

NISOD EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Eligibility

1. Years of Service
 - a. Residential Faculty must have taught as Residential Faculty at EMCC for a minimum of three (3) years.
 - b. Adjunct Faculty must have taught at EMCC for a minimum of four (4) semesters, which can include summer as 1 semester and do not have to be consecutive.
 - c. Full-Time/Classified Staff must have worked as Full-Time/Classified Staff for a minimum of two (2) years at EMCC.
2. Completed Nomination Form
3. Recipients can only be awarded once for the NISOD Award. Please review past winners to ensure a duplicate nomination/award is not submitted.

Nominations

All Estrella Mountain Community College employees are welcome to nominate themselves or an EMCC colleague. EMCC employees can nominate one person per category. In order for a nomination to be considered complete, it must consist of the following:

- The nomination consists of the nominee's name and three paragraphs (3-6 sentences each), one for each of the three criteria. Each paragraph must address the following:
 1. One specific example of exceptional and innovative service.
 2. One or two sentences that show how the example connects to the criterion.
 3. One or two sentences that show how the example is valuable in terms of student success.

CATEGORY 1: RESIDENTIAL FACULTY

Nominee's Last Name *

Gipson-Thurman

Nominee's Department/Division *

Occupational Education

Nominee's Employee Category *

Residential Faculty

Nominated By (Individual or Group)

Rachel Holmes

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Cheryl Gipson-Thurman provides Administration of Justice Studies students with exceptional learning experience through her dynamic instruction, bringing in guest speakers from the industry that can share insight into real-world experiences in law enforcement, and by facilitating a variety of educational field trips for her students such as a visit to the Glendale Police Department and to the MCSO Jail. Her students learn about potential careers in AJS and are provided with tremendous insight into the field.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Professor Gipson-Thurman is an active member of the I Will Graduate Committee and has served in this capacity for 5 years. She also serves on the BIT Committee Team, and the International Committee (III Committee). She is actively involved in the planning and facilitation of Black History Month, Student Success Fair, and Women's History Month events. Her enthusiasm for student success and her dedication to promoting innovative events on campus is inspiring to all!

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Cheryl Gipson-Thurman is an exemplary model and proponent of the learning college philosophy in all that she does. She mentors AJS students, served as a new faculty mentor and provided tremendous support to her mentee, and participates and supports learning experiences in her department as well as campus-wide efforts annually. She is always willing to volunteer her time and is the first to step up and ask, "How can I help?" Professor Gipson-Thurman greatly contributes to learning both inside and outside of the classroom and personally invests in the success of of students, staff, and employees at EMCC. Occupational Education is proud to have such a wonderful role model for students on our team, and her positivity in all that she does demonstrates just how deserving she is of this NISOD Excellence Award!

Nominee's First Name *

Annie

Nominee's Last Name *

Buentello

Nominee's Department/Division *

Arts and Composition

Nominee's Employee Category *

Residential Faculty

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Annie is actively engaged in her classes and the activities on campus. Some examples of her committee work include Hispanic Heritage Month, United Way, and Native American Heritage Month. She is innovative in her classroom by infusing pop culture into her curriculum and offers flex start classes to help students complete their degrees.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

She served as the Division Chair for Arts and Composition for six years. During that time she led the division through many changes and college initiatives to support student success.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Annie contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy by helping to create an engaging learning atmosphere at EMCC. Annie has led several activities during HHM including the Miniature Shrine Making Workshop, a longstanding favorite. This workshop offers a time for camaraderie as well as reflection and peace.

Nominee's First Name *

Cecilia

Nominee's Last Name *

Rosales

Nominee's Department/Division *

Modern Languages

Nominee's Employee Category *

Residential Faculty



1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Dr. Rosales goes above and beyond mentoring adjuncts and students by providing innovative pedagogical strategies and constantly seeks to improve her teaching. She does so by researching materials and drives the division to seek new and improved assessment strategies.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Dr. Rosales has used innovation grants to provide adjuncts with authentic assessment strategies as well as top quality online instruction using various new assessment programs, and using materials such as Connect and GoReact to ensure that students retain the Spanish language at the highest possible level.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Dr. Rosales is the gold standard of a good colleague who assists others, often without compensation, to improve their teaching and learning experiences and engages adjuncts in small group and one on one mentoring to ensure that SPA and SPH classes are of the highest quality.

