



Calendar

MAY 9-11

"Assassins," 7:30 p.m.,
Drama Lab Theatre

MAY 10

Beethoven and Mozart, 7:30 p.m.,
Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 13

**Town & Country - The Music of
Ives, Copland, and MacDowell,**
7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 14

Honors Night, 3-8 p.m.,
Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 16 & 17

"Assassins," 7:30 p.m.,
Drama Lab Theatre

MAY 18

"Assassins," 2:30 p.m.,
Drama Lab Theatre

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

MAY 19

**AANHPI Heritage Month
Celebration,** 11 a.m.-2 p.m.,
Main Quad

MAY 21

Spring Student Dance Showcase
7 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 23

OCC Commencement Ceremony,
5:30 p.m., Pacific Amphitheatre

MAY 24

An Evening Chat with Broadway,
7:30 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 23-25

One Act Play Festival, 7:30 p.m.,
Drama Lab Studio

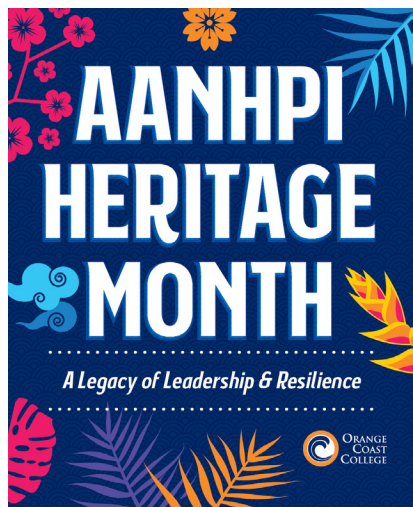
MAY 25

One Act Play Festival, 2:30 p.m.,
Drama Lab Studio

Spring 2025 Guitar Ensemble,
3 p.m., Robert B. Moore Theatre

MAY 27

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



OCC Celebrates Asian American, Native Hawaiian, & Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Orange Coast College will hold a series of planned events throughout May to celebrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month.

The events include a ukulele workshop, DIY graduation lei workshop, bánh mì cooking demonstration, and a lunch and learn session, among others. All activities and events will be organized by the AANHPI Student Achievement Program, and is open to all students.

The signature event will be AANHPI Heritage Month Celebration, which will take place on Monday, May 19, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Main Quad. The celebration will include music and dance performances, a resource fair, and light refreshments.

For a complete listing of AANHPI Heritage Month events, visit the AANHPI Student Achievement Program website.

OCC Speech, Debate, and Theater Team Takes Gold at 2025 National Championship

The Orange Coast College Speech, Debate, and Theater team won the coveted Gold Sweepstakes award at the 2025 Phi Rho Pi National Tournament in Norfolk, Virginia. Competing against over fifty schools for only two Gold Sweepstakes Awards, the OCC team

solidified its status among the very top of the nation.

A highlight of the tournament was the remarkable Interpreters Theater performance titled "Burn." Team members Lily Hall, Bailey Clements, and Grace Choo delivered an engaging 25-minute, highly choreographed performance addressing the alarming trend of attacks on public libraries and efforts to ban books. After a semifinal showdown with a team that had previously defeated them in the preliminaries, "Burn" made a comeback and defeated the number one seed in the finals, winning the favor of all three judges. This performance was part of a trio of shows presented by OCC, which also included "Bootstraps," highlighting our unhealthy relationship with work, and "Enemies of Mankind," focused on pirates. In addition to the team's success, several individual performances stood out, with three students finishing in the top-five overall speakers in the

nation of over 300 competitors. Campbell Gorlinski, in his third and final year competing for the team, secured a top five finish for the third consecutive year, a unique and rare accomplishment. He and his debate partner also claimed a gold medal, making Campbell the first debater to ever win three gold medals in a row.

Additionally, first-year competitor Lily Hall earned a spot in the top five overall, distinguishing herself as a renaissance competitor by medaling in three different speech categories: limited preparation (extemporaneous and impromptu), interpretation of literature (acting with advocacy), and platform speaking (written and memorized informative speech). She was one of only two competitors at the tournament to earn such a feat. "Doing all of that as a first-year competitor is something I've never seen in 15 years in forensics," said Director of Individual Events Sean Connor.



