



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Santa Ana College Seeks Former Students Interned During World War II *Efforts Underway to Locate Japanese American Students Whose Education Was Interrupted***

(Santa Ana)—Santa Ana College (SAC) is seeking Japanese American students who attended the college in the early 1940s and were forced to interrupt their education when Executive Order 9066 sent Japanese Americans to internment camps during World War II. As part of the California Nisei College Diploma Project, SAC hopes to bestow honorary degrees on these students or their family members at the college's spring commencement slated for May 20, 2011.

Santa Ana College faculty and staff have searched the archived student records and as of early February, 2011, have identified 22 students who appear to have interrupted their college studies due to the World War II directive. When found, these former students, who now are in their 80s or 90s, will be invited for a long overdue honor—to receive their college diploma. If a former student is unable to attend the ceremony or if he or she is deceased, family members will be invited to receive diplomas on their behalf.

The college is encouraging family members and others to help identify former SAC students who were unable to graduate because of internment and is asking that information be sent to Mark Liang, SAC associate dean of admissions and records, : [liang\\_mark@sac.edu](mailto:liang_mark@sac.edu) or 714-564-6040.

AB 37, which became law on October 11, 2009, requires California's public college and university systems – University of California, California State University and California Community Colleges – to retroactively grant an honorary degree to any student of Japanese American descent, living or deceased, who was forcibly removed and subsequently incarcerated during World War II.

“It's never too late to right a wrong,” said Santa Ana College President Erlinda J. Martinez, Ed.D. “This is our college's opportunity to honor those former students who didn't have the chance to finish what they started at Santa Ana College. We want to honor their sacrifice and present them with their long overdue diplomas.”

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Between 1942 and 1945, the U.S. government forced more than 120,000 Japanese Americans from their homes, farms, schools, jobs and businesses, in violation of their constitutional civil rights and liberties. The hysteria brought on by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 became a catalyst for challenging the loyalty of all citizens of Japanese descent.

For more information, please contact Mark Liang, associate dean of admissions and records at [liang\\_mark@sac.edu](mailto:liang_mark@sac.edu) or 714-564-6040 or visit [www.sac.edu](http://www.sac.edu).

**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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