

# Jessica Mejia gets February CEO Leadership Award

At the February Meet and Greet last Thursday Feb. 25, City CEO Tom Hatch presented Deputy City Clerk Jessica Mejia with the CEO Leadership Award.

“The City Clerk’s Office is right on the front lines of City Hall,” Hatch said. “We have a great team in that office who help the public with all their requests on a daily basis and Jessica is a big part of that team.”

Mejia has been with the City of Costa Mesa for a year and a half. Prior to coming to Costa Mesa she worked for the cities of San Dimas and Monterey Park.

She graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a Bachelor’s Degree in English. When she’s not helping manage the City Clerk’s office and marathon council meetings, she is running marathons.

She is an avid runner and over the last two years she has run 28 half marathons, and two full marathons, the L.A. Marathon and the San Francisco Marathon.

Mejia has been very helpful assisting all the new Committee and Commission secretaries on how to prepare agendas, comply with legal requirements and run the meetings.

She serves as a positive role model as she provides guidance, leadership and assistance to the secretaries.

In addition to Mejia, the city paid tribute to 10 newly hired employees as well as 11 who received recent promotions.

---

# Summer Musical Theater Program for Students Returns to Segerstrom Center for the Arts

Seegerstrom Center for the Arts is preparing for its annual Six Days of Broadway summer musical theater camp for middle and senior high school students. Students participating in these week-long intensives are introduced to musical theater technique taught by some of the industry's leading professional artists and instructors.

Classes will cover topics including musical theater performance, acting, dance, audition technique, acting on camera and introduction to the business of acting. Sessions for students ages 11 – 13 will be held June 27 – July 2 and students ages 14 –19 will be held July 5 –10.

Enrollment is currently open and scholarships are available for both weeks of camp. These scholarships cover the full enrollment fee and are made available for families that require financial assistance.



(photo courtesy:  
Seegerstrom Center for

the Arts)

Tony Award nominee and Broadway/film star Erin Dilly returns to lead the program along with Broadway veterans Stephen Buntrock, Danny Gurwin, Hank Stratton, Emily Rozek and other notable guest instructors.

The program culminates with the talented cast of students showcasing their week's efforts to invited family and friends. Classes will take place in the professional rehearsal and performance spaces of the Center's education center located in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall.

For more information and to register, please visit [www.SCFTA.org/SixDays](http://www.SCFTA.org/SixDays), call (714) 556-2122 ext. 4333 or email [classes@SCFTA.org](mailto:classes@SCFTA.org).

---

## **SCR's Junior Players Take the Stage**

*The Witches*, adapted by David Wood from Roald Dahl's popular fantasy novel, and directed by Mercy Vasquez, will be presented by South Coast Repertory's Junior Players in the Nicholas Studio, March 12-20, 2016.

The cast are members of SCR's Junior Players (grades 6-8), chosen through audition after at least two years in the Theatre Conservatory. These young actors attend class twice weekly during the school year, with additional rehearsal time prior to their annual performance.

The Junior Players portray all the roles in Wood's stage version, and include Costa Mesa residents Sasa Klein and

Caitlyn Roum in featured roles.

SCR's Junior Players (grades 5-8), Teen Players (grades 9-12) and Summer Players (grades 4-12) present three productions annually in the Nicholas Studio and Julianne Argyros Stage. Players are chosen through audition from students in SCR Theatre Conservatory's Kids and Teen Acting Classes.

---

# Something for everyone at Segerstrom Center for the Arts

Segerstrom Center for the Arts will celebrate two milestones during the 2016 – 2017 Season: the 30th Anniversary of Segerstrom Center for the Arts and the 10th Anniversary of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and Samueli Theater, both in September 2016.

This momentous season will celebrate the many performances, artists and projects of the past and continue to add new, innovative and community-inspired programming. The Center invites the entire community to join in this season of celebration.

The Center presents a broad range of programming for audiences of all ages, including international ballet and dance, national tours of top Broadway shows, intimate performances of jazz and cabaret, contemporary artists, classical music performed by renowned chamber orchestras and ensembles,

family-friendly programming, free performances open to the public from outdoor movie screenings to dancing on the plaza and many other special events.



