



## OCC Symphony Presents First Virtual Performance

Orange Coast College's Symphony Orchestra debuted its first-ever virtual concert via Facebook Live on Saturday, Feb. 20. Led by Symphony Director Maxim Kuzin, the 18-member orchestra presented a pre-recorded performance of Beethoven's "Allegretto" movement from the 7th Symphony.

The Orange Coast College Symphony originally planned to perform Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in March 2020 as a part of a large-scale concert at the Robert B. Moore Theater to celebrate the composer's 250th anniversary, however concert preparations were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Symphony members continued working on the music remotely, eventually making the decision to record and edit a video performance to present on Facebook Live.

"The Orchestra musicians worked tirelessly and diligently to record this great music at their homes using their smartphones,"

wrote Kuzin on the OCC Symphony Facebook page. "We are delighted to have the opportunity to present the audio-video production of the Second Movement (Allegretto) from Beethoven's 7th Symphony now."

"These videos take HUNDREDS of hours to create and I'm really proud of our orchestra folks for pulling this together," adds Music Department Chair Eliza Rubenstein.

To view the performance, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yqmwln17>

## Orange Coast College Enters Year Two of Cross-Enrollment Study with UC Irvine

Orange Coast College has received the second disbursement of a grant for its participation in a study through the University of California, Irvine (UCI) titled "Improving Transition of Community College Students into University STEM Programs through Cross-Enrollment." The



College received \$81,605 in January, the second payment of a five-year project being led by UC Irvine Professor of Education Rachel Baker and funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Baker's research stems from two California Senate Bills that require the University of California or California State University systems to allow community college students to cross-enroll in one class per term at a reduced tuition, as space allows. Originally intended as a way to increase transfer rates of underrepresented students from community colleges to four-year institutions through cross-enrollment, Senate Bill 1914 and Senate Bill 361 remain under-utilized.

"Dr. Baker contacted us two years ago to see if we would be interested in participating in a study looking at whether community college students are taking advantage of the opportunity to enroll in classes at UC Irvine," says OCC Dean of Math and Science Dr. Tara Giblin. "This project is predicated on research that shows students who are exposed to four-year university campuses can see themselves as part of that campus."

Approximately 100 students are participating in the study, including students from Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College. Researchers currently are finishing the "Data Collection" stage, with focus groups and surveys taking place over the past year. "We organized focus groups almost exactly a year ago, with a goal of designing interventions that encouraged more students to take a class at UCI while still enrolled at OCC," explains Giblin. "COVID slowed down progress in terms of the surveys we had planned, but it's picking back up as everyone is adjusting to a virtual environment."

Based on the findings from the focus groups and surveys, the study team will design and implement interventions to increase cross-enrollment. The study also involves a longitudinal analysis of participating students to examine if the interventions reduce barriers to cross-enrollment and the effects of cross-enrollment on eventual transfer.

"The underlying goal of this project is to find the hidden underrepresented students in science who have more barriers to transfer to begin with — the interventions study is really targeted to help students see their path to UC and Cal State," says Giblin. "We are trying to figure out: how do we help students imagine themselves as a transfer student?"

The funds provided by the NSF cover the cost of participant fees, dedicated academic counseling, and travel to research conferences.

## Coast Professor Arnold Guerra Nominated for UCI Lecturer of the Year

Orange Coast College Physics Professor Dr. Arnold Guerra has been nominated for the Lecturer of the Year award through the University of California, Irvine's "Celebration of Teaching" awards.

Guerra, who has taught full-time at OCC since 2002, completed his doctorate in condensed matter physics at UC Irvine in 1999 and has been a lecturer at the research university for many years. From 1993 until 2017, he worked in the Summer Science Academy of the California Alliance for Minority Participation at the university, and was the recipient of UCI's "Most Outstanding Professor in the School of Physical Science" award in 2006, 2009 and 2017.



In 2019, Guerra received the "Apple of Gold Award" bestowed by the Orange County Hispanic Education Endowment Fund for Excellence in Community College Teaching. He also coordinates OCC's Bridges to Baccalaureate program, in collaboration with UCI. Bridges to Baccalaureate is a STEM minority serving program funded through the National Institute of Health that invites minority and underrepresented students to apply to participate in Summer Research with faculty at UCI.

