



RANCHO SANTIAGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Judy Iannaccone
Director, Communications
Phone: (714) 480-7503
e-mail: iannaccone_judy@rsccd.edu

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rancho Santiago Community College District Awarded \$800,000 for GEAR UP Program at Santa Ana College *Students Celebrate National GEAR UP Day in Santa Ana on September 18*

(Santa Ana)—On September 18, National GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program) Day, students in Santa Ana schools have reason to celebrate.

Not only has the GEAR UP Program reached the 10-year milestone nationwide, but Rancho Santiago Community College District has also been awarded \$800,000 annually in a competitive six-year matching grant program to help fund the Santa Ana GEAR UP Program. This grant, totaling \$4.8 million over six years is being matched dollar-for-dollar by our local community. The program is a collaboration of Santa Ana College, Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD); the University of California, Irvine (UCI); Latino Health Access; and the Delhi Community Center.

Since its inception in 1999, GEAR UP has improved educational outcomes for millions of low-income students across the United States. To date, the Santa Ana College GEAR UP Program has worked with six middle schools and four high schools in the SAUSD to serve over 13,000 students in preparation to enter and succeed in college.

The Santa Ana GEAR UP Partnership focuses on students' math and English language arts achievement, college awareness and preparation, and parents' college awareness. The program begins its intensive work in the seventh grade at Carr and McFadden intermediate schools—both with a combined seventh grade population of 1,000—and will add a second sixth grade cohort of 1,000 in the second year. GEAR UP Santa Ana will continue to serve these 2,000 students as they move into Saddleback and Valley High Schools and begin college.

“At Carr Intermediate School we initiated ‘College Wednesdays’ when students and staff wear shirts from their favorite colleges and universities to increase college awareness on campus. All of our students will receive instruction on goal setting, college preparedness, and career exploration,” said Principal Patrick Yrarrázaval-Correa. “The most important thrust of our efforts

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District Office
2323 North Broadway
Santa Ana, CA 92706 - 1640
(714) 480-7500 Tel (714) 796-3900 Fax

is the underlying belief that our students *can* learn, that they *can* achieve, that they *can* graduate from high school, and they *can* pursue post-secondary training and education.”

The GEAR UP Santa Ana 2009 includes the following tactics:

- *English Language Arts*: English Language Academy for English learners; technology-based reading development programs; literacy across the curriculum; language arts specialist to lead professional development, peer coaching
- *Math*: Transitional algebra (8th grade) and summer algebra bridge course, MESA (Math, Engineering, Science Achievement) tutors; in-class tutors; math specialist to lead professional development, peer coaching
- *College Awareness*: Homeroom for College presentations in seventh and eighth grades making college seem attainable, UCI Summer Residential Program, Youth Expo, college information and awareness events
- *Parent College Awareness and Engagement in Student Learning*: Padres Promotores (parent advocates), UCI Parent Residential Experience Program

“Our goal is to increase the number of students who go on to college,” said Lilia Tanakeyowma, Ed.D., Santa Ana College dean of student affairs. “Through the program’s direct intervention with students and professional development activities with teachers, the statistics prove that we are having an impact. Last year, 75 percent of graduating seniors in SAUSD went on to college.”

In recognition of the national observation this Friday, September 18, each GEAR UP school—Carr and McFadden intermediates and Century and Valley high schools—will post a large banner with the phrase, “We’re GEARing UP for college!” in a visible location. The GEAR UP staff will invite students to sign pledge cards stating their future plans and intention to attend college. These visible signs of intention will be pasted to the banner and photos including the principal and students will be taken to commemorate the day. (Please note that due to a scheduling conflict, Carr is holding their observation on September 17.)

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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