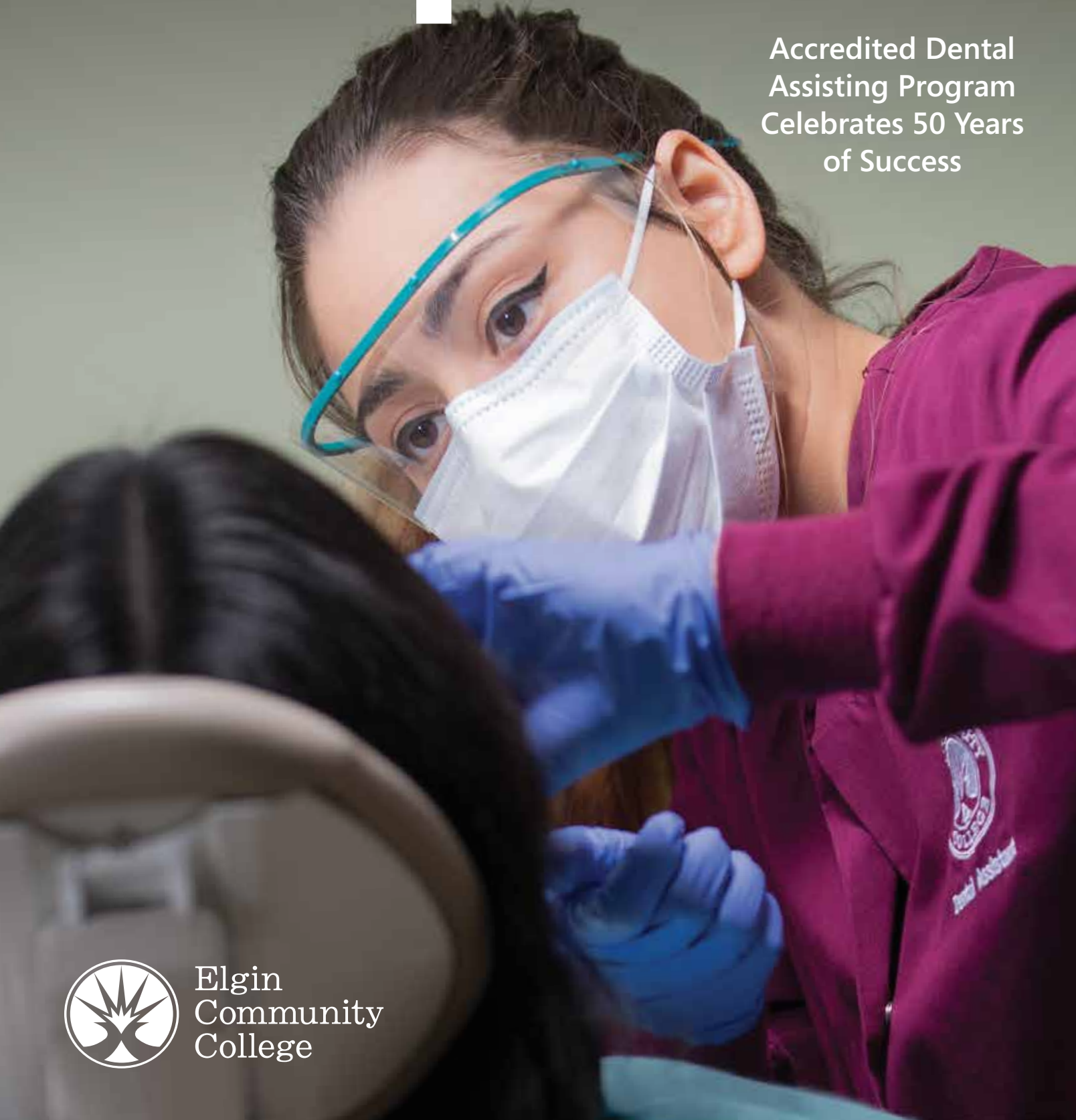


A PUBLICATION OF ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE TODAY

# Impact

Fall 2018

Accredited Dental  
Assisting Program  
Celebrates 50 Years  
of Success



Elgin  
Community  
College



**MISSION**

The mission of Elgin Community College is to improve people's lives through learning.

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- Freedom of Inquiry*
- Equity*
- Diversity*
- Ethical Practices*
- Accountability*
- Collaboration*

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# LEADING THE WAY

## A message from the ECC President and Board Chair

Dear ECC Community,

6.9 million. That is the number of job openings reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics at the end of July 2018. While this is good news for the economy, experts are concerned that there are more job openings than job seekers as many of those jobs will remain vacant due to a skills gap.

