

# HORIZON

OUR DISTRICT. OUR FUTURE.

A quarterly newsletter from the Office of the Chancellor

Summer 2022 / Issue No. 7



## Farewell From Chancellor Burke

**L**et me begin this message with a point of gratitude. As I prepare to retire from a forty-plus-year career in the California Community College System as a faculty member, administrator, college president and chancellor – I have nothing but gratitude for the people met and experiences had throughout my journey in higher education.

Leaving the SOCCCD community feels much like parting from a gathering of family, friends, and neighbors. When I

first arrived, someone told me that south Orange County feels like a small town, although the SOCCCD service area is comprised of one million plus residents. I love that aspect of our community and will carry the energy, friendliness, and aspirations of our district with me always.

Like the graduates who just crossed the stage at our first in-person commencements in two years; I too am excited about beginning a new chapter in my life and work. Farewells shouldn't be long or complicated. I

have only two things to leave you with – don't let anyone turn your sky into a ceiling and focus on what's next.

During some of the most difficult and uncertain times in our nation and district's history – I have been inspired by your dynamism, your energy, your drive to serve and improve the lives of others – individually and collectively. The richness of our collaborative work has reinforced my optimism and focus on the future.

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I have been lucky to experience this level of optimism, as we bear witness to one of the most polarized periods in the history of the nation, where intolerance, injustice, economic uncertainty, and changing climate weigh heavy on our hearts and minds every day.

While we all attempt to grapple with the challenges of the world to uplift the mission and values of SOCCCD and prepare the leaders of the future — I see in you the drive, intellect, and determination to embrace them all.

SOCCCD's mission is to provide a dynamic and innovative learning environment dedicated to student success and economic growth of the region — and through your hard work and dedication, that mission is carried out around the clock. You are shaping SOCCCD's diverse, innovative, and caring communities to create the jobs and values of the future.

I am grateful to the people of Orange County that support this district and to all those who gave me the great privilege to lead SOCCCD. Thank you to our generous, talented, and loyal community of supporters who are comprised of businesses, volunteers, elected officials, and alumni who have rallied in support of our

mission, serving on our boards, volunteering time, energy, and material resources.

I am grateful to the staff, who make things work every day, who make it possible for the faculty and students to teach, discover, and learn. I have enjoyed getting to know many of you, hearing about your lives, families, dreams and beliefs. There are so many unsung heroes, quietly, sometimes invisibly, going about your work, strategizing, planning, troubleshooting, and fixing. Without you, everything would fall apart in a hurry.

To my team and the managers across the district, what a pleasure and privilege it has been to know you and work with you. I know you will ensure a smooth and exciting transition for the next chancellor and beyond. To all our staff — I cannot thank you enough for the thousands of kindnesses, big and

small, that you have given me.

Finally, I want to thank the students and faculty who help carry out the very core of our mission. Whether we are celebrating your incredible successes, crafting an ambitious path for SOCCCD's future, or seeking to find common purpose when the world is roiling around us; I have thoroughly enjoyed working for you and with you.

In this position, I've had the pleasure of learning about your personal missions — what wakes you up in the morning and pushes you to work the long hours your role in this district requires.

Learning about your "why" has been a source of continued amazement and delight for me. While I know that the full context of your work is not always recognized, I also know that everyone in this district works to stretch themselves beyond perceived limitations to achieve excellence in various ways everyday — proving that

education truly eliminates barriers and creates pathways that are limitless. I can't wait to see what else you accomplish in the near and far-off future. Thank you for the memories.

Sincerely,

**Kathleen F. Burke, Ed.D.**  
Chancellor, 2018-2022

**"I cannot thank you enough for the thousands of kindnesses, big and small, that you have given me."**

— Dr. Kathleen Burke, Chancellor SOCCCD





“Dr. Burke led with a stable hand during one of the most tumultuous periods in higher ed. There is a reason our District did better than most in retaining and supporting our students and suffered more modest enrollment declines than others in the last 2+ years of the pandemic. Her humble leadership style and focus on students in the face of distractions will be her legacy. She outperformed and is under-credited, as is the mark of effective servant leadership.”

— Dr. Elliot Stern,  
President Saddleback College

**“Farewells shouldn’t be long or complicated. I have two things to leave you with — don’t ever let anyone turn your sky into a ceiling and focus on what’s next..”**

— Dr. Kathleen Burke  
Chancellor SOCCCD



“I so appreciate Dr. Burke’s leadership particularly in navigating our district through a worldwide pandemic. None of us were trained for the level of response and emergency management required during this period, however, under her leadership, all of us rose to the occasion and transitioned our colleges, personnel and students to remote learning and work. I want to extend my sincere congratulations and best wishes as she transitions to the next chapter in her life.”

