



# HIGH SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

FROM HIGH SCHOOL to GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE and BEYOND

## Ladders to Career Success

There are nearly as many different ladders to career success as there are successful people, but one thing is for certain; Glendale Community College can be an important step that will help you climb to whatever height you seek. Here are examples of four Glendale College alumni who climbed different ladders in their own careers. We hope you'll relate to something in at least one of their stories (inside) and begin building a career ladder of your own.

Student Outreach Services (SOS) is here to help. Call SOS: (818) 240-1000 ext. 3031 or visit our web site: [www.glendale.edu/sos](http://www.glendale.edu/sos)



*Suzette Clover,  
Superior Court Judge*



*Dr. Ani Halabi,  
Optometrist*



*Robert Yount,  
High School Teacher*



*Raffy Bitchakdjian,  
Firefighter*



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# Ladders to Career Success

Four individuals who made Glendale Community College an im



## Suzette Clover— Superior Court Judge

In case you don't believe in the power of persistence, you should consider Judge Suzette Clover's story. As a freshman at Hoover High, she ran for class president. "I received one vote—it was very humiliating. And guess whose vote it was? Yes, we were allowed to vote for ourselves," Judge Clover reminisced.

"My mother had attended Glendale College during the Depression era and World War II. She had such a positive experience there, so it was expected that I would also attend," said Judge Clover. "It was an absolutely wonderful experience. I was very involved in student government—successfully elected this time! I was initially going to run for Historian, but then Dean (J. Walter) Walt Smith and his assistant Judy Rossall suggested I instead run for Freshman Class President. I was elected, then went on to be elected Student Body Vice-President, then Student Body President. Student government not only developed leadership and organizational skills, but also brought enduring friendships and insights.

"I had decided I wanted to be a lawyer in 1968, when I was in the eighth grade," she continued. "It was a very tumultuous time—Martin Luther King was assassinated in April and Robert Kennedy was assassinated in June. The summer of '68 brought the upheaval of the Democratic

National Convention in Chicago. I decided that being a lawyer would give me the best chance of being in a position to make a positive difference. At that time, there were very few women lawyers, and with the exception of my parents, no one took me seriously."

At GCC, Dean Smith and Dr. John Davitt introduced her to USC and convinced her parents that it was worth the money. "USC was also a fabulous experience which was enhanced by my GCC experience. I received a Panhellenic Scholarship at Glendale College, and as a result, joined a sorority. I never would have been aware of this opportunity if not for the scholarship."

After graduating from USC, Judge Clover went on to complete UCLA Law School. Her first job was as a research attorney for a Justice on the California Court of Appeal. She also worked as a law clerk, an associate at a Los Angeles law firm and joined the U.S. Attorney's office, where she became Assistant Chief of the Civil Division. She was appointed to the bench in February, 2006.

"I love my job," says Judge Clover. "Every day presents the potential for making a difference in individual lives. I hope to be a judge for the remainder of my legal career. I have a wonderful husband and terrific children. I have a great deal to look forward to!"

## Robert Yount— High School Teacher

You might not expect a guy who dropped out of high school at age fifteen to end up being a high school teacher, but that's exactly what Robert Yount did. His ladder to career success had a few missteps, but once he developed a love for learning, that love eventually got him where he wanted to be. "I was 19 years old, had been working for years, but needed to get my GED so that I would be allowed to enter a management training program and earn more money," said Yount. "I came to GCC's Garfield Campus Developmental Skills Lab, where the environment, culture and energy were infectious. Learning for learning's sake was the new goal for me."

After his positive experience at the Garfield Campus, Yount decided to enroll in some credit courses at GCC, "...just for fun. I didn't have any particular goal in mind, and didn't really study like I should have. I was just enjoying sitting in a classroom and discussing subjects that impacted the world. The environment at GCC was absolutely wonderful!" he said.

