



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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California Community Colleges Board of Governors Honors Four Faculty Members with 2017-18 Gerald C. Hayward Award for Excellence in Education

East Los Angeles College, Fresno City College, MiraCosta College and Rio Hondo College represented at ceremony

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Community Colleges Board of Governors on Tuesday honored four professors with the 2017-18 Gerald C. Hayward Award for Excellence in Education. The winners are Brenda Chan (East Los Angeles College), Shushanek Silvas (Fresno City College), Adam Wetsman (Rio Hondo College) and Edwina Williams (MiraCosta College). Each winner received a commemorative plaque and \$1,250.

“We look forward to handing out this award each year because it gives us the great honor of recognizing some of the best and brightest faculty members the California Community Colleges has to offer,” said Board of Governors President Cecilia V. Estolano. “We thank them for their unparalleled dedication to our system and for the work they do to help our students succeed in and out of the classroom.”

The Hayward Award for Excellence in Education, established in 1989, is given periodically to community college faculty members who are selected by their peers for demonstrating the highest level of commitment to their students, college and profession. College academic senates nominate award recipients, who are then selected by representatives of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. Winners must have a record of outstanding performance of professional activities, as well as a record of active participation on campus.

2017-18 AWARD WINNERS

Brenda Chan for the past twenty-five years has served as a nurse clinician, educator, grant writer and researcher in both academic and service settings. Her work has assisted more than 2,000 students to achieve academic success by using student centered teaching/learning strategies and the latest educational technologies in didactic and clinical settings. Her pedagogy at East Los Angeles College is both inclusive and empowering to students, from providing accommodations to students according to the American Disabilities Act, to supporting annual scholarship funds for disadvantaged students and sponsoring students to attend professional development events.

To help advance students, Ms. Chan has evolved her instruction to overcome student equity gaps and sought out resources to continue her growth. As stated by her Academic Senate's statement of support, Ms. Chan's affinity for student success stems from the very college for which she teaches. The letter states, "The nominee's orientation towards student needs makes sense given her origins. Our nominee's career actually began as a student at our college, where she took pre-requisites in preparation for the RN program and was a student worker in the Learning Center [...] perhaps this is why she actively mentors students who are both in the Nursing Program as well as recent graduates who need support to obtain their RN license..." A true academic scholar, with an impressive professional history, Ms. Chan's commitment to the California community colleges is unwavering.

Shushanek Silvas is a part-time instructor for Fresno City College who has demonstrated academic commitment and forward-thinking progress to her college. Dr. Silvas believes in working with departments to create student success outcomes. Through her role in tutorial, specifically with reading and writing, she has implemented Essential Skills Workshops, while working with counseling and financial aid departments to create a platform of college success skills needed by students. Prior to implementing multiple measures, Dr. Silvas, along with support from the humanities and the assessment team, designed English Placement Test Prep, which assisted students to place more accurately. As a researcher, her work has taken her across the state to train campuses to better meet the needs of diverse students. Dr. Silvas' recent research aims to understand the plight of adjunct faculty, in particular the psychology of adjunct faculty. Her findings uncovered a relationship between the outcome of low psychological safety for adjunct staff and potential negative effects for students. In response to this finding, Dr. Silvas is developing a program to increase institutional cohesiveness and psychological safety, which will, as a result, improve the student experience. Fresno College Academic Senate President Bruce Hill poses the question in response to Dr. Silvas' self-professed unorthodox instruction by asking, "What is education but a continuing process by which a person begins to learn how to learn?" Dr. Silvas' commitment to the California community colleges begins with improving student lives by supporting their educational process and extends to the research and support of adjunct faculty who comprise a large portion of the student's journey.

Adam Wetsman is an Anthropology professor at Rio Hondo College. With close to twenty years of experience, Dr. Wetsman has dedicated his efforts not just to student success but also to college governance and in advocacy work through statewide organizations that support students and faculty. He is dedicated to cultivating literacy and critical reasoning skills to students who have varied learning needs, are ethnically diverse, and economically, physically or cognitively challenged. Dr. Wetsman's cultural capacity is accomplished through various modes of generating an accessible learning environment by creating extensive study guides, writing low-cost textbooks to reduce financial burdens, preparing audio-visual lectures to mirror in class presentations and securing \$50,000 to supply lab classes.

Dr. Wetsman has held numerous leadership positions at Rio Hondo College, including serving as the senate vice president and president as well as serving as a member of the Senate's executive committee for eight years. As president, Dr. Wetsman updated the senate bylaws to include part-time representatives and successfully integrated policies and procedures to the college. Rio Hondo Academic Senate President, Michelle Bean describes Dr. Wetsman's commitment to his community with great pride: "As if the commitment to students, our college, and statewide endeavors is not enough, he engages in relevant community service." From securing scholarships to being a club sponsor for the One Less Victim Project whose mission was to bring awareness to sexual assault as well as bringing speakers to campus to discuss LGBTQ+ issues, Dr. Wetsman's work is an embodiment of the Hayward Award for Excellence.

Edwina Williams is a part-time Sociology instructor at MiraCosta College. Ms. Williams' short tenure has already provided lasting impacts to the college and students she serves. As a strong advocate for equitable education, she professes her life's mission to "serve and empower students of all backgrounds through compassionate mentorship." She continues to grow professionally and is influenced by personal experiences, and social justice work. As a single mother and a woman of color who faced challenges financially and overcame barriers to education, she mirrors her own passion for career success and dedication back to the students she teaches as they embark on their own academic and career paths. As a true leader and advocate for change, Ms. Williams has broken out of social constructs to welcome spaces of intersectional work and built connections with organizations such as the Latina Leadership Network (LLN) and serves as the co-advisor for the Umoja Community Club. Through the development and implementation of the Literacy Is Knowledge Empowerment (LIKE) project, Ms. Williams has initiated a global literacy program that offers youth free extended learning activities through service learning projects and paid internships for college students. Ms. Williams' commitment to serving students, her college, and the community is apparent to college leadership. Susan Hermann, MiraCosta College Academic Senate President, explains: "In the short time that [Ms. Williams] has taught our college, she has become known for the very qualities we seek in colleagues leading us into the future....it is rare for a faculty member, especially a part-time colleague, to become connected so quickly and so authentically."

The 2017-18 Hayward Awards are supported through a grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges. The award is named in honor of Gerald C. Hayward, who served as chancellor of the California Community Colleges from 1980 to 1985.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 114 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/CACommColleges>, or <https://twitter.com/CalCommColleges>.