High Education Excellence in Diversity

El Paso Community College (EPCC) received the 2013 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education. As a recipient of the annual HEED Award—a national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion—EPCC will be featured along with 55 other recipients in INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine’s November 2013 issue.

“El Paso Community College is proud of our efforts to always be at the forefront of diversity and inclusion. The HEED Award validates the college’s hard work and makes us vigilant in our future endeavors,” said Dr. William Serrata, EPCC President.

INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine selected EPCC based on our institution’s exemplary diversity and inclusion initiatives, and ability to embrace a broad definition of diversity on our campus, including gender, race, ethnicity, veterans, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBT community.

“We hope the HEED award serves as a to honor those institutions of higher education that recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion as part of their everyday campus culture,” said Lenore Pearlstein, publisher of INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine.

Other recipients of the 2013 HEED award are:
- Alcorn State University
- Alliant International University
- Arizona State University
- SUNY, Buffalo State College
- California State University, Los Angeles
- Capital Community College
- Case Western Reserve University
- Community College of Allegheny County
- CUNY School of Law
- Cuyahoga Community College
- Davenport University
- East Carolina University
- Emory University

(Continued on page 3)
Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration 2013
“Descúbrete: Empowerment through Wings of Knowledge,”

EPCC, Diversity Programs celebrated Hispanic Heritage 2013 with many activities during September and October. “Descúbrete: Empowerment through Wings of Knowledge,” was the 2013 theme. The celebration was about literature, student artwork, music, current affairs and more. It began on with September 16th with a month-long art display by EPCC art students and local artist, Gabriel S. Gaytán at the Administrative Services Center (ASC). The official Kick Off will was September 18 at the Valle Verde Campus, Cafeteria Annex, 919 Hunter. Activities included pottery demonstrations by Mata Ortiz Pottery, Music by Jacob Prado, Danza Omecatl and Hugo Cortez la JG de Juarez.

Other major events will included Wednesdays at Lunch with; live performances at the Valle Verde Campus Courtyard. An Immigration Symposium was held at the Valle Verde Annex on Thursday, September 26th. Among those scheduled to appear were Congressman Beto O’Rourke and Senator Jose Rodriguez. Radio La Chusma provided entertainment in the courtyard. The celebration concluded with the annual Mentor’s Dinner October 16th at the ASC Auditorium. Dolores Huerta, President of the Dolores Huerta Foundation and Co-Founder of the United Farm Workers was the keynote speaker. Ms. Huerta will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award and EPCC, Mr. Carlos Marentes, Executive Director of the Farm Workers Center and Mrs. Guadalupe De la Vega, founder of FEMAP, a private, nonprofit organization in El Paso were honored this year for their selfless contributions to the community.

Jasmin Cohen Tarica: StandWithUs San Diego

Yasmin Cohen Tarica was born in Argentina and moved to Israel at a young age. She earned a bachelor’s degree in International Affairs and Political Science from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Yasmin graduated from the StandWithUs Fellowship — which trains Israeli student ambassadors and future leaders -- in 2011 and is still involved with different projects of StandWithUs in Israel.

Yasmin served in the IDF as a commanding officer of a professional development course in an Intelligence unit. She is also an alumnus of the Paths to Peace program at NYU (2012). Through the different lines of work Yasmin is engaged with, she gained valuable experience in program management and training as well as project coordination.

Specifically, she is a major part in the leading team of The Jerusalem Conference on International Law, which she and friends from the Fellowship initiated in the summer of 2011 and is running this summer for the third time.

Mustafa Akyol: Democracy and Islam in the Muslim World

Mustafa Akyol is a Turkish political commentator and author based in Istanbul, Turkey. He was born in Ankara in 1972 and had his early education there. Later he graduated from Istanbul Nisantası British High School and from the International Relations Department of the Bosphorus University. He had his master thesis on the Kurdish question at the History Department of the same university.

Since 2002, he has been a regular commentator in the Turkish media. He has spoken on many platforms, including the Council on Foreign Relations, Brookings Institution, Heritage Foundation, Mont Pelerin Society and many universities around the world (His talk at TED, Faith Versus Tradition in Islam, was widely acclaimed).

His latest book, Islam Without Extremes: A Muslim Case For Liberty, which was defined by the Financial Times as “a forthright and elegant Muslim defense of freedom,” was published by W.W. Norton in July 2011.

