



Cohort #6 Members



**Vonetta
Augustine**

President's Office

I am a proud alumna of ECC and happy to return again for my second time as a staff member. ECC shaped my entire collegial life both personally and professionally. I met some lifelong friends and wonderful mentors here.

My professional career includes working at CSU Long Beach, ECC, and two local governmental agencies before returning to ECC six months ago. Higher education is where I plan to stay for my professional career. Working at a college allows me to see the impact we are all making for students. My favorite time of the year on a college campus is commencement. I love seeing families celebrate their loved ones achievements.

I earned my Associates at ECC, my Bachelor of Science at San Diego State and my Masters in Public Administration at CSU Long Beach. During my free time, I love to travel with my husband; I'm an avid reader and enjoy tracking all my reading on Goodreads, including writing occasional book reviews; and adding to my collection of African-American Barbie dolls.



**Jeff
Baumunk**

Fire Academy

I began my time here at El Camino as Faculty member and Fire Academy Coordinator in 2018. In 2019 I was hired as the Public Safety Director, overseeing our AJ, FTEC, EMT, Paramedic, POST Academies, Police Explorer Academy and Fire Academy. I have been in Public Safety for over 31 years.

Before joining ECC, I served as the Drillmaster at Rio Hondo College Fire Academy. I have worked for JPL Fire Dept., La Verne Fire Dept., North Las Vegas Fire Dept., Las Vegas Motor Speedway Fire and Safety, Nevada FEMA Task Force One, and VIP Executive and Emergency Management Services. I have an AS degree from Mt. SAC, a Bachelors from Grand Canyon Univ., and my Masters from GCU as well.

My wife and I have been married for 26 years and we have two children. Brook Lynn has just started her full-time career with Disney in Orlando and our youngest Blake, is in his senior year at Univ. of Washington. We enjoy traveling, attending concerts, hanging at the beach, and paddle boarding. My hidden talent is that I play the bass guitar and I am in a garage band, Free Beer, with my kids.

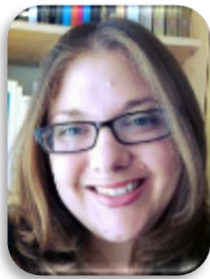


**Erica
Brenes**

English

Erica Brenes began teaching English at El Camino in 2015. Since then, she has coordinated the Puente Project, helped coordinate the Equity Minded Teaching Institute, and now cofacilitates New Faculty Learning Academy.

She is currently pursuing her doctorate in education with an emphasis on institutional culture and faculty change makers. When not at work or school, Erica can be found beach camping with her husband and two kids, baking cupcakes, or gardening in her backyard.



**Stephanie
Burnham**

English

I was born and raised in Southern California and got both my BA and MA from CSULB. I started at ECC in 2018 as a Full-time English Professor. In addition to teaching, I am also the VP of Academic Technology for the Academic Senate and the Data Coach for the LCJ Meta Majors Success Team.

Some of my favorite topics to teach and discuss are technology, culture, language, and psychology. I also have a special place in my heart for 19th Century British Literature, graphic novels, and all things sci/fi and fantasy. I am an extroverted introvert and am constantly balancing the desire to travel the world, and the yearning to stay home and read a book.



**Carla
Cain**

*Library & Learning
Resources*

Native Californian, born and raised in Los Angeles. I have two MAs, one in English, the other in Library Science. I am currently the archivist for the Library (as of Sept. 2021).

I love to collect rocks, knit, and I am also a dog lover. I am a big science fiction nerd too!



**William
Carter**

ITS

William Carter is the Director of Information Technology Services for El Camino College and has served in this role since November 2021.

Before joining El Camino College, William served for three years as Director of Information Technology for Glendora Unified School District and has over 20 years of experience as an information technology professional.

William earned his BS degree in Technical and Telecommunications Management from DeVry University and has an MBA with an emphasis in leadership from the University of La Verne.

Currently, he is an EER representative for El Camino College. Also, starting this October, he will be teaching an introduction to computers course as part of El Camino College's community development offerings.

William enjoys spending time with his sons and family, working out, eating good food, being outdoors, and participating in Toastmasters meetings.



**Linda
Cooks**

*Library & Learning
Resources*

Linda M. Cooks is excited to start her fourth academic year at El Camino College as a Faculty Librarian at Schauerman Library & Learning Resources. Along with Library and Information Science, she has a Master's in Heritage Preservation and worked in cultural resource management in Georgia for a number of years.

