



NEWS

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For Immediate Release

June 6, 2017

Distinguished Faculty and Staff Honorees Go Above and Beyond for the El Camino College Compton Center Community

El Camino College Compton Center recently announced its recipients for the 2017 Distinguished Faculty and Staff awards at the Annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation Breakfast, an event designed to thank all members of the campus community for their commitment to ECC Compton Center and its educational mission.

Amber Gillis, English and humanities instructor; Juan Meza, adjunct history instructor; and Wendy Wimberly, instructional assistant, were recognized for their dedication to students, ECC Compton Center and colleagues.

Amber Gillis, recipient of the Distinguished Faculty award, has a record of teaching excellence dating back eight years, along with an unparalleled level of dedication to the ECC Compton Center community. A highly regarded instructor of both English and humanities, Gillis also currently serves as a senator for the Academic Senate of the Compton Community College District. From her role as Student Learning Outcomes/Division III chairperson to her membership in the Student Success Committee, Gillis' contributions are notable on multiple levels.

As accreditation faculty chair, Gillis spearheaded the preparation and submission of ECC Compton Center's Comprehensive Institutional Self-Evaluation Report to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Her leadership in this process involved organizing committees, training and supporting fellow committee members, and compiling and editing the comprehensive self-evaluation report. She is recognized for her remarkable dedication to her institutional roles, all while maintaining an unwavering commitment to the students of ECC Compton Center and their academic success. Gillis has repeatedly been singled out for special recognition and appreciation by graduating students with praise such as "she helped build my confidence" and "she pushed me to want to learn." Her rapport with students and her effective approach to building a student-centered classroom have resulted in multiple years of high retention and achievement rates in her courses.

Gillis' additional contributions to academic excellence include her role in curriculum design, acting as a First Year Experience faculty member, and serving as the English bridge coordinator. A proud member of the campus community, her efforts have supported the continued development of Compton Center both academically and administratively. Gillis joined ECC Compton Center after completing her graduate and undergraduate studies in English with honors at California State University, Fullerton.

Juan Meza, recipient of the Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award, has served as a member of the history department since 2013, where he has taught a range of courses including U.S. History, World Civilization and Chicano History. His focus on individualized student success and empowerment is reflected in his ongoing professional development in areas relevant to his students, including cultural sensitivity in the global classroom, the needs of non-native English speaking students, and best practices in accommodating students with disabilities.

Meza is a graduate of the esteemed Project MATCH community college teaching internship. He initially joined El Camino College Compton Center as a teaching assistant. He went on to become known for his collaborative and interactive instructional approach. He connects students to the past and inspires students to explore how past events have shaped their present lives. One ECC Compton Center student described Meza's classroom environment as "challenging, positive and encouraging."

In addition to teaching, Meza is involved in other professional activities, including volunteer work with the California Science Center's Air and Space division. Meza's academic affiliations include the American Historical Association and the World History Association. He earned his master's degree in history at California State University, Los Angeles in 2012 and has received recognition for his published work entitled *Perspectives: A Journal of Historical Inquiry*.

Wendy Wimberly, recipient of the Distinguished Staff Award, is an instructional assistant for the Student Success Center where she has advocated for students since 2001. She facilitates interactions with academic counselors and supports students who are in the process of declaring majors and creating educational plans. She also plays a pivotal role in connecting ECC Compton Center students to campus resources such as the free computer lab, library, tutoring services and academic workshops.

Wimberly also currently serves on the Professional Development Committee as the classified representative. In this capacity, she collaborates with administration and faculty to bring innovative activities to the campus. Off-campus, she has shown dedication to the ECC Compton Center community through her leadership as a chaperone of the Historically Black Colleges & Universities Tour for transfer-bound students. Wimberly is an ECC Compton Center transfer student who earned an associate degree in general studies and went on to earn her bachelor's degree in liberal studies from California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Wimberly's dedication to students earned her an "Applause" recognition by the Compton Community College District. She also finds time to volunteer with the Salvation Army Compton Corps. On Mondays and holidays, she can be found in the "Love Kitchen," serving hot meals to hungry individuals and families in need.

Photos available online:

www.compton.edu/adminandoperations/publicrelations/images/2017/JuanMeza.jpg

Compton Community College District Board of Trustees honor 2017 Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award recipient Juan Meza of the ECC Compton Center history department at the Annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation Breakfast. From left are Compton Community College District Board of Trustees Sonia Lopez, member; Nicole J. Jones, clerk; Andre Ramos, president; ECC Compton Center Adjunct Instructor Juan Meza; Deborah LeBlanc, vice president; and LoWanda Green, member. Photo courtesy of El Camino College Compton Center.

www.compton.edu/adminandoperations/publicrelations/images/2017/WendyWimberly.jpg

Instructional Assistant Wendy Wimberly, who recently earned the ECC Compton Center 2017 Distinguished Staff Award, is honored during the Annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation Breakfast. From left are Compton Community College District Board of Trustees Sonia Lopez, member; Nicole J. Jones, clerk; Andre Ramos, president; ECC Compton Center staff member, Wendy Wimberly; Deborah LeBlanc, vice president; and LoWanda Green, member. Photo courtesy of El Camino College Compton Center.

About El Camino College Compton Center

El Camino College Compton Center is the community's education solution offering a full complement of transfer and degree courses, as well as career and technical education. Students may earn an associate degree or certificate, transfer to a four-year university or train for a career. El Camino College Compton Center is located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221.