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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Rancho Santiago Community College District Applauds Governor Schwarzenegger and Legislature**  
***State budget sustains access to community colleges***

(Santa Ana)— Thursday morning, the State Legislature approved an 18-month budget plan allowing community college leaders to once again focus their attention on providing quality education and job training for Californians.

“Governor Schwarzenegger and our legislative leaders should be thanked for preserving funding for California’s community colleges and for sustaining access for students statewide,” said Edward Hernandez, Jr., Ed.D., chancellor of Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD). “We applaud their efforts to sustain funding for career technical education, which will help drive the economic recovery of our state.”

As the fourth largest community college district in the state, RSCCD operates first-responder training programs, including nursing, law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical technician. The college district also runs the state’s largest construction apprenticeship program that trains carpenters, electricians, maintenance mechanics, operating engineers, power linemen, and surveyors. Additional district workforce development programs provide training in project management, water utility science, public works, and manufacturing technology.

Because of the economic downturn and 12,300 fewer slots at the University of California and California State University systems, enrollment is soaring at California’s community colleges. Last fall, Santa Ana College saw a 16 percent increase in students enrolling full-time and Santiago Canyon College welcomed 9.04 percent more full-time students.

“We value the Governor’s recognition of the need to fund anticipated system-wide growth,” said Hernandez. “And, we are grateful for his special advocacy for students who depend on competitive CalGrants, as those funds are critical for more than 200 of our economically disadvantaged students. By sustaining enrollment fees at \$20 per unit, more local residents will access our colleges to seek job training and coursework to become gainfully employed, advance on the job, and transfer to four-year universities.”

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**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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