"These students committed themselves to a goal: engage in critical thought, speak truth to power, and be the best in the nation. I couldn't be prouder of their commitment to growing their voice" said Head Coach Shauhin Davari.

In total, the team brought home 31 medals including 15 golds, 3 silvers, and 13 bronzes. Eight OCC students returned with gold medals from their 10 days in Norfolk, VA. Only the top 10% are awarded a gold medal, the top 15% are awarded a silver medal, and the top 20% are awarded a bronze medal.

OCC Honors Coast Colleagues of the Year & Retirees

OCC's President's Office and the HR Professional Development Office honored employees and their exceptional service at the April Outstanding Coast Colleagues of the Year and Retiree Recognition Celebration. A cherished OCC tradition since 1990, this celebratory event is a testament to the outstanding work and exceptional contributions of OCC's dedicated classified professionals, faculty, and administrators.

This year, 10 Coast Colleague of the Year nominees were honored with the following three winners:

- Classified Professional - Roxann Griffin, Accounting Assistant Senior
- Full-time Faculty - Anna Hanlon, Public Health Instructor
- Part-time Faculty - Richard Rozak, Mathematics Instructor



Additionally, 24 Coast retirees with a collective of 537 years of service dedicated to the College were honored.

Orange Coast College Fashion Department Hosts RE/GENERATION: A Celebration of Art and Fashion



The Orange Coast College Fashion Department, in partnership with Salvation Army, hosted RE/GENERATION: A Celebration of Art and Fashion on April 23. RE/GENERATION spotlighted sustainable efforts both on campus and throughout the Orange County community, addressing the critical issue of end-of-life clothing. Attendees had the chance to view a showcase of student-designed, upcycled garments displayed in a museum setting. Scholarship winners were announced based

on creativity, sustainability, and the potential of their designs to reduce garment waste in the future.

In addition to the student showcase and Scholarship Award Ceremony, Salvation Army presented its "Rising Stars" award, three gift cards to high school students for their exceptional designs. The OCC Fashion program also introduced the "Green Guide," a resource created by sustainability students at OCC to promote eco-friendly practices on campus and beyond.

"Partnering with the Salvation Army allows us to demonstrate the intersection of art, fashion, and sustainability," says Michelle Craner, an OCC Fashion Department faculty member. "We are proud to showcase the innovative work of our students while addressing the urgent need for more sustainable practices in the fashion industry."

OCC's Sylvia Mendez Receives National 2025 Outstanding Alumni Award

Orange Coast College alumna Sylvia Mendez has been awarded the 2025 Outstanding Alumni Award from the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). This prestigious national award represents the highest recognition for community college alumni, and Mendez is one of only three people nationwide chosen to receive the honor this year.



"We celebrate Sylvia Mendez, a remarkable champion for civil rights and education, whose legacy continues to inspire us all," says OCC President Suarez. "Her unwavering commitment to justice and quality education embodies the values we hold dear at Orange Coast College."

Mendez was a key figure in the landmark *Mendez et al. v. Westminster* case, which challenged racial segregation in California schools and marked a significant milestone in the civil rights movement. Her incredible legacy continues to impact education, as her story is now included in California's public school curriculum through Assembly Bill 1805, ensuring that future generations learn about the ongoing fight for justice in their communities.

Today, Mendez continues to share her story and discuss civil rights. She continues the legacy left by her parents by fighting for quality education and encouraging students to stay in school. She retired as a nurse after working more than thirty years in the field.

Among her many accolades, Mendez received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, awarded by President Barack Obama in 2011. Last year, Mendez was inducted into both the Orange Coast College Alumni Hall of Fame and the Orange County Hall of Fame. Furthermore, OCC unveiled a plaque in her honor within the Consumer and Health Sciences Division, the very academic field where she began her journey.

Mendez earned an associate degree in nursing from Orange Coast College in 1964 and a bachelor of science degree in nursing from California State University, Los Angeles.

The Outstanding Alumni Awards, a tradition since 1982, honors individuals who attended community college and are making outstanding contributions in their chosen fields of endeavor at national or international levels. OCC President Suarez accepted the award on Sylvia's behalf at the AACC Annual Convention in Nashville on Wednesday, April 16.

