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**For Immediate Release**

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*Fifth in a series - from El Camino College's 65 years of student success.*

## **El Camino College Celebrates 65 Years of Serving the South Bay; Alumni Success: 1990s**

El Camino College has served the South Bay for 65 years, offering the exemplary educational and support services that students need to reach their goals. Many students use El Camino College as a path to transfer to the university of their dreams; others find training programs for high-paying jobs. ECC alumni continue to be successful in their careers and community endeavors.

Alumnus and NASA astronaut Edward Michael "Mike" Fincke earned an associate degree in earth sciences (geology) from ECC in 1993. He also has two bachelor's degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and master's degrees from Stanford University and the University of Houston, Clear Lake.

Astronaut Fincke was a mission specialist on Space Shuttle Endeavour's final spaceflight from May 16 to June 1, 2011. He has a total of 381 days, 15 hours and 11 minutes in orbit and has logged 48 hours and 37 minutes of extra-vehicular activity time on nine spacewalks. Fincke was selected by NASA in April 1996.

A proud ECC alumnus, he was also the featured speaker at the 2005 and 2012 El Camino College Space Science Day, an event designed to inspire area youngsters about the science of space. In addition, Fincke was recently named a 2012 El Camino College Distinguished Alumnus.

"The time I spent at El Camino College helped give me the competitive edge I needed to further my career in space exploration," he said. "It is a big honor for me to be a Distinguished Alumnus of El Camino College. It made a big difference in my life. I think students should take different classes and find out what motivates them – that will take them very far. They will find the place they were supposed to be and that is the beauty of education."

The college continued to grow and change through the '90s, keeping up with the needs of area students. In 1995 Thomas M. Fallo became the fifth president of El Camino College, after serving as vice president of administrative services for four years. Fallo's presidency has focused on the college's fiscal stability while guiding the campus through a period of unprecedented growth and progress.

By the late '90s, El Camino College was celebrating its 50th anniversary and though the college had served the South Bay well through its first five decades, it was becoming clear that the facilities needed extensive safety and technology upgrades. Fifty distinguished alumni were honored in 1997 for the college's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Thousands of students have pursued higher education endeavors at El Camino College, leading the way to successful careers in the South Bay and beyond. For more information about El Camino College's academic programs and support services, please contact 1-800-ELCAMINO or go to [www.elcamino.edu](http://www.elcamino.edu).

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