

Cohort #2 Members



**Michelle
Arthur**

Michelle Arthur has 20+ years' experience in higher education, first as a student (first in her family to attend and obtain a graduate degree), and second as a student support services professional and community college ambassador and advocate. Currently, Michelle serves as El Camino's Director of Dual Enrollment, and part of a team leading efforts to increase college readiness, awareness, and equitable access by working with local K-12 leadership and college colleagues to create a seamless transition from high school via the college and career pathways model under AB 288.

Perhaps one of her most important professional accomplishments transpired with her leadership in creating a network of campus referrals and support for students exhibiting disturbing behavior, with the goal of ultimately keeping in contact with each other, supporting the student and their family, as well as balancing the safety needs of our staff and faculty on campus. Through initial group meetings the Assessment, Intervention, and Management of Safety (AIMS) Team -- the district's interdisciplinary behavior intervention team (BIT) was formed. The team, now in its 5th year, continues to support the needs of students, staff and faculty through its goal of assessing, intervening, managing, and ultimately supporting students of concern experiencing a mental health crisis along with creating a culture of safety on campus.

Michelle has earned: an Associate's degree in Art from El Camino College; double degrees of a Bachelor of Arts in Art and Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies from the University of California Los Angeles; and ultimately a Master's degree in Counseling from California State University Dominguez Hills.

Michelle is married to Ron, an ECC Alumnus, with whom she shares two children, Nolan (13) and Philomena (10), and a dog, Roxi the Rottweiler. Michelle and her family reside in San Pedro, California.



**Debra
Breckheimer**

Debra joined ECC as an adjunct instructor of English in fall 1993, and was thrilled to accept the full-time tenure-track position in fall 1996. After enjoying 24 years in the classroom and a number of special projects outside of the classroom, she made the brave decision to join the administrative ranks in January 2017. Debra began as Faculty Coordinator and effective July 1, 2017, she accepted the Interim Dean of Humanities position. While she does miss the classroom somewhat, she loves the challenges and opportunities of her new position. To keep herself balanced outside of work, she is active every day of the week playing tennis, biking, running, strength training or some combination thereof. Her two most favorite human beings are her 27 year-old son and her 23 year-old daughter; they are her rocks.



**Lyn
Clemons**

Hi my name is Lyn Clemons. I work in the DSPS Program in the Special Resource Center overseeing direct student services. I have had the pleasure of being a part of ECC in the community volunteer leadership programs, as a student, as a parent, and as an employee. Looking forward to the NEW AGE of ECC growth and change AND excited to be actively involved!

Two books that I re-read on a regular basis are Charlotte's Web and Frankenstein...both stories have different meanings at different stages of my life AND are about human spirit and the empowerment of self without judgement...and embracing growth/change/life!

Fun stuff I do would be:

- Community volunteer throughout the greater Los Angeles Area,
- I belong to P.E.O. a philanthropic educational organization that focuses on education/empowerment through learning for women.
- Urban and rural hiking...the longer the better...do enjoy a good month or two out in the wilds (hasn't happened since children...however children are now adults...it will happen!) – it feeds my inner environmental core!



**Marco
Colom**

I have acquired over 9 years of experience working in higher education prior to joining the El Camino College Financial Aid Department in April of 2013. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Telecommunications Management and recently I completed my MBA Degree. I don't consider myself to have hobbies, but I like to spend time with my family, read and do my own handy work around the home.



**Walter
Cox**

Walter Cox is Associate Dean of Fine Arts and first attended El Camino College after graduating high school in 1986. He holds a B.A. in Art History from the University of Southern California and an MBA in Marketing from California State University, Long Beach.

Before taking his current position, he served as an adjunct faculty member of the Art Department at El Camino College for 8½ years, teaching Two Dimensional Design, Typography, Digital Art and Portfolio and Career Planning for Artists and Designers. Prior to returning to El Camino as an instructor, he worked as a decorative house painter, freelance graphic designer and as the Human Resources and Safety manager for Oldcastle Glass, Los Angeles.

Although not currently as active in graphic design as he once was, his most notable projects have been designing murals for the Paseo Colorado mall in Pasadena, working on the original website for JennyJones.com and designing the identity for the California State University, Long Beach, College of Business Administration.

His outside interests include reading, working on various small construction projects and restoring his two antique automobiles, a 1968 BMW 2002 and 1930 Ford Model A Roadster.



**Monica
Delgado**

Monica X. Delgado started at ECC in May 2016 as the KEAS Program Coordinator. She holds master's degrees in Community & Regional Planning and Latin American Studies from the University of New Mexico. In addition to her work at ECC, she trains and teaches the Afro-Brazilian art of capoeira. She loves to travel, play music and make jewelry.



**Lorena
Garcia**

I am a proud alumna of El Camino College, class of 2006. I joined El Camino College as an office aide in the Counseling Division in 1993 while I was a student. In 2007 I became a full-time classified employee in the Assessment Center. I am a busy mother of two beautiful girls, Yarixa and Yaretzy. I love spending time with my family. In my free time I enjoy family gatherings and swimming with my husband and two daughters. My favorite sport is volleyball; in high school I played varsity volleyball as a setter. In addition, I enjoy taking classes in El Camino College, especially yoga.



**Ricardo
Gonzalez**

I was born in LA and grew up for half of my life there and the latter half in the South Bay. I was the second of four kids and the first to go to college which was a bit of a struggle my first year. I began as a student of El Camino College in 2010 through the First Year Experience Program and got more hands on with my education. I transferred to Cal State Long Beach in 2013 and graduated in 2015 with a Bachelors in English with emphasize in education. Currently, my passion has changed to counseling and am looking at MSW programs while also attempting to fulfill the prerequisite needed to apply to said program.

I began working at El Camino College in the summer of 2011 as an ambassador for Outreach and School Relations. Through that I met some of my best friends and they got me involved at El Camino. I became part of the Inter Club Council as the president of the organization and got to participate in many wonderful events. Following that I got involved in offices such as Admissions and Records, the International Student Program, the RISE Center and currently I'm the Student Services Specialist for The Opportunity Project.

I am an avid movie goer; I love the film industry and dissecting films for fun. Looking at the meanings behind the movie and the story and character arcs is something I find fascinating. I am a big animal lover; I have 4 dogs and two cats that I absolutely adore. I also love to read novels and watch sports diligently. Currently, I am engaged and very much in the early planning stages of the wedding and loving the experience. I love going out with friends, having quality time with my family, or simply having me time to meditate and study up on my further academic pursuits.



**Irene
Graff**

Irene Graff is the Director of Research & Planning at El Camino College. Irene joined ECC in summer 2005, enjoying the many pleasures and challenges ever since. She has formed or joined many staff groups and initiatives, including the Wool Gatherers stitching group, ECC Strummers ukulele group, ECC Readers (online). Irene enjoys the rich environment that ECC offers including attending both arts and sporting events, and walks on the beautiful campus. As these campus activities suggest, Irene enjoys knitting, reading, the Arts, and hiking, among other outdoor activities. She also loves learning languages and has studied three at ECC! Can you guess what they are?



**Brian
Hayden**

Brian C. Hayden was born in Torrance, CA, and fondly remembers spending time on El Camino College campus as a young boy with his father, Dwayne. Brian attended ECC from 2001-2004, during which time he was a student worker in the Professional Development & Learning Office. After transferring to UCLA, he remained a casual employee at ECC, becoming full-time in 2014 and now works for the Office of Outreach and School Relations. He also plays guitar, frequents art museums, reads classics, excels at trivia, loves the beach, music, sports, and movies – and has a 5-year-old son, William, whom he now brings to campus.



**Scott
Kushigemachi**

Scott Kushigemachi was hired as an adjunct instructor in 2007, and he became a full-time member of the faculty in 2010. Recently, he has also served as the Humanities Basic Skills Coordinator. Being an English professor, predictably, he enjoys reading, and he also plays the piano and guitar. But most of his time outside of work is spent with his three-year-old daughter, Claire, and his wife, Amy.



