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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Christmas Gift That Will Change Young Lives: Cristo Rey Orange County High School Announces a Permanent New Campus in Santa Ana for 2026-27 School Year

SANTA ANA, Calif. (December 8, 2025)—Christmas arrived early for students at Cristo Rey Orange County High School. The City of Santa Ana approved the school's plans to move forward and transform SOCO Harbor, a nine-acre office park into a new permanent campus of the future.

The unanimous decision by the Santa Ana Planning Commission in November to grant Cristo Rey a conditional use permit is a major milestone for the three-year-old school. It will allow the Catholic college preparatory high school to relocate from its current overcrowded campus to SOCO Harbor, a larger and highly accessible location at 3601 South Harbor Boulevard.

Cristo Rey acquired the office park with four existing commercial buildings in February with hopes that city officials would ultimately approve a change in use for the commercial site so the high school could open at the new location in time for the 2026-27 academic year. Generous donors provided a down payment on this dream property and the school is continuing to seek support for renovations.

From its inception, the Cristo Rey vision was to secure a permanent home in Santa Ana with the space, flexibility and facilities to educate and prepare students from working class families who would not otherwise be able to access such an education for college and professional careers.

“This is truly a Christmas gift for the students, their parents, our faculty and staff, and the community. Cristo Rey now has a permanent home and we are thrilled,” said Stephen Holte, Founding President of Cristo Rey. “This new campus will allow us to serve twice as many students, who will become the business and community leaders of tomorrow.

“We are eternally grateful to our families, donors and the City of Santa Ana for believing in the Cristo Rey model and supporting our mission to empower young people by helping them attain the education and workplace experience they could only dream about,” Holte said.

Launched in 2023, Cristo Rey Orange County’s first-year enrollment was 69 students. Today, there are more than 200 students in three grade levels and 42 faculty and staff members. Interest among students and parents to attend Cristo Rey continues to surge, underscoring the academic success and extracurricular offerings at the school.

Cristo Rey Orange County is part of a national network of 41 career focused college-preparatory schools. The schools’ unique educational model combines a rigorous academic curriculum with a Corporate Work Study Program, where every student works five full days a month all four years of high school to help fund their education while gaining professional experience.

With the support of a distinguished and highly active Board of Directors, Cristo Rey Orange County has formed partnerships with nearly 60 of the region’s leading businesses to help students gain invaluable real-work experience. Among the firms participating in this dynamic program are Northgate Markets, City of Hope, F&M Bank, St. Joseph Hospital and Schools First Federal Credit Union.

“The Corporate Work Student program differentiates Cristo Rey from other high schools. It provides students with real work experience in a business setting,” said Tim Psomas, a member of Cristo Rey’s Board of Directors and retired engineering executive, who was part of the search committee for a new school site. “Cristo Rey’s future home at SOCO Harbor aligns perfectly with the school’s mission to introduce students to a real life business environment.”

Soon after Cristo Rey opened in the fall of 2023 at a former elementary school in central Santa Ana, it became clear the site was too small to accommodate the school’s future growth. Cristo Rey officials toured more than two dozen sites in several Orange County cities to identify a new campus before they purchased the SOCO Harbor business park, which has approximately 151,000 square feet of office space in four separate buildings.

The site is centrally located with nearby access to freeways and adjacent to major thoroughfares and public transportation. The new school will have ample parking for the

approximately 300 students, faculty and staff who are expected next year when the campus expands to four grade levels.

Cristo Rey will fully occupy one of SOCO Harbor's buildings and the upstairs of a second building. Construction on Cristo Rey tenant improvements and modifications is now underway to build out classrooms, administrative offices and some outdoor spaces, including basketball courts and a covered lunch area. Completion is anticipated in time for the start of the new school year next September.

"Our intention from the start was to remain in Santa Ana, a city that has long prioritized quality education for residents from all faiths and income levels," Holte said. "Cristo Rey is proud to be part of that commitment and we plan to be here for many years to come. The next big step is building out our new campus and we are moving full speed ahead."

ABOUT CRISTO REY ORANGE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Cristo Rey Orange County High School is a Catholic, college preparatory high school that provides a transformative education to students and families with limited economic resources. The school's innovative Corporate Work Study program allows students to gain valuable professional experience while earning a portion of the cost of their education. Every student is placed in a professional job five full days a month during business hours, all four years of high school. While Cristo Rey is new to Orange County, it is part of a proven national model of 41 high schools in the Cristo Rey Network. www.cristoreyoc.org

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