



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Judy Iannaccone
Director, Public Affairs
Phone: (714) 480-7503
E-mail: iannaccone_judy@rscsd.edu

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Four Distinguished Alumni to Be Inducted into Santa Ana College Hall of Fame on June 5

(Santa Ana, CA)—In 2015, its centennial year, Santa Ana College (SAC) has much to celebrate. Since the college's founding in 1915, the impact of its graduates has been far-reaching. From stars of the big and small screen, like comedian, Will Ferrell (Class of 1992) and KTLA weather and traffic reporter, Vera Jimenez (Class of 1998) to hometown champions who brighten their communities with their outstanding and unparalleled skills and service, including social justice champion, Nora Adriana Preciado (Class of 1997) to master builder Engin Artemel (Class of 1960), SAC alumni have made their mark.

Numerous SAC graduates have gone on to achieve outstanding success in their chosen fields of study. To honor their success, the SAC Foundation through the Alumni Hall of Fame recognizes SAC alumni who, through leadership, character and hard work, have made exceptional contributions in their chosen fields and their communities.

Four distinguished alumni will be inducted into the 2015 Santa Ana College Hall of Fame sponsored by the Santa Ana College Foundation in ceremonies slated for the college's Phillips Hall at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, June 5. The 2015 inductees are innovative and energetic civil servant Gary C. Burton (Class of 1967), lifelong educator William H. Delaney (Class of 1965), the Honorable Dennis J. Keough of the Superior Court of Orange County (Class of 1969), and nationally recognized educator Irasema Salcido (Class of 1983).

Like many community college students, in 1964 young **Gary C. Burton** wasn't sure where he was going or what he wanted to do with his life. He landed at Santa Ana College, where he received the direction that set him on the path to a challenging and fulfilling career as a financial champion for both the County of Orange and the City of Irvine. In 1996, he served as Orange County's chief financial officer and has been referred to as the architect of the county's recovery from bankruptcy. At that time, he remembers someone asking, "Gary, why would you take that job?" The prevailing view was that the County of Orange was sinking and its rescue would be nearly impossible. It took sophisticated financial wisdom, patience and creative thinking to design the plan that would successfully resurrect the county and ensure its ongoing stability. At the time, Burton thought to himself, the county only had one way to go, and that was up.

"Designing the strategic financial plan and implementing it in 1997 was very significant," said Burton. "I had an opportunity to restructure their debt, to actually reduce their debt with litigation."

Burton says Santa Ana College provided the foundation for his studies at California State University, Long Beach, and his successful career in the public and private sectors as a certified public accountant and a certified government financial manager. "Santa Ana College helped me along the way. They were there when I needed them," he says.

Burton has worked for the Orange County Auditor Controller, the South Coast Air Quality Management District as its first chief financial officer, the Orange County Transportation Authority, the County of Orange, and the City of Irvine as the city's director of administrative services. With the City of Irvine, he came up with a plan to pay down the city's unfunded pension liability early and worked on putting the community facilities district together for the Great Park. Now, gradually

easing into retirement, he is chief financial officer at J.R. Watson Development Corp. Burton also has served on a number of community boards and advisory committees, including the Orange County Credit Union, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the Orange County Girl Scout Council, the Citizens Oversight Committee for the Huntington Beach Union High School District, and is treasurer of his church.

When **William “Bill” H. Delaney** first met legendary Santa Ana College track coach John Ward, Delaney and his older brother Robert were high school students training with college runners. Ward gave Bill a new pair of running shoes and made him promise to live healthy, study and train hard. He told Bill, then a high school sophomore, that the amount of tread left on the shoes would indicate how much he would have to pay for college so it made sense to run long and hard.

After placing second in the California State Track Championships, Bill received scholarship opportunities from several major universities, but decided to compete with the SAC Dons for at least one year. Ward became a mentor to Bill Delaney as he competed on SAC’s cross country and track & field teams from 1963-1965. He was also a member of two national record-setting relay teams. In addition to teaching his running techniques to Bill, Coach Ward also instilled his optimistic philosophy of life. He showed Bill how to meet the life’s challenges head-on and, when necessary, deal with defeat.

