

PURPOSE & PLACE

Inauguration of
President Tom Stritikus
Friday, April 25, 2025

OXY Occidental College



President Tom Stritikus

Tom Stritikus began his term as Occidental College's 17th president on July 1, 2024. A first-generation college student and son of immigrant parents, Stritikus brings to Occidental more than three decades of higher education leadership experience, as well as an abiding commitment to values of inclusive excellence and equity.

In his six years as president of Fort Lewis College, a public liberal arts college located in Durango, Colorado, Stritikus helped to reinvigorate a campus that served high percentages of first-generation students and students of color. He led efforts to double the college's endowment and worked through reconciliation efforts for the Native American-serving institution.

Prior to his presidency at Fort Lewis, Stritikus was a deputy director of education at the Gates Foundation, where he developed funding plans for initiatives to improve outcomes for low-income students and youth of color nationwide. Prior to that, he served as the dean of the University of Washington's College of Education, which *US News & World Report* ranked as the sixth-best program in the nation during his tenure.

Stritikus' scholarly work examines the effect of bilingual education policy and teacher practice on the academic lives of Latin American and Asian immigrants. He received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and earned his Ph.D. in language, literacy, and culture from the University of California, Berkeley. He began his teaching experience as a Teach For America corps member in Baltimore.

In addition to his responsibilities at Occidental, Stritikus currently serves as vice chair of the American Council of Education (ACE), a higher education membership organization that leads advocacy efforts in public policy. He and his wife, Debbie Pfeifer, live in the Wallis Annenberg House on the Occidental campus and are the parents of twin boys, both college sophomores—Leo at Dartmouth College, and Hays at the University of Richmond. The fifth family member is Sky, a 9-year-old rescue dog from South Korea.

Program

<i>Processional</i>	<p>“California Love” Lyrics by Tupac Shakur and James Anderson Occidental College Music Department Faculty Directed by Jonathan Richards, Director of the Occidental Jazz Ensemble</p>
<i>Processional Marshals</i>	<p>Isaac Hale '11 Assistant Professor, Politics</p> <p>Lydia Harmon Assistant Professor, Geology</p>
<i>Land Acknowledgment</i>	<p>Vivian Garay Santiago Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students</p>
<i>Invocation</i>	<p>The Rev. Dr. Susan E. Young Director of Religious and Spiritual Life</p>
<i>Musical Performance</i>	<p>“California Dreamin’” Music and Lyrics by John Phillips and Michelle Phillips Occidental College Glee Club Directed by Désirée LaVertu, Resident Director of Choral and Vocal Activities</p>
<i>Greetings From the Board of Trustees</i>	<p>Art Peck '77 P'10 P'14 Chair-elect, Board of Trustees</p> <p>Lisa H. Link P'18 Chair, Board of Trustees</p>
<i>Featured Speakers</i>	<p>Amy Marcus-Newhall '84 P'24 President, Scripps College</p> <p>Ronald A. Crutcher President Emeritus, Wheaton College and University of Richmond</p> <p>Ernest House Jr. Senior Policy Director, Keystone Policy Center</p>
<i>Musical Performance</i>	<p>“California Soul” Music and Lyrics by Nickolas Ashford and Valerie Simpson Occidental College Music Department Faculty Directed by Jonathan Richards, Director of the Occidental Jazz Ensemble</p>

*Introduction of
President Tom Stritikus*

Cecilia Grané '26
President, Associated Students of Occidental College

Investiture

Lisa H. Link P'18
Chair, Board of Trustees

Inaugural Address

"Purpose and Place"
President Tom Stritikus

The Alma Mater

"Occidental Fair"
Composed by William D. Ward
Performed by the Occidental Glee Club

Occidental glorious,
O'er her foes victorious
Be her praise uproarious,
Occidental fair.

'Neath the mountains old and grand
By the roar of Ocean's strand,
Girt with might forever stand,
Occidental fair.

The Traditional Yell

"Io Triumphe"
Led by the Occidental Glee Club

Io Triumphe! Io Triumphe!
Haben shwablen, rebekale animor
Whoopty whoopty, shelerdy veridy,
Boomdy raldy idee-pah
Haneka-heneka whaka-whaka
Boldebara-boldebara
Com-slomidy hob-dob-rah!
O.C. Rah!