**Larry
Leach**

Larry Leach is a faculty member in the Communication Studies Dept. at El Camino College in Torrance, CA and serves as the adviser to the student film club. Prior to his arrival at El Camino he was a faculty member at Chabot College in Hayward, CA, where taught Mass Communication, Film, TV production, Journalism and advised the award winning student publication "The Spectator".

In addition to teaching experience at several other colleges as a public speaking instructor, he has worked in television/video production, news broadcasting, public relations.

Larry received his B.A. in Communication Studies from CSU-Fullerton, his M.A. in Mass Communications & Journalism from CSU-Fresno and was recently accepted into the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership program through the USC Rossier School of Education.



**Mary
McMillan**

In addition to having a Masters in Library & Information Science from San Jose State University, Mary has a BA in Communications with a concentration in Film & Television Production from LMU.

She started off working in the entertainment industry and spent 6 years in various roles working on the sets of numerous film productions, followed by several years in the marketing department of a network television company.

After making the decision of a career change, she went back to school, and became a librarian to the surprise of family & friends. She started the new endeavor as the Business Outreach Librarian for the Long Beach Public Library, followed by years serving as the Library Director for the New York Film Academic and for Marymount College in Rancho Palos Verdes. She has been at El Camino for four years and is currently the Digital Resources Librarian managing the library's online content including databases, eBooks, and discovery tools. In addition, she participates in the embedded librarian program and is committed to fostering information literacy skills, which she sees as the essential mission of a librarian.

Personally, she has a keen wanderlust and loves to travel and explore the world. When at home, she enjoys hiking, yoga, attending concerts, learning new technologies, reading beachside, exploring all the offerings available in Los Angeles and is just starting to learn to play the banjo.



**Jonathan
Minei**

Jon Minei began his performing career at age 19, premiering at the Mirabelle Palace in Salzburg, Austria and also at Mozart's Residence in Vienna. In addition to classical guitar, he has performed with a variety of musical theater companies; performing as a pit musician for Man of La Mancha at the renowned 2001 Tony Award Winning Utah Shakespearean Festival in Cedar City, Utah. David Nichols of the Los Angeles Times calls his playing "Superb!" The late Poly Warfield of Backstage West describes his playing as "...plangent strains of enchantment ..."

As a soloist and ensemble player, Jon has performed extensively locally and abroad. His principle instrument is a 7-string classical guitar with extended lower and upper registers, made by Michael Thames of Taos, New Mexico.

He began his formal studies at El Camino College with John Dearman of the Grammy Award winning Los Angeles Guitar Quartet and completed his Bachelors in Music at the University of California, Irvine with early music specialist, John Schneiderman. He then went on to complete his Masters in Music at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California studying with classical guitarists William Kanengiser and artist-in-residence, maestro Pepe Romero.

Jon Minei is the Director of Guitar Studies program as an associate professor at El Camino College in Torrance, CA. Jon is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern California pursuing a DMA in classical guitar, having studied with Scott Tennant, Adam Del Monte, and Brian Head, minoring in Studio/Jazz Guitar (instructor, Pat Kelly), Music Industry, and Music Education. He has also completed coursework in the Arts Leadership & Entrepreneurship program under former chair of the National Endowment of the Arts, Dana Gioia.



**Lucy
Nelson**

I have been an Administrative Assistant in the private and public sector for over 30+ years. This is my 19th year at El Camino working as an Administrative Assistant II (1 ½ years in Counseling and 17 ½ years in Student Support Services). In 2008, I received my Bachelor's degree Magna Cum Laude in Business from CSU Dominguez Hills. Little known fact, I began my career as a preschool teacher! My hobbies include exercising (aerobics and yoga), hiking, kayaking, zip lining, reading and watching soccer. I am currently immersed in my home remodeling projects.



**Teresa
Palos**

Teresa P. Palos, Ph.D.