Bill followed his mentor into his own lifelong career in education. After attending Brigham Young University (BYU) on an athletic scholarship where he was a member of BYU’s cross country and track & field teams. He graduated with a history degree in 1969 and was hired by Orem High School as a history teacher and a track coach. He went on to earn his master’s degree in education administration from BYU. His track & field teams won 12 first and second place state championships and he was voted Utah Coach of the Year in 1971 and was nominated for National Track & Field Coach of the Year. “I was born to work with youth and schools,” Bill said. “It’s something that you love that makes you happy, and the rewards are long-lasting.”

He was promoted to assistant principal in 1980 and was selected as the assistant principal representative to the Utah Association of Secondary School Principals. In 1987, he was appointed as assistant principal for Pleasant Grove High School. In 1988-92, he served on the board of the Utah High School Activities Association. In 1988, he was named principal of Pleasant Grove High School and in 1993 was selected as Utah Principal of the Year. In 1994, he was named principal of Orem’s largest high school, Mountain View High where he served until 2001, when he was promoted to assistant superintendent of grade 7-12 schools.

He has served as a member of the following boards and advisory groups: Utah Valley University’s Center for Advancement of Leadership; Juvenile Justice, Comprehensive School Safety Leadership Initiative; and the Academic Performance-Plus Task Force for the Utah State Office of Education. In 1996, he was elected president of the Utah Association of Secondary Principals Executive Board.

The Honorable Dennis J. Keough, a judge of the Superior Court in Orange County, has served on the bench for more than 30 years. Growing up as the youngest son of a first-generation Irish family, Keough wasn’t sure that college was within his reach. He remembers his father and mother instilling in him and his brothers the principle of hard work, putting one foot in front of the other until one’s goal is achieved. His father, a Pennsylvania Railroad electrician, passed away when Keough was just 16 years old. He and his widowed mother moved to Southern California where he was inspired by his older brother Lawrence’s career as a Fullerton College English professor.

Earlier, while growing up in Pittsburgh, Keough became aware that he wanted to pursue higher education and looked forward to contributing something of value to the community and set his sights on the law. After moving to California, he found himself adrift in Santa Ana with scant resources except his wits and a determination to succeed. Santa Ana College became Keough’s first and most important step to a brighter future by providing an affordable, flexible education. “I was living on my own and things were economically challenging,” he said. “The notion of having a job and going to college was complicated, but the access to education delighted me.” He remembers hitchhiking to campus and experiencing a sense of exhilaration when attending college classes. “For my own dreams and ambitions, Santa Ana College was significant and my experience there was marvelous.”

After earning his associate degree in 1969, he headed to Cal State Long Beach and then to law school at Ole Miss (University of Mississippi). With law degree in hand, he hung out his shingle in Lincoln, Nebraska and was soon appointed an associate county judge, a position that provided the rich experience of presiding over the six county courts of

District Office

2323 North Broadway

Santa Ana, CA 92706 - 1640

(714) 480-7500 Tel (714) 796-3900 Fax

the state's fifth judicial district. Keough left the Nebraska court to join the Santa Cruz District Attorney's office, where he was assigned a wide range of responsibilities. An article in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* described him as one of "the best and brightest of Santa Cruz's assistant district attorneys." In 1986, he was appointed by the Superior Court of California as a juvenile court referee for the County of Orange. In 1989, Dennis was named a California Superior Court commissioner. He has been a Superior Court judge since his 2009 gubernatorial appointment.

In his career, Keough has heard some of the Superior Court's most significant cases. Since 2003, he has ruled on child abuse and neglect cases in the court's Juvenile Division. He has received numerous accolades, including the 2009 Judicial Honoree Award from the Orange County chapter of the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and a 1997 recognition from Western State University College of Law for his "outstanding contributions to the courts and the justice system." He is a founding member of the Warren J. Ferguson Chapter of the American Inns of Court at Chapman University School of Law and a founding member of the Celtic Bar Association. He is a faculty member of the California CASA Academy and a lecturer, instructor and volunteer judge for several associations.

Irasema Salcido, was born and raised by her grandmother in a small village in Michoacan, Mexico. She moved to the United States at the age of 14 to join her four older siblings and parents. Throughout her teens, Salcido worked in the fields, picking strawberries from dawn to dusk alongside her family. She knew little to no English when she arrived in America, and she struggled to learn the complexities of the language while attending Loara and Bolsa Grande High Schools. Even then, she wanted two things: to become someone of substance, and to make her parents proud.

