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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Determined El Camino College Student Takes a Risk, Finds Rewarding Career**

For Randy Williams, it all came down to a leap of faith. With only nine years to retirement from a stable, well-paying job, he decided to quit. Just like that.

Five years ago, San Pedro resident Williams left his 25-year career as a grocery store meat cutter and enrolled at El Camino College, looking for something new – an intellectual challenge. He checked out the college’s highly acclaimed allied health programs and decided on x-ray technology.

The academic journey took four years starting from quitting his job and finally to graduation day at El Camino College. Williams credits a long list of supportive professors who encouraged him along the way. It wasn’t easy – his wife worked while Randy took a full course load and they were raising their teenage son. The struggle was worth it – he is now an x-ray technician at Marina Hospital.

“The two jobs are so different – like night and day,” said Randy, 49, who was a regular on the Dean’s List and winner of the 2007 Dr. Nadine Ishitani Hata Memorial Scholarship honoring outstanding ECC Allied Health students.

“It was really hard for me to quit, but the real leap of faith was leaving a good job. My wife was there for me the whole time, while I went to school full time. It was one of the best decisions I ever made. A new job is never what you think it will be, and in my case it turned out so much better than I imagined.”

El Camino College’s allied health department offers outstanding programs in nursing, kinesiology, respiratory care and radiological technology – all with a variety of career paths.

Williams said he enjoys the variety of tasks involved in his career and the many opportunities for advancement. Besides all that, the salary is well over his wages at the grocery store.

“I didn’t do it for the money, I did it for intellectual stimulation,” he said. “I did it because I enjoy being a student; I did it so I could enjoy my career – and my life – every day.”