"I also enrolled in a PE class called 'Football.' Although this was listed in the catalog as a PE class, it really turned out to be the college football team. I was required to try out. With no experience, I was told I was probably wasting my time. I worked all spring and summer, and when the fall arrived,

I had made the team. Coach John Cicuto made it clear that my role on the team was to work hard, earn good grades and serve as a tackling dummy. I loved it and spent three years in that role. I'll always be grateful to Coach Cicuto for rewarding my hard work, allowing me to have that experience."

After three years at GCC, Yount transferred to the University of La Verne. "I failed miserably at ULV. I had taken shortcuts at GCC when I should have been developing skills—I was doing just enough to pass and it caught up with me," he confessed. "I dropped out after two semesters and returned to the workforce.

"One day, after a grueling shift at work, my wife, Rachel, asked me what I really wanted to do. I said, 'I want to graduate from college and teach high school.' She told me, 'Then do that.' The next day I re-enrolled at La Verne. In about 16 months I had fulfilled the requirements for a Bachelor's degree in Social Science and was accepted into their graduate program."

It took Yount about one-and-a-half more years to earn his teaching credential and Master's in Education. He is now teaching U.S. history and psychology/sociology as well as coaching football, basketball and track at a high school in Covina. "I love teaching because I learn something new every day. Education has changed my life!"





portant step in their climb to success.



## Raffy Bitchakdjian— Firefighter

Loving his time at Glendale High School, Raffy Bitchakdjian made the most of his student life. He was very involved in school activities; he played football, was in the student government and performed in school plays. He tried not to miss any school functions and even participated in organizing them.

“My drama teacher, Mr. Mack Dugger, was one of my biggest influences,” Bitchakdjian said. “He often talked about how great firefighters are and how they enjoyed every moment of their work. When I approached him and told him I was interested, he connected me with a battalion chief in the Glendale Fire Department. I called the chief and he set me up to join the Glendale Fire Explorer Program.”

From the moment he got his hands on the fire fighting tools and equipment in the Explorer Program, Bitchakdjian was hooked. “I absolutely loved it,” he relates. “When I graduated from my explorer post and was able to do my 24-hour ride-alongs, that sealed the deal for me. It was one big family at the station. I loved the teamwork, discipline, professionalism and integrity that the fire service upholds.

“I had great instructors as an explorer who pointed me in the right direction. They told me about the Glendale College fire technology classes, EMT

classes and the Verdugo Fire Academy. They had me prepared for just about everything, so when I graduated from high school, the transition to GCC was very smooth.

“Glendale College motivated me and pushed me in all the right directions. The more classes I took, the more I was drawn in.”

When it was time for him to apply to the Verdugo Fire Academy, Bitchakdjian had an advantage over some other applicants; having completed the Explorer Program, he would be sponsored by the Glendale Fire Department.

“I wouldn’t be where I am now if it weren’t for all the instructors from Verdugo Fire Academy. I’ll never forget graduation day from GCC, when Captain Tony Bagan from Pasadena Fire pulled us into a room, right before we hit the stage, and told us how proud he was of our accomplishments and that we all have promising futures.”

Right after graduation from the academy, Bitchakdjian was hired by the Pasadena Fire Department. His plans for now are to complete his probationary period successfully, after which, he says, “the doors will open up for me.”

“I received a lot of help, and owe my success to my family, friends, Pasadena Fire, Glendale Fire and the Verdugo Fire Academy,” he concluded.

## Dr. Ani Halabi— Optometrist

Looking back on it now, it seems that a career in optometry was always in Dr. Ani Halabi’s destiny, but there was a time when it wasn’t so clear. “My GPA was about 3.0 when I graduated from high school,” she recalled. “My family strongly encouraged me to go to college, but my grades weren’t high enough to get into a UC school directly. I knew that community college was my best option.”

Having been on the high school drill team and in the orchestra, Halabi very much enjoyed the performing arts. “Some classmates and I formed a band and I was one of the lead singers. We submitted a demo tape to a nation-wide competition and we won first place!”

After graduating from Hoover High, Halabi enrolled at Glendale College. “I wanted to explore my options,” she said, “so during my first semester at GCC, I met with Judith Apablaza at the Career Center. She helped me do some testing to find out what career path would be right for my personality type. My father has a business designing eyeglasses, and I had enjoyed working with him when I was in high school, so I was already interested in optometry. But taking the aptitude tests in the Career Center really helped me confirm my choice—optometry was on the top of my list of suitable career paths.”

