



**Contact:** Judy Iannaccone  
Director, Communications  
**Phone:** (714) 480-7503  
**E-mail:** iannaccone\_judy@rscsd.edu

September 20, 2010  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **State Budget Cuts Drive Enrollment Decline at Rancho Santiago Community College District's Colleges**

(Santa Ana)—Historically when unemployment increases so does the enrollment at community colleges. 2010 is proving to be an exception to that rule at Santa Ana and Santiago Canyon colleges in Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) in central Orange County, California.

This fall, enrollment at Santa Ana College (SAC) has decreased three percent, or about 577 students. “The reduced number of students can be attributed to the state budget cuts to the community college system,” said Erlinda J. Martinez, Ed.D., Santa Ana College president.

SAC was forced to reduce the number of credit class sections eight percent over last fall, in response to those cuts. The college has a total credit enrollment of 18,624 students, full-time and part-time, as compared to 19,201 students last fall. Due to fewer class sections, some 5,000 students are on class waiting lists. According to college administrators increased efficiency has resulted in classes full to 95 percent capacity. Also, those students who are enrolled are taking four percent more units than last fall.

“We worked diligently to get the word out on those classes with open spaces to maximize student enrollment,” said Martinez. “It is very hard to see our students not get the classes they need, but when the state doesn’t provide sufficient funding, we have no choice but to cut classes.”

Enrollments are on target at Santiago Canyon College (SCC) for the fall semester, despite a 6.1 percent reduction in the number of class sections, according to college administrators.

The college reduced the number of credit class sections from 588 last fall to 552 this year, in response to cuts in state funding.

The strength of the enrollments, despite the reduction in class sections, means the college has continued to increase its efficiency at a time when college accountability is becoming more important to taxpayers, according to SCC President Juan Vázquez. “Our classes are filled to 95 percent of capacity, which means we are offering the classes important to our communities,” Vázquez said.

- m o r e -

With a total credit enrollment of 8,048 students, full-time and part-time, the college is on track to meet its enrollment targets to receive the expected allocation of state support. Total credit enrollment is two percent less than last year's 8,211 students.

The enrollment figures do not include either college's non-credit students enrolled at SCC's Orange Education Center or SAC's Centennial Education Center.

Students continue to attend the Rancho Santiago Community College District's colleges for many different reasons. The unemployed are seeking career training with hopes of finding employment. Students who were unable to obtain entrance into the University of California and California State University want to complete their general education coursework in preparation for transfer. And, for students who are financially challenged, community colleges offer a quality education at a reasonable price.

With no 2010-2011 state budget in sight, RSCCD administrators are now grappling with the onerous task of determining how many cuts they will have to make for the spring semester.

"Our district and its colleges will continue to do our very best for students based on the resources available to us," said Raúl Rodríguez, Ph.D., RSCCD chancellor. "It's unfortunate that just when students need us most, we continue to grapple with unprecedented cuts to our budget."

### **About 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.*

###