

SUPPORTING THE MISSION OF EL CAMINO COLLEGE

FALL 2025

# Announcing the 2026 Distinguished Alumni & Gratitude Award Honorees

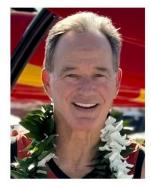
#### **Distinguished Alumni**



**Ashley Danial**Aerospace Executive
Northrop Grumman



**Bill Kim**Founding Chairman/Former CEO
Kizan International



**Jerry Marcil**President
Palos Verdes Investments



**John Sweeney**Principal Attorney
The Sweeney Firm



Mark Waronek
President/CEO
M&M Consulting Group

#### **Gratitude Awards**



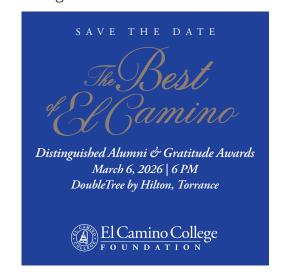




**Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce** Community Gratitude Award



It is our honor to announce this year's Distinguished Alumni & Gratitude Award recipients who will be inducted and recognized on March 6, 2026. These outstanding individuals and organizations embody the ECC Warrior spirit! We hope you will join us to celebrate their achievements and support for El Camino College! For additional event information, tickets, or sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.elcamino.edu/distinguished-alumni.



# The El Camino College Foundation Awards Record-Breaking \$1 Million in Scholarships for Fall 2025

The El Camino College Foundation is proud to announce a historic milestone: awarding over \$1 million in scholarships to students for the fall 2025 semester — the largest amount ever distributed in the college's history.

This unprecedented level of financial support will directly

"I am sincerely grateful for your support and belief in my educational journey. This generosity has not only lightened my financial load but also inspired me to work harder. I am committed to making the most of this opportunity and achieve excellence in my studies and future career."

 Russell R., Nursing major and scholarship recipient benefit nearly 675 students across a wide range of academic and career-technical programs, helping them pursue their educational and career goals with reduced financial barriers.

"This is a transformative moment for our college and our community," said Andrea Sala, Executive Director of the El Camino College Foundation. "Reaching the \$1 million mark is not only a record for us, but a reflection of the unwavering generosity of our donors and the strong belief in the power of education to change lives."

The scholarship funds were made possible through the support of alumni, local businesses, charitable foundations, and individual donors who have contributed

to the Foundation's mission of expanding access to higher education. The scholarships will help students cover tuition, books, supplies, and other critical expenses.

"This achievement is a testament to the strength of our community," said Dr. Brenda Thames, Superintendent/President of El Camino College. "When we invest in our students, we invest in the future of our entire region. I'm incredibly proud of the Foundation and grateful to everyone who made this possible."

The El Camino College Foundation secured nearly \$5 million in total fundraising efforts for the 2024-2025 year. The ECC Foundation continues to expand scholarship offerings and encourages community members to support student success at El Camino College.



Annie Frohoff, Communications & Operations Manager, Skechers Foundation (center), with the El Camino College 2025 Skechers Scholars

### El Camino College Selected for New Al Education Program

Artificial? Maybe. Intelligent? Absolutely. El Camino is proud to announce its selection to participate in the 2025–2026 Mentorship Program of the National Applied Artificial Intelligence Consortium (NAAIC). This prestigious opportunity positions El Camino College among a select group of institutions



El Camino's Al Team includes faculty members L to R (front row) Hac Le, Joanna Tang, Khai Lu; (back row) Koda Kol, Richard Perkins, Martin Anaya and Jesus Rubio

nationwide working to expand access to artificial intelligence education.

Through this nationwide program, El Camino College will partner with NAAIC to develop and launch an associate degree in Artificial Intelligence, designed to prepare students with the skills and knowledge needed for success in one of the fastest-growing fields in today's workforce.

"Our long-term vision is to establish a comprehensive, industry-aligned AI program that prepares students for emerging careers in artificial intelligence across sectors such as business, technology, and public service," explains Computer Information Systems professor Hac Le, of ECC's Business Department.

Among El Camino College's goals is to become a regional leader in community college artificial intelligence education, supporting not only career readiness but also transfer opportunities to four-year institutions. ECC seeks to engage industry partners to offer work-based learning, internships, and real-world projects, helping students gain practical experience and increasing their employability.

