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## El Camino College Mourns the Passing of Police Chief

El Camino College Police Chief Michael D'Amico passed away Wednesday in his Hermosa Beach home. He was 58.

"Mike was well known for his unwavering loyalty to the college," said El Camino College Superintendent/President Thomas M. Fallo. "He loved El Camino College and El Camino College loved him back. He will be truly missed by many."

D'Amico joined the El Camino College staff in 1973 as an instructor in the Administration of Justice program, following a stint as a Hermosa Beach police officer.

He became El Camino College's Chief of Police in 1993, but continued to teach, enjoying his involvement in academics. Teaching was an important part of his career, and he was always proud to see the many men and women complete the program and emerge as outstanding officers. Many law enforcement officials throughout the South Bay have taken his courses and were influenced by his dedication to the community's safety.

"I knew Mike D'Amico best as a passionate advocate for faculty, staff, and students – fighting to defend the best interests of the college community when we served together as officers on the Academic Senate many years ago," said Kriss Stauber of the Office Administration Department. "Mike D'Amico was among the most caring of colleagues and will truly be sorely missed."

President Fallo said Chief D'Amico created an important link between the college's Administration of Justice program and the other academic divisions on campus.

"Mike was a unique individual in that he was a police officer and an instructor so he had his hand in both the law enforcement and the academic worlds," Fallo added. "He definitely worked hard both inside and outside of the classroom to make sure our program was of the highest quality."

"I know that many officers working in the South Bay today went through this program and learned from Chief D'Amico."

D'Amico led the campus police department, which includes about 40 employees. During his tenure, the police department became involved in the South Bay Regional Driving Under the Influence Task Force, joining the rest of the South Bay departments in tracking down drunken drivers. Chief D'Amico also served as a liaison between the South Bay Chief's Committee and the South Bay DUI Task Force.

Among other awards, Chief D'Amico was recognized by MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and awarded the "MADD California Hero Award." At El Camino College, he also initiated a program to send all officers and supervisors in the campus police department to a five-day course on DUI enforcement.

Under his leadership, the college's police department also secured grants to enhance traffic safety conditions on campus; expand the cadet program; add additional officers; and purchase mobile data computers for the police cars. Overall, Chief D'Amico worked to bring the department up to current professional standards.

"He was a driving force throughout his professional career," said El Camino College Sgt. Jonathan Ott. "It is ironic, we were talking the other day about what his legacy would be, and his legacy is right here – in every single law enforcement officer he met through the years.

"He was always looking forward, that was a big part of his leadership style. He had an excellent vision of law enforcement. He also really liked the college and was proud of our department."

A resident of Hermosa Beach for nearly 40 years, Chief D'Amico grew up in Manhattan Beach, and graduated from Mira Costa High School. He was dedicated to the South Bay and was deeply committed to the safety of its residents.

"He really wanted the best for us – he fought to make sure the department had the appropriate equipment and training to make us as professional as possible," said El Camino College Officer Chad Miller. "We will all miss him."

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