A native of Los Angeles, I was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley. I did not travel far for my education as I stayed in LA for my graduate and undergraduate schooling at UCLA. I am quite the enthusiastic Bruin! I have been at ECC thirteen years, and I teach Biology and Microbiology. I have also worked on two 5-year HSI-STEM grants. While the work with the grants proved to be worthwhile and productive endeavors, I thoroughly enjoy working with students and have relished returning to the classroom full-time. When time permits, I enjoy exploring Southern California museums, botanical gardens/nature reserves, and interesting restaurants. I am looking forward to a rewarding experience with ECC PRIDE!



**Heather
Parnock**

Heather Parnock, Publications Supervisor
Public Relations & Marketing

Heather Parnock joined the El Camino College Public Relations & Marketing Department in 2008 as publications supervisor. In this position, she manages the public relations and marketing efforts of El Camino College and Compton College, bringing a branded and unified approach to all print and digital projects. Before El Camino College, she worked at the Easy Reader newspaper in Hermosa Beach for 12 years. She grew up in the South Bay with her twin sister and thoroughly enjoys her duties as "best. aunt. ever." When not at work, she enjoys outdoor activities such as saltwater fishing and traveling with her rescue dog Foster. Most Thursday nights, you'll find her listening to country music and line dancing.



**Soshanna
Potter**

Shanna earned her Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry from UCLA before doing a postdoctoral fellowship at Caltech in geobiology. She taught at Santa Monica College and USC before joining the chemistry department at El Camino College in 2009. Shanna has two sons and enjoys taking hands-on chemistry demonstrations to their classrooms. Besides chemistry, her passions include traveling and exploring with her family, hiking, and reading. She lives in North Torrance and enjoys riding her bike to work.



**Colin
Preston**

Colin Preston was named Director of Athletics and Kinesiology at El Camino College in January 2016 after serving as Director of Athletics at Academy of Art University for three years. Prior to being Director of Athletics at Academy of Art University, Preston held numerous positions within the Academy of Art Athletics department for six years. Preston graduated from University of California, Santa Barbara and received his Master's from University of San Francisco. He resides in Santa Monica with his wife Jess and their daughter Madison. He has a strong passion for every sport and is an Oakland Raider fan.



**Andrea
Sala**

Andrea Sala is the Executive Director of the El Camino College Foundation, whose mission is to develop community relationships and raise funds to support students' success in education and life.

Sala has been in fundraising, development, marketing, and public relations for over 30 years (a very long time!). Prior to taking her role at El Camino College, she was the Executive Director of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Education Foundation, where she increased donations to the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District from \$700,000 annually in 2001 to \$3.4 million annually in 2015.

Sala grew up in the South Bay and graduated from CSU Long Beach with a degree in Journalism with an emphasis in Public Relations and a minor in Marketing. She is an active volunteer having served on boards for Sandpipers, PTA, Peninsula Education Foundation, and National Charity League. She is currently a member of the Peninsula Committee Children's Hospital, raising funds for Children's Hospital Los Angeles. She lives in Rolling Hills Estates with her husband Jim in an "empty nest". Two of their three grown children live in the Los Angeles area, and one lives in Omaha, Nebraska.

Sala likes to run and hike for exercise and therapy, and has completed one half marathon and will run her second half marathon in October in Omaha, Nebraska with her daughter. One of her greatest physical accomplishments was successfully climbing Mt. Whitney (the highest summit in the contiguous United States with an elevation of 14,505 feet) round trip in one day in July 2016. She also likes to cook and entertain, play golf, water / snow ski, and watch most sporting events, but especially the USC Trojans and LA Lakers.



**Carla
Velasquez**

Carla Velasquez-Lopez
Student Services Specialist

Carla joined ECC as a TNC in the office of Outreach and School Relations in January 2014 and became a full-time in November of 2014. She received her BA in Sociology from UC Irvine in 2012. Previous to working for El Camino College Carla worker for the MESA program at UC Irvine proving STEM outreach to middle and high school students in underrepresented areas. In her free time she enjoys crafting and spending time with her pets.