Nominee's First Name *

Patty

Nominee's Last Name *

Swindle

Nominee's Department/Division *

Instructional Computing

Nominee's Employee Category *

Residential Faculty

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Patty Swindle exemplifies creative instruction by bringing her classes to the EMCC MakerSpace where her students "translate" what they are learning in the classroom into physical products. Patty shows them how to use laser engravers, vinyl cutters, and embroidery machines to create those products. I spend several hours a week in the MakerSpace and have seen how engaged and excited the students are. Patty fuels her students' critical thinking by being a co-learner with them. Add her positive attitude and laughter to the mix and you get a true learning community!

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Patty Swindle has served on more committees and leadership organizations than I can list. Her recent tenure with the Faculty Senate gave our division a direct pipeline to the inner workings of that critical organization. Her work with the College Plan, Faculty Agreement, and hiring committees has had a "behind the scenes" effect that certainly creates a better learning environment for all students.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

If a singular example can meet a learning college's "any time, way, and place" mantra, I witnessed Patty practice it: For several days in a row, I watched Patty work with an "exceptional" student who, without Patty's devoted, creative, and encouraging presence, would not have been able to produce a complex project in the MakerSpace. I was the proverbial fly on the wall marveling at Patty's genuine, relaxed, and effective nurturing of that student's "teachable moment."

Patty Swindle is my Teaching Hero. I'm sure her students feel the same way.

Nominee's First Name *

Anna

Nominee's Last Name *

Quiñones

Nominee's Department/Division *

Modern Languages

Nominee's Employee Category *

Residential Faculty



1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Dr. Quiñones has state-of-the-art expertise in reading and literacy acquisition which she fully utilizes in her classrooms, particularly with regards to students who are struggling readers and writers at the college level. And this is exceptionally evident in her work developing the new ALT 100 (Academic Literacy Through Integrated Reading and Writing) which has been recognized for its success rates in the district. The assignments and activities she designs are not only academically rigorous but also highly engaging to help struggling students develop meaningful connections to text that promote critical thinking. Her use of popular literature and authentic texts ignite students' connections to their respective fields of interest and global issues that affect first-generation college students and challenge them to continually grow, not just as readers and writers, but as global citizens as well.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Dr. Quiñones currently serves as one of the college representatives on the district Integrated Reading and Writing (IRW) mapping and design team. In this role, she advocates not only for students, but for other literacy (ENG & RDG) faculty as well, encouraging authentic collaboration and acknowledging the value and expertise of all literacy faculty striving to support students. She actively collaborates with her division colleagues as well as her ENG faculty colleagues to ensure that we are always finding ways to work together to support students' success.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Dr. Quiñones embodies the EMCC Learning College philosophy. She readily makes herself available to students, always reaching out when recognizing a student is struggling to provide them with assistance and also to connect them to other resources on campus to help them succeed. She also serves as a PAR mentor to a current probationary faculty offering guidance and advice on the tenure process as well as with literacy instruction to help this faculty member get more involved with the district IRW initiatives. She's always seeking opportunities for professional growth to stay current in the field and to continually serve her students and her division in meaningful ways.

Nominee's First Name *

Jarod

Nominee's Last Name *

Raithel

Nominee's Department/Division *

Life Sciences

Nominee's Employee Category *

Residential Faculty



1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Jarod wrote the first Innovations and Learning Grant to break ground on EMCC's Community Garden several years ago and has guided the garden's growth ever since. He has been awarded additional Innovations grants to expand and develop the garden and Jarod continues as the driving force behind the entire space. The garden provides a learning space for classes, for student clubs and organizations, for the community, and for the Kids College program and is in regular, year-round, use. It is a wonderful and unique space on campus and has created ties between faculty, facilities staff, the EcoCafe (the composting project), the MakerSpace (signage, and composting bins), and PTK (service projects). Without Jarod's leadership, we would not have the garden, nor any of these experiences to offer to our students, staff and community.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Jarod is the leader ("Ringmaster"?) of EMCC's Animal Ambassadors program. This program provides our students the opportunity to connect with faculty and with their community and also raises EMCC's profile out in the West Valley through the Animal Ambassador visits to local community venues. Through Jarod's leadership and advocacy the program has grown and has been awarded multiple WAESO grants. The program provides scholarships and stipends to support up to 10 students every semester as they learn public speaking and educational techniques, and animal handling and husbandry skills. In his leadership role, Jarod has been diligent in collecting outcomes data to document the program's positive impact on student success both at EMCC and post-transfer, with over 80% of the program's alumni successfully completing their Baccalaureate degrees post-transfer. Several of the program's alumni are now working in the wildlife management and conservation biology fields.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Learning happens any time, any place, anywhere - In the Community Garden, at an Animal Ambassadors presentation... and also through any number of honors projects that Jarod supervises in any given semester. His students have investigated composting techniques, perch height preference in burrowing owls, clutch size (number of eggs laid) and hatching success in burrowing owls and more, and have presented their research at conferences at ASU. Jarod regularly mentors students through the application process for internships with Arizona Game and Fish and the Student Conservation Association. In keeping with the anytime/anyplace/anywhere philosophy, Jarod has worked with students on watershed clean-up events for Alternative Spring Break, on trail stewardship for the Maricopa Trail and at the annual Tres Rios Festival. He has truly taken learning outside of the classroom and beyond the MWF-4credit-class boundaries to places where students have endless opportunities to be engaged.