OCC Marketing and Public Relations Earns Three National Awards

Orange Coast College's Marketing and Public Relations Department received three 2024 Paragon Awards from the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) at last month's national conference in New Orleans. The conference also concluded a year-long celebration of NCMPR's 50th anniversary, which was founded in 1974.



OCC took home the top prize for its Pirate Athletics video, which was entered in the "Video Shorts" category. The College also received two silver awards for its Coast skateboard and a social media post highlighting the student-built house.

The 2024 Paragon Awards drew 1,570 entries from 205 colleges across the country and were judged by 59 marketing and public relations professionals. OCC earned the highest number of Paragon Awards among California's community colleges.

"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.



The Orange Coast College campus community participated in Denim Day by wearing their jeans with a purpose on April 30. The Denim Day campaign hopes to bring awareness to victim blaming and destructive myths that surround rape and sexual violence.

OCC Celebrates Black Student Success Week

Orange Coast College participated in the State Chancellor's Office annual Black Student Success Week. This year's theme, "Lift Up, Level Up: The Rise of Black Serving Institutions," focused on innovative approaches to ensuring Black and African American students succeed in community college.

Black Student Success Week hosted daily #TheBlackHour webinars to share insights and approaches for improving student success among Black and African American students in community colleges. OCC's Black Student Union and Umoja Program hosted an event in recognition of Black Student Success Week. This event celebrated and uplifted Black student success by fostering a sense of community, providing valuable insights from accomplished professionals, and offering networking opportunities.



Memories in Motion: Commemorates 50 Years Since the Fall of Saigon

The Orange Coast College Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Team, in partnership with the Vietnamese American Arts & Letters Association, hosted Memories in Motion: A Vietnamese Refugee's Untold Story on April 28.

This event commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon through a special film screening of "Finding the Virgo," which follows Vietnamese boat refugee Lauren Vuong as she embarks on a decades long search for the heroic captain and crew of the United States cargo ship that rescued her at sea at 7 years old and saved her family and 57 other immigrants from certain death.

"Finding the Virgo" tells the powerful true story of the Vuong family's journey after the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam—from a father's



imprisonment to a daring escape and a daughter's decades-long search for the heroes who saved them. Set against the backdrop of the Vietnam War, the film speaks to timeless themes of survival, compassion, and the refugee experience. This screening honors the lives lost in pursuit of freedom and celebrates the resilience of the Vietnamese community.

The film screening was followed by remarks from Vuong, who also served as the film's producer. Vietnamese refugees Vuong, VAALA Executive Director Ysa Le, Trustee Nguyen and former Garden Grove City Councilmember Diedre Thu-Ha Nguyen shared their experiences in a Q&A panel discussion led by Dr. Alan Trinh.

Mozart's Requiem and Beethoven's Piano Concerto Take Center Stage at OCC

The OCC stage is set to host a magnificent celebration of classical music as two of history's greatest composers come to life in a remarkable concert on Saturday, May 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the Robert B. Moore Theatre. Audiences are invited to experience Mozart's timeless Requiem, performed by the OCC Chamber Singers and accompanied by a full orchestra, along with Beethoven's luscious Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, performed by OCC music instructor Teresa de Jong-Pombo.

The OCC Chamber Singers, known for their exceptional vocal artistry, will perform Mozart's Requiem – a masterpiece that has captivated audiences for centuries with its emotional depth and dramatic orchestration. This performance serves as a precursor to the group's upcoming appearance at Carnegie Hall, making this concert a unique opportunity for local audiences to witness their artistry before they take center stage in New York City.

Additionally, OCC's talented music instructor Teresa de Jong-Pombo will take the spotlight as she showcases her exceptional skills in Beethoven's celebrated Piano Concerto No. 4, a work renowned for its lyrical beauty and intricate piano passages.

"If you haven't experienced the arts at OCC, this is a great time to start," says OCC Chamber Singers conductor Eliza Rubenstein. "I predict our audience will be amazed by this concert, which showcases the exceptional talent we have in our program through two of the no-doubt-about-it greatest works of the Western classical tradition."



Tickets run \$10 for students and \$15 for the general public, making it the best bargain in town. Tickets can be purchased at OCC Tickets. Free parking will be available in Lot C. Don't miss your chance to enjoy an incredible evening of world-class performances right in your community!