Saddleback College Professor Larry Perez Recognized as Orange County’s Community College Professor of the Year

Anaheim, CA – At the Orange County Teachers of the Year Gala held Friday evening at the Disneyland Hotel, Saddleback College Mathematics Professor Larry Perez was recognized as Orange County’s Community College Professor of the Year, a title bestowed to him by the Orange County Department of Education in May 2009. Accompanying Professor Perez at the gala were Saddleback College President Tod A. Burnett, Ed.D.; South Orange County Board of Trustees President Donald P. Wagner; Trustee Nancy Padberg; Chancellor Raghu P. Mathur, Ed.D.; Saddleback College Dean of Mathematics, Science, and Engineering James Wright, Ph.D; and Algebra2Go Team Members Patrick Quigley, an associate professor of mathematics at Saddleback College, and Candice Harrington, a math instructor at Capistrano Valley High School and a former student of Professor Perez.

Professor Perez was one of five educators and the only community college professor to be named Teacher of the Year among 60 finalists nominated by school districts, community colleges, and private schools in Orange County. The five Teachers of the Year were each awarded $15,000 by Bill and Sue Gross through the Dr. James Hines Foundation. With his prize money Professor Perez donated $10,000 to the Saddleback College Foundation for the Bernard Osher Endowment, which helps financially strained students pay for their college educations. With a promised match from the endowment a $20,000 scholarship fund will be established for developmental mathematics students. Saddleback College is challenged to raise $671,000, and with the Osher matching funds our total endowment could be as much as $1,342,000.

Professor Perez stated, “I am humbled by this honor and thank my colleagues and students who deserve all the credit for my success. Teaching is a true love of mine and I am lucky to work with such an extraordinary group of people who value an environment that places the success of our students first.”

Dr. Burnett stated, “Congratulations to Professor Perez, who inspires us each day with his tremendous teaching skills and innovative online tools to help students succeed at math. Larry is another example of our outstanding Saddleback College faculty who are
dedicated to helping our students learn and grow. I also extend my sincere thanks to Professor Perez who has generously donated $10,000 of his winnings to the Saddleback College Foundation to establish a scholarship fund for developmental mathematics students.”

Board President Donald P. Wagner stated, “I am thrilled for Professor Perez, an outstanding instructor who truly deserves this honor. Through Algebra2Go and other resources he has created, Professor Perez helps students realize their potential in what is often their most frustrating subject. Professor Perez is an inspiration to his students and colleagues and we are lucky to have him at Saddleback College.”

Dr. Wright stated, “I have known Larry since I was on his hiring committee in 1999 and it has been a pleasure to work with him. He is a wonderful professor and his students consistently rave about his warmth and willingness to help them completely understand his subject. It is no surprise that he has been named Orange County’s Community College Professor of the Year.”

The Orange County Teacher of the Year award is sponsored by the Disneyland Resort, the Orange County Register, and the Schools First Credit Union. To read about Professor Perez and his fellow Teacher of the Year finalists in the Orange County Register, click here.

For more information on the Bernard Osher Endowment or to make a donation please visit the Saddleback College Foundation at www.saddleback.edu/foundation.

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 over 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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