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## **Cuyamaca College instructor one of four in the state to win community colleges' highest teaching award**

*Music Professor Pat Setzer receives Hayward Award for Excellence in Education*

**EL CAJON** – Cuyamaca College music instructor Pat Setzer, a key player in the planning and construction of a performing arts complex inside the campus' sprawling \$45 million communication arts center, is one of four community college faculty members statewide to receive the 2010 Hayward Award for Excellence in Education.

Setzer, an associate professor and chair of the college's performing arts department, joined his fellow instructors for the award presentation at the March 2 community college Board of Governors meeting in Sacramento. The award, which comes with a \$1,250 cash prize, is named after Gerald C. Hayward, chancellor of the California Community Colleges from 1980 to 1985.

"We are very proud of Pat Setzer for receiving this well-deserved recognition," said Chancellor Cindy L. Miles. "In addition to being an excellent instructor whose love for teaching is rivaled only by his love of music, Professor Setzer served as faculty consultant in the construction of the college's first performing arts venue. This jewel of a facility is the manifestation of his vision of developing and nurturing strong music and performing arts programs at Cuyamaca."

Along with a centerpiece 364-seat concert hall, the complex includes a 90-seat digital theater, three rehearsal studios, two recording studios, a 24-station electronic music lab, a media lab, 11 practice rooms and costume construction/dressing rooms. Before the complex opened in January, 2008, the 10,000-student college lacked a performing arts program and its music department was relegated to a single classroom and a single piano lab. Today, the college is in the rarefied company of Julliard and Carnegie Mellon School of Music as an All-Steinway School, a moniker bestowed by the foremost maker of concert pianos.

But Setzer, who last year received Cuyamaca's own Teaching Excellence award, is regarded as more than a good planner with a knack for deciphering architectural blueprints. Students speak glowingly of his commitment to the classroom and special connection he's made with so many, key reasons for his selection as a Hayward Award recipient.

Winners are selected through a process that begins locally with the colleges' Academic Senate faculty groups nominating one of their peers. The statewide Academic Senate for California Community Colleges then picks an honoree from each of its four regions who demonstrates the highest level of commitment to students, the

colleges and their profession. Setzer was selected from Area D, which includes 31 community colleges in the Southern California counties of San Diego, Orange, Imperial, Riverside and San Bernardino.

The names of the Hayward Award winners are then forwarded for consideration for the U.S. Professors of the Year award, co-sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. CASE is the largest international association of educational institutions.

Chris Norris, a current student of Setzer's who has even shared the stage playing in a band with the popular professor, said he's always bolstered by his words of encouragement. He credits Setzer with opening his eyes to the diverse career opportunities that a music background can offer.

"I was really nervous when I started at the beginning of the last year as a music major because of everything you hear about music not being a very practical thing to pursue," said Norris, who comes from a family of musicians and has aspirations as a composer.

"I was taking radio and television classes and planning to get into advertising, but I decided to follow my heart. Like I said, I was really nervous about that, but Pat was always very encouraging and he steered me toward the music industry program, where you learn about the business end of music and the different ways you can incorporate music in lots of different professions."

Cuyamaca's programs in music industry studies and music education are both transfer-degree programs developed by Setzer and approved by the state. The first combines training in music theory, literature, and performance with studies in music technology and business. The second is designed for the student aspiring to become a credentialed music teacher.

Norris, who plans to transfer into the music industry studies program at California State University, Northridge, describes Setzer as the best instructor he's ever had and marvels at his ability to hold a class transfixed, even as he's covering material that, on the surface, seems less than enthralling.

"I've taken classes at other community colleges and at (San Diego) State and I've never seen students as interested in their classes as they are in Pat's," he said. "I'm taking a history of jazz class right now and you kind of figure with the younger students, that jazz wouldn't be something they would respond to, but he makes such a connection with students that they're really drawn into the subject. And Pat knows so much about different types of music – it's not just the classics with him. He even knows rap, which kind of blows me away."

In his nomination letter, Cuyamaca College science professor and Academic Senate President Michael Wangler praised Setzer for his innovation and commitment to students and the college.

"He has been an exemplary mentor to both his students and peers alike and he has earned the respect of the college community for his dedication, compassion and professionalism," Wangler wrote. "He motivates and inspires his students to achieve their dreams, and is a role model for all of us who aspire to be the best in what we do."

Governing Board President Bill Garrett said Setzer epitomizes the tirelessly devoted educator who thrives to make a difference in students' lives. He added that Cuyamaca's performing arts complex is a lasting legacy to Setzer's contribution to the college and the East County as a whole.

"This facility is a tremendous investment in our college by East County taxpayers," he said in reference to Proposition R, the \$207 million bond measure approved by voters in 2002 to build and expand badly needed facilities at Grossmont and Cuyamaca colleges. "Professor Setzer thoroughly understands and embraces the

challenge to use this investment to enrich the educational and cultural lives of our students and the broader community. Everyone benefits from this facility, which has become the go-to place for high-school band competitions, ethnic music festivals, jazz ensembles, even the world-class bluegrass music of the Kruger Brothers.”

The performing arts complex just this past weekend was the site of the inaugural Grossmont Union High School District Arts Festival, which featured a variety of student productions in music, theater and the visual arts. The high school district has never held a districtwide event showcasing student art works and productions because of a lack of facilities, organizers say. Cuyamaca’s performing arts center proved to be the perfect venue.

“We are delighted that people are discovering what a cultural asset this facility is,” said Ron Manzoni, interim college president. “It is largely due to Pat’s vision that the performing arts theater and complex are here to benefit the East County region that we strive to serve.”

Setzer, who began his career in 1980, teaching at Drexel University in Philadelphia and Bucks County Community College in Newton, Pa. before joining the Cuyamaca College faculty full time in 1996, said he models his teaching after instructors who have been instrumental in his own professional development.

“When I recall educators who were my mentors, I don’t think of facts from their lectures; I remember words of encouragement they gave me at difficult moments, insightful criticisms they made of my work, extra hours they devoted to helping me and other students, or offhand remarks that stayed with me because they revealed something about their integrity or dedication,” he wrote in a statement submitted during the nomination process for the Hayward award. “My mentors inspired me to give my best efforts and to set my goals high; I hope that in my career as an educator, I can do the same for my students.”

Since 1989 – the first year the Hayward award was presented – seven San Diego County community college instructors have received the plaudit, founded by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors. The last instructor from San Diego County to win the prestigious award was Grossmont College Professor Zoe Close, who was lauded in 2005.

*The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District’s colleges are serving a combined student population of nearly 31,000 students each semester. For more information about Grossmont and Cuyamaca colleges, go to [www.gcccd.edu](http://www.gcccd.edu) or call (619) 644-7010.*

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