



**Santa Ana College**

# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

## **High School Students Earn Associate's Degrees** *Teens take college courses along with their high school curriculum*

**(Santa Ana, CA)** – Sixty-three students will graduate from Middle College High School (MCHS) with their high school diplomas, and 13 of those students will also graduate with their associate's degree and transfer as juniors to universities. On Wednesday, June 13, at 1 p.m., Middle College High School will celebrate this unique graduating class of 2007 at Santa Ana College's Phillips Hall Theatre. Dr. Erlinda Martinez, Santa Ana College president will serve as distinguished keynote speaker.

Adrian Reyes, 18-years-old, is ranked second in this graduating class. "I have been fortunate to have participated and completed my high school and two-year college requirements through this program," said Reyes. "Now, I have a jumpstart on completing my bachelor's degree compared to other incoming high school graduates." Reyes has been accepted and plans to attend the University of California Irvine in the fall. He will begin his studies as a junior and major in biological science.

Since 1997, Santa Ana College (SAC) has been the community college host of MCHS, an early college access program in which students have the opportunity to concurrently pursue a high school diploma and a college degree. This unique school is a collaboration between Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) and Ranch Santiago Community College District. While the school is located on the college campus, all teachers are employed by SAUSD. Students take high school curriculum courses, which are required by SAUSD but also take college courses to fulfill requirements by the state of California for earning an associate's degree.

The concept for middle college high schools was originally developed by Dr. Janet Leiberman of La Guardia Community College in New York and is being promoted nationwide through Gates Foundation grants. Today, there are over 30 middle colleges located across the nation. The Gates Foundation has provided grants locally to help fund MCHS and Olive Crest Early College High School, another collaborative venture of SAC and SAUSD.

"The program was established for the average student, to provide him or her with a platform to excel and reach for higher education," said Jean Williams, MCHS principal.

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Although the high school environment is traditional, students face additional challenges since they are also completing courses at SAC to fulfill their two-year college requirements.

“The program has been demanding, but the rewards have made it worthwhile,” continued Reyes. “I would recommend this program to anyone who seeks to be challenged.”

Reyes and his peers have each completed 60 transferable units for acceptance as juniors to four-year institutions and are scheduled to attend universities throughout the state, including Chapman University, San Francisco State University, University of California Santa Cruz, and Woodbury University.

For more information regarding Middle College High School, contact Jean Williams at (714) 564-6136.

### **About Santa Ana College**

*Santa Ana College is a public community college that serves nearly 50,000 credit and non-credit students annually. SAC provides 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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