



NEWS

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Longtime El Camino College Employee and Board of Trustees Member Passes Away

Dr. Nathaniel Jackson, a longtime El Camino College employee and Board of Trustees member, passed away early Sunday morning, November 21.

A steadfast supporter of El Camino College for 39 years, Dr. Jackson's legacy is evident in the thousands of successful students who began their higher education journey at El Camino College.

"El Camino College is deeply indebted to Dr. Jackson for sharing both his public and personal life with us," said Thomas M. Fallo, president of El Camino College. "He spent most of his career here as an educator, helping students achieve their academic goals. Then after retirement, he came back to the college in a public service capacity, guiding the college as a trustee."

Dr. Jackson's contributions span four decades, first with his tenure as a coordinator for special services in the Student Personnel Department in 1971. He was also a faculty member and administrator at El Camino College, teaching psychology and human behavior and serving as a dean for four different departments by the time he retired in 1990.

His unwavering commitment to serve the college did not stop with retirement – he was elected to the El Camino College Board of Trustees in 1995, serving until November 2010.

"Dr. Jackson was a senior member of the El Camino Community College District Board of Trustees, a mentor and good friend to all of us; and he will be sorely missed," said Ray Gen, president of the El Camino Community College District Board of Trustees.

During his tenure on the Board of Trustees, the ECC Inglewood Center was established, offering residents public access to technology, basic skills classes, and academic, career, and financial aid advising, conveniently located in the heart of downtown Inglewood. His leadership also added to the success of Measure E, the college's first-ever bond measure, which voters supported in 2002. Since then, countless safety and technology improvements have been made at the college, including the construction of a brand new instructional building – the first at the college in about 40 years.

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Dr. Jackson is also one of the pioneers in establishing EOPS (Extended Opportunity Program and Services), both at the college and the state level. ECC was one of the first California colleges to begin the program in the 1970s. Dr. Jackson called it “Project Open Door.” At that time, the program was housed in a room at ECC with a yellow door that was open and welcoming to students. Dr. Jackson started with just a few students, and now the EOPS program serves up to 2,000 ECC students per year.

“Through this program, Dr. Jackson gave opportunities to people who would have never had the chance to come to school,” said Dawn Reid, director of EOPS and CalWORKs. “Students come to this program and surpass what they thought they could be. Dr. Jackson started a pilot program that exceeded all expectations, both in the district and statewide. I still feel his legacy here in the program and the responsibility of serving students. I don’t want to let the project down; it is still his project – Project Open Door.”

“His presence is just inspiring. And because of EOPS, two other programs, CalWORKs and CARE, were created to work together and serve even more students. This just speaks to his legacy. That will always be with us.”

Dr. Jackson’s dedication to education reaches far beyond El Camino College – a U.S. Air Force veteran, he taught aviation physiology for that branch of the service, then went on to teach throughout the Los Angeles Unified School District; he was an assistant superintendent at Inglewood Unified School District, and also taught social psychology at California State University, Dominguez Hills.

The holder of a doctorate in human psychological behavior and education leadership from United States International University, Dr. Jackson also has a bachelor’s degree and two master’s degrees from California State University, Los Angeles.

He is widely known for his dedication to a variety of professional and service organizations, especially in his hometown of Inglewood, where he was a consultant to the Inglewood Police Department, in addition to his service as an executive/administrative management consultant. Early in his career, he organized the first Office of Human Relations for the Inglewood Unified School District, and coordinated counseling services for disadvantaged youth.

Dr. Jackson was a tireless advocate for many community organizations, sharing his time and leadership with groups such as the National Urban League, YMCA of Torrance and Inglewood, Rotary Club of Inglewood, NAACP, and the 1982 Olympic Advisory Committee.

In addition, Dr. Jackson served on the board of the Wellness Community – South Bay Cities, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services, California Community Colleges EOPS, and the Western Region Council on Black American Affairs. He was also a member of the California Association of Student Financial Aid Advisers, Association of Black Psychologists, and was a charter member of the Association of California Community College Administrators, among other groups.

Services are scheduled for November 29 at the Crenshaw Christian Center, 7901 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles.