$270,000 in Scholarships Awarded at Saddleback College Ceremony

Mission Viejo, CA – A record-breaking $270,000 in scholarships was awarded to 145 students at Saddleback College’s 35th annual Scholarship Ceremony on Thursday, May 12th. More than 138 individual scholarships were donated by businesses, organizations, community members, and the Saddleback College Associated Student Government, which donated more than $82,000 in scholarships and underwrote the expenses for the ceremony. Forty-nine scholarships worth more than $43,000 were funded by the Bernard Osher Scholarship Fund.

Dr. Tod A. Burnett, President of Saddleback College, stated, “Congratulations to our outstanding students who received scholarships and were recognized for their academic achievement, service to the community, leadership, and talent. The generosity of our donors made the entire event possible and I thank them for their support of Saddleback College and our students, who benefit greatly from the kindness of those who give so much to our college.”

Saddleback College Foundation Board of Governors President Donna Varner served as the event’s Master of Ceremonies, with Dr. Burnett and Dr. Mike Foudy, a member of the Saddleback College Foundation Board of Governors and Chair of the Scholarship Committee, joining Ms. Varner to present the scholarship awards. South Orange County Community College District Board of Trustees President Nancy Padberg provided the welcome address and Trustees Marcia Milchiker and Frank Meldau also attended the event.

The evening began with the presentation of the ASG President’s Award, which is bestowed to a student who has demonstrated excellent leadership at Saddleback College, and the Outstanding Student Award, which is presented to a student that has shown exemplary leadership, community involvement, and academic achievement. Cassandra Ong, who aspires to be an accountant, was presented the President’s Award by Dr. Burnett. Ms. Ong’s academic goal is to major in accounting in either the University of California or California State University to pursue an accounting degree and currently holds a 4.0 GPA. The Outstanding Student of the Year Award went to Tcharles Fagundes, who received his Associate of Arts degree in Business Administration at Saddleback College in 2009. Since graduating, Mr. Fagundes discovered a desire to help less fortunate people as a physician and changed his academic major to health care.

Ms. Varner presented the Donor of the Year Award to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Mission Viejo-Saddleback Valley. AAUW has contributed to the scholarship program for 10 years, exceeding $30,000 in donations. For the past three years, the group has also contributed to the Osher Endowment.
The Bernard Osher scholarship awards are the result of an initial $25 million gift from the Osher Foundation to the Foundation for California Community Colleges to establish an endowment to provide permanent scholarship support to community college students throughout the state. Over the next few years, this endowment will grow to $100 million through a system-wide campaign to raise $50 million by California Community Colleges and an additional $25 million from the Osher Foundation. Saddleback College recently met their fundraising goal of $671,000 and is continuing to raise matched funds through May 31st. With the Osher matching funds, the total endowment could be as much as $1,342,000.

The Saddleback College Scholarship Ceremony is an annual event that started in 1976, when 45 donors contributed just over $12,000 to some 60 students. Thirty-five years later, more than $4 million in scholarships have been awarded to deserving Saddleback College students.

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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