In collaboration with the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and the Student Equity Advisory Council, she contributed to the library exhibit, The History We Stand On: A Chronicle of the Land El Camino Occupies.

Linda currently serves on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Standing Committee and the Faculty Development Committee (FDC), both under Academic Senate. This semester she will partner with Formerly Incarcerated Re-entry Students Thriving (FIRST) to host the FDC's College Book Club.



**Karina
Franco**

*Admissions &
Records*

My name is Karina Franco, I have been with El Camino College's Admissions Office since 2016. I am a Senior Clerical assistant; I update the National Student Clearinghouse academic records, process enrollment verifications and dual enrollment applications. I also help students troubleshoot issues via zoom and in person.

I previously worked at ELAC and Westwood College and I have a Bachelors degree from CSULA.

In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family, traveling, reading, finding new recipes to never make lol, shopping, binging shows and drinking coffee.



**Lisa
George**

*Library & Learning
Resources*

Lisa Hall George has been with El Camino College as a full-time staff member since 1996. After completing her Associate's Degree at El Camino, she earned a Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with a minor in Anthropology from CSUDH. While working full time, she earned a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from UCLA. Most of her career at El Camino has been in the Learning Resources Center of the Schauerman Library, helping to provide academic support to students. Lisa was instrumental in supporting the Tutoring Program and the computer labs. In Fall 2021 she moved to the Library Services Department where she is now managing the Reserves collection and Inter Library Loan Services.

Lisa grew up and was educated in a variety of places in the United States and Europe. This gave her the opportunity to be exposed to and learn about different cultures, languages, and perspectives.

Some activities and hobbies that Lisa enjoys include yoga, skiing, fencing (where she met her husband), practicing calligraphy, playing the harp, and of course, reading!



**Christopher
Glover**

English

Born and raised in Southern California, Chris earned his BA and MA from CSULB (Go Beach!). He's always lived a double life as both a classroom instructor and student services professional, teaching English and reading courses at Long Beach City College, Coastline College, and CSU Long Beach while managing tutoring/SI/coaching programs and writing centers at the same time. Now that he's teaching English and leading the Writing Center at El Camino, he's living his best life.

In his spare time (haha) he enjoys watching baseball games, reading science fiction, and hanging out with his cat, Zilla.



**Rosa
Gutierrez**

Enrollment Services

My name is Rosa Gutierrez, I was born and raised in Guadalajara, Mexico; I immigrated to this country 22 years ago looking for a better future for my family and I. For years, my priority was to raise my children and help them learn the English language to ease their academic journey. However, as the years passed by, I realized that I needed to polish myself and pursue my own educational goal, something I had thought of achieving since I dropped out of high school.

Being a non-native English speaker brought additional challenges in my undergraduate career, but I did not allow that to stop me. There were times in which I wanted to quit but thinking of my children made me keep going. Going back to school opened many doors that helped me better myself, which eventually allowed me to offer my children a higher quality of life. I proudly graduated in May 2019 from Cal State Dominguez Hills as a Cum Laude student majoring in Business Administration.

I was recently hired as the ESL Coordinator, I love encouraging students to overcome their challenges and stay focused on their goals. I'm very happy and excited to be part of El Camino because it gives me the opportunity to help others the same way I was provided help some years back.

My goal is to provide our students with the needed resources, to motivate them into furthering their education, and to not allow obstacles to come between their education.

I'm very happy and thankful for being here :)!



**Charles
Hughes**

ITS

Have been employed at El Camino College since 1988 in various computer related positions. Currently serving as one of the Computer Systems Support Technicians in Information Technology Services.



**Carlos
Lopez**

Academic Affairs

Joined ECC as the Vice President of Academic Affairs on August 1 after serving in the same position at Moreno Valley College and Santa Ana College.

Formerly an associate professor of Mathematics and chairperson of the Mathematics Department at San Jacinto College. A recognized expert in strategic enrollment management and co-teaches a summer academy.

Fun Fact - learned to ice skate and play ice hockey at 43.



**Connie
Nguyen**

*Outreach & School
Relations*

Hi everyone! I'm a South Bay native who's always felt most at home at ECC. I was fortunate enough to earn my Associate's in Studio Art at ECC which later led to a Bachelor's in Public Administration from CSUDH. While taking classes at ECC, I had the opportunity to serve as a Student Worker and TNC, but I'm proud to say that I have recently joined the ranks of Classified Staff as the Student Services Technician for Outreach and School Relations, a position I've held since May 2021.

My hobbies are reading, writing, playing sandbox video games, and being obsessed with my recently adopted cat. I also enjoy discovering new plant-based recipes and hoarding spices. I love making new friends at ECC, so if you see me around, please don't hesitate to say hi...let's swap pet photos, book recommendations, and recipes! (Future club ideas anyone?) :-)



**Gema
Perez**

Distance Education

Gema Perez has worked in the office of Online and Digital Education as the Learning Management Systems Specialist aka the Canvas Lady, since 2014. She has worked in Online Learning for over 15 years.

Recently, she has embraced her role as VP of Employee/Employer relations for El Camino's Classified Union 6142. When not knitting, reading, or binge-watching Star Trek, Gema is struggling to understand truth tables in the hopes of completing her third master's degree.

She is survived by 10 dogs and 2 cats. LOL.



**Lavonné
Plum**

Academic Affairs

This fall marks my 25th year at El Camino College. I began as a casual employee in the Business Division and am now the Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

I am an ECC alum and have a degree in Organizational Management. Outside of work I love to spend time with my husband and two daughters as well as read, knit, and try to learn something new as often as possible.



**Karen
Preciado**

Enrollment Services

My name is Karen Preciado, and I currently oversee the Warrior Welcome Center (WWC) as the Enrollment Services Supervisor. Before working at El Camino College, I was an Outreach, Recruitment, and Orientation Counselor, as well as, the Transfer Center Coordinator at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).

I was born and raised in San Bernardino, CA, to parents who immigrated to the United States from Colima, Mexico. I love to lift weights and watch sports. My teams include the best of the best: Lakers, Dodgers, UCLA, Kings, and Cowboys! I also love watching The Bachelor, hanging out with friends, and listening to El Conejo Malo. I drink way too much coffee, and I love eating fruit. :)



**David
Reed**

Political Sciences

David Reed began his educational journey at El Camino College 26 years ago, and he hasn't stopped learning since. As a political scientist, he tries to educate his students about the American system of government so that they can be better informed citizens.

As a political philosopher, he tries to engage his students in discussion about the very nature of politics itself, and how normative questions about politics intersect with ethics, art, and aesthetics.

His main interests are political philosophy, film, comedy, music, and trying (mostly in vain) to master the guitar.



**Russell
Serr**

*Health Sciences &
Athletics*

I was born in So Cal and have lived here my entire life. I grew up playing all kinds of sports. After high school, I was in a car accident and was injured leaving me paralyzed. After a time of working, I went back to school and revisited my love for athletics. I played wheelchair tennis and basketball as well as competed in marathons. I was a USA Wheelchair Basketball national team member and made the all-tournament team in the Gold Cup World Championships in Brussels Belgium in 1992. I was able to travel the country and world playing wheelchair tennis and basketball. Good Times!!

I was a men's basketball assistant coach at LBCC and we won a State Championship in 1994. I completed my Doctoral Degree in Psychology in 2020. I love to handcycle, swim, bowl, and spend time going to concerts and sporting events with my wife who I met in second grade.

I have worked at ECC since 1996 teaching in the Adapted Physical Education program, and have been the Dean of Health Sciences and Athletics for 3 years. I love my job and the people at El Camino College!



**LaJuan
Steels**

Financial Aid

Hello, my name is LaJuan Steels. I was born and raised in Santa Maria, CA. I'm the youngest of 7. I have a daughter and two grandchildren whom are the love of my life.

I'm the Financial Aid Supervisor her at El Camino College. I've worked in Financial Aid for 20 plus years. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.

Lastly, "The Art of giving.....gives me joy"



**Bob
Suppelsa**

*Administrative
Services*

Robert "Bob" E. Suppelsa formerly served as Vice President, Administrative Services within the Los Angeles Community College District at Los Angeles Harbor and West Colleges since 2015. Suppelsa has more than 30 years of experience in education, which also includes providing financial and investment oversight for several educational Foundations.

In addition, Suppelsa served as the chief financial officer in leading independent schools and as controller for the Montebello Unified School District. He has held managerial leadership positions with Northrop Grumman Corporation responsible for Engineering Administration and Advanced Systems Planning on several high technology programs.

In addition to his educational background, Suppelsa was also president of the Santa Monica Schools Credit Union, served in a supporting board position for Kinecta Federal Credit Union, and was president of a Citizen's Bond oversight committee for a local school district.

He has taught finance and school business administration coursework at Pepperdine University and the University of Phoenix.