CATEGORY 2: ADJUNCT FACULTY

Nominee's First Name *

Leslie

Nominee's Last Name *

Arriaga

Nominee's Department/Division *

Instructional Computing

Nominee's Employee Category *

Adjunct Faculty



1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Seeing Leslie Arriaga in action with her students makes me happy for her students. In my role as the MTI director, I have visited Leslie's classes and seen firsthand how infectious her energy is. Her direct instruction is more of a guiding supplement to her student-engaged activities than a boring lecture. She has made student-driven projects a foundation of her instructional strategies. My own students have sung her praises, especially those who are in her online classes.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Last year, Leslie Arriaga redesigned the EMCC course master for CIS120DB (Adobe Illustrator), which was in dire need of a ground-up update. I reviewed the result and find it to be a great improvement over the prior version. The course now aligns better with the District master. More critically, it is chock full of assignments and projects that require students to think critically and demonstrate course competencies in creative, industry-ready ways.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Since Covid has required that courses be taught online, many which were not designed for remote learning, Leslie's restructuring of her CIS105, CIS120DB, and CIS136 delivery for the online format has directly addressed the learning college's "Any time/place/way" philosophy.

Nominee's First Name *

Evelyn

Nominee's Last Name *

Ruiz

Nominee's Department/Division *

Behavioral Sciences

Nominee's Employee Category *

Adjunct Faculty



1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Evelyn uses a variety of different kinds of innovative resources in her class. In her statistics class, Evelyn uses Khan Academy and Jamovi. Both are FREE resources for students to use in order to understand statistics and how to do analyses better. Evelyn also creates weekly agendas for students to show them how to do the work in Khan academy that they are assigned. Additionally, Evelyn helped in the creation of the OER Introduction to Psychology course. She was a pilot, for all intents and purposes, and helped the course designed to build the best course that now my and many other students use. Evelyn has also supported students with honors projects and in the Psychology Club.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Evelyn is an EMCC alumni who collaborates with residential faculty, meeting weekly throughout the semester in order to discuss best practices for teaching a challenging subject matter. Evelyn works daily in helping to create and maintain an equitable learning experience for students. She does this by offering various times when students can contact her, offering extra credit for students who watch her tutorials, and encouraging students to get involved in clubs and organizations. Evelyn has taken a great deal of initiative in planning her classes and supporting students and other faculty. She was one of a handful in our division that taught in person in Fall 2021. She taught every day during the evenings because of her work schedule which was difficult in some ways to navigate but important for her to give face to face experiences for students who wanted them.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

As mentioned before, Evelyn started joining the Psychology club and Psi Beta (the national honor society for psychology majors at two year institutions) meetings. Her presence there has had a very positive impact on students, as they are able to see an alumni of EMCC and learn about all of the steps she's taken to be where she is today. Evelyn has also continuously supported faculty efforts with events on campus. For instance, Evelyn often encourages students to attend events and get more involved on campus. Evelyn has and continues to be an amazing advocate for students on campus and actively promotes inclusion and diversity. For example, Evelyn will be participating in a Women's History Month "Women in Psychology" panel held by the psychology club and Psi Beta honor society later this month to discuss her experiences as a woman in graduate school and working as a counselor and program coordinator. As mentioned previously, we think it's incredibly important for our students to see a fellow EMCC alum, whom many of them can relate to on a cultural level, being successful and achieving everything she sought out to. Evelyn is an inspiration and we highly recommend her for the NISOD award!

