange Coast College Ranks Among Top 10% of California Community Colleges for Graduation Rates

Orange Coast College ranks in the top 10% among California community colleges, boasting a three-year graduation rate of 46.2%, according to a recent analysis published by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Released on October 20, the analysis examines completion outcomes at more than 2,300 colleges nationwide using official data from the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The study tracked the progress of students who began their higher education journey in 2021.

While the standard timeframe to complete an associate degree is traditionally two years, community college students frequently balance rigorous coursework with employment, family responsibilities and external commitments. The Chronicle's three-year tracking window captures a more realistic picture of student persistence and long-term completion.

"At Orange Coast College, our mission centers on student success and removing barriers to higher education," says OCC President Dr. Angelica Suarez. "These results reflect the dedication of our students, and the efforts behind the scenes to keep them on the path to graduation."

Alongside high completion rates, OCC leads Orange County in combined UC/CSU transfers and maintains a robust transfer rate overall. The analysis found that 12.1% of students in OCC's measured group transferred to another institution.

Calendar

Now-Nov. 25
"Bad Marks," Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion

Now-Nov. 25
"The Ballad of Discard and Decay: Stephanie Sherwood," Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion

Nov. 21
Fall Choral-Vocal Showcase, 7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

Dec. 3
Fall Student Dance Showcase, 7 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

Dec. 3
Joyful Pops, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall

Dec. 4 & 5
An Old-Fashioned Christmas Melodrama & Ice Cream Social, 7 p.m., Drama Lab Theatre

Dec. 5 & 6
An Old-Fashioned Christmas Melodrama & Ice Cream Social, 2:30 p.m., Drama Lab Theatre

Dec. 6
Fall 2026 Guitar Program Recital, 3 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

Dec. 7
OCC Commercial Music Concert, 7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

The findings were published in The Chronicle of Higher Education's October 20 article, "What Happens After Students Enroll? Explore Graduation Outcomes at 2,300 Colleges." The analysis draws on federal data collected through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which tracks student enrollment, graduation and other outcomes at colleges and universities across the country.

President Suarez Receives NCMPR Pacesetter Award



Orange Coast College President Dr. Angelica Suarez was recently awarded the 2026 District 6 Pacesetter of the Year Award from the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR).

This award recognizes a community college president, chancellor, or CEO who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and support in college communications and marketing. The award is presented annually in each of NCMPR's seven districts, and district recipients automatically qualify for consideration for the national award. NCMPR District 6 encompasses community colleges across Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah, Hawaii, and the U.S. territories of Guam and American Samoa. The award highlights leaders who understand the vital role that strategic communications, storytelling, and community engagement play in fulfilling the community college mission.

Dr. Suarez is now in the running for NCMPR's National Pacesetter of the Year Award, which will be announced in March.

"Our Marketing and Public Relations team understands the power of storytelling and the important role it plays in creating a sense of belonging," said Dr. Suarez. "By finding, uplifting, and sharing the stories of our students, they help others in our community see what is possible for themselves and believe, 'There is a place for me at Orange Coast College.'"

This year's NCMPR District 6 Conference was held in Scottsdale, Arizona, where President Suarez attended the Awards of the Excellence Luncheon and accepted the award. OCC Marketing and Public Relations Director Juan Gutierrez provided opening remarks before President Suarez took the stage.

"President Suarez knows how important it is for us to share OCC's story with our community," said Juan Gutierrez, Director of Marketing & Public Relations. "She trusts our team, encourages us to try new ideas, and recognizes the value of what we do. Her support makes a real difference, and this recognition is well deserved."

Dr. Suarez became the 11th president of OCC. Throughout her tenure, Dr. Suarez has consistently prioritized initiatives that amplify student voices, strengthen regional partnerships, and ensure equitable access to educational opportunities. Grounded in the core values of creativity, innovation, and a commitment to making students feel seen and valued, Dr. Suarez continues to champion the transformative power of education.

OCC Marketing & PR Department Wins 12 Regional NCMPR Awards

Orange Coast College's Marketing and Public Relations Department won 12 Medallion Awards at the National Council of Marketing and Public Relations District 6 annual conference and awards ceremony held on October 27 in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The Medallion Awards recognize outstanding communication achievement at community and technical colleges throughout the U.S. OCC is part of the NCMPR's District 6, which includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, and areas around Guam.



Coast received two gold, four silver, and six bronze awards for creative work produced during the 2025-2026 academic year. The College was recognized for excellence in writing, photography, graphic design, internal communications, social media, and video.

