



MEDIA RELEASE

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Highline College Honors Diversity and Inclusion Advocate Ed Ramos Named Distinguished Alumnus

DES MOINES, Wash. — A 20-year accounting industry veteran has been recognized by Highline College for his work to recruit, retain and advance underrepresented minorities in his profession. The college selected Ed Ramos as this year's [Distinguished Alumnus Award](#) winner.

The award honors former Highline students who have made notable achievements in their profession or community.

Born and raised in Tacoma to parents originally from Puerto Rico, Ramos is a CPA and shareholder with the firm [DP&C](#) (formerly Dwyer Pemberton & Coulson). His diversity and inclusion advocacy work began early in his career when he felt out of place as a Latino in the accounting profession. Lacking role models, Ramos couldn't visualize his future as a partner in a CPA firm.

His outlook changed after attending conferences through the [Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting](#) (ALPFA). His strong belief in the importance of the organization, both for himself and other Latino professionals, prompted him to co-found the Seattle chapter of ALPFA, which serves members in the Puget Sound region.

In 2011, Ramos was selected as the first CPA in the state of Washington — and one of only 33 CPAs in the nation — to attend the [American Institute of Certified Public Accountants](#) (AICPA) Leadership Academy. He is also part of a commission created by the AICPA to identify strategies that will increase the retention and advancement of underrepresented minorities in the profession.

A diverse workforce is critical not only for the employees within the profession, but also for the message it sends to clients, Ramos believes.

“Our profession must represent the community that we serve. Without having a diverse profession, we are not providing our clients with the best service,” he says, noting the increase in ethnic and racial diversity in Tacoma and in the region.

Ramos also volunteers in his community as a member and past finance committee chair for Rotary 8 and previously served as treasurer of Centro Latino and Tacoma Community House.

A 1995 Highline graduate, Ramos went on to earn his bachelor's degree at Eastern Oregon University.

Former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, who attended Highline in 1968–69, was the first recipient of the award in 1990. Other [Distinguished Alumnus Award winners](#) include Sandra Cravens Robinson, nurse and Army veteran; Ezra Teshome, agent with State Farm Insurance and TIME magazine global health hero; and Junki Yoshida, founder and CEO of the Yoshida Food Group.

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Attachment: Photo of Ed Ramos

Links within this release:

- Highline College Alumni Recognition: <https://alumni.highline.edu/recognition/nominate.php>
- DP&C: <http://dpcpa.com/>
- Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting: <https://www.alpfa.org/default.aspx>
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants: <https://www.aicpa.org/>
- Distinguished Alumnus Award winners: <https://alumni.highline.edu/recognition/>

Founded in 1961 as the first community college in King County, Highline College annually serves more than 17,000 students. With over 70 percent students of color, Highline is the most diverse higher education institution in the state. The college offers a wide range of academic transfer, professional-technical education, basic skills and applied bachelor's degree programs. Alumni include former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, entrepreneur Junki Yoshida and former Washington state poet laureate Sam Green.