To meet this challenge, Elgin Community College launched two new apprenticeship programs in fall 2018 designed to connect students with local employers for a customized workforce development strategy. Apprenticeships offer students the opportunity to earn while they learn. It is a commitment that yields a significant return on investment for the student and employer.

Turn to page 7 to learn about ECC's Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship Program offered through a partnership with the Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT), the leading apprenticeship program provider in the Midwest, and our new basic nurse assistant (BNA) certificate apprenticeship. These two programs pave the way for innovation and promising opportunities that invigorate our mission.

Upon completion, students graduate with no debt—tuition is covered by their employers—and full-time careers with benefits await them. Apprentices earn an average starting salary of more than \$50,000 per year, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Guaranteed employment is always worthy of a celebration.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversaries of ECC's Dental Assisting Program and our Rho Kappa Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, we want you to know it is never too late to change careers or chart a new one.

Now is the time: We'll save a seat for you.

**David Sam, PhD, JD, LLM**  
President



*Photo by Pat Dorgan*

**Jeffrey A. Meyer, JD**  
Chair, Board of Trustees



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# Passing the torch

ECC's dedication to developing new generations of skilled workers burns bright.

As the demand for skilled welders heats up, ECC has lit a spark in teenage residents by providing them with valuable experience in a field with high growth potential.

Meeting this challenge "helmet on," the college held its first high school welding competition in May 2018. Thirty-one budding welding enthusiasts began by taking a written test on welding fundamentals. The second stage of the event featured demonstrations of their shielded metal arc welding techniques for competition judges Dave Reich and Marc Hucek, both ECC instructors and certified welding inspectors.

"The demand for skilled welders is at an all-time high in our area and throughout the U.S.," said Reich. "Welding is a great career choice for those looking to work with their hands while making a great living."

Just a few months later, ECC extended its reach through its first Manufacturing Camp, a week-long, full-day summer camp for 14- to 16-year-olds. Participants eagerly learned about careers in manufacturing and put their newly acquired knowledge to good use during hands-on lessons in computer-aided design (CAD), welding and sheet metal cutting.

Experienced ECC faculty members taught the new Kids' College offering, which was made possible thanks to the ECC Foundation's partnership with the Fabricators and Manufacturing Association's (FMA) foundation *Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs*®. The ECC Foundation and FMA are working together on additional grants to expand opportunities for students.



ECC offers degree and certificate options in many skilled trades, including welding, manufacturing, automotive, HVACR, energy management and more. To choose a career-technical program that is right for you, visit [elgin.edu/careertech](http://elgin.edu/careertech).





# Four-handed dentistry builds strong relationships

In fall 2018, Elgin Community College Dental Assisting Program alumni and members of the area dental community gathered to celebrate the program's 50th year. Marking the major milestone provided an opportunity to pause and reflect together—a priority for a group that prides itself on relationships.

"Dental assisting is about building a bond with the patient," said Kim Plate, director of the program. "You typically take care of generations of the same family, and that's something special."

Plate found the career she loves after taking a dental assisting class at ECC 38 years ago. To gain experience while



Kim Plate, director, Dental Assisting Program

ECC's Dental Assisting Program is one of five in the state of Illinois and the only one in Northern Illinois accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation.



Amy Amaya ('14), Dental Assisting Program alumna

working toward her certificate, she was assigned to work with Dr. Bruce McLane, an Elgin dentist. McLane saw that Plate had promise and hired her. They worked side by side for 23 years.

"My goal was to have the next instrument ready before he asked for it," Plate said. "You follow along and get to know how the dentist works."

Dental assistants set up and clean examination rooms, sterilize instruments, take x-rays and impressions, and assist the dentist during procedures. They're part of a team that normally includes dentists, hygienists and front office staff.

While learning what's referred to as 'four-handed dentistry,' ECC students take 33 credits of dental and general education classes, followed by a rotation through local dental offices to get practical experience. The program is one of just five of its kind in the state of Illinois, and the only one in Northern Illinois accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation.

Plate's career path led to a position as an ECC dental assisting instructor before her appointment as the program's director.

When McLane retired in 2014, Plate suggested they swap roles.

McLane now works for Plate at ECC using his 38 years of experience to teach and provide counsel as a member of the program's advisory board. He believes in the motto 'people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' McLane passes that philosophy on to his students.

"What people remember is how you treat them personally," McLane said, adding that he always looked for ECC graduates when hiring. "ECC's program is the gold standard."

