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Two O.C. community colleges buck perceived state trends Rancho Santiago Community College District transfers jump 27 percent

(Santa Ana)— Some who can ill afford to pay for an expensive college education may avoid community colleges thinking they are a dead end. Two colleges prove them wrong.

College and university transfers from Rancho Santiago Community College District's Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College increased 27.7 percent last year, according to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). A total of 2,357 students transferred to the California State University system, the University of California system, or private or out-of-state institutions.

Cynthia Vicario, a 46-year-old transfer student from Santiago Canyon College to CSU Long Beach said, "I am fulfilling a dream and I had the most empowering group of people to help me."

In a district report, the number of transfers has grown by 49.7 percent since 2002-2003. According to NSC reports, 1,678 Santa Ana College (SAC) students transferred last year, representing a 35.3 percent increase over the previous year. At Santiago Canyon College (SCC), 1,036 students transferred, representing a 10.2 percent increase over the previous year.

"It is rewarding to see more and more Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College students take the next step on their journey to a brighter future," said Edward Hernandez, Jr., Ed.D., RSCCD chancellor. "Students come to us for different reasons. Many prepare for transfer, others train for high-demand careers or pursue their associate degrees. We are grateful to our faculty and staff who ensure their success."

In fall 2007, both SAC and SCC saw their student enrollments swell. More than 10,500 students enrolled at SCC, an increase of 9.9 percent over fall 2006. More than 27,000 students enrolled at SAC, an increase of 11 percent over fall 2006.

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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