



Annual State of the College

“Very Good to Great”

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Saddleback College first opened its doors to students on September 23, 1968, and a full year has passed since I began my tenure as president of Saddleback College. The college’s 40th anniversary and my first anniversary mark important milestones for Saddleback College and the South Orange County Community College District. The past 12 months have been extremely positive and my enthusiasm and excitement for the future of our college not only continues, but actually has increased. Last year when I accepted the chancellor’s offer to be the next president, I did so based on my preliminary research and knowledge about the college and district. I learned that Saddleback College was a very good community college. But more important, I recognized that the college had the potential to not just be very good, but be a great community college. Today I am very pleased to report that Saddleback College has more than just potential, the college is already on a path to greatness and soon will be one of the premier community colleges in the state and nation.

I make this claim based on my firsthand experiences over the past year. As a new president who came from the outside, I have had the unique opportunity to see Saddleback College for what we truly are—without any pretense based on past relationships or issues that could impair my ability to see what we look like to the community at large. What I found was that Saddleback College is doing remarkable things for our students, employees, and community.

The breadth and quality of our academic and career technical programs are stellar. Our focus on student success and providing excellent support services are impressive. We play a pivotal role in south Orange County and have forged important relationships with numerous community partners. Our campus environment fosters creativity, ingenuity, and problem solving in a collegial manner. The college and district are progressive and place a high value on continuous improvement. We owe all of this success to our outstanding faculty, staff, and management, as

well as to our supportive chancellor and board of trustees.

Also as a new president from the outside, I have been able to bring a different perspective to the college and present new ways to evaluate and formulate workable solutions to problems and enhance programs, policies, and procedures. One of the most impressive qualities of the college and district has been the overwhelming receptivity to change and new ideas. I am thankful to our faculty, staff, and management for their tremendous commitment to our students and dedicated efforts to improving the college.

This past year has been highly productive due to our participatory governance groups that worked long and hard. We owe a great deal of gratitude to our Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Associated Student Government, and management team (all represented on the Consultation Council). Leading the year's accomplishments was the reaffirmation of the college's accreditation in February. Next year we look forward to completing a successful Accreditation Self Study, a process which we have already begun with unprecedented levels of participation from students, faculty, staff, and management.

It was with great pleasure that I recently approved a revised strategic planning process that was developed over several months and recommended by our Consultation Council. This college-wide process will enable us to more effectively achieve our mission and move us toward our vision for the future. Strategic planning will be facilitated by our new director of planning, research, and grants culminating in a new three-year strategic plan that will provide clear directions for the college.

I. Academics

Saddleback College is an institute of higher education and we are judged by the quality of the instruction and training we offer to students. Our high quality academic programs including over 300 degrees and certificates are led by a

superb faculty. Recently we were honored to have mathematics professor Larry Perez named the Orange County Community College Professor of the Year. His award is indicative of the great success and high caliber of all of our faculty.

There have been many academic accomplishments over the past year, beginning with graduating almost 2,000 students and transferring as many to four-year colleges and universities. In our Advanced Technology and Applied Science Division, a new Sustainability Studies Occupational Skills Award was created. The automotive technology department received a \$50,000 donation from Tuttle Click Automotive Group to fund a new scholarship program and the fashion department began offering a new Basic Costume Construction and Sourcing Occupational Skills Award. Our Business Science and Economic Development Division established a new partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to work in the field of manufacturing technology which was another auspicious development for our Rapid Tech program. Rapid Tech has also begun forging a strategic partnership with our district's Advanced Technology Education Park (ATEP) in Tustin, a partnership that will provide greater opportunities for expanding our nationally recognized rapid prototyping technology program.

The college's Health Sciences and Human Services Division last year developed two new programs and one expanded certificate in hospital coding and billing, mental health worker, and medical laboratory technician. The college was recently awarded a \$1.5 million grant to construct a Medical Laboratory Technician program. This year both of the college's professors of the year as selected by students hail from our Division of Mathematics, Science, and Engineering—Professor Larry Perez, mathematics, and Adjunct Professor Tracy Magrann, human anatomy.

The college's Physical Education and Kinesiology Division continued another banner year for our athletic programs. The men's

basketball and women's tennis teams were champions of the Orange Empire Conference, which is often considered the most elite community college conference in the nation. The men's basketball team qualified for the Elite Eight state tournament for the sixth time in nine years, and placed second in the state, and the women's tennis team finished third in the state.

This fall, our Fine Arts Division will be launching a new Entertainment and Theatre Technology Certificate program and our Social and Behavioral Sciences Division will be launching a new online teaching certificate for the Foster Care Kinship program. The Social and Behavioral Sciences Division also oversaw the growth of our college-wide online education offerings by an impressive 22.8%.

