

# Artist Michael Dergar receives award

Michael Dergar, Impressionist artist and CEO of the Academy of Special Dreams, received the Golden Award Andres Henestrosa, the highest recognition in Oaxaca, Mexico, for his mission of inclusion and financial contribution to support children facing stages one and four cancer in Oaxaca. The award was presented by Oaxaca Mexico Delegation and the National Broadcasters of Mexico.

"I want to thank all my friends and supporters from the academy but in particular Lic. Isela Sédano, Emanuel Reyes, and my dear family in Oaxaca, artist Maru Pombo and Dr. Sergio Andres Bello Guerra.

Mr. Dergar creates colorful rhythmic patterns in his art through the use of textures and colors. "While I am painting, my textures, colors, and designs awaken another part of me that connects me with another world where time does not exist," he said. His artwork can be seen in galleries internationally.

After his childhood in Mazatlan, Mexico, and his formative years in California, Mr. Dergar discovered his passion to help artists with disabilities by creating the Academy of Special Dreams Foundation, which brings public



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awareness and recognition to artists with disabilities. He lives and works mainly in the Pasadena area.

"I paint to help," Mr. Dergar said. "If I can make a difference with my talent, I will definitely use it to bring people together. Art has no borders, no nations, no language, no race. Art is universal!"



Cal State LA President William A. Covino, far right, accepted the award from the Campaign for College Opportunity at an event with alumni and students. (Credit: Cal State LA)

# Cal State LA recognized as champion for transfer students

Cal State LA has once again been recognized for its exemplary efforts in enrolling and supporting transfer students.

The university was among 15 colleges and universities in California recognized by the Campaign for College Opportunity as 2019 Champions of Higher Education for Excellence in Transfer. The institutions included 12 community colleges and three California State University campuses.

This is the second consecutive year Cal State LA has received the recognition, which honors colleges and universities that have increased the number of students earning an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), enrolling those students at a CSU with junior status, and graduating them with bachelor's degrees.

An Associate Degree for Transfer, sometimes called a "Degree with a Guarantee," is a special degree offered at all California Community Colleges that guarantees transfer to many four-year universities in the state, including CSU.

The goal of the partnership is to provide a clear pathway for students to transfer under the same program of study as their ADT to

ensure timely and cost-effective completion of their bachelor's degree program.

Of Cal State LA's nearly 3,000 transfer students in fall 2018, 28% were ADT students on a guaranteed pathway in their program of study, according to the Campaign for College Opportunity.

"Having the structure of the ADT program not only helped me save money, but it gave me peace of mind and made me feel like I have accomplished a significant step toward earning my bachelor's degree," said Leily Sanchez, a Cal State LA transfer student majoring in business administration with an option in marketing. She expects to graduate in spring 2020.

Cal State LA Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jose A. Gomez praised the efforts of ADT students and their contributions to the university.

The colleges and universities were recognized in November, along with California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, at an event celebrating the Campaign for College Opportunity's 15th anniversary. Cal State LA President William A. Covino accepted the award on behalf of the university.



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# Alhambra Rotary to award teacher mini-grants

Applications for the Rotary Club of Alhambra's Mini-Grant Program have been distributed to teachers at every school in the Alhambra School District. The Mini-Grant Program, started in 1991, awards a limited number of grants ranging from \$50 to \$200 to teachers in the Alhambra School District for enriching classroom projects in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The funds are allocated to teachers' projects at a meeting of the committee members. Funds are raised for the program through member and business donations.

"This program is in its 29th year," said Chairman Dr. David Snyder. "The Rotary Club of Alhambra has donated more than \$215,000 to this project."

Grants will be presented to the individual teachers at a school board meeting Tuesday, Feb. 4.

Other sponsors of the Mini-Grant Program are The Alhambra; Transtech Engineering; Republic Services; Kerechuk Motors Service; Spark – Linda Wong; and Beggis H. Lieberg, D.D.S.

For more information, contact Dr. Snyder at 626-282-8493.