



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Santa Ana College Inducts Distinguished Alumni Into Its 2010 Hall of Fame

(Santa Ana)—Four alumni from Santa Ana College will be inducted into the Alumni Achievement Hall of Fame at a ceremony scheduled for Thursday, June 3, in Santa Ana College’s Phillips Hall at 3:30 p.m. The celebration will be followed by a reception in the adjacent patio area.

The 2010 inductees are Ruben Barron, Ed.D. (Class of 1971); Mark A. Lowry (Class of 1977); Joel Ohlgren, J.D. (Class of 1963); and Karen Gardner Richards (Class of 1967).

Ruben Barron, Ed.D., is retired after a 30-year career as an educator. He grew up in a migrant family that had moved to the United States in 1955. His childhood was spent living in makeshift wooden shanties as his family picked crops in the San Joaquin Valley. He came to Santa Ana College (SAC) in 1968 after completing a tour of duty in the U.S. Army that took him to Vietnam during the Tet Offensive.

Barron graduated with honors from SAC in 1971 and earned a B.A. from Cal State Fullerton along with a teaching credential. He began his teaching career in the La Habra City School system. A master’s degree from Cal State Fullerton followed, and later his Ed.D. from Arizona State University in 1993.

After serving as a classroom teacher for seven years, he became director of bilingual programs for the La Habra City School District. He went on to be a principal in the McFarland Unified School District in Kern County, CA. His career path led him to administrative positions in which he could provide influential leadership on a range of educational issues, including chairing a number of accreditation teams. In retirement, he continues to serve on a variety of accreditation teams, continues to be active in his church and community, and is a candidate for the North Orange County Community College District Board.

In 1970, when he met SAC President John E. Johnson, the college president “convinced me that I had a chance to do something with my life. The fact that he took so much time just to talk with me, to encourage me, made a huge impression.”

Mark A. Lowry, a believer in community service and addressing social issues, serves as the director of the Orange County Food Bank.

While at SAC, Introduction to Philosophy was a pivotal course in his journey toward a career dedicated to social justice. “Professor Vasquez’ class was very provocative and stimulating. It was also one of the core courses that helped create a solid foundation for me to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in social ecology.”

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After receiving an associate degree in administration of justice from SAC in 1977, he went on to the University of California, Irvine, where he earned a B.A. in social ecology. From there, he joined Lutheran Social Services as marketing director for Censorview. Later, he served as an occupancy specialist for the Orange County Housing Authority. He found his niche with the Community Action Partnership of Orange County, first as a research analyst, then as manager of a homeless program. In 1989, he became manager of the Orange County Food Bank, and later its director as the program grew.

His relationship with SAC has continued after graduation. The food bank has benefitted from college students volunteering there. For example, three students in a SAC math class did price surveys based on six distinct menus at three different types of retail outlets allowing the food bank to quantify the food bank's financial impact on seniors. Because of his belief in the college, Lowry personally staffs volunteer recruitment tables at the college whenever he can.

He is a frequent media spokesperson on issues such as hunger, the economy, food, and nutrition. "Hunger in a community like ours is simply a symptom of deeper underlying issues," he said, "Classes I took at SAC and at UCI gave me the foundation to understand the complexities of [such] issues."

Joel Ohlgren, J.D., is now retired from his legal career with Sheppard, Mullin, Richter and Hampton in Santa Barbara where he is still considered "Of Counsel." His areas of practice are bankruptcy, creditors' rights, international insolvency, and commercial law.

In 1962, Ohlgren was on the Dons football team that won its second consecutive Easter Conference championship. Coach Homer Beatty led the team to a perfect 10-0 record a 20-0 win in the Junior Rose Bowl. "From Coach Beatty, I learned that there is no limit to what one may accomplish if one does not care who takes the credit."

He graduated with an associate degree in economics in June 1963 and transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) where he earned a B.A. in economics. He received a J.D. from the UCLA School of Law in 1968, where he was senior editor of the *Law Review*. From 1968 to 1970, he taught law at the University of Malawi in Central Africa. From there, he joined Sheppard, Mullin, Richter and Hampton.

He served as a member of the International Insolvency Institute delegation the United Nations Commission on International Trade in 2006 and 2007. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the International Insolvency Institute; has been a chair of the American College of Bankruptcy Foundation since 2008; and is a Fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy.

"Insolvency comes down to fundamentals, many of which I learned in my accounting class at Santa Ana College," he said. "Where is the money? How much is coming in? How much is going out?"

His community involvement has included serving as an assistant volunteer coach for the Brentwood Eagles Varsity Football Team and as a member of Men Against Domestic Violence and the Santa Barbara Athletic Round Table, a group that provides financial support for athletic programs in Santa Barbara.

Karen Gardner Richards, an educator in the Tustin Unified School District for 37 years, was named Teacher of the Year for 2002-2003 at W.R. Nelson School. In supporting her nomination, alumnus

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Doug Davert (Class of 1985) recalled, “Karen Richards was my third grade teacher. I largely credit [her] with fostering my love for learning and giving me much of the foundation that has led to my successes as an adult.”

As a member of the Tustin City Council, Davert has had the opportunity to observe Richards in action in the classroom in recent years. “Most striking to me as a 40-something adult was seeing the same caring, professional, and enthusiastic teacher who made third grade such a positive experience for me more than three decades earlier,” he said.

Richards entered SAC after graduating from Santa Ana Valley High School in 1965. At SAC, she felt nurtured and supported by her instructors, especially science teacher and Coach Dick Gorrie. “I remember feeling that I really mattered to them, that they really knew who I was, and that if I showed up and really put in the effort, they would do everything to help me succeed.”

After graduating from SAC, Richards went on to earn her teaching credential and a B.A. from California State University, Long Beach. In 2003, she earned her M.A. in teaching from Grand Canyon University.

In 1992, she received the “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers” award. In addition to her many achievements as a teacher, Richards has been honored for improving instruction, safety, and the school environment.

The Alumni Achievement Hall of Fame is an extension of the college’s long-standing Alumni Achievement Awards program that started in 1955. For the past 50 years, the awards program has honored over 150 outstanding alumni.

Annual nominations for the Hall of Fame are solicited in the month of February with a selection process occurring in March. The selection committee is composed of a cross segment of college faculty, staff, , foundation board members and distinguished alumni inductees from the Santa Ana College Alumni Hall of Fame. The winners are officially presented and formally inducted at the college’s annual commencement ceremony.

The Santa Ana College Foundation fosters support for the college, its students and faculty. It is a non-profit corporation with a volunteer board of directors. Their commitment is to generate the resources needed to expand programs, improve facilities, and support students. For more information, contact Director of College Advancement Christina Romero at the Foundation Office, (714) 564-6091.

About the Rancho Santiago Community College District

The mission of the Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) is to respond to the educational needs of an ever-changing community and to provide programs and services that reflect academic excellence. Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College are public community colleges of RSCCD, which serve the residents of Anaheim Hills, East Garden Grove, Irvine, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin and Villa Park. Both colleges provide education for academic transfer and careers, courses for personal and professional development, customized training for business and industry, and programs to train nurses, firefighters and law enforcement personnel.

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