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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Santa Ana College's Automotive Technology Program Receives Three Vehicles Donated by KIA Motors

**** KIA Honored as exemplary private-public partner ****

SANTA ANA, CA – For more than five decades, Santa Ana College (SAC) has operated one of the state's largest and oldest automotive technology programs. Known in the industry for preparing students for the world of work, the SAC automotive technology curriculum has always been based on industry need, giving students first-hand experience with the newest technology. The campus recently celebrated a landmark event – the largest single donation to the automotive technology program by a local business partner – KIA Motors of Irvine. KIA gifted three new cars - two new 2010 vehicles, as well as the recently released 2011 Optima, a mid-sized sedan. The donation will be used to expand the program's specialization in passenger vehicles. The campus celebrated the donation with an on-campus ceremony, featuring remarks by KIA executives, including Greg Georgianni, director of Human Resources for Corporate Facilities and Administration. "Through this donation, we hope that Santa Ana College will be able to further its efforts to provide training instruction on the most advanced automotive technology available to date. At KIA, we are committed to both the local community, supporting educational programs and investing in workforce training."

"Public-private partnerships like this one with KIA Motors ensure that students are workforce ready and have been trained on the latest technology, including current 'green' ventilation, fuel and exhaust systems," explained Erlinda J. Martinez, Ed.D., college president. Tony Ellis, president of the Santa Ana College Foundation, Christina Romero, executive director of the SAC Foundation, and President Martinez accepted the keys to the new vehicles on behalf of students and faculty. The donation was accepted before a crowd of about 50 guests and students.

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In addition to benefitting the adults enrolled in the automotive technology program, the donation also supports the college's Career Academy Scholars Program, which provides a career/job training pathway for local high school students attending High School Inc., an innovative collaboration involving the college, Santa Ana Unified School District, the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce, as well as industry partners. Students from High School, Inc. enroll in Saturday classes, earning both high school graduation credits and college units for course completion. The goal of this collaboration, according to President Martinez, is to provide the automotive industry with a qualified pipeline of well-trained students, skilled in repairing diesel engines and trucks.

"Private-public partnerships are a winning recipe for success. Our students learn to problem-solve and troubleshoot in real world training scenarios using industry equipment and tools, while our industry partners benefit from a skilled workforce. We believe that private-public partnerships are among the most cost-efficient and beneficial solutions to broadening both training and program offerings for students. That is why the SAC Foundation is working to expand the number of private-public partnerships supporting workforce training programs," she explained.

According to industry projections, 40-50 percent of the automotive and diesel mechanic workforce will retire by 2014. The job market is favorable for the technically-trained students graduating from SAC's program. "We are proud to produce the next generation of automotive mechanics and technicians," President Martinez added.

The automotive technology program serves about 600 students annually. The college also boasts the only diesel/transportation technology program in the region and the only transport refrigeration program in California. Moreover, SAC is one of five community colleges in the state offering the California Air Resources Board training and certification. While these three KIA cars represent the largest single donation of vehicles to date to the automotive technology program, the diesel/transportation technology program has received truck donations in the past from Hino Trucks and Toms Trucks of Santa Ana.

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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