For Immediate Release
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Saddleback College Statement Regarding Fire in Business and General Studies Building

Saddleback College is deeply saddened to confirm the tragic death of a Saddleback College student who passed away after being treated for severe burn injuries sustained in a fire that occurred in the college’s Business and General Studies (BGS) Building. We send our thoughts and prayers to the student’s family.

At 6:39 a.m. on Monday, July 8th, Saddleback College Police responded to a notification by the college fire alarm system that a fire had started in the BGS Building. A college employee simultaneously called 911 to report the fire. When campus police arrived at the scene, the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) had already arrived and were attending to the victim and containing the fire.

The building was closed throughout the day while OCFA investigated the cause of the fire, which was determined to be arson. The investigation is ongoing.

Saddleback College Police are working in conjunction with OCFA and the Orange County Sheriff in the continuing investigation of this isolated incident. Saddleback College’s first concern is the safety of our students. College Police and administrators will study OCFA’s report when it is available and make recommendations to minimize the risk of a similar incident in the future.

The clean-up of the areas affected by smoke is underway and planning has started for the renovation of the area damaged by fire. Because the fire was contained in BGS 356, a large lecture classroom located at the corner of the third floor, damage to the building was minimal.

The first floor of BGS was deemed safe after a thorough inspection by a restoration and reconstruction company hired by the college’s insurers, and classrooms on that floor only were reopened for business on Tuesday, July 9th. The second and third floors of the building remain closed and are being thoroughly cleaned by maintenance crews. Classes held on these floors have been relocated to other classrooms on campus. The classrooms and office spaces on the second and third floors that did not suffer fire damage are expected to reopen next week.

The college’s Crisis Intervention Team is available to assist students and employees who may
need grief counseling. Counseling is available in both the Student Health Center and Counseling Services:

Student Health Center  
SSC 177  
(949) 582-4606

Counseling Services  
SSC 167  
(949) 582-4572

Updates will be provided at www.saddleback.edu when additional information is available.

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