(photo courtesy: Segerstrom Center for the Arts)

Segerstrom Center for the Arts is Orange County's largest non-profit arts organization. In addition to its six performance venues, Segerstrom Center is also home to the American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School, where students ages 3 – 14 are taught by acclaimed teachers utilizing the renowned ABT National Training Curriculum in studios utilized by the world's greatest dancers and choreographers.

The Center's arts-in-education programs are designed to inspire young people through the arts and reach hundreds of thousands of students each year. In addition to the presenting and producing institution Segerstrom Center for the Arts, the 14-acre campus also embraces the facilities of two independent acclaimed organizations: Tony Award®-winning South Coast Repertory and a site designated as the future home of the Orange County Museum of Art.

Segerstrom Center for the Arts is also proud to serve as the artistic home to three of the region's major performing arts organizations: Pacific Symphony, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County and the Pacific Chorale, who contribute greatly to the artistic life of the region with annual seasons at Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

---

# **Private Costa Mesa School Teacher named as one of the top 25 in county**

Mariners Christian School of Costa Mesa announced that its beloved fourth grade teacher, Kristin Knecht of Mission Viejo, was chosen as one of the Top 25 Teachers in Orange County for 2016 by OC Parenting Magazine.

The surprise announcement came in Knecht's classroom, who received balloons, flowers, and cheers from fellow teachers, administrators, and her students.

Knecht has over 20 years of teaching experience in fourth grade, four of them at MCS.



“Mrs. Knecht is dedicated to the idea of fostering creativity, imagination, and finding ways to apply content to the real world to motivate her students. She desires to know the unique dreams and aspirations of each student in the classroom in order to make learning come alive,” said Elementary Principal Reggie Biancalani.

One of Knecht’s educational commitments is to model for her students what it means to be a “lifelong learner” by pursuing professional development opportunities as often as she can.

From attending the California Math Council Conference so that she can teach her students to think like mathematicians, to the latest training on Literacy from Columbia University Teacher College Reading and Writing Program, Knecht is ready to implement top teaching strategies to benefit her class.

She understands the importance of assessing growth as vital data to ensure students are increasing their level of achievement.

Recently she helped implement a new national standardized assessment program called MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) geared towards identifying students' strengths and weakness in the math, reading, and language.

This year, Knecht served on the school's accreditation steering committee, the admissions committee, and she is instrumental in co-leading a group of 130 parents and 4th grade students to Sacramento and San Francisco each spring to make social studies come alive.

In addition to being a wife of 17 years and mother to her daughter Riley (an MCS student), teaching is truly Knecht's passion, and it is not uncommon to find students from years past visiting her classroom for a hug and pep talk.

---

## **Developers break ground on new luxury living project at 580 Anton**

To celebrate its soon-to-be-constructed 250-unit luxury apartment building, executives from Legacy Partners joined together with city and business leaders on Thursday Feb. 18 for a mid-morning Groundbreaking Ceremony at the 580 Anton Blvd. South Coast Metro location.

Standing in front of the active construction site complete with bulldozers, Timothy O'Brien, the managing director of

Legacy Partners hailed the virtues of this new project and all it stands to offer the residents who will live within walking distance of world-class dining, shopping and entertainment.

“We set out to design something that is timeless, classic and beautiful,” O’Brien said. “This is a fantastic place to develop a project.”

O’Brien, a lifelong Costa Mesa resident who attended Estancia High School, also complimented the city employees who assisted him in getting this project approved, and he even went as far as calling Costa Mesa’s staff the best in the state.



Costa Mesa Mayor Steve Mensinger and Councilwoman Sandy Genis also attended the event and heaped praise on the project and what it will mean to Costa Mesa.

“This project stands to create tens of thousands of jobs,” Mensinger said.

When complete, the building will yield more than 200,000 square feet of rentable space, which will have luxury

amenities and appliances as well as a fully fitted clubhouse, a concierge entry, a dog-wash station, a fitness center with a lake view, a wine bar and much more.



Legacy Partners, a privately held real estate firm based in San Francisco, acquired the former retail center in May of 2015 in a joint venture with Prudential Real Estate Investors. The development is set to complete by fall of 2017.

