



April 28, 2025

# Board of Trustees Resolution

## *Honoring Marilee Nielsen*

### *Saddleback College 2025 Emeritus Faculty of the Year*

*Whereas*, the South Orange County Community College District Board of Trustees is proud to recognize and honor faculty who exemplify the highest ideals of teaching, mentorship, and dedication to lifelong learning; and

*Whereas*, Marilee Nielsen, a practicing artist and accomplished educator, has been named the 2025 Saddleback College Emeritus Faculty of the Year in recognition of her remarkable service, passion for the arts, and her unwavering commitment to the personal and artistic growth of her students; and

*Whereas*, Professor Nielsen brings over 25 years of teaching experience in drawing, painting, and jewelry fabrication—sharing her knowledge in high schools, college campuses, and, most recently, through a decade of outstanding instruction at the Saddleback College Emeritus Institute; and

*Whereas*, she holds degrees in both Landscape Architecture and Art, along with a Master's in Education with a specialization in digital technology, a combination that equips her to blend classical techniques with modern tools, inspiring creativity and innovation in every classroom setting; and

*Whereas*, Marilee Nielsen creates a welcoming, inclusive, and interactive learning environment, encouraging participation, self-expression, and peer-to-peer connection through platforms like Zoom and Padlet, where students engage in meaningful critiques and mutual encouragement; and

*Whereas*, students describe Professor Nielsen as a warm, professional, and supportive instructor who begins each class with a thoughtful poem or quote—creating a unifying, reflective, and positive atmosphere that fosters not just artistic skill, but personal growth and community; and



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*Whereas*, she is deeply admired for her ability to meet students where they are—whether they are beginners or advanced artists—guiding them forward on their unique learning journeys with constructive feedback, inspiration, and access to new techniques, tools, and global artistic perspectives; and

*Whereas*, her students have formed lifelong connections, often meeting outside of class to continue their artistic exploration, and consistently express that Professor Nielsen has significantly elevated their confidence, creativity, and connection to the arts; now, therefore,

*Be it resolved*, that the Board of Trustees of the South Orange County Community College District does hereby congratulate and commend Marilee Nielsen on being named the 2025 Saddleback College Emeritus Faculty of the Year, and extends its heartfelt appreciation for her outstanding teaching, artistic leadership, and dedication to the mission of lifelong learning.

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