Her next step was to find a job working in an optometrist’s office. “I worked as a receptionist, did pre-testing to prep the patients for the doctors, did back office work such as filing and placing orders, and also some lab work, since we had an in-house lab where we cut and ground lenses. I started working there during my second semester at GCC and continued for four years—until I started optometry school. I loved it.”

Halabi graduated from Glendale College with an AA degree and moved on to Cal State Northridge, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. She attended the Southern California College of Optometry next, and earned her doctorate in optometry. “I did very well,” she said. “I think going to GCC prepared me well for CSUN.”

“My job gives me instant gratification,” she continued. “A patient comes in stating that he or she can’t see well, and I know that by the end of the exam, they’ll be able to see better—whether it’s with contacts or glasses. It’s financially rewarding, too, and allows a very flexible work schedule.”

A year or so after she graduated from optometry school, Halabi ran into Judith Apablaza at a local market. “I thanked her and told her about my achievements. She was very proud. Many students are confused or lost coming out of high school. I strongly believe that the Career Center was a very encouraging and helpful place for me to visit.”





# Get more out of college— get involved!

There are many opportunities available to you to make the most of your Glendale College experience and be better prepared for your future.

## Clubs and Student Government

You can start building your ladder to career success by participating in student activities during college. Leadership, teamwork, organization and creativity are just some of the qualities you'll develop through involvement with clubs, athletics, performing arts or student government. Students that get involved in campus life build lasting friendships and receive valuable mentoring and support from faculty and staff advisors.

### The Office of Student Affairs

Located in the J. Walter Smith Student Center, this is a great place to start. Headquarters to over 50 current clubs and organizations, you'll likely find one that piques your interest. If not, you can always create your own! Clubs are typically organized around four themes: academic achievement, cultural, religious and special interests.

### Examples of Clubs and Organizations:

#### Student Government:

- Associated Students of Glendale Community College (ASGCC)

#### Cultural Organizations:

- Armenian Student Assn. (ASA)
- Assn. of Latin American Students (ALAS)
- Chinese Culture Club
- Ciao Italia
- International Student Assn.
- Japanese Club
- Persian Student Association (PSA)
- Philippine Cultural Organization (PCO)

#### Religious Clubs:

- Korean Campus Crusade for Christ
- Latter Day Saints Student Association (LDSSA)

#### Academic Achievement:

- ACE Extreme
- Alpha Gamma Sigma
- College Scholars Program
- ESL Student Assn.
- Honors Biology

#### Special Interest:

- Economics Club
- Project: Earth Tomorrow
- Psychology Club
- GCC Speech & Debate
- GCC Music Club
- GCC Theater Guild

Contact the Office of Student Affairs at **(818) 240-1000 ext. 5592** or at [www.glendale.edu/studentaffairs](http://www.glendale.edu/studentaffairs)

## Athletics

Glendale College athletics programs provide numerous opportunities for student participation and development—on the playing field, or behind-the-scenes in supporting roles. The Vaqueros have a rich history of achievement in multiple men's and women's sports—inductees in our Athletic Hall of Fame include state champions, Olympians, NFL, MLB and NBA players and coaches.

### Men's and Women's Athletics at GCC:

- Basketball
- Golf
- Soccer
- Cross-Country
- Track and Field
- Tennis
- Women's Softball
- Women's Volleyball
- Men's Baseball
- Men's Football
- Cheer Team

Contact the Athletics Department at [www.glendale.edu/athletics](http://www.glendale.edu/athletics)

## Performing Arts

Develop your talent and share it with the world by joining a performing arts group at Glendale College. You can build relationships with other talented individuals while you challenge yourself on stage or behind the scenes.