**Brenda
Thames**

President's Office

I am Brenda Thames and I have had the honor and privilege of serving as the President of El Camino College for a little over one year.

I am a mother.
I am a daughter.
I am a wife.
I am a sister.
I am a friend.

I am not always sure and I am not always right but I am always willing to say I don't know - I'm sorry - How can we make this right?

I am an off the chart INTJ/F introvert.

My top 5 strengths are:

1. Intellection
2. Restorative
3. Learner
4. Input
5. Connectedness

I am a servant leader.

"I am responsible for my impact on the world whether I acknowledge it or not. So, what does it take to qualify as a leader? Being human and being here. As long as I am here, doing whatever I am doing, I am leading, for better or for worse. And, if I may say so, so are you." ~ Parker J. Palmer

"This is my thesis: caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each other, is the rock upon which a good society is built. Whereas, until recently, caring was largely person to person, now most of it is mediated through institutions - often large, complex, powerful, impersonal; not always competent; sometimes corrupt. If a better society is to be built, one that is more just and more loving, one that provides greater creative opportunity for its people, then the most open course is to raise both the capacity to serve and the very performance as servant of existing major institutions by new regenerative forces operating within them." - Robert K. Greenleaf



**Gerson
Valle**

Mathematics

Born in Mexico City and imported to the US at 4 years old. Gerson is a product of the California education system. After finishing high school in Cypress he attended Cypress Community College at the turn of the century and transferred as a Mathematics major to California State University Long Beach where he earned his Bachelor's and Master's degree in 2006.

Gerson taught mathematics part-time for 9 years before becoming a full-time math professor at Compton College in 2014. He continued to teach part-time at El Camino College during this time. In 2018 he became Division Chair for Mathematics, English, ESL, Communications, Human Development, and Library Faculty. During this time, he oversaw the implementation of AB 705 for both math and English, guided pathways implementation, the separation from El Camino College, and was a founding member of their brand-new curriculum committee. All of this paved the way for Gerson to become Associate Dean of Mathematical Sciences at El Camino College where he plans to use his experience to benefit students with a particular focus on equity.

When he is not in the office, Gerson loves to lose himself in a galaxy far, far away. Gerson has an almost encyclopedic knowledge of all things Star Wars. He is also well versed in the MCU, a Song of Ice and Fire, and Tolkien. Games, be it video games, board games, role-playing games are also some of his interests and hobbies. He shares these loves with his 14 yr old son and 10 yr old daughter.



**Judith
Valle**

Chemistry

I was born and grew up in Mexico. I got my bachelors in Biochemical Engineering from the Metropolitan Autonomous University in Mexico City. I was the first person in my whole family to attend college. I then did my Master's of Science in Biochemistry at CSULB. After completing my Masters, I worked as a lab manager and research associate in a Molecular Biology lab at the VA Long Beach Medical Center for six years.

In January 2018, I gladly joined El Camino College as a lab technician in the Chemistry department. What I like most about my position is that I get to interact with and help the students and faculty every day.

I am blessed with two kids, Giselle and Ethan who are my joy and reason to improve myself. I travel with my family to Mexico at least once a year. I love visiting my family and exploring new places in the country. I really like ice skating, shopping and going out with my friends. I enjoy spending time with my family watching digital anime, horror and thriller series or movies and TV soaps. I also like to dance cumbia and salsa, even though I am not the best.



**Irena
Zugic**

Academic Affairs

Irena Zugic immigrated from a war-torn country of former Yugoslavia to the United States of America, 20 years ago. She finished high school in Memphis, TN, while barely speaking any English. She continued her education at the University of Memphis, obtaining a Bachelor's degree in both, French and Spanish, and she also received a Master's degree in Romance Languages, at the age of 22, which is one of her greatest accomplishments.

Irena is now a multilingual higher education professional with 13 years of combined experience, including teaching, student support and success coaching, admissions, curriculum and scheduling, leading Starfish early alert and tutoring appointment system implementations, and last but not least, project managing Guided Pathways efforts overall at her previous institution. Irena started her position as an Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at ElCo last year in July. She loves innovation and already prides herself on being able to work collaboratively with all constituent groups to reach our institutional goals. Irena is passionate about helping students from all backgrounds and communities achieve their self-defined goals. She firmly believes that access to quality education and equitable learning environment should be a right and not a privilege.

In her spare time, Irena enjoys traveling and (salsa) dancing. She can also be very competitive, especially when it comes to playing ping pong or participating in a TV game show, such as Beat Shazam.