

MiraCosta

Transforming Lives

Arrived!

Your Best Begins
at MiraCosta College
OUR ALUMNI TELL ALL

WORD IS OUT ABOUT THE BEST DEAL IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Community colleges are responsible for providing a superior higher education to approximately 3 million Californians each year and close to 11 million students nationwide. Students enroll at community colleges to earn an associate degree, complete the first two years of a university degree, or train for a career in a variety of high-wage and technical fields.



Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President
MiraCosta College

Many students attend their local community college, like MiraCosta College, because it is close and convenient, while for others the soaring costs of four-year schools have made it a financial necessity. For some, it is a first crack at college. For others, it is a last chance. Many arrive with limited language skills or underprepared for the rigors of college work, yet through their hard work and diligence, they graduate. Whatever the reason for attendance, we embrace and accept them all gladly and without exception. Our students and their families soon learn that community colleges represent the greatest educational value per dollar and that our teachers, programs and services are among the very best in higher education.

This fall, MiraCosta College will be the college of choice for thousands of students, including my own daughter, Angelica. Like so many moms and dads across the country, my wife and I took Angelica to visit several colleges and universities throughout her high schools years and ensured that she took a rigorous course load and engaged in extracurricular leadership activities. Angelica did everything we expected and more, and was granted admission to some excellent four-year schools. However, upon exploring the MiraCosta College Music Program and visiting with music professor and alto saxophone player Steve Torok, she quickly discovered the advantages of attending a community college. She saw for herself what I describe as our competitive advantage—personalized instruction from passionate and skilled instructors in a supportive environment that puts students first.

In this edition of *MiraCosta, Transforming Lives*, we share with you the stories of three of our alumni who came to MiraCosta College because they were attracted to superb quality of our programs and services. While here, all three excelled and were pushed by our faculty and staff to discover their own capabilities, passion and excellence. You'll read about Emily O'Brien, three-time Emmy nominee, who enrolled to participate in our award-winning Theatre Program and is now turning heads in Hollywood; Douglas Green, M.D., who chose MiraCosta College because of our highly successful Transfer Program and is now a well-respected and published radiologist; and Rita Naranjo, who realized a college education would take her from poverty to self-reliance. All three recognized that MiraCosta College could help them attain success, and each was helped along the way by people, like you, whose beliefs and support made their dreams a reality.

As for Angelica, whether or not she sticks to her current goal of music education is not what is most important. It is the fact that she believes, like those featured in this magazine and all of our students, that anything is possible and that it all can begin right here.

Thank you for your continued support and for your investment in the futures of our students and our college.



Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President



Angelica Rodriguez plans to be a music major in the fall with a long term goal of being a music educator and performer.

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On the Cover is a stunning shot of Emily O'Brien, courtesy of Los Angeles photographer/artist Brad Elterman.



Emily O'Brien

Her life's been a soap opera; within a year of graduating from MiraCosta College Emily landed a role on daytime drama, "The Young and the Restless."

John Wayne was discovered loading boxes onto a truck. Marilyn Monroe was a model. Lana Turner ditched class and was discovered at a Hollywood soda fountain. These "right-place-at-the-right-time" stories would have us believe that an acting career happens as randomly as a lightning strike. If that's true, there's a storm system over the theatre program at MiraCosta College.

While a student at Carlsbad High School, Emily O'Brien attended a MiraCosta College production of *West Side Story*. "I was utterly and completely blown away. I knew I definitely wanted to go there. It felt right."

Emily starred in the college productions of *The Children's Hour* and *Moon Over Buffalo* and went on to perform in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. There, she was a finalist in the Irene Ryan Acting Competition, an honor that put her in the top five percent of all theatre students across the country.

Emily completed a theatre major at MiraCosta College in 2005, and was honored to have her efforts recognized with a scholarship. "The scholarship gave me encouragement and allowed me to focus more time on rehearsals instead of on my outside job—I still appreciate it," recalls Emily.

A year after she finished up on the MiraCosta College stage with a tour-de-force performance as Louise in *Gypsy*, Emily landed the part of Jana Hawkes on CBS's *The Young and the Restless*. Emily's been nominated for an Emmy three of the five years she's portrayed Jana, and in the roll has spent time in prison for murder, had a brain tumor,

and was kidnapped and held hostage in an abandoned zoo. With Jana's life of high drama recently resulting in her death, Emily looks forward to broadening her acting career. She's excited about pursuing work in movies and on Broadway.

