Foundation Sponsors Chromebooks Pilot for English Classes

According to Pete Marcoux, an English professor at El Camino College, the demise of the paper based textbook is not a question of “if” but a question of “when.”

“In order to prepare our students for their future, El Camino College reading and writing classes need to focus on reading and writing in the digital world,” he explained.

During Marcoux’s presentation to the ECC Foundation Board requesting funding to pilot Chromebooks, his passion shined through as he explained the benefits of digital learning in his classroom. Using McGraw Hill’s digital textbook, learning would take on a whole new meaning for this generation of students who have grown up in a world surrounded by social media and technology.

The pilot project is proving to be a hit with students and faculty. The collaborative learning environment allows the teacher and students to interact simultaneously, and peer editing can be completed easily by sharing the screen. Students are more engaged and eager to learn through this modern classroom experience.
Wayne G. Bemis, D.D.S., is an El Camino College alumnus who grew up in the South Bay. He and his wife of 59 years, Peggy, graduated from Leuzinger High School. Dr. Bemis remembers his years at El Camino fondly, with the oil fields of Torrance surrounding the campus. While serving in the military from 1955-57, Dr. Bemis attended night school at El Camino. After the military, he became a full-time student, while Peggy worked at Northrop to support the newlyweds. He received his degree at USC School of Dentistry, and opened a dental practice in the South Bay, where he worked tirelessly for the next 45 years until his retirement in 2008. Dr. Bemis has established two scholarships at El Camino College in memory of his favorite professors: Julius Sumner Miller and Dr. Gordon Wilson.

Julius Sumner Miller was a guiding force in the education of Dr. Bemis during his years at El Camino College, and Miller’s approach to teaching was “never boring.” Professor Gordon Wilson changed Dr. Bemis’ view of the world, and opened his eyes to many areas not yet discovered by him in history, political science and economics. According to Dr. Bemis, “Professor Gordon explained each subject matter, making it understandable and fascinating. Both of these professors had a major impact on my life.” The Bemis’ have created a legacy for their scholarships by establishing an endowment in their estate plan. By naming a gift to El Camino College Foundation in their will, the recollections of Dr. Bemis’ days at El Camino will live on in perpetuity. His gift is the ultimate legacy to El Camino College and the students their scholarships will benefit.

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The South Bay Promise was created to provide a pathway from high school to college, in collaboration with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, Centinela Valley Union High School District, Inglewood Unified School District, El Camino College and CSU Dominguez Hills. The South Bay Promise will allow students to chart a clear pathway from high school to El Camino College, and then onto California State University, Dominguez Hills, or another four-year university where they are accepted. South Bay Promise students may also utilize support services at El Camino that include summer school classes, tutoring, transfer assistance, career counseling and peer-to-peer mentoring. The El Camino College Foundation is proud to support the program for a second year. This program will continue to grow, and with support from the Foundation’s generous donors, more students will be eligible to participate.

Dr. Wayne and Peggy Bemis: Keeping the Memories Alive

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Dr. Wayne and Peggy Bemis with the 2015 Bemis Scholarship recipients.
He and his wife Frances were a strong part of the El Camino College family during the formative years of the College. Since Warren’s passing, Frances has remained engaged and is still a big part of the ECC family. She has established several scholarships for incoming high school and El Camino College students, providing funds to pay for tuition, books and fees.

Frances truly enjoys her scholarship recipients, and for many of her Nursing students, she continues her generosity with annual help funding their educational expenses. Frances writes them warm letters of encouragement on her faithful typewriter, and they write her back! Since establishing the scholarships in 2008, over 50 students have received financial help from the Ford Scholarships. Frances is passionate about nursing, because her mother Dena was a professional nurse in 1918 in Marshalltown, Iowa during World War I.

Shelby Bradley received a Ford high school nursing scholarship as she entered El Camino from high school, and was the first Ford high school recipient accepted into the nursing program to graduate from the nursing program. She has continued her education at CSU Dominguez Hills, where she’ll receive a BS in nursing.

Making a difference in these students’ lives is most important to Frances. Her support and encouragement of these recipients has helped them be successful in their educational path. Nursing is one of the most difficult, and expensive, programs at El Camino. Having a supporter like Frances to watch over these students makes their lives a little easier.