Amy Amaya, of Marengo, agrees. In 2014, she completed her certificate and was hired as a full-time assistant at the dental office where she completed her clinical experience. "The whole program at ECC is amazing. It's so hands-on and prepares you for everything you do in the office," Amaya said. The interaction with patients is what she enjoys the most. "It's great when someone comes in with a problem and you can help them," she said. "It's so rewarding."

The program has the potential to be even more relevant as it moves into its sixth

"The whole program at ECC is amazing. It's so hands-on and prepares you for everything you do in the office."

—Amy Amaya ('14)

decade. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, dental assisting jobs are projected to grow 19 percent through 2026.

ECC's Integrated Career & Academic Preparation System, or ICAPS, offers extra assistance for dental assisting students and provides free loaner textbooks. ICAPS students take classes together with the goal of earning the first of the three available dental assisting vocational certificates in less than one year.

Kim Plate encourages students she meets to give dental assisting a try. "I tell them to take a class as an elective as it can always apply toward an associate degree," she said. "Or, you might discover you like helping people—which means it's likely the right career for you."



## ANSWERING THE CALL

In 1968, Marilyn Westerhoff was working as a dental assistant when she took a phone call from someone looking to hire an instructor for ECC's new dental assisting program. Marilyn seized the opportunity, and the rest, as they say, is history.

As the college's first dental assisting instructor, Westerhoff taught full time at ECC from 1968 to 2002 and served as the program director for 37 years. During that time, she taught over 500 future dental assistants and left a lasting legacy. In addition to the knowledge she bestowed on students, she also started the endowed

Westerhoff Dental Assisting Scholarship for dental assisting students through the ECC Foundation.

Reflecting on her career, Westerhoff considers herself incredibly fortunate. "The greatest use of life is to leave something behind that will last forever—and I'm hopeful that's what I've done," she said.

Visit the ECC archives at [library.elgin.edu](http://library.elgin.edu) to see Marilyn Westerhoff's full interview and learn about the groundwork she helped establish for ECC's premier dental assisting program.

# Dreaming in color, succeeding in life

## ECC's celebration of diversity and commitment to equity runs year-round.

At Elgin Community College, our values of inclusivity, diversity and equity are tangible the moment you set foot on campus. On any given day, you will find an ongoing recognition and celebration of what makes us unique and brings us closer together: A commitment to creating a safe, inclusive community.

One of the ways students and community members experience this commitment to diversity is through the holistic and thoughtful events featured on campus.

"ECC demonstrates its commitment to diversity by offering intentional programming to meet the needs of various student populations and address their intersecting social identities," said Gregory D. Robinson, assistant vice president of student services and development and dean of students. "Targeted programming for diverse populations is also used to counter the sense of invisibility some students may feel on campus. Students who perceive their campuses as welcoming, engaging, and inclusive are more likely to complete their intended educational goals."

Funded by an ECC Foundation Resources for Excellence mini-grant, ECC hosted its inaugural "I Dream in Color Week," with nationally recognized speakers, leadership workshops, and innovative activities for students and community members to engage in critical thought, develop strategies for success, and become powerful self-advocates. The week concluded with ECC's second annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities Fair, which featured nearly a dozen out-of-state schools and attracted more than 250 attendees.

Additionally, the college launched its annual Latinx Heritage Month celebration to recognize the contributions, heritage and culture of Hispanic and Latino Americans. Organizers of "I Dream in Color Week" and Latinx Heritage Month built bridges within the college community by collaborating on events.

"I felt empowered to express my culture and my belief that the future does include my generation," said Organization of Latin American Students President Alannis Muñoz, who helped plan events for "I Dream in Color Week" and Latinx Heritage Month. "These events are proof that ECC is a diverse, welcoming campus, and I am grateful for the experience I received while participating in a more personal way."

"Still Processing," a weekly event series that debuted this fall, focuses on giving students opportunities to openly explore and develop an understanding of identity and culture. Similarly, timely discussions related to race, ethnicity, class and socioeconomics, sexual orientation, globalization, identity, and culture are woven into events sponsored by multiple campus committees and departments.

Campus-wide, month-long celebrations will continue with Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March) and Asian Pacific Month (April). Many of these events are open to the community.

For information about campus events, visit [elgin.edu/news-events](http://elgin.edu/news-events).



*Traci Ellis, local author and social justice advocate*



*Kwanyin Linares (left),  
ECC student-apprentice at  
Clare Oaks Senior Living*

# Earn while you learn

## Apprenticeships meet the needs of employers and students.

Kwanyin Linares' educational journey began in 2017 in Venezuela, where she was a university student pursuing her dream to become a nurse. However, as political and economic conditions worsened, Linares and her brother left their birth country—leaving behind family members as well as their dreams—and settled in Bartlett.