According to Katie Sundara, Acting Dean of the Business, Design and Applied Technology Division at El Camino College, "Being selected for the NAAIC Mentorship Program is an important milestone for El Camino College. This partnership reflects our commitment to providing innovative, future-focused programs that open doors for our students and strengthen our community's workforce."

### 100,000 Reasons to Love Honda

HONDA Thanks to a \$100,000 contribution from Honda, the

El Camino College Foundation will continue to drive meaningful change in the Los Angeles-South Bay region. The funding will expand the college's K-14 Career Pathway Programs, a workforce pipeline initiative that prepares high school and community college students for careers in industries where skilled talent is urgently needed.

El Camino's Career Pathways students engage in free dual enrollment courses, hands-on projects, and work-based

learning aligned with high-demand sectors, including Advanced Manufacturing, ICT/Digital Media, Life Sciences & Biotechnology. Health, Business & Entrepreneurship, and Energy, Construction & Utilities. In Advanced Manufacturing alone, students are inspired to pursue roles such as machine operator,

By investing in El Camino's **Career Pathways, Honda** is inspiring the next generation of innovators and fueling a sustainable talent pipeline to help meet the demands of the region's economy for years to come.

maintenance specialist, and careers in AI and automation fields that are transforming the future of work.

Honda's support ensures that students gain access to updated course materials, industry field trips, and design challenges, while educators benefit from externships that connect teaching directly to workforce needs. This allows educators direct exposure to industry practices so they can bring real-world knowledge back to the classroom. Nearly 2,000 students will explore career opportunities, participate in capstone projects, and attend a new career fair designed to strengthen ties between education and industry.



Honda's Katie Swenson (left) and ECC's Kelsey lino and Breeanna Bond volunteer at the 2024 Onizuka Space Science Day at El Camino College. (Photo credit: The Union, March 21, 2024)

By investing in El Camino's Career Pathways, Honda is inspiring the next generation of innovators and fueling a sustainable talent pipeline to help meet the demands of the region's economy for years to come. Honda has supported many of El Camino College Foundation's programs, including those in Industry and Technology, STEM initiatives, the South Bay Promise, Warrior Pantry, Community Partners, scholarships, and campus event sponsorships. Thank you, Honda, for your longstanding partnership with El Camino College and your continued support of our faculty and students.

# Congratulations to Sigli Amadu, El Camino College's First Presidential Scholar at CSUDH

The Presidential Scholarship at California State University, Dominguez Hills is the most prestigious and coveted fullyfunded award at CSUDH covering full tuition, books, technology and a housing stipend. This scholarship recognizes and rewards the outstanding academic achievements and contributions of student leaders.



Last spring the El Camino College Foundation established a new Presidential Scholarship

at CSUDH, awarded annually to an El Camino College transfer student. Sigli Amadu was honored as the inaugural recipient.

Since welcoming the first Presidential Scholars in 1985, CSUDH has awarded nearly 200 scholarships to deserving students.

### **Francisco Named Eighth El Camino College Athletics Director**

Earlier this summer. El Camino College appointed Abigail Francisco as the eighth full-time athletics director since the position was established in 1976. Francisco also becomes the first woman to hold the position. Francisco stated, "I am beyond excited to step into the role of Athletic Director at El Camino College. especially as the first woman to do so. Coming from the athletic training room, I've seen firsthand the heart. hustle, and dedication our student-athletes and coaches



bring every day. Now I get to cheer them on from a different seat and I'm truly grateful to ECC for this opportunity and am ready to get to work."

Francisco served as the interim athletics director since March following the departure of Jeffery Miera after a four-year tenure. Francisco has been a member of the ECC athletics family since 2016. Following her graduation from San Diego State with a Bachelor of Science degree in kinesiology in 2014, Francisco worked as a part-time athletic trainer at ECC as well as Compton College beginning in 2016. In the summer of 2019, Francisco became a full-time athletic trainer at ECC and she took over as the senior athletic trainer beginning in the fall of

A South Bay native, Francisco earned her master of science degree in kinesiology in 2020 from California Baptist University.

## **Guests Left Starry Eyed at Starry Su**

On August 14, the El Camino College Foundation enjoyed an enchanting and intimate evening under the stars to thank our generous donors. Guests were treated to a delicious dinner and a mesmerizing planetarium show, led by ECC Astronomy professor Shimonee Kadakia, reminding us of all the limitless possibilities that El Camino offers.























## mmer Night Donor Appreciation Event

























## **Bright Minds, Bold Futures: 2025 Intern South Bay Spotlight**

Intern South Bay is an eight-week summer internship program for El Camino College students to provide hands-on experience in their career fields. El Camino's Career Services, in partnership with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB), collaborate

The mission of the Intern South Bay Program is to empower students by providing meaningful internship experiences that enhance their career readiness and professional skills.

on the program that connects students with local employers, offering valuable professional development, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

The first Summer Internship program lasted eight weeks from June 23 – August 18, 2025, and provided up to 20-hours of paid weekly work for students. The program was fully funded by the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB).

The mission of the Intern South Bay Program is to empower students by providing meaningful internship experiences that enhance their career readiness and professional skills. Students hired as Intern South Bay participants receive a paid internship;

professional development workshops covering resume building, interview techniques, and networking skills; hands-on industry experience; access to mentorship from professionals in their field; and a closing celebration dinner event with corporate partners and fellow interns.

Some of the participating employers who provided internship opportunities this past summer included the City of Torrance, Experimentally Structured Museum of Art (ESMOA), Moog, Inc., Palos Verdes Publications and Magazine, and the El Camino College IT Department.

Interested in providing a future internship opportunity for El Camino students? Please contact Jason Barquero, Dean of Workforce Readiness & Student Life at jbarquero@elcamino.edu.



# GIVE BIG. WIN BIG. Score VIP LA Rams Tickets on Giving Tuesday!

# 2 CHANGES TO WIN RAMS TICKETS!

#### LA Rams vs AZ Cardinals

SoFi Stadium | January 3 or 4, 2026 (TBD)

1<sup>st</sup> Place: 4-Club Seats plus VIP parking Sec 114, 9 rows from field, 20-yd line (\$1,500 Value)

> **2nd Place**: 4-Reserved Seats Sec 444, 1<sup>st</sup> row, 50-yd line (\$500 Value)

1 chance for each \$50 gift increment on #GivingTuesday

(i.e. \$100 donation = 2 chances)





# More Than Just the Transfer of Knowledge: The Transfer Center and STEM Center Help Students Successfully Transfer to Four-Year Universities

#### **Transfer Center**

El Camino's Transfer Center provides services and activities to help guide students through the process of transferring to a four-year college or university. By utilizing Transfer Center services and participating in activities, students learn about potential transfer institutions, gain knowledge of transfer admission requirements, and increase their motivation and intent to transfer. Understanding university admission requirements can be complicated and overwhelming, but the Transfer Center helps prepare students to become strong applicants.

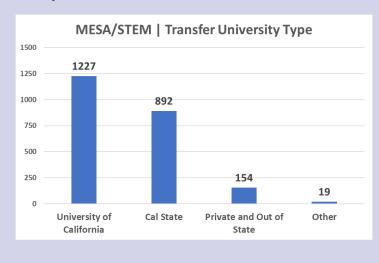
#### El Camino College Ranks

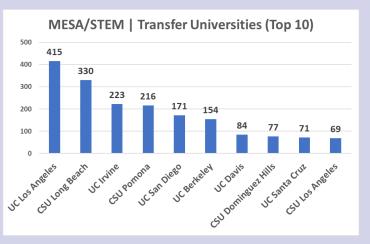




#### MESA/STEM Center

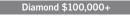
The MESA/STEM program at El Camino College was established in 1999 and has been supporting students pursuing calculus-based majors in Mathematics, Engineering or Science. The program has assisted over 2,290 students transfer to four-year universities since 2000.





















Gold \$25,000+









Silver 10.000+







#### **SKECHERS**

Bronze 5,000+



the human energy company













Copper \$2,500+



















#### **ESTATE GIFTS**

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#### \$10,000+

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#### \$2.500+

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#### \$1,000+

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#### \$500+

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#### ANNUAL GIVING | ATHLETICS | SCHOLARSHIPS | SOUTH BAY PROMISE STEM | STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND | WARRIOR PANTRY/BASIC NEEDS

#### \$1 500 000+

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#### \$1,000,000+ Mary Haag

\$100,000+

### Bill Kim

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Maria & Luis Conti Sachin & Payal Maheshwari National Board for Respiratory Care Virginia & Donald Whinfrey Marc Yeber

#### \$5,000+

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