Our Liberal Arts and Learning Resources Division launched a 24/7 online library reference service and began a program of online tutorials in the Learning Assistance Program. The Basic Skills Initiative program at the college has done a phenomenal task working with underprepared students. In addition to counseling students, the program has established a Freshman Academy that will follow a cohort of students through the first two years of college. In partnership with ATEP and Irvine Valley College, the inaugural Academic Foundation Summer Institute, which provides writing, reading, and math instruction to homeless and impoverished students, was just completed.

There were many achievements in our student support services divisions. A new Veterans Education and Transition Services (VETS) program was introduced to support returning veterans, active military, and their families as they transition to college life, including the launch of a new VETS Virtual One Stop website and preparations for a new VETS center that will open in the fall. Our Transfer Center has secured new partnerships with Arizona State University, Kaplan University, and Chapman University and is working with several additional four-year colleges and universities interested in providing incentives for our students to transfer

to their institutions to complete bachelor degrees.

Saddleback College's lifelong learning programs are well regarded throughout the community. Since 1976, our Emeritus Institute has offered classes geared for our older adult population located within their communities to accommodate their special needs. These students are highly valued and we are committed to continue meeting their needs while balancing the needs of our more traditional students seeking degrees, transfer, and workforce training. We also have an outstanding Community Education program that provides educational opportunities for all members of our community, such as for school-age kids in our College for Kids program, and hobbies and life skills for all people.

II. Financial Challenges

In discussing this past year and looking ahead, I would be remiss to not mention the financial challenges we face in the midst of our current state and national economic situation. I am proud to report that our college and district finances are relatively sound due to the responsible fiscal stewardship by our board of trustees, chancellor, and college administration. However, the state budget crisis is real and many of our programs and services have been significantly cut, cuts that will most likely increase next year and possibly thereafter. We are in the process of taking steps to respond to further budget reductions while doing all that we can do to minimize the impact to student programs and support services, and meet the growing construction and scheduled maintenance needs of the campus. Our college management team has been working for months to develop proposed operating efficiencies to enable the college to increase services while more efficiently utilizing our resources.

We are particularly concerned about the direct financial impacts to our students. The state raised fees from \$20 to \$26 per unit and reduced several categorical programs from 16% to 100%. Programs and services impacted include: career

technical, nursing, and economic development grants; disabled student programs and services; equal opportunity programs and services; basic skills; CalWorks; cooperative agency resource for education; credit and non-credit matriculation; scheduled maintenance; and instructional equipment. While these budgets have been reduced this year, it is hoped that anticipated federal stimulus funds are realized by the state and used to backfill some of these cuts.

While the state budget reductions are the deepest in the history of California's community colleges, there is no doubt that the number of students seeking to enroll at our college will increase substantially over the next few years. Serious budget reductions and large fee increases at the University of California and California State University systems coupled with higher unemployment and returning veterans have strained our college budget and will have a real impact on our ability to adequately deliver programs and services to all students. In addition, meeting the construction and scheduled maintenance needs of our aging campus is ongoing, with a maintenance backlog of over \$115 million and further reduced state funding.

III. Communication

Communication is critical to ensure transparency, keep the entire college informed about campus news, and promote a message to the south Orange County community that encourages prospective students and employers to consider Saddleback College as their first choice. Over the past year, we have made great strides to increase our internal and external communications efforts. Press releases that highlight campus news and events are emailed to the college, community, and media on a weekly basis. The President's Gaucho Gazette, a bi-monthly online newsletter, provides updates on campus news, events, and accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff, and management.

We have greatly expanded our use of communication technology. We have initiated an aggressive effort to expand our use of social networking media, including daily updates to our

students and community via Facebook and Twitter. Our purchase of Blackboard Connect will enable us to text, email, and telephone students and college personnel important messages within minutes. Most importantly, it will offer us the technical ability to immediately notify and direct students in the event of a campus emergency.

Our college website has been revamped to better focus on the needs of new and returning students. The new home page was launched in December 2008 and the feedback from our students and employees has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, the California Community College Public Relations Organization awarded our website second place at its annual state conference.

IV. College Advancement

College advancement characterizes our efforts to build awareness of our college programs and services to the community, cultivate and maintain relationships with key community partners, and raise external resources. Such efforts include fundraising, public relations, outreach, marketing, alumni, community partnerships, government relations, and other externally-focused activities that enhance our college mission and vision. Under the current and future state fiscal climate, now is the time for the college to place much more emphasis on expanding our college advancement efforts.

The Saddleback College Foundation is a non-profit auxiliary organization that supports our efforts in raising external resources for the college for such purposes as scholarships and construction projects. Last year, the foundation raised and awarded \$300,000 in student scholarships, including raising \$138,000 for the statewide Osher Endowment scholarship program that provides a 100% match, thus bringing our total balance for this endowment to \$276,000. We still have to raise another \$500,000 over the next two years to take advantage of the 100% match and finish with a \$1.3 million endowment that will provide \$1,000 annual scholarships to dozens of students in perpetuity.