"They sacrificed so much for us," Salcido remembers, "working in the fields and barely providing for their family." She attributes her success to the sacrifices her parents made for her and her siblings.

It was happenstance that Salcido walked onto the Santa Ana College campus after high school and learned, to her surprise, that community college classes were offered free of charge. She recalls that the prospect of working full-time to support herself through school, though incredibly daunting, was a good incentive to avoid a lifetime as a migrant farm worker. Her hardened drive and work ethic allowed her to work in the fields, a shoe store, a department store, an office, and a bank just to support herself and her family as she attended college. Perhaps the most important job she had, though, was as an outreach counselor to disadvantaged youth. By encouraging minorities to pursue college, Salcido knew she had found her calling.

Santa Ana College helped her make her dream a reality. Once at Santa Ana, she found her women's studies classes empowering and secured a mentor to help her with her writing skills. Salcido credits the college's Tutoring Center with helping her get through college; even so, it took her four years to earn a two-year degree. "Without Santa Ana College and the support I received there, I wouldn't have been able to achieve what I've achieved," she said. "I owe so much to Santa Ana College and the opportunities I had there; teachers who really care and a life that became my new life, my other life."

After Santa Ana College, she transferred to Cal State Fullerton and continued to work for student affirmative action, a cause that was increasingly becoming her passion. After graduating from CSUF, she worked for MALDEF, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. Then she pursued a master's degree in education at Harvard University, an experience she remembers as difficult but ultimately rewarding. Upon earning her master's, she became a high school administrator in Washington, D.C., only to be frustrated that many of her students were graduating without knowing how to read, write or multiply.

In 1997, pregnant with her fifth child, Salcido decided to take a huge risk – she opened her own charter school. Named for Cesar Chavez, the school sent the message to students that even if they came from humble beginnings, they could do great things. Her first Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School for Public Policy had 60 students. Today, there are four schools with 1,400 students. Now a nationally recognized expert and advocate for charter schools and underserved students, Salcido recently retired after running the schools for 16 years.

"It was very challenging to be a pioneer for charter schools, especially because I was also raising a family of my own," she admits. But by teaching students from poverty-stricken neighborhoods plagued by drugs and violence about public policy and requiring them to take action on issues that concern them, Salcido showed that they have the power to take control and impact their community. Indeed, she passionately believes that access to higher education for all students, no matter their background, is critical to everyone having an equal chance to achieve the American Dream and create change.

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“I realize what college can do in one’s life,” she declared. “I urge them to discover their passion and decide what they want to change. The solutions are in the hands of our students – they will become adults and impact what’s going on in their communities.” When students leave the charter high schools, “the results are priceless because their lives are changed forever.”

Salcido was a 2005 Cal State Fullerton Vision & Visionaries honoree and she has addressed Congress on the topic of charter schools and underserved students. Oprah Winfrey’s Angel Network presented her with its Use Your Life Award and she received the Republican National Committee’s Trail Award for dedication to civil and public service. Most recently, she was recognized as a Washingtonian of the Year by *Washington Magazine* for using her life to help make the Washington area a better place to live, and she was featured for her work on the Visionaries 19th Season in Public Television.

For more information about the Santa Ana College Alumni Hall of Fame, please visit www.sac.edu/foundation or call (714) 564-6091.

About Santa Ana College

Santa Ana College (SAC), which is turning 100 years old in 2015, serves about 18,000 students each semester at its main campus in Santa Ana. The college prepares students for transfer to four-year institutions, provides invaluable workforce training, and customized training for business and industry. In addition, another 11,000 students are served through the college’s School of Continuing Education located at Centennial Education Center. Ranked as one of the nation’s top two-year colleges awarding associate degrees to Latino and Asian students, the college is also recognized throughout the state for its comprehensive workforce training programs for nurses, firefighters, law enforcement and other medical personnel. SAC is one of two comprehensive colleges under the auspices of the Rancho Santiago Community College District. Visit www.sac.edu to learn more. For information about Santa Ana College’s Centennial, please visit www.sac.edu/100.

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