Lightning struck for Emily thanks to the exceptional theatre program and scholarship offered by the MiraCosta College Foundation. "MiraCosta gave me an amazing platform," Emily says. "Everyone at MiraCosta was backing me up when I went to Hollywood—it was like having cheerleaders—and you need that in this competitive business." ■

MiraCosta Theatre Professor Eric Bishop agreed that she belonged at the college. "I saw Emily play Fantine in her high school's production of *Les Misérables*. I knew that this was a student I wanted to recruit to our theatre program."

Emily credits MiraCosta College's Theatre Program and teachers/directors like Eric Bishop for nurturing the drive for excellence as well as teaching her discipline, professionalism and the ability to collaborate. That's all part of the program's approach to theatre says Eric. "We make it clear that all students in the program are theatre students, not separate camps of actors, designers or technicians. Actors work as technicians, likewise designers and technicians as actors. This creates a sense of esprit de corps that signals we are all working toward the same goals."

The training equipped Emily for the demands of Hollywood in ways that larger schools could not, allowing her to take on lead roles as soon as she started her classes.

A Life's Story

Written with

Good Works



Theresia Heyden's charitable gift annuity is the largest in MiraCosta College's history and will benefit nursing students.

Her life story could be a best seller. But instead of writing a book, this former German countess, nurse, pilot, prisoner of World War II and philanthropist prefers to use her time and resources to alleviate suffering for children in war-torn Afghanistan and pave the way for financially strapped students to earn a nursing degree at MiraCosta College.

Theresia Heyden is a true citizen of the world and could have made her home on almost any continent. We count ourselves lucky that she has chosen to live in Oceanside, where her home has become the epicenter of her good works. It is from her modest house that she is currently planning her next trip to Afghanistan, where she will meet with three orphaned siblings whom she

financially supports and where she will check in with a friend who runs a secret school for girls that Theresia funds.

Here in her own back yard, Theresia has just established a \$100,000 charitable gift annuity with the MiraCosta College Foundation, specifying that the remainder of her gift be used to fund scholarships for nursing students. Her affinity for nursing stems from her lifelong nursing practice—in World War II as a battlefield nurse, as a volunteer nurse practitioner for the World Health Organization in the Indonesian province, Irian Jaya, and in meeting the needs of the suffering in Afghanistan after the 2005 Kashmir earthquake.

"I'm an idealist and I love people. I'm a good diagnostician because where I go, I must diagnose without a hospital. I teach but I also learn, even from the primitive tribe I lived with in New Guinea," Theresia explained to a *Los Angeles Times* newspaper reporter when being interviewed about her membership in Mensa, where applicants must score in the top two percent of the population on a standardized intelligence test.

As Theresia, at the age of 87 and going strong, continues to save the world one person at a time, MiraCosta College nursing students know that they have a new friend. ■



Theresia lived for a time in Turkey. Before moving away she celebrated with the neighborhood children the new school that would be built with the proceeds from the sale of her house.



Volunteering with the World Health Organization, Theresia spent six months working with a tribe in West Papua, New Guinea.

WHAT IS A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY?

Simply put, it's an exchange—you transfer your cash or property to us and we pay you a guaranteed, fixed annual income for life.

Payments may be set up for you alone or for you and your spouse. Once all annuitants have been paid, we receive the remaining value.

One benefit of the gift annuity is that your payment amount is fixed at the very beginning; you have the security of knowing your income

will not change based on fluctuating interest rates. And depending upon your gift, you may receive the added benefit of mostly tax-free income. You will receive a charitable deduction at the time you make your gift to us.

Find out the rate you would receive on your gift annuity. Call Linda Fogerson, MiraCosta College Foundation Executive Director and Certified Specialist in Planned Giving: 760.795.6775.

Dr. Douglas Green

“Community college is an amazing opportunity for people not focused on a specific academic pursuit to have time for exploration—you never know what will spark your interest.”

Doug Green graduated from The Bishop’s School in La Jolla with little idea of what he wanted to do. He thought possibly he might like to work as marine scientist, yet he could also see himself pursuing music and becoming a cool bass player. To Doug it seemed a risky proposition to take on debt for a college degree when he wasn’t focused on the undertaking.

