

neighbor to neighbor

COMMUNITY NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF ORANGE

CHAPMAN ALUMNI HONORED FOR STRENGTHENING ORANGE CLASSROOMS

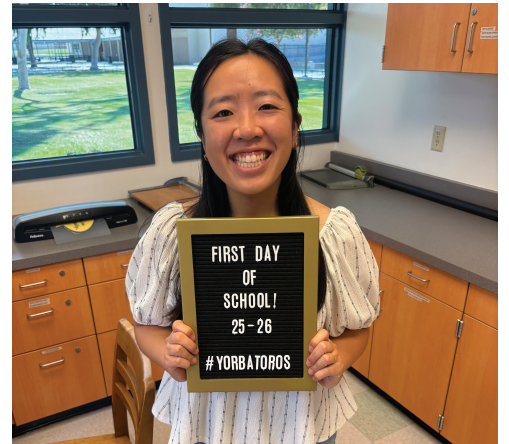
Chapman University is celebrating two alumni who are making a lasting impact in local classrooms. Attallah College graduates Dorcas Hoi (IES '18, MACI '19) and Marina Ballesteros (MA '19) have been named 2026 Teachers of the Year by the Orange Unified School District.

Hoi teaches middle school math and AVID at Yorba Middle School. She continued through Chapman's Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction. Advising, coursework, and a year-long student teaching experience helped her enter the profession feeling prepared. A math methods course also changed how she viewed the subject. "It helped me see math as a subject centered on reasoning, problem-solving and building confidence, and it ultimately set me on the path to becoming a math teacher," Hoi said. She credits Dean Roxanne Greitz Miller and Professor Quaylan Allen with encouraging her development as an educator.

Ballesteros teaches sixth grade at Fletcher Mandarin Language & GATE Academy, serving as the English counterpart teacher in

its Mandarin Dual Immersion Program. Its fieldwork and student teaching opportunities helped her develop confidence. "I think the cohort model was essential in our success," Ballesteros said. "We were able to support each other during our time at Chapman and beyond." Dean Miller's Writing for Educators course helped her communicate with the school community.

Both educators recently completed administrative credentials, strengthening their understanding of school systems and keeping their career possibilities open. Their recognition highlights the strong partnership between Chapman University and the Orange Unified School District, a connection that extends beyond the work of its graduates. Chapman reported in October 2025 that its faculty, staff, and students had performed more than 100,000 hours of work in local schools during the previous year. Together, these contributions demonstrate how investing in education strengthens local schools and the broader Orange community, one classroom, one student, and one teacher at a time.



Chapman alumni Dorcas Hoi and Marina Ballesteros, Orange Unified's 2026 Teachers of the Year.

WELCOMING NEW STUDENT AFFAIRS LEADERS AT CHAPMAN



Genia Herndon, Ed.D., senior vice president for student affairs



Chris Hutchison, Ph.D., vice president and dean of students

Supporting student success and building strong community relationships go hand in hand at Chapman University and remain enduring institutional priorities. In late July, veteran higher education leader Genia Herndon, Ed.D., joined Chapman as senior vice president for student affairs, succeeding the now-retired Jerry Price. An experienced, cabinet-level leader, Herndon joins Chapman most recently from the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver), where she served for almost two decades in progressively senior roles with responsibilities touching the entire student lifecycle from recruitment and campus life to post-graduation success. Her career at CU Denver culminated in her position as the associate vice chancellor for student affairs, the campus's senior-most student affairs leader, where she supported not only student success and career preparation but also important public-private partnerships.

Supporting Herndon in day-to-day student affairs operations is Chris Hutchison, Ph.D., vice president and dean of students, whose appointment reflects more than a leadership transition. It also reinforces the university's

ongoing commitment to preparing students to be engaged as members of both the campus and community.

Since beginning his career in higher education in 1998, Hutchison has helped shape the Chapman experience by creating opportunities for students to connect, lead, and find a sense of belonging. From supporting student organizations and fraternity and sorority life to expanding civic engagement, wellness and recreation programs, and leadership development, he has spent more than 25 years helping students grow while fostering a sense of responsibility to the communities they call home. He also teaches leadership courses at Chapman's Donna Ford Attallah College of Educational Studies, preparing the next generation of civic-minded leaders.

Throughout his career, Hutchison's work has emphasized civic learning, experiential education, and meaningful university-community partnerships. His philosophy is rooted in the belief that some of a student's most important learning happens beyond the classroom through service, leadership, and active participation in the community.

YOU'RE INVITED!

Join us for these engaging events at Chapman.

There are many terrific Chapman University events that neighbors are welcome to attend. Here are just a few. Find more at the University's online events calendar: events.chapman.edu. Advance tickets for performing arts events may be purchased online at tickets.chapman.edu.

As You Like It

October 8

Experience Shakespeare's classic comedy with a fresh, contemporary twist as Chapman's Department of Theatre presents *As You Like It*. This student production offers an engaging evening of live theater and is open to the public.

Jerry Douglas Band at Musco Center

October 22
Musco Center for the Arts

Fourteen-time Grammy® Award winner Jerry Douglas brings his acclaimed blend of bluegrass, Americana, folk, and jazz to the Musco Center for the Arts. The public is invited to enjoy an evening of live music from one of the most celebrated instrumentalists in American roots music.

More information: MuscoCenter.org

Winterfest at Chapman

November 18

One of Chapman's most anticipated traditions returns this November as the campus transforms into Winterfest. The evening features festive lights, holiday-themed activities, seasonal treats, live entertainment, and opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and guests to celebrate the start of the holiday season together. It's a fun way for neighbors to experience the Chapman campus during the holidays.



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Find more
news at
NeighborsOfChapman.com

PREPARING STUDENTS TO
BECOME GOOD NEIGHBORS

This fall, Chapman University is continuing its proactive outreach to help students understand the responsibilities of off-campus living and strengthen relationships with residents. This multi-pronged effort includes small-group meetings, live conversations, and other educational resources.

By reaching students through multiple channels, Chapman continues to invest in positive, lasting partnerships that help students and neighbors enjoy a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community.

Want to Connect?

- Contact Chapman University's Office of Community Relations at (714) 289-2097 or email neighbors@chapman.edu to engage and provide feedback.



Preparing Panthers for off-campus living