---

## **Chief Sharpnack names Jennifer Ruffalo as new Communications Supervisor**

The Costa Mesa Police Department continued a trend of new hires and promotions this Wednesday Feb. 17 as Chief Rob Sharpnack announced the promotion of Jennifer Ruffalo to

Communications Supervisor at a swearing-in and badge-pinning ceremony outside his office.

“These promotions are so uplifting for our department,” Chief Sharpnack said.

Sharpnack noted that the department’s communication staff answered more than 120,000 calls for service last year. And he had high praise for Ruffalo, who began her career with Costa Mesa police in 2004. Two years later, she was already a training officer and shift lead.



“You gain such an appreciation for what these folks do day in and day out,” Sharpnack said. “Jennifer is a team player who always puts the organization first.”

In 2009, Ruffalo was working with a trainee who had taken a call from a person in distress who was unable to speak. Working closely with the trainee, they were able to assist the caller with their emergency situation.

Later that year, the trainee was given an Award of Recognition

at the State 911 level for exemplary performance, and that 911 call is still used in the department's communication's training program.

Ruffalo had her badge pinned on her by her sister Courtney as several high-ranking officers, city staffer and members of the communications team looked on.

"I thank you all for your support," she said.

---

## **Tips for Tree Care During Drought**

The urban forest is a cherished resource that provides cleaner air, cooler temperatures, enhances public health and creates vibrant lively neighborhoods. As the climate becomes warmer and drier, saving our existing tree canopy and planting new trees is wise. [Click here for tips for tree care during the drought.](#) [Click here for additional information.](#)

---

## **City of Costa Mesa encourages donating not dumping unwanted goods**

Several 40-yard dumpsters sit along the north and east walls of the City of Costa Mesa Corporation Yard.

Some bins hold green waste such as branches, flowers, grass and leaves; others contain appliances, also known as “white goods.”

But one particular bin is filled to the brim with unwanted furniture, toys, and other household items that have been illegally dumped in alleys, parks, and other areas in the public right-of-way and collected by the city’s maintenance services staff.

The haul is in response to residents who are leaving behind items that ultimately are taxing city resources and staff who have to retrieve the items and keep them from accumulating on public property.

“We have one full-time senior maintenance worker and one part-time maintenance assistance assigned to pick up illegally dumped items five days a week and on-call for special needs or emergency situations,” says Maintenance Services Manager Bruce Hartley. “It takes strict commitment to keep the city streets clean.”

Dumping like this happens daily and citywide but is most prevalent around the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month when residents are moving and rental leases are expiring.

Staff members drive around town in a two-ton dump truck to collect items and fill a 40-yard dumpster measuring 8-feet wide by 6-feet tall by 20-feet deep every one to two days.

The City of Costa Mesa contracts with Ware Disposal Co., Inc. for hauling and disposal of all waste collected by the staff. Furniture and daily park trash are hauled once a week while green waste is hauled monthly. Appliances are retrieved every other month.



Shopping carts retrieved by staff are returned to the owners, and carts containing personal property are inventoried by Costa Mesa police personnel.

Alleys most affected by illegal dumping are located in the southwest area and predominantly in high-density residential neighborhoods.

Staff has seen a recent increase in property being left in the public right-of-way. However, there are multiple options available to residents for disposing or donating unwanted goods.

The Costa Mesa Sanitary District is responsible for waste collection and transferring recyclable materials for single-family residences in the city.

Through CMSD's contract with CR&R, single-family residences with up to four units are eligible for large item pick-ups three times a year at no cost.

There is a limit of 10 items per call or a combined total of 30 items per calendar year.

Residents may call CR&R Customer Service at (949) 646- 4617 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to schedule a large item pick-up.

Residents living in multiple-family units that use dumpsters are not eligible for the program through CR&R and must contact their contracted waste haulers for pick-up of unwanted items. Contact information can be found on dumpsters on by contacting property management.