If you asked Linares a year ago what she'd be doing today, she would have never imagined that she could be back on track toward her goals. Today, Linares has embraced a new future, thanks to an apprenticeship offered through Elgin Community College and Clare Oaks

Senior Living, a continuing care retirement community based in Bartlett.

"The apprenticeship model works well for employers," said Kathy Meisinger, ECC's director of strategic partnerships and experiential learning. "In particular, employers interested in strategies customized to their businesses will find that the model promotes the transfer of knowledge to the next generation of workers and builds a long-term pipeline of employees."

Clare Oaks generously pays Linares' tuition, while also providing her with on-the-job training. Upon completion of the

apprenticeship, the organization will offer Linares a full-time job as a certified nursing assistant (CNA).

"We're excited to explore a new avenue for CNA talent. There's an overall shortage in the market for this role," said Gigi Walker, chief executive officer at Clare Oaks. "The apprenticeship is a great service that benefits Clare Oaks, but more importantly, a program like this benefits the employee for a lifetime."

ECC has taken the lead in developing innovative apprenticeships, such as the basic nurse assistant (BNA) option, that extends the 'earn while you learn' concept beyond traditional trades.

Meanwhile, apprenticeships in skilled trades remain viable and productive. ECC has partnered with the Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT), a leading apprenticeship program provider in the Midwest, to create an industrial maintenance apprenticeship program. The ICATT partnership has been so successful that plans are being made to expand the program in spring 2019.

From Linares' perspective, the nursing assistant apprenticeship represents a new world of opportunities—a world she would not have envisioned without the help of ECC, where she gained the confidence to move forward toward her dream.



*ECC student-apprentices at GEKA Manufacturing*

# Why is ECC a bright choice?

Current ECC students express confidence in their reasons for choosing to attend ECC.

*ECC was not only the closest option for me, but it has a great reputation. I could get some classes out of the way, and because I already talked to my advisor, I know my credits will transfer with me when I go to University of Kentucky to study architecture.*

–Nolan Williamson, Elgin



*When I graduated high school early, I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do. I'm now 21 and ready to start college so I was really impressed by how easy ECC made the application process. Coming to ECC means I can stretch the small amount of money I have, so I know I'll be able to comfortably afford my education.*

–Madalyn Miller, St. Charles

*When I found out that I received a scholarship from the ECC Foundation, I was so proud of myself! This is my first scholarship, and I am so grateful for it. It's going to make a big difference for me here at ECC and when I transfer to Northern Illinois University. I am more motivated to pursue my educational plan.*

– Bernice Tinajero, Elgin



## YOU'RE SMART. GET MOVING.

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Spring classes start  
Monday, January 14.

[elgin.edu/go](http://elgin.edu/go)



Elgin  
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# Your community college at a glance

From life-changing academic programs to powerful community partnerships, ECC takes a leading role in improving people's lives through learning.

## Where does your future begin?

If you would like to complete your education, train for a new career, or eventually transfer to a four-year school, ECC is where everything begins. We can help you decide what to study—and we're dedicated to helping you succeed through free tutoring, labs, advising and more.

## Transfer around the corner—or across the country.

ECC alumni have transferred just about everywhere, including Ivy League and prestigious research universities such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In fact, over 966 institutions have accepted ECC transfers. If you prefer to stay close to home, you can complete a bachelor's degree right here on ECC's campus through specific university partners.

## ECC is in touch with the needs of area employers.

ECC wants your business to thrive. Not only is ECC the area's leading supplier of qualified talent and employee training, our Office of Strategic Partnerships and Experiential Learning works closely with businesses and industry experts to make sure our students learn what area employers expect from successful employees.

## ECC Foundation: Investing in future leaders

The ECC Foundation exists as a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization affiliated with the college. Thanks to the foundation, over \$590,000 in direct institutional support was awarded in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. The foundation also competes successfully to secure private funding for innovative projects that would not otherwise be possible.

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# 50 years. 7,000 leaders.

## ECC's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society celebrates 50 years of leadership.

Give us 50 years, and we'll give you 7,000 leaders who are well-equipped to become paragons of success within the community. Elgin Community College's Rho Kappa Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) celebrated its 50th anniversary in November 2018 when past and present members connected and shared with each other the exciting ways that PTK has transformed their lives and fostered their development as community leaders.

After their time at ECC, PTK alumni go on to become corporate executives, actors, STEM researchers, educators, health care professionals, musicians, entrepreneurs, public safety officials, attorneys, engineers and more.

