



Educational Assistance Center

THE ADVOCATE: A Newsletter Devoted to Disability Equity

Thank you for believing in our students!

RECOGNIZING FACULTY WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

At Oxnard College, faculty members play an especially important role in helping students with disabilities achieve their educational, personal, and career goals. For students with learning disabilities, mental health disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and other disabilities, college can sometimes present challenges that extend beyond the classroom. A caring and understanding faculty member can make a tremendous difference.

Faculty are often among the first people to recognize when a student is struggling. Taking the time to listen, provide encouragement, explain a concept differently, or connect a student with DSPS services can help a student regain confidence and continue moving forward. Sometimes, something as simple as a professor saying, "I believe you can do this," can have a lasting impact. Our faculty also help create an inclusive classroom where students feel respected, valued, and comfortable asking for help. By recognizing individual strengths and learning differences, faculty give students opportunities to discover what they are capable of achieving rather than allowing a disability to define their potential.

For students with disabilities, success is not always measured simply by earning a degree. It can mean gaining confidence, becoming more independent, developing self-advocacy skills, and believing that a successful career and fulfilling future are possible. Faculty who provide encouragement, patience, mentorship, and understanding are an important part of that journey.

Faculty deserve recognition because their teaching, guidance, mentorship, and support help make these opportunities available to students. Supporting faculty who champion students with disabilities is an investment in the students themselves. Their dedication can turn uncertainty into confidence, obstacles into opportunities, and educational goals into accomplishments.

Every student deserves someone who believes in their potential. At Oxnard College, our faculty have the opportunity to be that person. This is our way of saying thank you for believing in our students and helping them succeed.

~ Leo Orange, EAC Coordinator

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION OR SUGGESTION FOR NEXT MONTH'S CONTENT?

Contact Leo Orange at lorange@vcccd.edu

The 7 Core Accessibility Principles

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Principle 2: Use descriptive hyperlinks

What do we mean by "descriptive" hyperlinks?

Links composed of words that describe their destination are considered descriptive. Entire URLs, or links that merely say something like "click here," are not.

Why are descriptive links important?

Screen readers such as NVDA and VoiceOver read URLs aloud in their entirety, which too often force-feeds long, nonsensical words and characters. Screen readers also offer a "links list" function that allows the user to skip from one link to the next; since the links are read aloud, hearing "click here" out of context does not

inform the user what the link is for. If the link's words are also the destination, such as "Movie Times," the user knows where it will take them.

Accessible link:

Visit the CCC's [Introduction to Alternate Media Course](#) for further training.

Inaccessible links:

<https://ccconlineed.instructure.com/courses/4706>

For an introduction to our Alternate Media course, [click here](#).



What Are We Doing Here?



It's no secret that having an education can lead to a better job. Even so, not everyone who attends community college wants to transfer to a university or graduate toward a career. Here are a few more reasons students may dedicate a portion of their income to textbooks and tuition.

Lifelong Learners: Some students love learning for its own sake. College allows students to hone in on a particular subject by taking multiple guided, interactive classes in that discipline. Subjects such as history, science, and art are as equally suited for passionate hobbyists as they are for professionals. Those who fancy a more Renaissance approach may continue pursuing multiple subjects, no matter how many associate degrees they've accumulated along the way.

Interactive Community: Some students attend Oxnard College because they love Oxnard College. This small, intimate campus, known as the College with a Heart, feels like a second home. Faces become familiar, friendships are

born and maintained, passions are shared and revisited. Students join clubs, utilize the library, and attend gatherings in the quad. Our biggest event, the Annual Family Festival, doesn't involve attending a single class. Few colleges apply "community" as prominently as Oxnard College.

Sense of Purpose: One of the most valuable traits of good mental health is having a sense of purpose. Having somewhere to show up, engage, and achieve is incredibly motivating; attending classes, performing assignments, and finishing courses hits all these marks. Being a college student can give someone a reason to wake up with enthusiasm. It can keep hope alive when times are difficult. It can instill purpose.

As we look across the faces inhabiting our classrooms, it may help to keep these reasons in mind. Our most passionate students may not be the ones using Oxnard College as a stepping stone to elsewhere; Oxnard College may simply be the place they want to be.

DID YOU KNOW EAC NOW HAS AN [ACCESSIBILITY WEBPAGE](#)?
Check it out to learn best practices for all things digital!





EAC STAFF SPOTLIGHT



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**DR. AMY
EDWARDS**

**DEAN OF LIBRARY
AND LIBERAL
STUDIES**

What do you like about being the Dean of Library and Liberal Studies?

I love this job! I love that the Library and Liberal Studies touches on so many different aspects of the student experience because our division encompasses such a wide range of disciplines and services. I enjoy working with faculty and staff across different areas and finding ways to support their success. One of the most rewarding parts of my job is helping create an environment where students feel welcomed, supported, and connected to the college. Most of all, I enjoy being in a position where I can help people solve problems and make a positive difference in their college experience.

Why do you think Oxnard College is a good fit for students with disabilities?

Oxnard College has a strong sense of community, and I think that is especially important for students with disabilities who may benefit from knowing that there are people on campus who *genuinely* care about their success. I also think the size of our campus allows students to develop meaningful relationships with faculty and staff rather than feeling like “just another 900 number.” Ultimately, Oxnard College is a place where students can find support, build confidence, and pursue their goals in an environment that values their individual strengths.

How does your role feed into ensuring accessibility on campus?

As a dean, I see accessibility as much more than simply meeting requirements—it is about making sure students can genuinely participate and succeed. Because my division includes the Library and Learning Resources Center and several student support areas, I have the opportunity to look at accessibility from both an academic and student-services perspective. I believe our responsibility is to create an environment where students don't have to fight through unnecessary barriers just to access the education they came here to pursue.

How do you like to spend your Saturdays?

I enjoy spending time with my husband, Guy, and my two kitties, Winston and Rusty! We spend our Saturdays catching up on things around the house, seeing musicals (my favorites are RENT and A Chorus Line), and finding time to simply relax. I also love a good Saturday where I can binge-watch a true crime show, see friends for dinner, go to a concert, or enjoy a very hot cup of coffee without having to rush. And, of course, sometimes the best Saturday is one spent doing absolutely nothing. It is a day typically without a published *agenda*.

If you could only have one book with you on a deserted island, what would it be?

I love to read. I read a lot of narrative fiction. I feel like I get to learn something yet also get just the right amount of story. One book... hmmm...I think I would have to go with Philippa Gregory's *The Other Boleyn Girl*, although my favorite writer is really Toni Morrison. Can I have two books?

**CONNECT
WITH US**



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