V. Campus Culture

Saddleback College has a winning culture that celebrates our past accomplishments while recognizing that we can still do much more in the pursuit of greatness. A positive campus culture is vital because it helps to create a can-do environment of support, collegiality, and teamwork. Over the past year, we have worked hard to nurture a positive campus culture and celebrate our rich traditions and college pride.

September 23, 2008 marked the college's 40th anniversary and college-wide celebrations included a kick-off with local elected officials at our monthly board of trustees meeting that included an introduction of some faculty and employees from 1968, a 1960's era game show featuring college trivia, and a barbecue for all students, faculty, staff, management, and community guests.

To foster greater campus pride and enhance relations with our sister campus, the presidents of Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College established two new annual traditions: Presidents' Cup basketball challenge and employee softball game. Both events were a major success and we look forward to next year. Examples of other college community events held throughout the year include a women's conference, black history month, senior day, environmental awareness week, and homecoming.

VI. Campus Environment

Our students and employees need and deserve world-class facilities that provide a comfortable, sustainable, and state-of-the-art campus environment. As is expected, the college is showing its age after 40 years, but with careful planning, innovation, and sustainability practices, we can ensure success for another 40 years and more.

Over the past year, we have placed an emphasis on making our campus more welcoming and attractive through landscaping projects, new directional signage, campus light pole banners, dedicated student and employee parking lots, and

other campus improvements. We also completed major improvements to our fine arts complex, student services building, and administration and governance building while preparing for the major renovation of our library.

Our college community created a new quad design that is truly innovative and sustainable. The environmentally conscious design is inviting, providing plenty of seating and areas for instruction and campus events while encouraging students to spend more time on campus between and after classes, thereby helping them succeed with their studies.

Sustainability measures such as our recycling program, use of reclaimed water for irrigation, and installation of a 1.5 megawatt cogeneration plant and absorption chiller have resulted in enormous savings of energy, natural gas, and water consumption with an annual cost savings of over \$900,000. To create a more ecologically-conscious campus, we are looking to install an upgraded energy management system and new cool roof system for the student services building and conduct an evaluation of campus irrigation systems by the Moulton Niguel Water District. We are also exploring green technologies including alternate electrical generation through the use of solar photovoltaic, concentrated solar electric, wind turbines, and fuel cells.

The college's commitment to sustainability is also reflected in our academic program development. Our environmental studies department is working on adding a green technology certificate program to meet the demands for a green collar workforce that can respond to a variety of green technology needs, such as installing solar panels. Architecture Professor Blake Stephens just earned his certification to teach Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) concepts, a rating system for green building by the United States Green Building Council. These new developments enhance our existing environmental and ecological programs which will help our community's demand for green jobs training.

VII. Conclusion

Moving the college from very good to great requires a commitment from all of us to improve our college infrastructure and position us for maximum success. When we talk about infrastructure, we are referring to a more effective managerial and organizational structure; a participatory governance process fostering college-wide engagement; data-driven strategic planning integrated with budget and other resource allocation decisions; proper training and development of faculty, staff, and management; state-of-the-art technology, equipment, and facilities; stronger community partnerships; expanded alumni and foundation efforts; and a positive campus culture that encourages

innovation and collegiality. We must reinforce our commitment to student learning and success and together make Saddleback College a great institution—we owe this to our students, employees, and community.

As mentioned previously, I am very optimistic about the coming academic year and I look forward to again working with the entire college community. Thanks to all students, faculty, staff, and management for being so welcoming to me during my first year of service and for being so open to the fresh ideas a new president brings. Above all, I am thankful to our board of trustees and chancellor for the wonderful opportunity they have given me to serve as president of Saddleback College. Let's go Gauchos!

Our Mission

Saddleback College enriches its students and the south Orange County community by providing a comprehensive array of high-quality courses and programs that foster student learning and success in the attainment of academic degrees and career technical certificates, transfer to four-year institutions, improvement of basic skills, and lifelong learning.

Our Vision

Saddleback College will be the first choice of students who seek a dynamic, innovative, and student-centered postsecondary education.

Our Values

Saddleback College embraces:

Commitment. We commit to fulfilling our mission to serve the south Orange County community.

Excellence. We dedicate ourselves to excellence in academics, student support, and community service.

Collegiality. We foster a climate of integrity, honesty, and respect.

Success. We place our highest priority on student learning and delivering comprehensive support for student success.

Partnership. We strive to develop strong and lasting partnerships among students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Innovation. We anticipate and welcome change by encouraging innovation and creativity.

Academic Freedom. We endorse academic freedom and the open exchange of ideas.

Sustainability. We promote environmental sustainability and use our resources responsibly to reduce our ecological impact.

Inclusiveness. We cultivate equity and diversity by embracing all cultures, ideas, and perspectives.

Global Awareness. We recognize the importance of global awareness and prepare our students to live and work in an increasingly interconnected world.



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