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Martinez Promoted to Student Affairs Leadership Team

New position created, reflecting importance of
diversity and inclusion at Highline College

DES MOINES, Wash. — Doris Martinez has been promoted to Director for Student Diversity and Inclusion at Highline College. Martinez has worked at Highline since 2014, most recently as Coordinator of the Inter-Cultural Center and Acting Director for Multicultural Affairs.

Instead of finding a permanent director for Multicultural Affairs, the position was redesigned to focus on student retention and academic success.

“The new position will continue to provide leadership for Multicultural Affairs, but with an intentional focus on students’ holistic development. At Highline, we are committed to creating a learning environment that welcomes, respects and values the diverse perspectives and experiences of our students. Doris embraces and exemplifies this commitment,” said Toni Castro, Highline’s Vice President for Student Services.

Multicultural Affairs offers social justice education programs, leadership development, diversity programming and services that promote student retention and academic success. The department is responsible for leading efforts that enhance collaboration with existing programs and services to ensure educational equity, inclusive excellence, and a welcoming and safe learning environment for all students.

“Since Doris began working at Highline, she has made significant contributions to strengthening our community through social justice education, diversity programs, mentoring and community engagement,” said Castro. “She is well prepared for this new role.”

A resident of Federal Way, Martinez was born in Huntington Park, Calif., to parents who had emigrated from Honduras. Early on, her parents instilled the importance of her cultural heritage. She was raised primarily in Federal Way, but spent a few years living with her maternal grandmother in Honduras, where she met extended family, learned more about her heritage and became trilingual, speaking English, Spanish and Garifuna.

Martinez graduated from Decatur High School and Highline College. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at Seattle University, focusing on Student Development Administration.

Her career in higher education began in Philadelphia where she spent three years as the Commuter Student Coordinator at LaSalle University before returning to Highline in 2014 to work as Coordinator of Highline's Inter-Cultural Center.

She is a member of the Washington State Student Services Director's Council and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

The new position is another reflection of Highline's commitment to diversity, social justice and multiculturalism for which the college has earned several awards and recognition.

For the third straight year, Highline received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award, a national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Given by Insight into Diversity magazine, the 2015 HEED Award was presented to only 92 institutions across the nation.

In 2014, the college received a prestigious Award of Excellence from the American Association of Community Colleges for increasing diversity and social equity on campus. Highline was one of six colleges in the nation earning recognition and won in the Advancing Diversity category.

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Highline College was founded in 1961 as the first community college in King County. With nearly 17,000 annual students and 350,000 alumni, it is one of the state's largest institutions of higher education. The college offers a wide range of academic transfer, professional-technical education and bachelor's degree programs. Alumni include former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, entrepreneur Junki Yoshida and former Washington state poet laureate Sam Green.

Attachment: Photo of Doris Martinez