For more information about Mustafa Akyol and his writings visit: http://thewhitepath.com/
High Education Excellence in Diversity (continued from page 1)

Palo Alto University
Penn State University
Princeton University
Saginaw Valley State University
San Diego State University
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Southwestern Law School
St. Cloud State University
SUNY System
Texas Tech University
Union College, New York
University of Akron

University of California, San Francisco
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Cincinnati
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of La Verne
University of Maryland at Baltimore
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
University of Mississippi Medical Center
University of Missouri — St. Louis
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
University of the Rockies
University of South Carolina - Columbia
University of Texas at Austin

For more information about the HEED award, visit www.insightintodiversity.com.

Cultural Bowl & International Festival

The Cultural Bowl is a high school student Quiz Bowl competition. It includes eleven teams from four high schools; Eastwood High School, El Dorado High School, Harmony Science Academy and Emmanuel Christian School. The participants will be asked questions related to geography, arts, religion, customs, and food from five communities: French, Turkish, Mexican, Israeli, and African American. The Cultural Bowl was held in the Boardroom. President William Serrata, Ph.D.; Ft. Bliss Garrison Commander, Col. Dailey; and City Representative, Lily Limon will present the awards.

The International Festival was held at the ASC Auditorium. Through the support of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy’s (USASMA) International Students department, the EPCC Dance department, the, and local groups like the French Alliance and The Raindrop Turkish House of El Paso, the community came together to learn about the various cultures and people we call neighbors. We were very fortunate to have the support of International Students Department. The students and their families represented 28 countries from around the world.

The Alliance Française d’El Paso represented the French community and the Raindrop Foundation and Raindrop Turkish House represented the Turkish community participated in both the Cultural Bowl and the International Festival. The festivities included cultural displays and international dance. Entertainment. Rainy Demerson, was held in the Boardroom. President William Serrata, Ph.D.; Ft. Bliss Garrison Commander, Col. Dailey; and City Representative, Lily Limon will present the awards.

Cultural Bowl participants

The International Festival participants

Dance Department arranged and coordinated performances by Raindrop Turkish House; Samba Batucada Alma de Fogo w/Tudo Bom and Capoeira Quinto Sol; Shana Oh; Egyptian Belly Dance Ballet Folklorico Paso del Norte; Patambores; West African Drum and Dance; EPCC Mariachi Real de El Paso. These events were free and open to the public.
Diversity Programs provides training opportunities to both students and staff on diversity issues.

Diversity Programs presents a workshop for students titled, “Defining Diversity: What Is It and What Does It Look Like?” as part of the Student Success series of workshops provided by the Counseling Department.

Diversity Programs also presents at our quarterly New Employee Orientation program. This presentation is an overview of the Diversity office, its functions and some of the programs. We make similar presentations during Faculty Development.

The Diversity Program’s Diversity Council consists of faculty, staff, healthcare professionals, elected officials and community leaders. Members agree to serve as advisors to Diversity Programs as an ongoing Diversity Council.

The council provides their perspectives and expertise to help improve diversity and inclusion opportunities at EPCC. Among the significant outcomes was the need to support the concepts of diversity and inclusion throughout the College district, a need for additional training, as well as marketing the program.

Contact the Diversity Programs office if you would like to be a member of the Diversity Council.

What better time of the year than to reflect upon all the good fortune that the Diversity Programs has had this year. Our failure has only been that we have not shared these experiences sooner.

As Director of the Diversity Programs, I have had the opportunity to bring on board 2 dynamic, hard-working and motivated employees. Mr. Doroteo Franco, Assistant Director, joined our small family this past August. As such, he has brought his technical talent and amazing ideas to the forefront. Also, Ms. Aida Bläck, Administrative Associate, a former EPCC employee brings her talents and experiences from the City of El Paso. And let me not forget the talents and assistance of our students, Giselle, Nancy and Felipe who work hard in their capacities to assure that all our activities are covered.

To reflect the good work not only in our office but within the institution, we were honored by accepting the HEED Award. This award is given to institutions of Higher Education that can demonstrate the importance of diversity and inclusion at their campuses. Those of you who have been involved in Diversity through your programs and through the support of Dr. Serrata, EPCC President, allowed us to become victorious and recognized!

Here are examples of what type of work is involved here at the Diversity Programs. The next time someone asks you what are Diversity Programs, you will be able to know. Our website is www.epcc.edu/diversityprograms. Follow us on Facebook at EPCC Diversity.

We hope that you would like to join one of our committees or our events in the future. Many of our ideas have come from our faculty and staff. Just give us a call or fill out the form and send it to us.

May you have a magnificent summer!

Olga C. Chavez, M.A. LPC