Over $265,000 in Scholarships Awarded at Saddleback College Ceremony

Mission Viejo, CA – More than 160 students received over $265,000 in scholarships at Saddleback College’s 33rd Annual Scholarship Ceremony on the evening of Thursday, May 14th. For the first time, this year the total award amount included sixteen $1,000 scholarships from the Bernard Osher Foundation to help financially strained students pay for their college educations. The 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 is challenged to raise $671,000, and with the Osher matching funds, our total endowment could be as much as $1,342,000.

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 evening 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.”

Scholarships were provided by 233 generous donors from businesses, organizations, and community members, as well as the Saddleback College Associated Student Government, which donated more than $64,000 in scholarships and underwrote the expenses for the ceremony.

Dr. Burnett and Foundation Board of Governors President-Elect Gary Capata served as Masters of Ceremonies. South Orange County Community College Board of Trustees Vice President John S. Williams, Trustees David B. Lang, Nancy Padberg, and Marcia Milchiker, Chancellor Raghu P. Mathur, and members of the Saddleback College Foundation Board of Governors presented scholarships to students.
Greg Powers, President of the Saddleback College Foundation Board of Governors, presented the Donor of the Year Award to Dr. Mike Valentine, a member of the Foundation Board of Governors and the Angels for the Arts, an auxiliary organization that supports fine arts at Saddleback College. Dr. Valentine established an Osher endowment that will be awarded in perpetuity each year in the amount of $1,000 to a Saddleback College music student. As the former scholarship chairman for the foundation, Dr. Valentine initiated concerts and programs in the fine arts department to raise funds for what he named “students helping students scholarships.” An instructor of Flamenco guitar through Saddleback College’s Community Education Department, Dr. Valentine has a love for music and can be found taking fine arts classes at the college. Dr. Valentine earned his doctorate in education at the University of California, Los Angeles, and lives in Coto de Caza with his wife, Gail.

The evening concluded with the presentation of the President’s Award, which is bestowed to a student who has demonstrated excellent leadership at Saddleback College, and the Outstanding Student of the Year Award, which is presented to a student that has shown exemplary leadership, community involvement, and academic achievement.

Anoushah Rasta, a journalism major who aspires to be an international news correspondent, was given the President’s Award by Dr. Burnett. Ms. Rasta served on Associated Student Government as a senator of the Division of Fine Arts and will be transferring this fall to the University of Southern California. The Outstanding Student of the Year Award went to Travis Fuller, treasurer of Associated Student Government who plans to pursue a career in higher education. Mr. Fuller will be transferring this fall to the University of California, Los Angeles, where he will continue his studies as a double major in history and English. The Outstanding Student of the Year Award was presented by Dr. Robert Cosgrove, President of the Academic Senate.

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-three 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 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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