Guerra was nominated by his colleagues for the Lecturer of the

Year award. "Since he began teaching at UCI, his evaluations in these courses have been consistently among the very highest of any instructor in the department," wrote Director of Faculty Instructional Development Dr. Andrea Aebersold. "In evaluation comments, students often cite his energy and enthusiasm in class as making the material more interesting and approachable. Students frequently mention that he is one of the best professors they've ever had and express the desire to take more courses from him."

## Black History Month Events Include Guest Lectures, Financial Literacy, Poster Contest

Several programs at OCC organized events to celebrate Black History Month in February, with activities paying homage to the contributions and legacy of Black Americans throughout history and today.

OCC's EOPS/Umoja, Multicultural Center and International Multicultural Committee planned virtual workshops and guest lectures throughout the month, including a Financial Literacy workshop hosted by the Orange County Black Chamber of Commerce. The College also hosted Dr. Wind Dell Woods, who presented a lecture on Zoom titled "It's Bigger Than Rap: The Fifth Element and the Black Radical Tradition."

The OCC Student Equity office hosted several activities, including a contest inviting students to create a black civil rights poster to share with the campus community. The Equity office also organized several social media campaigns celebrating Black culture and traditions, such as "Black History Through Food" on Instagram and a "Black History Month Equity Playlist" on YouTube.

The OCC Library organized a collection of films and novels that celebrate the work and lives of Black people in America. A virtual display is available on the Library's website at <https://libguides.orangecoastcollege.edu/bhm> that highlights novels written by Black authors, nonfiction books and films on Black history, culture, and the Black experience. The Library shared its recommendations with followers on Instagram every week day during February.

## OCC CLEEO Project Partners with First Choice Bank for Student Scholarships

Orange Coast College's Counseling Latinos for Equity and Engagement (CLEEO) Project has formed a partnership with First Choice Bank to provide 10 scholarships annually to students at the College. The scholarships are available in \$1000 and \$500 increments, and the first distribution took place in December 2020.

# OCC CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

# CLEEO Summit 10.0

**Counseling Latin@s for Equity & Engagement at Orange Coast College**

First Choice also has provided OCC's CLEEO Project with a grant through the Orange Coast College Foundation that will go toward additional scholarships awarded at the College's annual scholarship event — Honors Night — in May. Additional planning is under way to establish a workshop series at Coast that will help students and employees learn about financial literacy and cultural competency.

"Like all financial institutions in United States, First Choice Bank takes steps to remain compliant with the Community Re-Investment Act, which asks banks to address financial literacy, especially in low to moderate income populations within the communities in which they serve," says OCC Associate Professor and CLEEO Project Coordinator Eric Cuellar. "I am pleased to see First Choice Bank being proactive in reaching out to diverse communities in Orange County, including at Orange Coast College."

Cuellar shares that an OCC alumnus who works at First Choice Bank helped to facilitate the partnership upon realizing that the two organizations share many of the same goals that the CLEEO Project is working toward. "[The student] graduated from OCC and eventually transferred to Cal State Fullerton and plans to attend law school. He has kept in touch over the years, and has continued to attend events organized by CLEEO," Cuellar explains.

The CLEEO Project was founded in 2016 by Cuellar and OCC professors Jordan Stanton and Rendell Drew. The Project, which organizes learning cohorts that focus on developing an educational pathway for college students with an emphasis on the successful development of life skills, hosts several events throughout the year, including guest lectures, workshops or "Summits," and art exhibits. In 2019, the CLEEO Project was successful in bringing Civil Rights activist and Presidential Medal of Freedom Recipient Dolores Huerta to campus as a guest speaker.

"Research has shown that only 2-4 percent of Latinos in the U.S. hold doctorate degrees. So, one of the main tenets of OCC's CLEEO Project is to establish an education pipeline from community college to post-graduate education," says Cuellar. "Students can participate as much as they want. But already we have seen many of our CLEEO students successfully transfer and obtain their bachelor's degree, and even continue on to law school, MBA programs, and other postgraduate programs of study."

The CLEEO 10.0 Virtual Summit, "COVID-19 & Latinos: Opportunities to Strengthen Student Leadership for Community Engagement," began on Feb. 18 and will run through May 13. The 8-session seminar will be presented by Dr. David E. Hayes Bautista, Professor at UCLA School of Medicine.