Recessional

"Ventura Highway"
Music and Lyrics by Dewey Bunnell
Occidental College Music Department Faculty
Directed by Jonathan Richards, Director of the Occidental Jazz Ensemble

Thank you for attending the inauguration of President Tom Stritikus. We would also like to extend special thanks to the dozens of members of the campus community whose hard work and dedication make a historic event such as this possible.





About the Speakers

Amy Marcus-Newhall '84 P'24

Amy Marcus-Newhall is the 11th president of Scripps College, following an acclaimed career in academia and leadership. She began as a psychology professor at Scripps in 1992 and later held key administrative roles, including associate dean of faculty and vice president for academic affairs. A founding member of the Scripps College Academy, Marcus-Newhall is recognized for her work in academic enrichment and diversity. Her research focuses on social psychology, stereotypes, and prejudice reduction. She holds a bachelor's in psychology and American studies from Occidental and a master's and Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of Southern California.

Ronald A. Crutcher

Ronald Crutcher is a distinguished classical musician and academic leader. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Miami University, he earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Yale University in 1979, becoming the first cellist to receive this honor. Crutcher has held leadership roles as associate vice chancellor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, vice president at the Cleveland Institute of Music, and director of the School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin. He is president emeritus of Wheaton College in Massachusetts (2004-2014) and president emeritus and university professor at the University of Richmond (2015-2021). A Fulbright recipient, Crutcher currently serves as a senior fellow at the Aspen Institute. His memoir, *I Had No Idea You Were Black: Navigating Race on the Road to Leadership*, was published in 2021.

Ernest House Jr.

Ernest House Jr. is an enrolled member of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe in Towaoc, Colorado, and a leader in Native American affairs. He served as executive director of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs for 12 years, fostering communication between Colorado's tribes and state agencies, while maintaining government-to-government relations with Governors Bill Owens, Bill Ritter, and John Hickenlooper. Currently, as senior policy director and director for the Center for Tribal and Indigenous Engagement at the Keystone Policy Center, he focuses on tribal consultation, energy, conservation, healthcare, and cultural resource management. House is a Gates Family Foundation and German Marshall Memorial Fellow, and serves on several boards, including Fort Lewis College and the Nature Conservancy. He is the son of the late Ernest House Sr., a longtime tribal leader, and great-grandson of Chief Jack House, the last hereditary chief of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe.

Musicians

Occidental Glee Club

Noe Barraza '27
Max Brown '25
Lee Chaloehtiarana '27
Caroline Cole '27
Sydney Collins '25
Giovanni Cozic '28
Christopher Cronk '26
Claire Dao '26
Charlotia de Mita '25
Theo Ellis Novotny '26
Bella Flad '25
Isabel Friedl '25
Ella Gibbs '25
Mikattrin Heynen '28
Hayden Jennings '25
Shelby Kernisant '27
Connor Leebarde '25
Avery Lidge '27
Molly Malin '27
Nicholas Martini '26
Agustin Melgar '25
Jess Orkin '25

Zoe Pedvis '27
Anna Pruyin '27
Prisha Purohut '28
Kate Reinhard '25
Day Rhizal '26
Bunyaon (Faai) Srisuponvanit '27
Bee Stanton '26
Nick Taylor '26
Maddie Thorpe '26
João Veirano '25
Alyssa Wu '27
Aaron Zemelman '27

Occidental Music Department Faculty

Loren Battley, *vocals*
Steven Gregory, *guitar*
Jay Jennings, *trumpet*
Erm Navarro, *trombone*
Cathlene Pineda, *keyboard*
Jonathan Richards, *bass*
Jamey Tate, *drums*

Academic Costume

Academic costume dates back to European universities in the Middle Ages, when gowns and hoods were required for warmth in unheated buildings. Eventually in the United States the mortarboard, with medieval tassel, became the standard headwear, while the colorful hood is draped over the back of the gown.

