

Meet our 2018 El Camino College Distinguished Alumni

The El Camino College Foundation is proud to announce the 2018 Distinguished Alumni. These individuals have furthered their educational and career goals and have proven to be outstanding in their field, as well as recognized for achievements in business, volunteerism and philanthropy.

We're proud to announce that we will also honor one area philanthropist and one local corporate partner with the first ever Gratitude Awards. This award recognizes long time support of El Camino students to help ensure they have a more successful and productive educational experience. Please join us to celebrate and recognize these deserving recipients.

For more details visit www.elcaminocollegefoundation.org



Rocky Chavez



Dan Keenan



Sherry Kramer



Brian Wilson

Assemblymember Rocky Chavez

Rocky Chávez began his career in public service after graduating from El Camino College and then Chico State, when he joined the United States Marine Corps. Chávez served in the USMC for 28 years, rising to the rank of Colonel. Chávez served in all four active Marine divisions, including serving as Chief of Staff for the 4th Marine Division.

Upon retiring from the Marine Corps., Rocky continued his legacy of public service by founding the School of Business and Technology, a charter high school in the Oceanside Unified School District. He served as the school's director from 2002-2008.

Rocky was active at El Camino and was a member of the wrestling team. He qualified for the U.S. Olympic trials in 1968 and 1972. Rocky helped his family during grade school and college by working in agriculture, including summers picking grapes in Fresno County.

In November of 2002, Rocky was elected to the Oceanside City Council and in 2009 he was appointed by then Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to serve as the Undersecretary of the California Department of Veteran Affairs and later as Acting Secretary.

Rocky was first elected in 2012 to represent the 76th Assembly District which includes Camp Pendleton, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Oceanside and Vista. He has served on many committees representing education, veterans, utilities and energy.

Rocky and his wife Mary live in Oceanside and have three children and five grandchildren.

Dan Keenan

Dan Keenan is Senior Vice President at Keenan & Associates in Torrance and works closely with public agencies and Keenan & Associates benefit consultants to design and implement retirement programs. After attending El Camino College from 1973 to 1975 and earning his AA degree, Dan graduated from California State University, Long Beach with a degree in Human Resources Management. Dan and his six brothers all attended El Camino College (ECC).

After graduating from South Torrance High School, Dan played football and wrestled during his years at ECC from 1973 to 1975. Dan has been involved in the South Bay community since he was a young boy and was ASB Vice President at South High, and was on the May Company Students Advisory Board, in Redondo Beach. He has coached softball, and has been involved with the American Youth Soccer Association (AYSO) Region 34 South Redondo Beach as a coach, referee, board member, Regional Commissioner, and Referee Administrator since 1991.

He is also very active at St. Lawrence Martyr Church as an Extra Ordinary Eucharist Minister and Right of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA-Children/Teens) Teacher. He is currently an Executive Member of Keenan & Associates' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Committee with emphases on outreach to the community and assisting youth with Mentoring and Right Start Programs.

Dan has been married to Judy for 37 years, and they have a daughter and son-in-law, and two daughters. He is also a proud grandfather.

Sherry Kramer

Since 2006, Sherry Kramer has been the Director of Community Affairs and Government Relations for Continental Development Corporation, a commercial real estate business which also includes office, hotel, retail and medical complexes throughout the South Bay and San Francisco.

Sherry is a proud El Camino College alumna. She attended prior to transferring to CSU Long Beach where she received a degree in Speech Communications. Sherry is actively involved in several area Chambers of Commerce including El Segundo, Torrance, Palos Verdes Peninsula and Manhattan Beach. She has been Chairwoman of the El Segundo (twice), Torrance, and Manhattan Beach Chambers of Commerce.

