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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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First 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 Stories from the 1950s

As El Camino College celebrates 65 years of serving the South Bay, it is a great time to reflect on the many student success stories from alumni through the years. Countless outstanding alumni continue to tell of the tremendous positive impact El Camino College made on their future endeavors, both in their careers and in other aspects of their lives.

The campus has grown tremendously since Forrest Murdock led the way as the college's first president. He guided ECC through those first 11 years, transforming an empty, dusty field into a college campus that featured classes held in repurposed barracks from the old Santa Ana Army Air Base.

By the time Murdock retired in 1958, 14 permanent modern buildings had been constructed on the expansive campus – all without incurring debt. This remarkable feat established a fiscal stability that ensured El Camino College would be able to offer educational opportunities for decades to come.

When prominent alumnus Robert Horii ('51) was a student, construction was constant. Classes were held in the barracks and then in new buildings as they opened, with a new science building completed in 1957. Students relaxed in between classes by playing horseshoes and ping pong. Dances and pep rallies also added to the social atmosphere. Horii said ECC gave him a great start to his career.

"Without El Camino College, I don't believe I could have afforded to continue my education," he said when interviewed for the 1997 ECC Distinguished Alumni Award. "Great professors provided me the necessary tools to succeed."

After earning an associate degree in engineering, Horii transferred to UCLA where he earned a bachelor's degree. He went on to a successful career with the City of Los Angeles that spanned four decades from 1953 to 1996. Horii retired from city service in 1996, leaving a legacy of 1,500 essential projects with a combined construction value that exceeded \$4 billion.

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