President Fallo, Frances Ford, Shelby Bradley (recipient of the Ford scholarship), and Jon Ford (nephew and presenter of the scholarship).

President’s Circle

The El Camino College Foundation’s President’s Circle is a dynamic group of distinguished community members, business leaders, alumni and friends who support El Camino College.

The President’s Circle provides funds for the El Camino College Foundation to respond to the College’s greatest needs, and support and enhance campus programs. Your donation enables us to strengthen funding of vital student services, support the President’s strategic initiative and priorities, and respond to new and emerging opportunities.

You will also receive these benefits:

- Exclusive invitations to events with the ECC President, including the annual President’s Dinner
- VIP seating at special events on campus throughout the year
- Network with business and community leaders
- Access to the College President and key College & Foundation leaders

President’s Circle donors play an important role as ambassadors in our community to help educate others about El Camino College and the critical role education plays in transforming lives. Become a member today.

Meet the Foundation Student Representative

Eman Dalili is the El Camino College Foundation student representative, as well as the student representative to the ECC District Board of Trustees. Eman graduated from Palos Verdes High School in 2014, and headed to El Camino. Next fall, he will apply to four prestigious colleges: USC, UC Berkeley, UCLA and Cornell as a business major.

Eman has engrossed himself in activities at El Camino College which require many meetings at school after his classes are finished: commissioner of finance for the Inter Club Council; president of the Business and Marketing Club; and co-president/founder of Students Against Cancer Club, as well as a member of El Camino’s award-winning debate team. In his “spare time,” Eman has been an intern for Congresswoman Janice Hahn and former Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi.

“My experience at El Camino College has been nothing short of exceptional. It’s truly a special place with amazing opportunities, wonderful people and unparalleled student support services,” Eman explained. “In my time here, I’ve grown extraordinarily as a student, leader, and most importantly, as a person.”
Jesse Finds His Way at El Camino College

By Jesse Villalobos, ECC student, Class of 2016

Since I was young, I’ve always had an interest in science or engineering, but unfortunately my years in high school were misguided and undisciplined, and I was unable to perform well academically. I felt ashamed of the student that I was in high school and when I graduated, I didn’t even go to graduation because I felt I did not deserve a celebration of my poor academic display.

In the fall of 2006, I attempted school at Cerritos College, but due to my employment and my family financially, but with an unsatisfied feeling lingering lack of motivation, I had to withdraw.

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After high school I went straight into working full time with my dad as a mechanic and office assistant, which helped my family financially. In the fall of 2006, I attempted school at Cerritos College, but due to my employment and my lingering lack of motivation, I had to withdraw.

The following years I worked to help my family financially, but with an unsatisfied feeling of accomplishment. I attempted to take a class once more at Cerritos College in the fall of 2009, yet again half-heartedly motivated and working too many hours, so I withdrew for a second time.

Everything changed for me when I became unemployed in September 2011 and I could not acquire employment with a high school degree. I would apply for jobs and stood in long lines to fill out applications at multiple job opportunities, but I wouldn’t get any of these jobs.

I was finally able to acquire a stable job working in an office in Torrance in February 2012. I began to reestablish myself financially, but I was not going to allow myself to be placed in a situation where I would be unemployed with just a high school degree. This is when El Camino College came in to my life.

I enrolled in El Camino College in fall 2012. I was a geology major, but switched to mechanical engineering when I noticed that I was doing well in math. The geology department at El Camino College was of great help and support in my success here. Although I am a mechanical engineering major, I am still considering going into petroleum engineering since it’s closely related to geology.

Although school was hard, I knew I needed to stay enrolled so I could make a difference in my life. Through the help at MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement), I acquired scholarships, engineering research opportunities at UCLA, lots of workshops providing vital career information, counseling and a community of students in similar majors.

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Now I am in my last year at El Camino, and I will be completing the pre-engineering requirements and acquiring an associates of science in geology and mathematics in spring 2016. I plan on transferring to a mechanical engineering program, preferably at UCLA, USC, or UCI.

I love El Camino College for everything that it has given to me, and I hope to give back one day with my own scholarships.