The Music Department features seven performing ensembles that present regular fall and spring concerts. The groups include the Concert Choir, Vocal Pops Ensemble, Concert Singers, Orchestra, Jazz Band, Saturday Jazz and Chamber Music. Contact the Music Department at **(818) 240-1000 ext. 5829** or at [www.glendale.edu/music](http://www.glendale.edu/music)

Gotta dance? If dance is your thing, the Dance Department has a place for you. Classes are offered for a variety of disciplines and techniques with opportunities to perform in stage productions throughout the school year. Contact the Dance Department at **(818) 240-1000 ext. 5556** or at [www.glendale.edu/dance](http://www.glendale.edu/dance)

Acting, singing, costumes, set design and construction, lighting and make-up—just some of the ways you can enrich your college experience in the Theatre Department. With continuous stage productions in the works, you'll find plenty to inspire and excite you while you build lasting friendships with fellow cast and crew members. Contact the Theatre Department at **(818) 240-1000 ext. 5618** or at [www.glendale.edu/theatre](http://www.glendale.edu/theatre)

## El Vaquero

The student newspaper of Glendale College trains and develops students in the process of newspaper production. Talented writers, photographers, editors and design artists can hone their skills in a professional work environment. Contact El Vaquero at **(818) 240-1000 ext. 5349** or at [www.elvaq.com](http://www.elvaq.com)

# Becoming a GCC student is easy!

## New or Returning College Credit Students—

### STEP 1 Submit an Application for Admission

Complete and submit an application for admission at the Admissions and Records Office (1st floor, Admin. Bldg.) as soon as possible. You will receive:

- Your Student I.D number
- A permit to register

### STEP 2 Complete Assessment

Go to the San Fernando Complex, Room 112 where you will be assigned a counselor. You will usually be able to take the English and math computerized assessments immediately.

### STEP 3 Orientation

Complete one of the following college orientations:

- Computerized orientation, Assessment Center (SF 112).
- Enroll in a Student Development class.
- Online orientation at [www.glendale.edu](http://www.glendale.edu)

### STEP 4 Meet with a Counselor

Make an appointment to see a counselor

- Bring your assessment test results, CLEP or advanced placement exam scores, your high school transcripts, and any college transcripts.

### STEP 5 Register for Classes

- See the STARS and WebReg registration worksheets in the class schedule.

## Just \$20 a unit—

If you want to get a four-year degree, consider completing your freshman/sophomore level courses at Glendale Community College before transferring to complete your junior/senior level courses at a four-year university. During your first two years at GCC, you'll save between 85% to 98% compared to the cost of attending a CSU, UC or private university in California.

## Financial Aid—

Money is available to help you pay for your college expenses. Start by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form at the Financial Aid Office or on the web at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). The Financial Aid Office is located at **SF110**. Call **(818) 240-1000 ext. 5916** or visit [www.glendale.edu/financialaid](http://www.glendale.edu/financialaid)

## Career Center—

The Career Center is your resource at GCC to help you explore careers and majors that match your talents and strengths. You can meet with a career counselor, attend free career planning workshops, and research various jobs and professions that will be available when you graduate. The Career Center is located on the second floor of the San Rafael building. Call **(818) 240-1000, ext. 5407** for hours and workshop schedules, or check the web site: [www.glendale.edu/careercenter](http://www.glendale.edu/careercenter).

	<b>MAIN CAMPUS</b> 1500 N. Verdugo Rd. 818-240-1000 <a href="http://www.glendale.edu">www.glendale.edu</a>	<b>GARFIELD CAMPUS</b> 1122 E. Garfield Ave. 818-548-5233 <a href="http://www.glendale.edu/ce">www.glendale.edu/ce</a>	<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER</b> 2340 Honolulu Ave. 818-957-0024 <a href="http://www.glendale.edu/pdc">www.glendale.edu/pdc</a>	<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES EDUCATION</b> 1122 E. Garfield Ave. 818-240-1000 X5015 <a href="http://www.glendale.edu/cse">www.glendale.edu/cse</a>

Do you have any questions about Glendale Community College? Would you like us to mail you information about our programs? How about a campus tour? Please call Student Outreach Services: **(818) 240-1000 ext. 3031**. We will be happy to assist you.