OCC won gold awards for a story in the 2025 OCC Foundation Annual Report titled, "Charting Her Course," and for a photo taken at an OCC Dance Department concert.

Additionally, OCC nabbed silver awards for the College's internal newsletter, "Coast to Coast," the 2025 OCC Magazine, the OCC aluminum water bottle and an OCTA flyer.

The College also took home six bronze awards for the 2026 Sailing and Seamanship Schedule, a Career Center postcard, the OCC Instagram account, OCC's Alumni Testimonials video series, an OCC Foundation print advertisement, and the projection wall displayed on Robert B. Moore Theatre.

"I'm incredibly proud of our marketing and public relations team for earning 12 Medallion Awards from NCMPR District 6," says OCC Marketing and Public Relations Director Juan Gutierrez. "These honors represent the creativity, collaboration, and heart that go into sharing the Orange Coast College story. Every campaign, photo, and publication reflect our commitment to celebrating our students, faculty, and community – and it's an amazing to see that work recognized."

Last Chance to View Two New Exhibitions at the Doyle Arts Pavilion



The Doyle Arts Pavilion unveiled two concurrent exhibitions, "Bad Marks" and "The Ballad of Discard and Decay: Stephanie Sherwood." Both exhibitions will be on display at The Doyle until Nov. 25. Admission is free for all exhibitions.

"Bad Marks" celebrates the expressive potential of the mark in all its forms. Bringing together artists working in drawing, printmaking, painting, and installation, the exhibition explores the line as gesture, record, accident, and intention. Scribbles, scratches, stains, cuts, erasures, and repetitions become evidence of thinking made visible. Embracing the awkward, unruly, and unexpected, Bad Marks argues that every mark has the potential to become language, create symbols, and document communities. The exhibition expands our understanding of mark-making, revealing its limitless possibilities as both technique and expression.

"The Ballad of Discard and Decay," a solo exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist Stephanie Sherwood, includes the artist's continued exploration of works using discarded materials. Since 2019, Sherwood's art practice has been shaped by her 'Confine In Situ' series of temporary installations created using discarded furniture found visibly to drivers, pedestrians and residents-alike across the city.

The exhibition features documentation of this project alongside site-specific works as well as paintings and sculptural works which continue to deteriorate and become visually fragile. These vulnerable materials reflect the vulnerability of the human body and experience and include the artist's signature varying still life of soft, fleshy materials spilling out of basket-like structures.

Learn more about the exhibitions at the Doyle Arts Pavilion website.

OCC Participating in Giving Tuesday this Holiday Season



The Orange Coast College Foundation is participating in this year's Giving Tuesday on December 1. This will mark the tenth year that the College participates in Giving Tuesday. Giving Tuesday is an international effort to inspire personal philanthropy and charitable giving during the holiday season.

OCC Theatre Dept. Stages 15th Anniversary Production of 'She Kills Monsters'

The Orange Coast College Theatre Department presented its production of "She Kills Monsters" at the Drama Lab Theatre this November. Marking its 15th anniversary since its debut, this faculty-directed mainstage production is a story about the worlds we build and the people we find there.

"'She Kills Monsters' comedically explores themes of youth, family, grief, and loss," says Director and OCC Theatre Arts Instructor Bethany Kraemer. "This production invites audiences to reconnect with the tradition of live theatre – bringing people together to collectively experience and overcome life's



challenges. Through humor, heart and imagination, we hope to foster community and meaningful reflection."

Written by Qui Nguyen, "She Kills Monsters" is a play set in the mid-1990s and follows Agnes Evans, an average woman mourning the tragic death of her teenage sister, Tilly. After discovering Tilly's custom Dungeons & Dragons notebook, Agnes enlists a local Dungeon Master to help her play through the campaign. Stepping into the fantasy realm of New Landia, Agnes begins to unlock the secret life, identity, and struggles her sister kept hidden.

The OCC production featured high-energy stage combat, live sword fights, battle axes, and stylized combat sequences against a gauntlet of monsters.

The creative team that brought this production to life included OCC students Sophie Flandrios (Stage Manager), Wren Hua (Dramaturge), and Aaron Wu (Lighting Designer). Additional contributors included Fight Choreographer Adi Fawk and Costume Designer Greer Gardner.

"This play truly has something for everyone, making it a great choice – especially if you haven't been to a theater production before," says Kraemer.