Saddleback College Honors Dorothy Marie Lowry for $2.2 Million Gift

Mission Viejo, CA – To celebrate the single largest gift ever made to the Saddleback College Foundation, the Saddleback College Emeritus Institute hosted an afternoon tea with a sell-out crowd to celebrate Dorothy Marie Lowry for her $2.2 million endowed contribution to support the college’s older adult education programs. Lowry was a loyal Saddleback student for more than 10 years, having never missed a semester since her first class in 1999 until she passed away in 2011. She took many emeritus classes in physical fitness, film, literature, and art. Lowry was an educator herself, having taught elementary school for many years, and a strong proponent of lifelong learning.

A highlight of the celebration was when the niece of Dorothy Marie Lowry, Barbara Bauer, shared the wonderful news that her aunt donated an additional $800,000 to the foundation, bringing the total of her donation to a very generous $2.2 million. Ms. Bauer said, “My aunt moved to Casta del Sol in Mission Viejo without knowing a single person, and the Saddleback College Emeritus Institute allowed her to meet great friends and to explore new interests. She loved the classes, teachers, and the idea of lifelong learning.”

Dr. Tod A. Burnett, President of Saddleback College, stated, “Our Emeritus Institute is cherished by our college, district, and community alike. Due to the very generous gift from the Dorothy Marie Lowry Trust and with future gifts made to our foundation from the community, we will be better able to continue to offer classes for our older adult population with minimal fees and provide scholarships to students who are unable to afford the costs.”

Sandra Marzilli, Director of the Saddleback College Emeritus Institute, said, “Wow! I am blown away by Dorothy Marie Lowry’s generosity. There are more than 300 emeritus students in attendance today, but I know that another 10,000 of our students would want to personally thank the family for this gift.”

The tea, held at the Norman P. Murray Center in Mission Viejo, also celebrated the 36th anniversary of the Saddleback College Emeritus Institute and was attended by more than 400 students, faculty, staff, and community leaders including Bob Ring, Mayor Pro Tem of Laguna Woods, Joe Brown, Mayor Pro Tem of Laguna Niguel, Nancy Padberg, President of the South
Orange County Community College District Board of Trustees, and Gary Poertner, Chancellor of the South Orange County Community College District. Also in attendance were Bauer’s daughter, Annemarie Alley, and her mother, Norma Carlsen, and Carolyn Franzie who was a lifelong friend of Lowry.

The Saddleback College Emeritus Institute was established as a unique educational opportunity for the pursuit and enhancement of lifelong learning for the older adult population. The college offers more than 150 emeritus courses held at more than 25 convenient locations throughout South Orange County and successfully serves over 10,000 students annually.

Located in Mission Viejo, Saddleback College provides quality higher education and training to the greater south Orange County community. Having served more than 500,000 students since 1968, Saddleback College offers more than 300 degree and certificate programs to help students reach their personal, career, and educational goals. For more information, please visit www.saddleback.edu.

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