Additionally, Sherry is involved in numerous philanthropic organizations. Ones closest to her heart include serving on the boards of Torrance Memorial Medical Center, CSULB, The South Bay Police & Fire Memorial Foundation, Torrance Cultural Arts Center and serving on the Education Foundation Advisory Boards in El Segundo, Manhattan Beach and Torrance. Past recognitions that Sherry has received include The MB Chamber "Heart and Soul" (2007); Senate District 28 "Woman of the Year" (2010); Torrance Chamber "Athena Award" (2014), Switzer Learning Center's South Bay Woman of the Year (2016) and the 2016 LA County Board of Supervisors and LA County Commission for Women "Woman of the Year" from former Supervisor Don Knabe.

Sherry has been married to Dr. Ian Kramer for over 32 years and together they have three adult children who all reside in the South Bay.

Brian Wilson

Brian Wilson is most famously known as the founder of the Beach Boys, an iconic American band that created the sounds of Southern California. He is an American musician, singer, songwriter, and record producer. The Beach Boys are an American rock band formed in Hawthorne, California, in 1961. The group's original lineup consisted of brothers Brian, Dennis, and Carl Wilson; their cousin Mike Love; and their friend Al Jardine.

Distinguished by their vocal harmonies and early surf songs, they are one of the most influential acts of the rock era. The band drew on the music of jazz-based vocal groups, 1950s rock and roll, and black R&B to create their unique sound, and with Brian as composer, arranger, producer, and de facto leader, often incorporated classical elements and unconventional recording techniques in innovative ways.

Brian enrolled at El Camino College, majoring in psychology, in September 1960 and continued his music studies there as well. At some point in 1961 he wrote his first all-original melody, which was eventually known as "Surfer Girl".

The Beach Boys began as a garage band, managed by the Wilsons' father Murry, with Brian's musicianship dominating their creative direction. In 1963, they gained national prominence with a string of top-ten hits reflecting a southern California youth culture of surfing, cars, and romance, later dubbed the "California Sound".

Gratitude Award Recipients

Frances Ford

Frances Ford has a passion for helping students at El Camino College. Her late husband Warren was a Chemistry professor for 36 years. Professor Ford had a love for his passion of Chemistry and a dedication to students at El Camino. Professor Ford started teaching at 28 years of age after a short career at Warner Brothers. He always had time to see one more student, answer one more question, or work one more problem. It was his desire to see all his students succeed. He and Frances had several wonderful adventures when he took two sabbaticals and they journeyed to Europe and Asia.

Frances has donated and bequeathed nearly \$1 million to the El Camino College Foundation in support of nursing and chemistry scholarships, and programs to support student success. Each year she has ten to twelve students who receive her two-year scholarships.

Frances, at 92 years young, is very active and enjoys traveling to Mexico, Hawaii and Iowa, where she visits her 95 years young brother. When told of the honor she was to receive, Frances humbly said, "No, not me! I don't do this for any recognition!" That only makes this award much more special.



Edison International

For more than 20 years, Edison International has supported students at El Camino College through donations to Fine Arts, STEM, MESA, Business, Women in Technology, and multiple student scholarships. During the OSHER Scholarship Campaign in 2009-2010, Edison International was one of the top donors to support this innovative endowment initiative from the Bernard Osher Foundation. Over the years, they have donated over \$700,000 to El Camino College. Most recently, donations have been designated for Edison STEM Scholars Scholarships, awarded to students in the STEM program at El Camino College. Students who receive this prestigious scholarship are proud recipients and wear it like a badge of honor.

Edison International's corporate philosophy is that education can transform lives and change entire communities. Their support focuses on providing underrepresented students access to higher education through scholarships in STEM. They want our future workforce to reflect the ethnic diversity of their customer base. Scholarships and grants to community colleges and universities provide underserved and underrepresented students the opportunity to attend college where otherwise they may not have had the opportunity to do so. In many cases, recipients of educational funding and winners of the Edison Scholars scholarships program are the first in their families to attend college. They currently fund more than 100 higher education institutions — all community colleges, all California State Universities, all University of California schools and several private schools in their service territory. Funding education programs nurtures STEM scholars and helps them develop skills needed for the future workforce of our company, our region and the country. The students at El Camino College are more than grateful!