"For me, joining PTK wasn't a means to get recognized or be awarded scholarships," said ECC student Margaret Sherman, who served as president of the chapter during the 2017–2018 academic year. "While those are definitely benefits, PTK became an avenue to learn about who I am as a person—a leader—and it gave me opportunities that I can use to sculpt my future."

PTK is an award-winning, internationally recognized honor society for community college students whose members participate in a variety of service, scholarship, leadership and fellowship activities. Participation in the society is life-changing for ECC students who, upon their acceptance into the society, grow as scholars and as student leaders.

Many members are attracted to PTK after noticing how it has benefited their family members' lives. In some instances, an entire generation of siblings is inducted, which was the case for Ryan Weiss, ECC alumnus and member of the District 509 Board of Trustees. Weiss served as student trustee at ECC 20 years ago, and his sister and brother-in-law are also PTK alumni.

First Year Programs Coordinator Ali-Reza Kashani, an ECC and PTK alumnus, currently serves as one of three staff advisors for the chapter. Kashani was



recognized as a Distinguished Advisor during the organization's international centennial conference in April 2018. Kashani's siblings were PTK members, too.

"When I was a student, PTK gave me the resources and opportunities to be

successful beyond the classroom," said Kashani. "Now as an advisor, the best part of working with students is seeing their transformations—they are more confident, self-motivated, and ultimately become better leaders who are prepared to achieve their academic and personal goals."

### RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY

In its 50-year history, ECC's PTK chapter has won dozens of awards recognizing its service projects, community involvement, chapter leadership, chapter excellence, and overall contributions to the PTK Honor Society. Some of ECC's recent accomplishments include:

- 2003 – Organized ECC's first Relay for Life cancer fundraising walk, which raised more than \$650,000 in 13 years.
- 2006 – Pacesetter Award from the Illinois Community College Trustees Association awarded to PTK alum Katie (Hopkins) Storey, EdD ('03).
- 2009 – Won the National PTK Beta Alpha Continued Excellence Award.
- 2009 – PTK member Andrea Andrada ('09) named to the All-USA Community College Academic Team. The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation named her a New Century Scholar, a first for an ECC student.
- 2015 – Opened the Spartan Food Pantry to benefit ECC students.
- 2016 – Won an Elgin Image Award, recognizing Spartan Food Pantry's positive impact on the city of Elgin.
- 2018 – Ali-Reza Kashani ('11), first year programs coordinator, named Distinguished Advisor at PTK international conference.
- 2018 – Partnered with Advocate Sherman Hospital to grow fresh produce for Spartan Food Pantry.

# U-46 grads eligible for new ECC Foundation scholarship

A new scholarship for School District U-46 graduates positions students for success when they start their educational journeys at Elgin Community College. Joan Longmire, who worked with thousands of students during her 35 years as a seventh grade social studies teacher, learned that her students' hopes and dreams were as varied as the students themselves. With that in mind, she turned to the Elgin Community College Foundation to create the Joan M. Longmire Scholarship.

"I wanted to donate where I saw the most need and where the money would go to the best use," said Longmire. "For me, that meant working with ECC."

"A high school education is no longer enough for many people. ECC has so many options to help students get a leg up on their futures," said Longmire. "And it's a great place to start before entering a university."

The scholarship is available to recent graduates of any School District U-46 high school who have financial need.

For more information on more than 200 scholarships available through the ECC Foundation—or to start a new scholarship—visit [elgin.edu/eccfoundation](http://elgin.edu/eccfoundation) or contact Sheri Lacy at 847-214-7596.



Jorge Contreras, recipient of Joan M. Longmire Scholarship

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SOME *Dreams* JUST NEED A LITTLE HELP

# SAVE THE DATE

21st Annual  
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Founders' Day  
Celebration  
February 17, 2019



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FALL COMMENCEMENT

JANUARY 14  
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FEBRUARY 5  
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FEBRUARY 17  
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CELEBRATION  
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APRIL 15  
OPEN REGISTRATION  
BEGINS FOR SUMMER  
AND FALL TERMS

MAY 18  
SPRING COMMENCEMENT

JUNE 17  
SUMMER CLASSES BEGIN

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## Welcome to Impact

This publication was created by combining three separate mailings—President's Report, Alumni Newsletter, and the ECC Foundation's previous version of IMPACT magazine. This new, cost-effective approach allows Elgin Community College to reach more people using fewer resources.



### Why did you choose ECC?

*I was surprised by the diversity and the culture at ECC. When I first enrolled, I wasn't sure what to expect, but I've been blown away with my experience so far. The number of people from different backgrounds that come together to make up one school is really cool. ECC has a lot to offer students and the community.*

—Jonathan Fonseca, Hanover Park