Gowns are normally black, although some universities have designed their own in the color of the institution. The hood reflects both the field of study and the institution that conferred the degree. An Occidental hood has a black-and-orange lining to reflect the College's colors. The color of the velvet edging on the hood is that of the degree conferred. The width of the edging represents the degree—two, three, or five inches for the bachelor's, master's, and doctor's degrees, respectively. The mortarboard is black with a black tassel, although if worn by the holder of a doctoral degree, it may have a gold thread. Undergraduates wear the tassel on the right side; graduates, on the left.

The following colors are associated with the degrees frequently represented in an academic procession of a liberal arts college faculty:

Arts, Letters, Humanities	<i>White</i>
Economics	<i>Copper</i>
Education	<i>Light Blue</i>
Fine Arts	<i>Brown</i>
Law	<i>Purple</i>
Library Science	<i>Lemon</i>

Members of the governing board of an institution are entitled to wear doctoral gowns. Trustees of Occidental College wear gold medallions embossed with the College seal, hung from an orange ribbon, with their black gowns.

Board of Trustees

Board Officers

Lisa H. Link P'18, *Chair*
Art Peck '77 P'10 P'14, *Chair-elect*
Maurine Halperin P'16, *Vice Chair*
Bob Johnson '77, *Vice Chair*
Amos Himmelstein, *Treasurer*
Lupe Salmeron, *Assistant Treasurer*
Gretchen Saalbach, *Secretary of the College*

Board Members

President Tom Stritikus (*ex officio*)
Lande Ajose '87
Timothy Allison-Hatch '71
Magdalena Arenas '92 P'19
David W. Berkus '62 P'95
John G. Branca '72
David Burcham '73 P'13
Anne Cannon '74
Nicholas M. Choumenkovitch '86
Barbara Clarke P'19
Lindsey Collins '94 P'26
W. Don Cornwell '69
Lisa Coscino '85
Nancy Dambro '75
Hector De La Torre '89 P'20
Gloria Duffy '75
Ronald Hahn '66
Christopher Hamel '76
Alison Hawkins '87
Andrew Heath '04
Lori Moore Hunter '79 P'08
Gary Kaplan '71
Enrique Lopez-Carlos '89
Greta Mandell '72 P'92
Theodore R. Mitchell H'07
Tuan Ngo '07
Leo Olebe '97
Steven Robinson '77
Stephen Rountree '71 GP'25
Reid Samuelson '72
Lawerence Solomon '84
Jacob Stevens '08 (*ex officio*)
Woody Studenmund

Chairs Emeriti

Christopher Calkins '67 P'96
Dennis Collins P'94
Ginny Cushman '55
John Farmer P'98
Irwin Field GP'11 GP'14
Stephen Hinchliffe '55 P'88 H'16 GP'18 GP'23
Susan Mallory '76 M'78
John B. Power '58 H'19
Catherine Young Selleck '55

Trustees Emeriti

Coit Blacker '72
Alice Walker Duff '69 H'02
J. Eugene Grigsby III '66
Fred Hameetman '62
Giles Kemp P'04
Daniel Ian McKinnon '89
Kristine Morris '76
Christopher Varelas '85
Tod White '59

Presidents Emeriti

Harry J. Elam Jr.
Theodore R. Mitchell H'07
Robert A. Skotheim H'89
Jonathan Veitch

Presidents of Occidental College

Tom Stritikus

(2024-present)

Harry J. Elam Jr.

(2020-2024)

Jonathan Veitch

(2009-2020)

Robert A. Skotheim H'89

(2008-2009)

Susan W. Prager

(2006-2007)

Theodore R. Mitchell H'07

(1999-2005)

John Brooks Slaughter

(1988-1999)

Richard C. Gilman

(1965-1988)

Arthur G. Coons 1920

(1946-1965)

Rev. Remsen Du Bois Bird

(1921-1946)

Rev. Silas Evans

(1917-1920)

John Willis Baer

(1906-1916)

Rev. Guy W. Wadsworth

(1897-1905)

Rev. James W. Parkhill

(1896-1897)

Rev. Elbert N. Condit

(1894-1896)

J. Melville McPherron

(1891-1894)

Rev. Samuel H. Weller

(1887-1891)

