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News Release

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SoCalGas Awards Two \$5,000 Scholarships to Cerritos College Graduates

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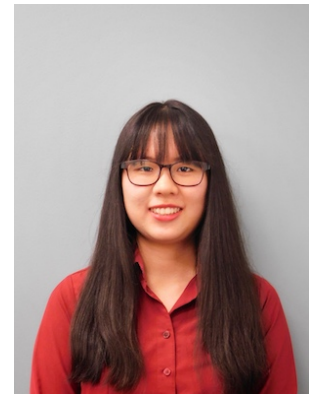
Media Contact: Aya Abelon; Public Affairs

Norwalk, Calif. – July 15, 2020 – Cerritos College Foundation has announced Rachelle Elhessen and Tran Pham as the recipients of the SoCalGas Scholarship. Both students will receive \$5,000 to support the continuation of their higher education. SoCalGas, a Sempra Energy utility, believes that a well-educated workforce makes good business sense and is essential for a vital and economically healthy Southern California.



Rachelle Elhessen just earned associate degrees for transfer in mathematics and physics from Cerritos College and has been accepted to the University of Southern California (USC). She plans to earn a B.S. in chemical engineering with the goal of advancing technologies in sustainable and clean energy to aid third-world countries. A Bellflower resident, Rachelle was active in the Cerritos College's Scholars' Honors Program and NASA Aerospace Scholars Program. She also participated in the Research Experience Program at USC. "Engineering can be used for so much more than just structurally designing houses and buildings," said Rachelle. "Having visited third world countries in the Middle East, I have witnessed first-hand the consequences of water and electricity shortages. As a chemical engineer, I can remedy this problem."

Tran Pham will matriculate to the University of California, Berkeley where she will continue her business administration studies. After earning her bachelor's degree, she wants to work for a Big-4 accounting firm as a certified public accountant (CPA). While at Cerritos College, Tran served as the President of the Cerritos College Accounting Club and Vice President of Education at Cerritos College Toastmasters. She also co-founded the campus chapter of the Association of Latin Professionals for America (ALPFA). "I want to become a CPA as I believe it will grant me a better future and help me become a better-rounded professional. Organizations flourish by creating and supporting transparency and other community values. CPAs play an essential role in delivering that mission, as they are well-respected strategic business advisors and decision-makers," said Tran.



"We are honored to provide scholarships to Rachelle and Tran. Their academic achievements, goals, and volunteer experiences were exceptional," said Julia Emerson, Public Affairs Manager at SoCalGas. Julia is a Cerritos College alumna, who served as Vice President of the Associated

Students of Cerritos College and then-mascot Freda Falcon. "We send our appreciation and well-wishes to all of the students who applied," she said.

About Cerritos College Foundation: *The Cerritos College Foundation, a non-profit organization, serves as a charitable vehicle for the community, individuals, and alumni, to assist with the financial support of Cerritos College beyond that which state funding supports. Visit the Foundation online at www.CerritosCF.org.*

About Cerritos College: *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. Enrollment currently averages 23,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at <http://www.cerritos.edu/>.*

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