In addition to disposal, residents are encouraged to donate clean, usable items to local charities. The following is a list of local organizations that may be interested in your items:

- Fresh Beginnings Ministries (to benefit Costa Mesa homeless residents who have been placed in housing and are in need of furniture and household goods), Pastor Bill Nelson, Fresh Beginning Ministries, bill@freshbeginningsministries.com
  - Project Hope Alliance (to benefit Costa Mesa homeless families placed in housing), 1945 Placentia Ave., Suite 202, Costa Mesa, CA 92627, (949) 722-7863
  - Salvation Army Family Store and Donation Dropbox, 2126 Harbor Blvd., Costa Mesa, CA, 92627, (949) 642-3636
  - Assistance League of Newport-Mesa, 2220 Fairview Rd, Costa Mesa, CA 92627, (949) 645-6929
-

# City joins in celebration of Tet Festival and Lunar New Year at OC Fair and Event Center

Council Member Sandra Genis and members of the city staff attended the opening of the 35th Annual USVA Tet Festival this past weekend at the OC Fair and Event Center.



Costa Mesa was once again home the world's largest Tet Festival, attracting over 60,000 guests to the three-day event.

Featuring culturally enriching attractions, live entertainment, festive games and rides, a variety of ethnic foods, and a spectacular firecrackers show, the festival celebrated the Lunar New Year and the "Year of the Monkey."

UVSA is a 501(c)3 non-profit, non-partisan, community-based

organization founded in 1982 to bring together Vietnamese American youth including students from different colleges and high schools throughout Southern California.

The festival serves as a vehicle to help develop student volunteers in the community to become well-rounded leaders with a strong sense of cultural awareness and civic responsibility to improve their communities.

Over the past 15 years, UVSA's members have awarded over \$1.25 million of festival proceeds as community grants to non-profit organizations across Southern California.

---

## **New bus shelters and benches coming thanks to grant money city received**

In 2014, the city captured a Measure M2 grant to improve three bus stops located at Harbor Boulevard/Victoria Street, Harbor Boulevard/Wilson Street, and Wilson Street/Harbor Boulevard.

Unique Performance Construction, Inc. has been awarded a contract in the amount of \$79,820 to complete the work.

The work to be performed consists of the installation of new bus shelters, bus benches and associated amenities.

Also included is the removal of the existing sidewalk and installation of a new decorative sidewalk.

Coordination with Edison and AT&T has taken place regarding adjustments to their facilities and work is now scheduled to begin.

Construction is anticipated to take approximately one month.

---

# Costa Mesa High School's Mesa Minute

Mesa Minute is being distributed through the High School's Peachjar program. If you have a student registered at CMHS/MS, you are automatically getting this bi-weekly newsletter to the parent emails established in the CMHS/MS database. Click on the button on the right to be linked to the rest of the newsletter. They will be available on schoolloop. Please email [vhatch@nmusd.us](mailto:vhatch@nmusd.us) for any subscription issues. Mesa Minute can also be viewed on [cmhs.schoolloop.com](http://cmhs.schoolloop.com).

## No School

There will be no school on:

February 15th–19th for Presidents Recess

## Mesa High/Middle School Newsletter

Lunch & Learn Engineering & Manufacturing

February 24, 2016 during lunch in the library

Enjoy pizza while you hear about the various career pathways available in engineering and manufacturing from professionals who have the up-to-date insight

RSVP with Ms. Allie Hatch or Mrs. Mary Harrison (schoolloop, in person, phone) to reserve your pizza!

## COSTA MESA ZONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CMHS/MS Tutoring

Tutoring is available Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. in the Room 146. Students interested in

applying to be a tutor can get an application in the College & Career Center and the Community Service Office. For questions please contact Allie Hatch.

### **COSTA MESA ZONE SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN THE HOUR OF CODE!**

All of the schools in the Costa Mesa Zone participated in the Hour of Code on December 9, 2015. All students had the opportunity to do computer programming. Computer programming is important for our students. It will help them learn the skills needed for their future.

### **A BIG "SHOUT OUT" GOES TO DAVIS MAGNET SCHOOL STUDENTS!**

A Shout Out is the new form of positive reinforcement that is sweeping across the Davis Magnet School campus. Students may earn Shout Outs when caught following the school's five core values. Upon receiving a Shout Out, students turn in the white copy of the duplicate form to the grade level appropriate box in the front office. The yellow copy is shared with the class and/or sent home to parents. On the last Thursday of every month Mrs. Flores randomly selects two student names from every grade level box to be recognized at flag deck. Those students receive a special certificate and have their picture taken. The pictures are then on display for the remainder of the year. Davis Magnet School is in Tier II of PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports). After several meetings, discussions, and observations the staff created the school wide positive reinforcement system. Shout Out to the Davis staff for their collaboration and to our students for making good choices!

