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El Camino College | Public Relations & Marketing Department
16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506
Contact: Ann M. Garten, Director, Community Relations
Telephone: (310) 660-3406 | E-Mail: agarten@elcamino.edu

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El Camino College Names Lars Kjeseth and David Snowden 2011 Distinguished Faculty and Staff

El Camino College math professor Lars Kjeseth and staff member David Snowden were recently honored at a reception for their dedication to students, college, and colleagues.

Kjeseth and Snowden, honorees for the 2011 El Camino College Distinguished Faculty and Staff Award, were recognized at the 14th Annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation Day, an event designed to thank all members of the campus community for their commitment to the college and its educational mission.

Lars Kjeseth is known by students and colleagues as an exceptional math teacher who works well with students on all levels, from basic skills to advanced courses. As a college and curriculum leader, Kjeseth has brought many direct improvements to the math department, such as helping instructors have more student-centered, active learning experiences in the classroom, and adding several new math courses. Kjeseth also introduced the concepts of “gateways” in math instruction, which has helped many students succeed.

An advocate for students and teaching first and foremost, one colleague noted that even though Kjeseth is extremely busy with his many duties on campus, if a student comes to his office with a question, he never fails to drop everything and help. He does this for any student – even those not enrolled in his classes.

Kjeseth has a doctorate in mathematics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a bachelor’s degree in math from St. Olaf College in Minnesota. His career experience includes teaching math at all levels at ECC, in addition to teaching various math courses at Occidental College.

At ECC, Kjeseth is an activity director for a Title V cooperative grant with Santa Monica College, a CurricUNET design team leader, College Curriculum Committee chairman, and the former Student Learning Outcomes co-coordinator. He has also serves on the academic senate, in addition to a variety of division committees.

David Snowden is an El Camino College graduate, student services specialist, and degree audit encoder in the Admissions Office. For more than 40 years, he has contributed to the college as a student, volunteer and employee. Snowden enrolled at ECC in 1970 under the G.I.

Bill, after serving in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and Japan. From those first days as a student, he was already “jumping in” to help others, either rescuing students from the deep end of the pool while lifeguarding, or serving as the stadium manager and game announcer for many different sports.

In the ECC Admissions Office, Snowden has become the “go to” source for using Datatel, the college’s information system. Not only does he perform the duties of his regular job, he took it upon himself to become an expert on Datatel and has become a statewide presenter on the system.

Snowden is a leader on campus, and is the building captain for emergency preparedness. His yellow hat is permanently propped up on his desk, and is ready for all situations. He recently coordinated training sessions for the college’s “evacuchair.” In addition, Snowden is the co-adviser of the Veterans Club. A veteran himself, he is sensitive to their needs and is able to help veterans find the services and support they need to be successful.

In the community, he has many interests: he is a merit badge counselor for the Boy Scouts, a certified water aerobics instructor at the Torrance YMCA, volunteer projectionist for the Old Town Music Hall, and has served as an announcer, referee, or official for various sports, including basketball, soccer, football, water polo, and swimming.

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