— Dr. John C. Hernandez  
President Irvine Valley College





“Chancellor Burke is much admired by the IVC community because of the integrity and accountability she brought to the district, especially during these challenging times. Her leadership of the last four years not only forcefully responded to the present, but, more importantly, anticipated and strengthened the future of the district.”

— Lisa Alvarez, Professor of English, Irvine Valley College



“It has been an honor to serve under Chancellor Burke these past four years. I have always marveled and am forever humbled by her knowledge and expertise in all aspects of the community college environment. There was rarely an occasion when I took something to her that she hadn’t already experienced or wasn’t able to provide valuable insight into regardless if it was FTES calculations, SCFF intricacies, financial aid guidelines, or education code interpretation. Her quiet, consistent leadership was an inspiration!”

— Ann-Marie Gabel  
Vice Chancellor Business Services







“Kathleen’s leadership and extensive experience has been instrumental in moving our District forward through some of the most difficult and unique times we have faced. She was absolutely the right CEO at the right time and SOCCCD is so much better as a result of her experienced, forward thinking, and ethical leadership!”

– Dr. Cindy Vyskocil  
Vice Chancellor, Human Resources



“Chancellor Burke has been one of my favorite people to work with in my career because everyday with her included a lesson about professionalism, strategic planning, adaptivity or leadership. Occasionally, I’d learn the little known facts about art, travel, Disney and the Beatles. She is a true Renaissance woman that I thoroughly enjoyed learning and leading with. She will be greatly missed, but I hope will never be more than a phone call away.”

– Letitia Clark  
District Director of Public Affairs





“Working with Dr. Burke really has been a blessing. I am so thankful for all that she has shared with me, from teaching me a new skill, to sharing laughter over music and baseball anecdotes, and showing a graceful poise that led the district through an unprecedented time of uncertainty. We were able to get the work done, and still have a good time while doing it. I know that I, along with so many others, will remember her tenure with us fondly.”

— Kristen Duggins  
Manager Office of the Chancellor



“Kathleen is a compassionate, ethical leader and a person of great integrity. She will be missed.”

— Dr. Margot Lovett  
Professor of History,  
Saddleback College



“I am so thankful that I got the opportunity to work with Dr. Burke. She is more than an illustrious leader, she is truly an inspiration. Her hard work and dedication will continue to inspire me. She will be greatly missed!”

— Grace Garcia  
Director Office of the Chancellor







“After many years in this district, and many years when it has been riven by discord and disagreement, I had become somewhat jaded and cynical about the district’s and colleges’ administration. Under the direction of Chancellor Burke, our district has made a quantum leap forward in terms of collegiality, functionality, and effectiveness. She has fostered a sense of community and collegiality that has been missing for decades, and created an awareness among district and college leadership of our common goals and purpose: serving students, and creating the best possible environment to serve that goal. This sense of working together at the executive level to serve the students and our district community has permeated the colleges, and created a generally positive atmosphere for the first time in many years, and under her leadership, I have learned to appreciate the privilege of working in this district again.”

— Lewis Long, Professor of English, Irvine Valley College



# 2022 Classified Employees of the Year

**C**lassified employees of the year were announced at the May 23rd board of trustee's meeting. The three staff members below were recognized as employees who excel at making the District more successful.



**Andrew Craven**  
**Saddleback College**

Andrew, a Police Technical Services Specialist, was on-campus throughout the pandemic and was instrumental in the logistics and operations of quickly-organized on-campus activities, such as drive-through events to distribute Chromebooks. He worked tirelessly to execute events that were safe for people coming to campus, and for the staff working the event.

Andrew's colleagues appreciate that he is sincere in all that he does, always collaborative, and brings a safety lens to all meetings and discussions because he genuinely cares about the safety and welfare of all employees and students.

Andrew is highly approachable and has helped the entire police force be seen as protective and accessible. He has been a great ambassador for the college!



**Dawn Pickering**  
**Irvine Valley College**

Dawn has worked at key classified positions at IVC for the past 10 years and her skills have benefited the college and community as Senior Administrative Assistant in EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs/Guardian Scholars department. She supports IVC's mission by advocating for students and by helping assist students to realize their full potential. Dawn is an instrumental part of the team during the organizing of department events. She provides excellent communication and follow-up with the foundation, vendors, fiscal office, and community partners.

Dawn is admired for her caring attention to students' and colleagues' needs and her ability to put feedback into action. She completes her assignments with professionalism and in a positive demeanor. She goes over and above with every task, always puts on a smile, and is ready to face the next challenge. Dawn is an exemplary employee and a tremendous asset to the college!



**Leilani Anselmo**  
**District Services**

Leilani serves as the HR Compliance & Title IX Analyst but she took on critical new tasks during COVID in an effort to keep students and employees safe. Her added tasks included working with employees to validate proof of vaccinations, responding to COVID inquiries, and notifying people who had close contact with employees who had tested positive.

Leilani never complained about the added responsibilities and is known to step up and get work done accurately and on time. Leilani is known for her positive attitude and for making work more fun.

Leilani played a key role in helping Human Resources manage the regulations implemented regarding COVID-19 and the vaccine mandate. Additionally, she provided amazing customer service to employees and was praised as a stellar colleague who was meticulously attentive to details while working on an array of tasks throughout the pandemic.



# Lavender Affinity Group



SOCCCD is pleased to announce the creation of the District-wide Lavender Affinity Group in support of LGBTQIA+ employees. Allies welcome.



Learn more at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/LavenderGroup>



## New Student Trustee Elected

Irvine Valley College student Rachel Abalos was elected as the new Student Trustee for the 2022-2023 academic year. Abalos will represent students from both Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College and plans to call attention to issues that impact students. An anthropology major and a member of the ASIVC – Abalos' main initiatives will be to support student basic needs and environmental and disability justice.

"Community colleges are the bridge for students with differing abilities to feel safe and have access to a fair education and pathway to a career," said Student Trustee Abalos.

President of the Board Marcia Milchiker said, "Rachel Abalos will be a great addition to the Board of Trustees. As with all of the student trustees, we value the role they serve in being the student voice and providing input on some of the most important matters that have an impact on students at Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College."

Student Trustee Abalos will transition into the new role after serving as an ASIVC Senator and Co-Chair of the ASIVC Sustainability Committee. The Irvine native and graduate of Portola High School plans to transfer to a four-year university upon graduation to study anthropology.



## District Services 2021 Employee of the Year

Due to the pandemic, we did not get a chance to honor our 2021 Employee of the Year, Gene Tjoa. He is the database administrator for District Services Research, Planning, and Data Management Department. He was described by his co-workers as not only technically skilled, but also very careful in his work, continually concerned about quality and security of SOCCCD systems. More importantly, Gene was described by his peers as a great team player, who mentors others, bringing a fun and cooperative spirit to the team. We congratulate Gene for being District Services 2021 Employee of the Year.





# First Commencement in New Stadium

**O**n May 26, Saddleback College held its first commencement ceremony in the new stadium where they recognized 6,097 graduates. In addition to speeches by Chancellor Burke and Board of Trustees President Marcia Milchiker, the students were inspired by keynote speaker U.S. Representative Mike Levin of California's 49th District. More than 3,500 of these graduates will be transferring to four-year universities in the fall semester.



Note: Photos and text provided by Saddleback College

## IRVINE VALLEY COLLEGE NEWS

# Trustee Inmon Sharing IVC Student Stories

**T**rustee Carolyn Inmon, photo right, is also a contributing writer for the Irvine Community News newspaper, and she has been sharing stories of extraordinary Irvine Valley College (IVC) students with her readers. In late May, Trustee Inmon started a series of profiles on the accomplishments of IVC students in her "Meet the Students" feature in the Irvine Community News and Views section (link below).

[irvinecommunitynewsandviews.org/author/carolyninmon/](http://irvinecommunitynewsandviews.org/author/carolyninmon/)

Her series focuses on students who attend IVC and who also live in the city of Irvine. Examples of the profiles (right) include a student who made the honor roll and was the first in his family to attend college. DeAngelo was also a veteran before entering IVC, was a founding member of the Black Student Union, and was elected President of the Associated Students of IVC.

### Community College Corner: Meet IVC Student DeAngelo Hunter

by Carolyn Inmon

**NOTE:** As a community college trustee, I have the good fortune of meeting some amazing people. Over the next few weeks, I will be spotlighting Irvine residents who are excelling in their studies at Irvine Valley College.

Irvine resident and Irvine Valley College (IVC) student **DeAngelo Hunter** is this year's Student Commencement Speaker.

DeAngelo, who is a veteran, has been very active during his two years at IVC. He's won awards in speech and debate, was one of the founding members of the Black Student Union, and has lobbied Congressional representatives to advocate for basic needs, veterans and free community college.



Irvine resident & IVC student DeAngelo Hunter

As President of the Associated Students of IVC, DeAngelo has used his leadership skills to create a highly active student government, empowering those around him to join in high-level advocacy by engaging with state and federal representatives.

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Horizon is created by the Public Affairs department in the Chancellor's Office. Please direct comments or suggestions to Letitia Clark, District Director of Public Affairs, at 949-582-4920.