

NEWS RELEASE

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Orange County Employees Retirement System Receives National Champions Award

Santa Ana, CA (June 26, 2025) – The Orange County Employees Retirement System (OCERS) has been recognized as the recipient of the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS) Champions Award in the \$1 billion to \$50 billion assets under management (AUM) category.



Chair Richard Oates (center) accepts the 2026 NCPERS Champions Award on behalf of the Orange County Employees Retirement System during the NCPERS Annual Conference & Exhibition in Las Vegas. Joining him are (from left) NCPERS CEO Hank Kim, Trustee Adele Lopez Tagaloa, Trustee Iriss Barriga, Director of Communications Mary-Joy Coburn, Staff Attorney Ivan Cao, and NCPERS Board President Jake Lemonda.

The award was presented on May 19 during the NCPERS 2026 Annual Conference & Exhibition (ACE) in Las Vegas, one of the nation's longest-running educational events for public pension professionals.

Board of Trustee Chair Richard Oates accepted the award on behalf of OCERS, joined by Trustee Iriss Barriga, Trustee Adele Lopez Tagaloa, Director of Communications Mary-Joy Coburn, and Staff Attorney Ivan Cao.

The NCPERS Champions Awards recognize public pension funds that demonstrate an exceptional commitment to ongoing education and leadership development. Award recipients were evaluated based on organization-wide participation in NCPERS educational programs throughout 2025, including conferences, forums, summits, and training initiatives designed to strengthen governance and improve operational effectiveness.

As public pension systems operate in an increasingly complex environment, NCPERS leaders emphasized the growing importance of continuous professional

development and collaboration across the industry.



"The demands on public pension fiduciaries continue to evolve," said Hank Kim, CEO of NCPERS. "Organizations that prioritize education, invest in their teams, and engage with the broader pension community are better positioned to navigate risk, strengthen governance, and deliver long-term retirement security."

OCERS Board Chair Richard Oates said the recognition reflects the organization's ongoing dedication to excellence. "Receiving the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems Champions Award reflects OCERS' deep commitment to continuous learning, strong governance, and leadership at every level of our organization. By investing in the education of our trustees and staff, we strengthen our ability to serve our members with integrity, accountability, and long-term resilience."

The award recognizes OCERS' continued investment in professional development for both trustees and staff, reinforcing the organization's commitment to sound governance, informed decision-making, and the long-term retirement security of its members.

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About Orange County Employees Retirement System ([OCERS](#)):

For over 80 years, the Orange County Employees Retirement System (OCERS) has been dedicated to delivering retirement, death, disability, and cost-of-living benefits to the employees of our 13 participating employers, which include the County of Orange, various special districts, and the City of San Juan Capistrano. Our mission is to deliver secure retirement and disability benefits with premier service quality.

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