Doug looked for a more practical option and found it at MiraCosta College, where he could affordably explore his interests and have a guaranteed transfer to a university. Doug considered the decision to enroll a “no brainer.” It was at MiraCosta College that Doug began the intellectual journey that led him to medical school.

As a medical doctor, Doug specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases involving the brain, spine, and head and neck, such as stroke, cancer and aneurysms. He recently completed a fellowship in neuroradiology at UCSD Medical Center and is heading to the Finger Lakes region of New York for his new position as staff radiologist with a not-for-profit medical group.

What motivated his scholarly dedication can be traced to one night in the MiraCosta College Library. Doug was studying from a botany textbook that he, at the time did not see the need to buy. As he was speed-reading a chapter before the library closed, his botany professor passed by. Doug recalled being embarrassed because he was impossibly behind on the readings. After the next botany class, the professor asked to talk to Doug, who expected to be reprimanded on not being prepared. Instead the professor gave him the class textbook.

“MiraCosta College provided a foothold for me to begin my academic career,” says Dr. Green. “The experience played a huge role in getting me where I am today.”

“He said it was last year’s edition, but not much had changed and he explained it was an extra copy.” Doug remembers that the book was practically new.



“I can literally mark that moment as a turning point in my academic career,” Doug says of his instructor’s show of faith. “When my professor took an interest in my education and wanted me to succeed, I felt empowered, inspired.”

Doug went on to complete his transfer requirements at MiraCosta and graduated with a B.S. in biological sciences from the University of California, San Diego. He was admitted to the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, earning an M.D. as well as a Ph.D. in cellular and molecular neuropathology.

With 14 years of post-graduate education under his belt, Doug has worked with innumerable, highly acclaimed professors, but found that only a few showed as much interest in the development of their students as his community college professors. “The instructors at MiraCosta aren’t there for prestige; they are there for the students.” ■

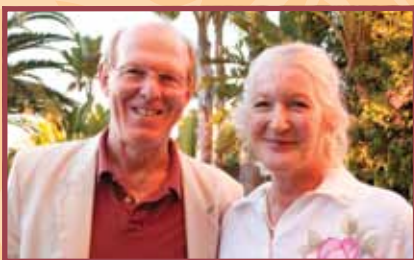
To our many Osher initiative donors Thank you

for creating a scholarship endowment of more than
\$1 million for
MiraCosta College Students

The MiraCosta College Foundation gratefully acknowledges the individuals and organizations that fully funded named scholarships and those who boosted the fundraising for the Osher Initiative with contributions of at least \$1,000. **Named Scholarships:** American Association of University Women, Del Mar-Leucadia Branch • Susan Eckley • Emerson Network Power • Genentech • Howard Charitable Foundation • Matsui-Beckman • Samuel D. & Melinda L. Riccitelli • Eva Stjernfeldt & Alec Babiarz **The following scholarships were established and named in memory of loved ones:** Martin Broad by Tina Jones & David Broad • Margaret Eginton by Jackie & Ed Eginton • Lucy C. Hoskins by Roberta Collier and Jennifer Samaha • Joshua Kerrigan by Jacki & Daniel Nagle • Joan C. King by Toni & Gregory King and Kathryn & Mike Loarie • Rose E. Nemeth by Karen & Jim Austin • Gail Prentiss by Julie & David Hattoff and many friends • Julius G. Raetz by Patricia Jennings-Raetz • Drue Knox Williams by June and Knox Williams **The membership of several MiraCosta College organizations established and fully funded the following scholarships:** Academic Senate • Associated Student Government • Classified Employees • President's Circle • Spotlight Circle • Women's Advisory Committee **In response to a one-to-one challenge match made anonymously by a member of the Foundation Board of Directors, the generosity of many resulted in the establishment of scholarships for specific majors:** Nursing • Performing Arts • Science **Generous Supporters also include:** • Elaine & Bob Algeo • Alliance Engineering of California, Inc. • Elaine & James Berquist • Biogen Idec • Muriel Kaplan • Jean Kellogg • Vicki Krivoski & William Smith • Stephen "Hap" L'Heureux • Connie Matsui & Bill Beckman • Kathleen & Andrew and Mauro • Premier Food Services • Losahn & James Dennis Staley • Peter Stern • Frances Hamilton White

To the Bernard Osher Foundation: Thank you for donating millions to establish the California Community Colleges Scholarship Endowment and for challenging us to join you in raising funds that will forever provide financial support for our students.

