



## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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**Contact:** Judy Iannaccone  
**Office:** (714) 480-7503  
**Email:** [iannaccone\\_judy@rsccd.edu](mailto:iannaccone_judy@rsccd.edu)

### **Santa Ana College Foundation Executive Director Christina Romero Named Person of the Year by the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce** *Romero will be honored at the Difference Makers Celebration Luncheon on April 19*

**Santa Ana, Calif.** – The Santa Ana College (SAC) Foundation is proud to announce that Christina Romero, executive director of the SAC Foundation and Office of College Advancement has been named “Person of the Year” by the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce. This is the highest level to be awarded to those making a difference in the city of Santa Ana through the chamber’s “Difference Makers: Celebrating Extraordinary People” initiative.

She will be one of a select few to be honored this year at the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce’s 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Difference Makers Luncheon, which spotlights extraordinary members of the community that help build a better Santa Ana.

Romero has spent over a decade in her current leadership role as the executive director of the SAC Foundation and Office of College Advancement, working tirelessly to empower students within the community through building scholarships, and educational programming and opportunities. With extensive skills in community outreach, strategic business planning, marketing, management, event planning and branding, Romero continues to increase awareness and funding for Santa Ana College programs through her relationships with private, community, and corporate donors.

Additionally, she works closely with faculty and other college constituents to develop strategic initiatives for further resource development, develops and executes major fundraising campaigns, cultivates grants, and plans high-level events, including the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration a few years ago, which brought over 8,000 people to the Santa Ana College campus for the event.

According to Ken Purcell, president of the SAC Foundation Board of Directors, Romero’s resource development initiatives are “critical to student achievement” in Santa Ana. As the only 501(c)3 for the second oldest community college in Orange County, and the fourth largest in the state, her work has resulted in tripling the size of the foundation’s portfolio from \$3.2 million to well over \$10 million during her tenure. Her management style has created “big results”, leading to the SAC Foundation ranking in the top 10% of community college foundations based on assets and successes.

Romero’s dedication to making college possible for more students along with her commitment and passion for her work, has also yielded both national and statewide grants, which has directly contributed to growing the Santa Ana College scholarships endowment fund from \$1.2 million to over \$5 million. As a result, Santa Ana College can offer higher education opportunities to a broader range of students, ultimately leading to a positive economic outcome as those students enter the workforce.

“Christina has worked alongside and helped build a board of directors that is focused on aligning their philanthropic efforts with the college as their highest priority,” said Purcell. “She brings enthusiasm and infectious energy to the board, college, and community that she engages and leads, all with a focus on students [success] and a deep passion ... for Santa Ana College. She is truly a Difference Maker in this community.”

David Elliott, president and CEO of the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce adds, “It has been a pleasure to work with Christina and the SAC Advancement Office team. Her passion and enthusiasm is contagious, and her work with the local business community has strengthened the pipeline between the business and education sectors, creating an educated and in-demand workforce.”

Romero has extensive experience in philanthropic work, and currently serves on several boards of directors including Directors for El Sol Science and Arts Academy, the Network of California Community College Foundations, Comunidad Latina Federal Credit Union, and the Hispanic Education Endowment Fund (HEEF).

Prior to joining Santa Ana College Advancement Office, she served as the assistant director for the Orange County Small Business Development Center, an economic development program of the Rancho Santiago Community College District.

Romero received her undergraduate degree in liberal arts from Santa Ana College. She holds a bachelor’s degree in speech communication from California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) and a master’s degree in management from the University of Redlands. Additionally, she is certified in Executive and Life Coaching from CSULB.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Difference Makers Luncheon presented by the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce will take place on Thursday, April 19, from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel located at 201 E. MacArthur Boulevard in Santa Ana. In addition to celebrating the honorees, fourteen area students will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship provided by local business partners.

For more information about the Difference Makers 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration Luncheon, please contact:

Dianna Mejia

Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce

Tel: (714) 541-5353 ext. 116

Email: [dmejia@santaanachamber.com](mailto:dmejia@santaanachamber.com)

Web: <https://santaanachamber.com>

#### **About the Santa Ana College Foundation**

*The Santa Ana College (SAC) Foundation is committed to ensuring that no student is denied educational opportunities due to financial constraints. The SAC Foundation works to maintain, expand and enhance the educational opportunities at Santa Ana College, while also partnering with community organizations, businesses, funding sources, alumni and staff in order to preserve “A History of Success, A Future of Promise.” Santa Ana College prepares students for transfer to four-year institutions, provides invaluable workforce training, and customized training for business and industry. Ranked as one of the nation’s top two-year colleges awarding associate degrees to Latino and Asian students, SAC is one of two comprehensive colleges under the Rancho Santiago Community College District. For more information on scholarship opportunities, please visit <https://www.sac.edu>. For more information about the SAC Foundation or for sponsorship opportunities, please contact [foundation@sac.edu](mailto:foundation@sac.edu), or call (714) 564-6091.*

#### **About Santa Ana College**

*Santa Ana College (SAC), which turned 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.*