

Four Outstanding Community Leaders to Be Inducted into the Santa Ana College Alumni Hall of Fame

(Santa Ana, Calif.) – The Santa Ana College Foundation and the Alumni Hall of Fame Committee are proud to announce the four brand new inductees into the Santa Ana College Alumni Hall of Fame are Vera Jimenez, Fortino Rivera, Jim Steiner and Mike Talbot.

These outstanding alumni have gained distinction and achievement through professional and personal efforts since leaving Santa Ana College and represent the thousands of students who graduate from Santa Ana College each year. In order to be eligible for induction, each individual must be a graduate of Santa Ana College or have completed a minimum of 30 units of coursework. The nominee should have made a significant impact in their education, profession or community.

“Our immense and diverse alumni base is what makes Santa Ana College so unique, and I am proud and honored to be part of the 2020 Inductee Class,” said Rivera, who is a SAC Foundation Board member and chair of the Alumni Relations Committee. “So many of the individuals who have graduated from Santa Ana College have gone on to do amazing things in our community, and this year’s class members are exceptional examples of this great work.”



Vera Jimenez, '98, is a meteorologist at KTLA and runs a home-based business that helps people on their health and wellness journeys. Born Elvira Jimenez, she, her mother and five siblings migrated from Mexico to the United States when she was just three years old. They settled in Garden Grove where she received a temporary green card in junior high school and years later, U.S. citizenship for her entire family.

“Like many families during that time, we came here illegally,” Jimenez said. “I share that candidly because I

don't mind people knowing that about me. I think it is important to share for kids out there who are going through that, to know there's hope.

I want to serve as an example that if you stay focused, have faith, put your nose to the grindstone, and don't take anything for granted, that it's going to come." After graduating from Bolsa Grande High School, she enrolled in Santa Ana College and sparked an interest in journalism. She went on to earn a religious studies degree from California State University Long Beach, then a meteorology certificate from Mississippi State University while working at KCBS-TV. She went on to have a 10-year career as the resident meteorologist at KTLA in Los Angeles, entrepreneur, health and wellness guru, and two-time Emmy-award winner.



Fortino Rivera, '84, is the CEO of Staffing Solutions, and serves as a SAC Foundation Board member and chair of the Alumni Relations Committee. Born and raised in Santa Ana, Rivera is the youngest of a large working-class, tight-knit family. He was a star football player, but chose to stay close to home by choosing Santa Ana College as the place to continue his football career. When his wife became pregnant with their second child after he had completed two summers and a full year of college, he took a job putting the electronics knowledge he gained at SAC to work. After SAC, Rivera attended the National Institute of Technology and landed a job at the imaging electronics services company, Ricoh.

Later, he became an international sales representative, which required travel throughout Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. He went on to work for Goodwill, where he developed the skills to pair candidates with positions that suited their abilities and interests.

Rivera leaned on these skills to build his company, Staffing Solutions, into a powerhouse staffing firm with two successful locations. Sixteen years later, the business has soared and survived rough times like the 2008 economic downturn. "Running the business is difficult and it takes a lot of time, energy and effort," said Rivera. "But when it's all said and done, I feel a lot of satisfaction in knowing that when I serve, it's making a difference to help a larger amount of people."



Jim Steiner, '85, is mayor of Corona, California and a former celebrated Corona firefighter. Like most high school graduates, he was unsure of what to expect when he entered Santa Ana College in the fall of 1983; but he says that he immediately felt "connected." Although it took Jim thirteen years to complete his SAC degree after graduating from the fire academy, working construction full time, juggling family life, and joining the Corona Fire Department, he did it by taking a course or two every semester.

As a firefighter, Steiner always went the extra mile. Once he made a call to the Fire Department of New York to coordinate an escort to the hospital for a young girl with a brain tumor to receive life-saving surgery. Another time, he organized a crab boil to raise funds for a mother and son stricken with cancer at the same time – and raised \$40,000 in a day, which covered food and rent for an entire year. Steiner's service has been noticed and honored many times: Citizen of the Year, Father of the Year, Firefighter of the Year (twice) and Heart of a Hero.

Steiner saw an opportunity to serve his community in a new way when he began his campaign for mayor. "I felt like the public would appreciate my communication style, and as a neighbor who was willing to work his butt off to try and improve things," he said. Five thousand door knocks later, he says that he is "still fighting fires, just in a different way now."



Mike Talbot, '66, is CEO and president of Universal Space Lines, an attorney, and a military Judge Advocate Officer. In 1963, the son of a military family and recent Tustin Union High School graduate enrolled in Santa Ana College as a football player. Shortly after returning for his second year, Talbot lost his job. "That's where Santa Ana came through," he said. After sharing his circumstances with the coaches, they set him up with job assignments on campus – handing out towels, working in the cafeteria, cutting shrubs, anything they could find to help him out.

His hard work made an impression on the assistant dean who set him up for an interview to be an office clerk at the largest law firm in Orange County at the time. This role led him first to California State University Long Beach, then to law school at the University of California where he graduated top of his class. Talbot went on to enjoy a successful career

in corporate law and a brief stint as a film producer. He then returned to practicing law at Stradling, Yocca, Carlson & Rauth, the largest firm in Newport Beach.

After a long and storied career, Talbot began looking for an exit from the legal profession. His subscription to "Aviation Week & Space Technology" magazine sparked an interest. He went on to meet Pete Conrad, naval officer, NASA astronaut, and third man to walk on the Moon, and became the CEO and president of Universal Space Lines, an aerospace solutions company that provides the "brains of space launch vehicles." After his USL tour, Talbot dusted off his law license to serve as a Judge Advocate Officer. Now he is a captain in the California State Reserve and a lieutenant colonel.

For the past 50 years, Santa Ana College has honored over 180 outstanding alumni representing all walks of life. The tradition began in 1955 when the first three award recipients were named. A formal Alumni Hall of Fame was developed in 1991, with a biennial ceremony to honor the inductees. The 2020 inductees will be honored with a ceremony in Spring 2021.

"I invite any and all alumni to reach out to the SAC Foundation to get involved with the exciting efforts that are taking place in Alumni Relations right now," said Rivera.

For more information, contact SAC Foundation executive director Christina Romero at romero_christina@sac.edu or 714.564.6091.

About Santa Ana College

*Santa Ana College (SAC), which turned 100 years old in 2015, serves about 27,000 students each semester at its main campus in Santa Ana. The college prepares students for transfer to four-year institutions and provides invaluable workforce training and customized training for business and industry. In addition, another 11,000 students are served through the college's School of Continuing Education located at Centennial Education Center. Ranked as one of the nation's top two-year colleges awarding associate degrees to Latino and Asian students, the college is also recognized throughout the state for its comprehensive workforce training programs for nurses, firefighters, law enforcement and other medical personnel. SAC is one of two comprehensive colleges under the auspices of the **Rancho Santiago Community College District**.*

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