The Martin Broad Scholarship established in loving memory by Tina Jones and David Broad



Tina Jones and husband David Broad, MiraCosta College Trustee, are originally from Great Britain and now U.S. citizens. From their perspective, the community college system, which has no equal in the U.K., presents a truly remarkable opportunity to enter higher education. The Osher Initiative motivated them to make a lasting gift that will enable generations of students to attend MiraCosta College. The Martin Broad Scholarship Endowment is named in memory of David's brother.



David cherishes the memories he has of his younger brother, Martin, to whom he was a protective companion. When only 8, Martin died of leukemia. For young David, the loss forged a determination to vanquish the enemy that had taken his brother. David pursued his goal at the University of London, earning a B.S. and Ph.D. in microbiology, and during his long career in the biopharmaceutical industry, dedicated his efforts to developing and producing cancer treatments.

Rita Naranjo

Rita's children, 2-year-old Selea, Amir, 10, and Sativa, 16 (not pictured) are the ultimate beneficiaries of their mother's determination to gain an education.



CHOICES

LIFE-CHANGING

Rita Naranjo could have been just another statistic, just another cautionary tale. Instead, she is proof of the power of education to change a life. Rita has early memories of her family—brothers to play with, parents who loved her—before it all fell apart. She was four when her father was murdered in Colombia, and due to her mother's drug addiction, Rita and her siblings were removed from her care. Her childhood was spent going in and out of foster homes before becoming pregnant at age 14 and being sent to juvenile hall.

It was the birth of her daughter, Sativa, and Rita's decision to be a mother her child could depend on that drove her next choices. At 16, Rita attended a local continuation high school and simultaneously began taking classes at MiraCosta College. "Getting a better education was a means of survival," she explains. "I didn't want to be poor forever. I knew that higher education would be a way out of poverty."

She excelled at school, graduating from high school one year early and then enrolling full-time at MiraCosta College. At the college, she found people who understood her past, but saw what she was capable of in the future.

She was awarded the renewable Mort and Agatha Winski Scholarship, which was set up specifically to help diligent, financially struggling students. Rita graduated with an A.A. in social and behavioral sciences and transferred to San Diego State University where she earned a B.A. in social work. She's attending CSU San Marcos, working on her master's in applied sociological practice.

"I've made financial sacrifices so that I can go to school," Rita says. "But, I decided that I would

stick with it for my children. Everything I've done has been with them in mind."

At the same time Rita has come "home" to MiraCosta College where she initially worked in school relations and outreach. Her job was to reach out to diverse communities of people who, like Rita, never saw college in their futures. Now, she works in the career center coordinating on-campus employment for students.

Rita's professional goal is to reform the nation's foster care system so that she is no longer a statistical outlier; only three percent of former foster youth attain a college degree and forty percent of persons living in homeless shelters are former foster youth.

"We should not allow poverty to be a barrier to pursuing higher education," Rita says. "I tell people, regardless of where we come from or if we've had struggles, education is something that is attainable." ■

The special encouragement Rita found at MiraCosta College is no accident. For years our student services program has squeezed out extra funding to assist former foster youth like Rita. Now that small program is being formalized thanks to a grant from the Leichtag Family Foundation. This expanded effort, which Rita had a hand in designing, reaches out to former foster youth to encourage them to enroll in college and then provides intensive counseling support to assist with basic needs such as housing and employment. To find out how you can help former foster youth succeed in college, call the MiraCosta College Foundation at 760.795.6777.



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www.miracosta.edu ■ foundation.miracosta.edu

YOU
SHOULD
HAVE
BEEN
HERE!...



It was a crowded house in the Concert Hall when we began a new tradition: with proud friends and family watching, recipients of MiraCosta College fall 2011 scholarships were personally congratulated and handed their award letters by donors. The scholarships are funded by a variety of sources: some annually by civic organizations, businesses, and individuals; and many are gifts set up as endowments that build over time, generating larger amounts every year to be shared with students. **Next year, you too can join us in the celebration. You're invited to become a scholarship sponsor and make an invaluable contribution to student success. We'll save you a seat... rsvp 760.795.6777**

