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Honors All Around at Highline College
8 Employees and Trustees Recognized for Excellence, Service

DES MOINES, Wash. —Employees and trustees of Highline College have earned a wide range of awards for their professional excellence and achievements. The honors reflect their contributions to their communities and students at the college.

The award winners are Dan Altmayer and Doris Martinez, both of Federal Way; Dr. Jonathan Brown, Seattle; Judy Mannard, Des Moines; Patricia McDonald, West Seattle; Fred Mendoza, Normandy Park; and Rus Higley and Michael Tuncap, both of Tacoma.

Dan Altmayer

Dan Altmayer, of Federal Way, received the 2017 Trustee Leadership Award from the Washington State Association of College Trustees (ACT). ACT annually recognizes an individual trustee who has made a significant contribution to promote Washington's 34 community and technical colleges.

Among Altmayer's many contributions is the work he has done on behalf of education and support for veterans at two-year colleges. As a veteran of the U.S. Army, Altmayer knows firsthand what it is like to return to civilian life and the importance of support programs to help veterans make the transition.

A Highline College trustee since October 2008, Altmayer is in his second term. Highline's board members serve five-year terms and can be reappointed once.

Dr. Jonathan Brown

Dr. Jonathan Brown, of Seattle, received the Highline College Employee of the Year award for 2017. Nominated by his peers, Brown was recognized for his dedication to nurturing student leaders and advancing community, as well as helping students find their own voices, an important mission of the college.

Brown serves as Associate Dean of the Center for Leadership and Service, a role he has held since coming to Highline in 2001.

He earned his master's degree at Seattle University and his doctorate in education from the University of Washington.

A \$1,500 cash award provided by the Highline College Foundation accompanies the honor. All permanent classified staff, professional staff and administrative employees are eligible for the award, which has been given each year since the 1990–91 academic year.

Rus Higley

Rus Higley, of Tacoma, was named the 2016 Outstanding Marine/Aquatic Educator of the Year by the Northwest Aquatic and Marine Educators (NAME). He is known as a strong advocate for environmental justice, a passion he shares with his students.

Higley has taught environmental science, marine biology and oceanography courses at Highline since 1999 and has served as manager of the Marine Science and Technology (MaST) Center since 2003. Located on Puget Sound's Redondo Beach, the MaST Center is a 2,500-square-foot marine biology and aquarium facility and serves as a teaching institute and public learning center. Its aquarium holds over 15 tanks, displaying more than 250 native marine species.

He has a master's degree in marine affairs from the University of Washington and a master's degree in curriculum from Old Dominion University.

Judy Mannard

Judy Mannard, of Des Moines, received the Highline College Outstanding Adjunct Faculty award for 2017, a peer-nominated award recognizing her professional excellence.

Noted for her exceptional leadership, innovation and integrity, Mannard has been teaching at the college for the past nine years in the Engineering department. She is also the tournament director for the state and regional Science Olympiad competitions that are held annually at Highline.

She earned her associate degree at Highline and her bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Washington (Seattle campus). She worked at Boeing for 15 years before coming to Highline to teach.

A \$1,500 cash award provided by the Highline College Foundation accompanies the honor. This is the first year an award has been given to an adjunct faculty member.

Doris Martinez

Doris Martinez, of Federal Way, received the 2016 Race and Social Justice Award, presented by Social Outreach Seattle, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating and providing various resources to the LGBTQIA community.

Martinez received the award based on her leadership in multicultural affairs and Highline's commitment to social justice education. She has worked at the college since 2014 and currently serves as Director of Student Diversity and Inclusion.

Martinez earned an associate degree at Highline College and bachelor's and master's degrees at Seattle University, focusing on Student Development Administration.

Patricia McDonald

Patricia McDonald, of West Seattle, received the Highline College Outstanding Tenured Faculty award for 2017, recognizing her professional excellence.

In nominating her for the award, peers described her as one who passionately serves all students and actively promotes excellence in student engagement and learning. She was also noted for championing diversity in all its forms, advocating for equity and social justice issues and building relationships across cultures.

McDonald has been teaching at the college since 2006. She is a tenured faculty member in the Education department and serves as its coordinator. She also contributes countless volunteer hours toward improving and integrating learning.

She was instrumental in developing Highline's new applied bachelor's degree in Teaching and Early Learning, which will begin offering classes in fall 2017. The new degree will widen opportunities for those in the local community to become educators or advance in the teaching profession.

She has a bachelor's degree from Western Washington University and a master's degree from Pacific Oaks College NW.

A \$1,500 cash award provided by the Highline College Foundation accompanies the honor. A peer-nominated award, the Outstanding Faculty award has been given annually to a full-time tenured faculty member since the 1987–88 academic year.

Fred Mendoza

Highline Trustee Fred Mendoza, of Normandy Park, received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medal of Distinguished Service for his service to the South King County community. He was one of nine awardees recognized by the Metropolitan King County Council during a May 2017 ceremony.

Along with his service to Highline College, where he has served as a board member since November 2011, Mendoza has contributed his time and talent on the boards of a number of organizations including Highline Medical Center, Highline Schools Foundation as a founding member, and 39 years with the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind. He also founded the Kent King County Bar Association Neighborhood Legal Clinic, where he volunteered for 35 years.

Michael Tuncap

Michael Tuncap, of Tacoma, was selected as the 2017 Emerging Leader by the Multicultural Student Services Directors Council (MSSDC). The annual award recognized Tuncap for his contributions in creating authentic, meaningful campus and community support for students of color. The MSSDC is comprised of directors from the state's 34 community and technical colleges.

He has worked in education for 18 years, including the past five years serving students in south King County. He currently works at Highline where he is an adjunct professor in the Diversity and Globalism department and a program manager for community engagement.

Tuncap earned a bachelor's degree in communications and American ethnic studies at the University of Washington and a master's degree in ethnic studies at U.C. Berkeley, where he is also working on his Ph.D.

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Attachment: Judy Mannard (left), Patricia McDonald and Dr. Jonathan Brown pose with framed certificates recognizing them as winners of the Highline College's three premier employee awards.

Celebrating its 55th anniversary, 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 applied bachelor's degree programs. Alumni include former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, entrepreneur Junki Yoshida and former Washington state poet laureate Sam Green.