



VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Moorpark College • Oxnard College • Ventura College • District Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ventura College Custodian Selected as VCCCD 2021 Classified Employee of the Year

Camarillo, Calif. (March 25, 2021)—With his trademark “Ask Me” button showcasing his helpful attitude, Ventura College’s Alwin Sauers Jr. has been named the 2021 Ventura County Community College District Classified Employee of the Year. The VCCCD bestows this honor in accordance with the California Community Colleges (CCC) Board of Governors, who will now consider Sauers for the CCC statewide award. The award recognizes classified professionals who positively influence countless lives by showing the utmost commitment to our community colleges, by upholding professional ethics and standards and by serving the community with purpose and passion. They embody the best of California’s community colleges.

Fellow VCCCD Classified Employee of the Year nominees included Thomas “Tommy” Arellano of Moorpark College, and Gabriela Rodriguez of Oxnard College.

“Our classified employees often work behind the scenes, yet they play a critical role in helping VCCCD students achieve their academic and professional goals,” said Board Chair Joshua Chancer. “All three candidates are outstanding employees who reflect the District’s focus on serving students, and we are thrilled to have Alwin represent the District at the state level.”

“These nominees have been vital in maintaining the District’s outstanding educational opportunities for our approximately 31,000 students, despite the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Chancellor Greg Gillespie. “The District is honored to employ these three leaders as their commitment allows us to maintain a firm foundation for academic and career fulfillment at Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura colleges.”

Arellano is the athletic equipment manager at Moorpark College. He is known for his unlimited skills and contributions to the athletic department during his 39 years with the District. Arellano is an expert at repairing essentially any equipment breakage, is highly skilled in technology and has a knack for growing relationships with students, alumni and staff.

“Throughout his nearly four decades as MC’s equipment manager, Tommy has provided exemplary service to student-athletes, faculty, coaches, classified staff and athletic directors. No

single person has imprinted him/herself onto the MC athletic program even close to the extent Tommy has,” wrote Dr. Howard Davis, dean of student learning, in Arellano’s nomination.

Rodriguez is the student activities specialist for Oxnard College. For the past five years, she has served students and staff with a passion that is imperative to maintaining OC’s high-quality enrichment and academic offerings. As a powerful advocate for student success, Rodriguez serves in myriad roles on college and District committees and with community organizations. She chairs the Graduation Committee, tri-chairs the college’s Guided Pathways Committee and is an active member of the Student Equity and Success Committee. Rodriguez also initiated the OC Food Pantry program for students in need.

“Gaby focuses on students with every breath she takes. In all her interactions at the college, Gaby is conscientious, strives for success and is fired up to participate. ... She does all of this with her characteristic boundless energy and drive to make OC a special place to study and work for everyone,” noted Dr. Oscar Cobain, vice president of student development, in the nomination.

Sauers is a custodian at Ventura College and Ventura College East Campus, where his focus for over seven years has been on serving students. Sauers is an ever-present fixture on the campuses, making him a VC and VCEC ambassador available to help students. With his “Ask Me” button and gentle demeanor, every student feels comfortable asking him for assistance. As an essential worker, Sauers takes special care in guaranteeing the cleanliness of the campuses during the pandemic and always.

“Alwin Sauers Jr. is special. He is a mensch, a good man, who does his job and then some with a true commitment to all the students that we serve. When his name comes up in a discussion or meeting, the response from everyone is always the same: we smile and sing his praises. Alwin is truly deserving of this honor,” wrote Susan Royer, college services supervisor, in Sauers’ nomination.

Up to six recipients will be honored as California Community Colleges Classified Employee of the Year at the May 2021 Board of Governors meeting, where they will receive a \$750 cash award and a plaque.

About Ventura County Community College District

The Ventura County Community College District is a member of the 116-campus California Community College system and serves approximately 31,000 students annually. The District's three colleges--Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura--offer programs in general education for degrees and certificates, transfer to four-year colleges and universities, career technical education, and provide opportunities to engage in co-curricular campus activities. For more information, please visit vcccd.edu.

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