Cerritos College Student Receives $1,000 Physical Therapist Assistant Scholarship

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 27, 2010

Media Contact: Aya Abelon, Public Affairs; (562) 653-7878

NORWALK, Calif. - April 27, 2010 - Matthew De Casas, a student in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Cerritos College, was awarded a $1,000 scholarship from the Intercollegiate Academic Clinical Coordinators Council (IACCC).

Through the IACCC Scholarship program, the Council awards scholarships annually to one physical therapist and one physical therapist assistant student each. These scholarships are merit-based and awarded to students who have completed their first fulltime affiliation as part of their physical therapy education.

“Matt is a true representative of the qualities needed in the physical therapist assistant,” said Marijean Piorkowski, director of clinical education and instructor of physical therapist assistant program at Cerritos College. “He is professional in patient interactions, motivating and positive in his approach, and a true delight to have in the classroom. He is most deserving of this award.”

De Casas, of Whittier, was recommended by his instructor Piorkowski, who also serves the IACCC as a faculty member, based on his previous outpatient internship at Long Beach Physical Therapy and Sports Rehab.

De Casas, who holds a bachelor’s degree in kinesiology from California State University, Fullerton, plans to use the money to pay for the upcoming board exam.

“I plan to gain more clinical experience as a physical therapist assistant and also plan on furthering my education by pursuing a doctoral degree as a physical therapist,” said De Casas.

Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college’s district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs and South Gate. Cerritos College offers degrees and certificates in more than 180 areas of study in nine divisions. Annually, more than 1,200 students successfully complete
their course of studies, and enrollment currently averages 23,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at http://www.cerritos.edu/.