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El Camino College Honors Seven “Women of Distinction”

Seven exceptional community leaders were recently honored at the 11th Annual El Camino College Women of Distinction Luncheon.

The seven “Women of Distinction” for 2007 include: Torrance-based attorney **Peggi Collins**; **Ann M. Garten**, El Camino College’s Director of Community Relations; youth mentor and El Camino College administrative assistant **Wilma Hairston**; community volunteer **Beverly Hutchinson**; Hawthorne volunteer **Darlene Love**; El Camino College counselor **Kathryn Romero**; and Redondo Beach-based Girl Scout leader **Tammie Scott**.

Honorees were nominated by friends, family, and colleagues. Award winners were selected by the El Camino College Women’s History Month Committee, based on service in one or more of the following areas: professional accomplishments; leadership and/or mentorship; and social, educational, or health services. Honorees also must also live or work within the El Camino Community College District which includes: El Segundo, Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Lawndale, Lennox, Inglewood, Hawthorne, and Torrance.

The accomplishments of these hard-working award winners will be featured on the El Camino College Women’s Wall of Fame throughout the year and their names will be engraved on a plaque that is a permanent part of the wall display.

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“Women of Distinction” 2007 Award Winner Profiles

El Camino College alumna and Torrance-based attorney **Peggi Collins** has served on the college's ABA Accreditation Advisory Committee since 1986. She also has been actively involved with Torrance Memorial Medical Center's Holiday Festival for 15 years, serving as chairwoman in 2004, 2005 and 2006. In addition, Peggi is a former trustee of the Little Company of Mary Hospital Foundation and a founding member of the committee that runs the annual Simple Abundance Day of Women's Wellness. Her leadership roles also include serving as director of the South Bay Bar Association, co-chairing its Adopt-a-Family program; director of the Palos Verdes Art Center; and a trustee for Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services. Peggi also provides free legal advice to South Bay non-profit organizations, such as the PV Seniors and Vistas.

Ann M. Garten is a community volunteer who is actively involved in the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce and the Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, where she served as chairwoman of both organizations. Ann is also the Vice Chair of the Redondo Beach Planning Commission, is a member of the Mayor's Water Quality Task Force, and two Redondo Beach Sister Cities committees. In addition, she is an active member of the Torrance and Manhattan Beach chambers of commerce. As the El Camino College Director of Community Relations, Ann promotes the college and its students, and was active in securing the college's historic first bond measure in 2002. Ann is a member of several professional organizations, including ACCCA, CCPRO, and C4HE, many of which she has served in leadership roles.

Wilma Hairston has a distinguished history as a youth mentor. She has served as youth director for both the Citizens of Zion Missionary Baptist Church and Providence District Missionary Baptist Association, in addition to teaching Sunday school and speaking at youth leadership conferences. Wilma also offers training to churches and other non-profits seeking to establish youth programs. Her service to others extends to the Wall Street Women's Investment Club, which she founded. She has also been president of the Women's Group for the Citizens of Zion Missionary Baptist Church, executive director of Providence District Missionary Baptist Association, dean of the Congress of Christian Education, and secretary of the California State Baptist Association. Wilma is an administrative assistant at El Camino College and a University of Redlands graduate.

Beverly Hutchinson is the founder of Sister Spice, a non-profit organization in Inglewood designed to support the community with various outreach programs. Her strong leadership abilities over the years have motivated other women in the community to raise funds to assist less fortunate women and their families with educational expenses, clothing, food and other necessities. She also spearheaded the Little Sister program to challenge women to become mentors for young girls placed in foster care. Beverly donates a lot of her time and talent to the community, her annual “Christmas Caring Celebration” and “Back to School Supply Giveaway” sustain hundreds of needy families. As an “Adopt-A-School Partner” with the Inglewood Unified School District, Beverly provides mentoring for children and much-needed resources for schools.

Darlene Love is active in numerous community organizations, including the Olivet Lutheran Church, the El Camino College Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee, Hawthorne President's Council for Low Income Families, and Moneta Gardens Improvement Program in Hawthorne. A member of the Hawthorne Chamber of Commerce and a civil service commissioner for the City of Hawthorne, Darlene also serves as president of the Hawthorne Women's Club and chaplain for the Hawthorne Chapter of the Lions Club. For five years, Darlene has been a board member of Behavioral Health Services, which works with drug and alcohol addicted adults and children; she works closely with its outreach program to assist the homeless in Los Angeles. For 10 years, she also served on the advisory board of Pacifica House.

Full-time El Camino College counselor **Kathryn Romero** is known for her commitment to students. She has worked to expand the college's orientation course, and to implement student success initiatives. Kathryn serves as co-chair of the Teaching and Learning Cohort, an in-depth training program she created for new faculty who are teaching the college's orientation courses. Additionally, she secured El Camino College Foundation funding for new student success and orientation initiatives. Kathryn was also instrumental in bringing to campus the acclaimed On Course student success workshop for faculty and staff. She is a mentor for the Puente Project and a faculty union representative. She has developed a textbook geared to El Camino College students which is offered at a reduced price, and has written a children's book.

Tammie Scott of Redondo Beach, is known for her tireless work with the Girl Scouts. She started as a Girl Scout herself, and has been a leader for the past 16 years. Tammie also served as the North Redondo Neighborhood Chair for a dozen years, recruiting, training and mentoring leaders and girls in the Girl Scout organization. During this time, she mentored more than 35 girls in her own troop and more than 400 girls in the area. To offer an international camp experience, she has taken area Girl Scouts to the World Center in Cuernavaca, Mexico and has encouraged and empowered girls in her troop to take on service projects, including collecting and distributing coats and making and donating quilts. In addition to her Scout activities, Tammie is a mother of two, a certified Red Cross trainer and a full-time employee at Northrup Grumman.

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