CATEGORY 3: FULL TIME/CLASSIFIED STAFF

Nominee's First Name *

Liahla

Nominee's Last Name *

Roberts

Nominee's Department/Division *

STEM

Nominee's Employee Category *

Full-time, Classified Staff ▼

Nominated By (Individual or Group)

Allie Cervantes

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Liahla is a student advocate inside and out. She is a leader in stem and student support and is extraordinary when it comes to finding innovative ways for students to get hands on STEM career experience at the community college level. This only prepares the STEM students future in being able to obtain prestigious scholarships and jobs

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Liahla is a leader all around. She is very engaged and active in the STEM community outside of EMCC as well as collaborates with internal departments. She takes on so much to just provide students the best holistic experience that she can.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Liahla contributes to the learning college philosophy by ensuring that students can apply the concepts taught in the classroom to real-world experiences. Whether that is through support students to pursue undergraduate research, internships, service learning, and part-time job opportunities. In STEM, the student is always learning...

Nominee's First Name *

Daniel

Nominee's Last Name *

Meador

Nominee's Department/Division *

Student Affairs

Nominee's Employee Category *

Full-time, Classified Staff ▼

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Male Empowerment Network

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

He leads the One Stop and Greeters (student workers)

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Provides academic advisement for the DRS department with Jill Nico and Pam Grady

Nominee's First Name *

Ivette

Nominee's Last Name *

Ruiz

Nominee's Department/Division *

Modern Languages

Nominee's Employee Category *

Full-time, Classified Staff ▼

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Ivette goes above and beyond to make sure that students receive immediate and significant assistance when they need assistance in selecting classes or if there are issues with courses in which they are enrolled. Additionally, her exceptional organizational skills in scheduling provide maximum learning opportunities for students.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Ivette is an Employee Senate Rep and has provided exceptional leadership with her team to assist employees in gaining clarity on policy and employee conditions. She advocates for those who feel disenfranchised and excluded.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Ivette, constantly takes classes to improve her skill set and has been a mentor to the Administrative Assistants in all divisions at the college. She is a go to person for how to complete complex tasks and provides her own division with exemplary service and leadership on scheduling and budget issues.

Nominee's First Name *

Rosanna

Nominee's Last Name *

Short

Nominee's Department/Division *

Financial Aid

Nominee's Employee Category *

Full-time, Classified Staff ▼

1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Rosanna is a very student-centric administrator who always finds innovative ways to provide financial access to students. Additionally, she is always open to improving the ways in which service is provided in order to expand educational opportunities. Example: Using a 4DX WIG which focused on getting more student to apply for and use Summer Pell resulting in a increase in communication with students and an increase in students who were awarded summer Pell.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Rosanna serves on a variety of committee and taskforces at EMCC and MCCC. She uses her regulatory knowledge in exemplary ways in order to lead efforts such as, HLC compliance, Maricopa Financial Aid Council and the EMCC Compliance committee. She is always willing to give of her time to assist in leading efforts that will have an impact on student success. Example: Her willingness to assist in grant writing and HLC compliance.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Rosanna, is a huge proponent of "learning" and seeks opportunities to provide mentoring opportunities to her staff and others in Student Affairs. She often volunteers to take on a new projects in order to learn and then transfers that knowledge to others. Example - Course applicability process, using DISC in teambuilding and Title IX investigations.

Nominee's First Name *

Timothy

Nominee's Last Name *

Wilson

Nominee's Department/Division *

Occupational Education

Nominee's Employee Category *

Full-time, Classified Staff



1. Exemplifies innovative practices inside and/or outside of the classroom (example: Student Club Advisor who provides exceptional and innovative learning experiences for students)

Through extensive outreach across campus Tim was able to drastically increase participation in the MakerSpace. Student use in the MakerSpace was increased through direct outreach to faculty across campus. Course integration, as defined as courses using the MakerSpace went from 1 course using the MakerSpace in Fall 2020 to over 22 courses using the MakerSpace in Fall 2021. Additionally, Tim collaborated with Jim Hienrich to integrate Multimedia Experience into the MakerSpace, which made that equipment available for student, faculty, and staff use.

2. Exemplifies excellence in leadership (example: Committee Chair who implemented an exceptional and innovative change in the way EMCC serves students to promote their success)

Tim implemented project management techniques to manage the MakerSpace and ensure that the space was being managed and scheduled appropriately even though he spent the semester as an OSO in the Energy Department.

3. Contributes to advancing the learning college philosophy at EMCC (example: Engage Estrella Mentor who provides exceptional and innovative mentoring experiences)

Tim also developed and taught a entry level engineering course for adults with cognitive disabilities in Fall 2021, and built a partnership with the Education department to give education students the opportunity to get hands-on experience working with students with cognitive disabilities.
