



**Santa Ana College**

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**Contact:** Nikita C. Flynn- Public Information Officer  
Santa Ana College  
**Ph:** 714-564-6475  
**e-mail:** flynn\_nikita@sac.edu

## **Distinguished Alumni to be inducted into the Santa Ana College Foundation Hall of Fame**

**SANTA ANA, CA** – Four alumni of Santa Ana College who have distinguished themselves in their professions and their communities will be inducted into the Santa Ana College Foundation Alumni Hall of Fame in a ceremony being held on campus in the Phillips Hall Theatre on Friday, June 5, at 3:30 p.m.

They are **Robert David Hall**, Los Angeles; **A. Daniel Hohneker**, Santa Ana; **Craig A. Hunter**, Anaheim, and **Thanh Minh Nguyen**, Jacksonville, Fla.

**Hall**, a character actor who plays the role of the coroner Dr. Albert Robins on the CBS primetime show, “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation,” lost both his legs following an automobile accident in 1978. He is a passionate advocate for disabled persons in the professions and serves on numerous boards and committees, as well as a public speaker when his professional schedule allows.

In addition to teaching economics for 32 years at Santa Ana College, and serving as chair of the combined Departments of Economics/Geography for 23 years, **Hohneker** began serving on the Board of OCTFCU/SchoolsFirst Credit Union in 1964 and chaired the Board for five terms.

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After retiring in 1997, he continued to work with students in the Tutoring Center and to support the Kiwanis Club of Santa Ana.

**Hunter**, who is Deputy Chief of Police for the City of Anaheim, oversees all daily operations for the department of nearly 800 full-time and volunteer members and a budget of \$120 million dollars and has pioneered a number of innovative programs designed to improve the safety of tourists and residents in California's tenth largest city. He entered law enforcement as a Campus Police Safety Officer at Santa Ana College, where he was pursuing an AA degree in Criminal Justice. Upon graduation from the rigorous six-month training in the Riverside County Sheriff's Academy, he was elected president of his graduating class, #175.

**Nguyen** is a pediatric endocrinologist whose career in science and medicine started when he enrolled in a pre-calculus class in what was then Rancho Santiago College at the age of 16, with no high school diploma or G.E.D., and very limited mastery of colloquial English. He graduated with highest honors, transferred to UCLA, then Ohio State University College of Medicine. After completing residency in the Dept. of Pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine and the Fellowship Program in Baylor's Dept. of Pediatrics Endocrinology and Metabolism Fellowship Program he joined the Nemours Children's Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla., where he is a pediatric endocrinologist and on staff at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

"I got my first taste of theater while watching rehearsals for school productions in the room across the hall from the newsroom of el Don, the school newspaper, where I was on staff," Hall says. He also was supporting himself, including earning money for tuition, by working at Disneyland as a captain on the jungle ride. When he transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles, he pursued a major in English Literature and a Minor in Theater Arts.

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Hohneker was just out of the Navy when he moved to Santa Ana with his wife, who was pregnant with their first child. His bond with the college was so strong that he chose to invest the rest of his life helping students access the education and opportunities that served him so well.

In order to serve as a Campus Police Safety Officer, Hunter, who had been a Police Explorer in the Santa Ana Police Dept., was required to attend the Orange County Sheriff's Reserve Officer's Academy. This training also qualified him to be a Garden Grove Police Reserve Officer. These early experiences gave him the solid real-world experience that helped him succeed first at the Academy and then throughout his 30-year career in law enforcement.

After surviving a treacherous boat crossing from Vietnam to Thailand, Nguyen diligently learned English taught by missionaries in the refugee camp where he, his four siblings, and his parents stayed for two years before emigrating to the United States. Understanding and speaking the language in class, however, initially posed serious obstacles to his academic success. By pre-reading the chapters in his pre-calculus class and studying a dictionary to improve his English vocabulary on the bus ride between his home in Santa Ana and campus, then working with his professor, Nguyen aced his first class, setting him up to graduate with highest honors and transfer to "a school I knew about only because my professor gave me the information and encouraged my family and me to explore the possibilities of pursuing a bachelor's degree," he says.

Santa Ana College has honored outstanding alumni since 1955, when the first three award recipients were honored. Since then, more than 150 exceptional alumni representing all walks of life have received the Alumni Achievement Award. In 1991, a formal Alumni Hall of Fame was developed with an annual ceremony to honor the inductees.

According to Foundation Executive Director Christina Romero, "The selection process is rigorous, and nominations must be supported by detailed attachments that describe the candidate's professional and/or personal accomplishments that qualify him/her for this honor; personal

anecdotes to help illustrate the candidate's service and commitment; honors the candidate may have received since attending Santa Ana College, and past and present involvement with organizations, clubs and/or nonprofit groups.”

For more information about the Alumni Achievement Awards and this year's recipients, please contact Christina Romero, 714.564.6091.

*About Santa Ana College*

*Part of Rancho Santiago Community College District, Santa Ana College serves nearly 40,000 credit and non-credit students each semester and offers 136 certificate and associate degree programs. This 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 serves 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.*