



Retired Professor Mary McChesney Gifts \$1 Million to OCC Planetarium

The Orange Coast College Foundation has received a gift of \$1 million from retired Spanish Professor Mary McChesney. The donation will fund a Foucault Pendulum for the College's Planetarium, which is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2018.

McChesney, 91, is making the donation in honor of her late partner, Adelyn Bonin, who passed away in January of this year. Bonin — also a professor who taught German — retired from OCC in 1983 after 24 years of teaching.

"I know Lyn would be happy to do this. This is half hers," says McChesney. "I like to think she sees what we're doing, and she approves."

OCC's Planetarium will be the first of its kind in Orange County, serving as a premiere science center for both college and grade school students. The facility will include a state-of-the-art theatre and presentation room with a 40-foot dome and theater style seating for 125. Construction on the concrete dome began earlier this summer.

The Planetarium also will include an exhibit hall featuring

a Science on a Sphere National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration display globe, and a Foucault Pendulum. The pendulum — which will be powered by an electromagnet and used to demonstrate the rotation of the earth — will be one of only a few in the state, and will be the only Foucault Pendulum in Orange County.

After seeing a brochure detailing plans for the facility, McChesney knew that she wanted to contribute.

"When I joined the faculty of Orange Coast College in 1950, I became a part of brother and sister scholars who loved to teach — that was the best decision I ever made," she says. "The College is now building a Planetarium, which will be a center of scientific studies for college students as well as the surrounding community. I have grown old, but my love for this college is very much alive. Here is the promise for an exciting future."

OCC Chamber Singers Perform 'Songs of the Slave' at Carnegie Hall in New York

When Orange Coast College's Chamber Singers — along with five other choruses from California — took part in a performance of Kirke Mechem's "Songs of the Slave" at Carnegie Hall in New York City on June 24, the atmosphere was electric.

Perhaps it was the fact that OCC's top choir had spent months preparing for the 35-minute cantata, which focuses on Frederick Douglass and communicates a powerful message about freedom, justice and equality. Or perhaps it was the fact that the composer of the stunning piece was sitting in the audience with 40 of his closest family and friends. In any case, it was clear that the singers on stage poured their hearts into the music, and the audience responded in kind.

"We spent two and a half days rehearsing the work in New York, then presented it to a nearly full audience who gave us a lengthy standing ovation afterward," said Director of Choral and Vocal Activities Eliza Rubenstein. "The staff members of Manhattan Concert Productions, the company that organized and produced the performance, said over and over that they'd never seen a festival chorus that was so dedicated and so enthusiastic, and more than a few people told me over the course of the weekend that our OCC students were the nicest group of kids they'd ever met."

Along with the other choruses, OCC's Chamber Singers were joined by soloists Marlissa Hudson (soprano) and Donnie Ray Albert (bass-baritone), as well as the New York City Chamber Orchestra.



"[We] performed this work a year ago, and its gripping music and unforgettable text quickly stamped it in our hearts and minds as a favorite," explained Rubenstein. "The opportunity to bring it to a national stage was one we couldn't resist."

Corpse Flower Viewing Fundraiser Raises Money for Three Scholarships

Orange Coast College's Classified Senate raised \$1,500 — enough money for three student scholarships — during a Corpse Flower viewing event held on June 28-30.

The event was organized after the College's horticulture department announced it had an *Amorphophallus Titanum*, better known as a "Corpse Flower," set to bloom.

OCC's flower was named "Little Dougie" after Foundation Director Doug Bennett, and was grown from seed provided by the Huntington Botanical Gardens in 2003.

Corpse Flowers are known for their pungent odor, which many people liken to rotting flesh. The plant can take many years to bloom and has the potential to grow more than 10 feet tall. The College's Classified Senate organized a viewing event with a suggested donation of \$3 for visitors hoping to catch a whiff of the endangered plant.



OCC's flower bloomed late Wednesday evening, and remained open on Thursday and Friday. Hundreds of visitors came to campus to view the plant, which was on display on the patio of OCC's Administration Building.

The Daily Pilot newspaper wrote about the event on June 29, noting that "the plant's pungent perfume has evoked comparisons to rotten fish, cheese and sweaty socks."

Honors Expo Offers Students a Chance to Get Involved on Campus, In Community

OCC will host its semi-annual Honors Expo on August 24 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. in the Peterson Gymnasium foyer. The event will include representatives from many of the College's 16 honor societies and its Honors Program, and will give prospective honors students a chance to gather information about how to get involved, both through academics and through volunteer service in the community.



OCC is home to the largest number of honors organizations among two-year colleges in the state. The College's honor societies give students a chance to gain scholarly and service distinction, and provide an avenue for close interaction with like-minded students, faculty and staff.

"If a student wants to be in the same room with smart, creative, enthusiastic and successful people who support and encourage them, or if they want to make a significant difference on campus or in the community as a volunteer, they should think about attending OCC's Honors Expo," says honors program office coordinator Teresa Scarbrough.

Membership in one of OCC's honors societies also gives students exposure to scholarships for their studies at OCC or at a four-year institution after transfer, and provides leadership experience.

The Expo will be a precursor to the opening of the Garrison Honors Center on campus, which is scheduled to be complete by the end of September. A grand opening will be announced at a later date.

Save the Date! OCC Flex Day Scheduled for Aug. 25

Orange Coast College's faculty and staff will have a chance to welcome new employees and learn about the current state of the College at Orange Coast College's Fall Flex Day (formerly known as Focus Day) for employees on Friday, Aug. 25, from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. in the main campus Quad.

Attendance is required for all full-time faculty, and part-time faculty are welcome to participate and will be paid for up to three hours of attendance. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.