### **MS/HS STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Scholarship Information

Scholarship

Searching

Video

Tutorial:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueqYuYjBzbU>

This quick video overviews:

- three types of funding for college
- scholarship searching

- how to search for scholarships on Naviance

### Scholarship of the Week

John R. Wooden Scholarship Deadline 24, 2016

Possible award: varies

The John R. Wooden Scholarship Fund provides scholarships to students who have demonstrated a commitment to community involvement and for whom higher education might otherwise not be possible without financial assistance.

#### Criteria:

- U.S. citizen
- High school senior graduating from Newport Mesa School District
- GPA 2.0 or higher
- Plan to enroll as a full-time student at an accredited institution or as a part-time student if employed
- Demonstrate a strong pattern of community involvement, such as volunteer work and active participation in school clubs, church, etc.
- Financial need may be considered. If you choose to not enter financial information you may enter a "0"

See this link to find out about the eligibility criteria and complete the

application: <https://oc-cf.academicworks.com/opportunities/886>

For the rest of the list, please see the Naviance website <https://connection.naviance.com/family-connection/auth/login/?hsid=costamesastudent> sign in is the same login that they use for the school computers. If you are a parent and do not yet have a Naviance Parent log-in you can email Allison Hatch and she can get you a username and password.

#### Seniors

4 year university pathway: close attention to your emails so you don't miss any important or information. Don't forget to send your SAT/ACT and AP scores.

Community College pathway: It is time to apply! Go to [cccapply.org](http://cccapply.org) to start your application. If you apply to Golden West, Orange Coast, or Coastline you can take the placement test here on our campus! See the attached form for directions

on how to register.

FAFSA/Dream Act: All seniors thinking about going to any kind of higher education need to apply for either the FAFSA or Dream Act. Complete the application by March 2, 2016.

Senior Exit Project Internship: If you haven't completed your 20 hour job shadow/internship yet you need to start thinking about it.

Stop by the College & Career Center ASAP to get help

## **TER AND ROP ND ROP ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### Juniors

If you are interested in applying to 4 year universities remember you need to complete the A-G requirements, have a 3.0 or higher (see eligibility index for CSU with 2.0), have C's or higher, and complete at least one SAT or ACT test.

It is recommended that you take at least one SAT or ACT test the spring of your junior year and one the fall of your senior year.

Utilize Naviance for career and college exploration and planning!

For more information check out:<http://cmhs.schoolloop.com/collegeandcareercenter>

Stop by the College & Career Center to make an appointment to discuss college & career options

Reminders!!

Follow Counseling on social media and get updates and reminders about important events deadlines!

[www.cmhs.schoolloop.com/costamesa](http://www.cmhs.schoolloop.com/costamesa)

Instagram @cmhsnextsteps

Facebook [www.facebook.com/cmhsnextsteps](http://www.facebook.com/cmhsnextsteps)

Remind 101 Text Messages Text message @cmhs15-16 to the number 81010 to get text message reminders

Featured ROP Student – January–Susan Bravo

Susan Bravo is one busy senior. She is currently enrolled in the ROP Certified Nursing Assistant course and upon completion will be taking the State CNA test for her license. She has

registered for EMT in the spring and will have the opportunity to take the state EMT test at the same time that she graduates from CMHS. Wow! A CNA and EMT license. That is pretty amazing! As if that wasn't enough on her resume, she has completed the ROP Animal Healthcare class and interned at a local animal hospital/clinic. She says that experience was quite interesting and fun as she worked with pigs, ferrets, chickens, and exotic birds.

After graduation, Susan has applied to several colleges in hopes of continuing her education in the medical field, possibly as a nurse practitioner.

Susan says the ROP classes have offered her a hands on experience and that her CNA internship has taught her much. In caring for these elderly patients she has discovered that, "It's not like a job. I look at it like I am carry for someone's family member. And someday, it could be one of mine." Susan is definitely a stand out student and person! Many ROP spring classes are still open for enrollment and several will be offered during the summer. Come into the career center today and pick up a catalog. Susan Bravo

Students at College Park Elementary participate in the Hour of Code on December 9th.

ASB made great signs to hang on the library walls and lined the sidewalk to the gym!