



2023-2024

CCCPEKD SERVICE AWARD



DENNYSE CLARK

Rio Hondo College

Dennyse has been an invaluable asset to Rio Hondo College for over 20 years, dedicating her time and expertise to providing athletic counseling, support services, and ensuring athletic compliance for our student-athletes. Her commitment to helping students succeed academically and athletically has profoundly impacted our student-athlete community.

Dennyse's role in EOPS counseling and as the sole athletic counselor demonstrates her dedication to supporting students in achieving their goals. In addition to excelling in counseling, she has shown exceptional leadership as the Rio Hondo College Leadership Academy coordinator, Academic Senator, Faculty Association Secretary, and as a member of the Faculty negotiations team. Her membership with the California Community College Athletic Counselors association underscores her commitment to staying informed and supporting student-athletes in navigating NCAA rules and transfer requirements. Dennyse's creation of an early alert academic progress reporting program for student-athletes and curriculum for Counseling 100 showcases her innovative approach to student support.

Dennyse's tireless efforts to assist students and coaches, coupled with her unwavering commitment to student success, make her a deserving candidate for recognition. Dennyse's upcoming retirement in June 2024 will leave a significant void in the community, and she will be greatly missed for her dedication, effort, and heart in serving all student-athletes.

2023-2024



KINESIOLOGY EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



TARA JACOBSON

Santa Rosa Junior College

Tara Jacobson is a dedicated educator and practitioner in the fields of kinesiology, fitness, and health, with a bachelor's degree in Kinesiology and a master's degree in Exercise Physiology from San Diego State University. She is currently pursuing her doctorate degree in Educational Leadership (Social Justice and Equity) from San Francisco State University. Tara has taught full-time as a Kinesiology generalist at Santa Rosa Junior College since 2009. She is the current department chair, Academic Senate executive board member, co-chair of the district online committee, and on the executive board of CCCPEKD since 2020.

Tara's journey into movement and wellness began with her early love of dance, which eventually led her to become a dance and group fitness instructor starting in high school. Tara holds credentials from ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine) as an Exercise Physiologist, NSHC (National Society of Health Coaches) as a Certified Health Coach, Balanced Body as a certified Comprehensive Pilates Instructor, and Yoga Alliance as an experienced 500-hour Registered Yoga Teacher.

Throughout her career, Tara has been deeply involved in teaching a diverse range of lecture and activity-based classes in Kinesiology, Fitness, Yoga, and Pilates Instruction in a variety of formats: in-person, online, hybrid, and HyFlex.

Tara has developed and coordinated three career education certificate programs in Fitness, Yoga, and Pilates instruction playing a crucial role in helping shape the next generation of instructors to meet local industry needs with affordable and accessible training opportunities. She promotes diversity and inclusion so that individuals of all experiences and abilities can thrive and reach their personal and professional goals.

2023-2024



DANCE EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



MAHA AFRA

Cypress College



Professor Maha Afra is an accredited, dancer, teacher and choreographer. Currently Ms. Afra is a professor of dance at Cypress College, and chair of the Dance Department. She has a B.A. and an M.F.A. in Dance from University of California, Irvine as well as a B.S. in Biology and an M.S. in Human Morphology/Genetics from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

Professor Afra is actively involved on the Cypress College campus and within the dance community. She currently serves as the Dance Department coordinator and is a DEI member at the college. With DEI, she organizes dances for all events, including BHM & PRIDE. Professor Afra also serves as the CLO Coordinator for Fine Arts. In 2021, she was honored by the California Association for Postsecondary Education and Disability for her work with DSS Students. She is in the process of receiving her doctorate at California State University, Long Beach.

2023-2024



HEALTH EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



TRACY HARKINS

LA Mission College

Tracy Harkins, an esteemed associate professor of Health and Kinesiology at Los Angeles Mission College, embodies a commitment to health education and equity. Serving as Chair of the Department of Health and Human Performance, she champions health equity initiatives within the college community. Tracy's involvement as co-chair of the Educational Planning Committee and active participation in various campus and district committees further amplify her impact.

Beyond her primary role, Tracy extends her expertise as an adjunct professor at Los Angeles City College and Los Angeles Valley College, as well as a faculty member in the Fire Technology program at Santa Ana College. Her dedication to teaching diverse fitness and performance topics, including those for California Peace Officers Standards Training, underscores her passion for empowering students.

Tracy's diverse background, ranging from commercial fitness to elementary education, enriches her teaching approach. She prioritizes equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary for healthier lives, emphasizing wellness and performance enhancement.

Moreover, Tracy's recent work reflects her advocacy for broad access to health and kinesiology education at community colleges. By supporting student success and wellness, she actively contributes to community well-being and public health initiatives.

In summary, Tracy Harkins' unwavering commitment to health education and equity shines through her teaching, advocacy, and collaborative efforts. She is a beacon of dedication to student empowerment and community well-being, embodying the spirit of excellence in education and public health advancement.

2023-2024



KINESIOLOGY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR



DR. TIMI BROWN

Chaffey College

Dr. Timi Brown is deserving of this award for her hard work, commitment and exceptional leadership as Director of Kinesiology and Athletics at Chaffey College. This last year we endured a reorganization involving the splitting of Kinesiology from Athletics. Dr. Brown has helped navigate this challenging transition and has continually advocated for our faculty and students to ensure daily operations continue with as much ease and efficiency as possible.

Additionally, Dr. Brown has collaborated with many internal and external constituents to improve the development of physical structures on campus, including the Kinesiology Building, Kinesiology Classrooms, the Athletics' and Aquatics Complex, Sports Center team rooms, weight room, the Softball Stadium and Lowder Field. She has also worked with campus Information Technology & Facilities to upgrade infrastructure in the fitness center as well as at athletic venues to support live streaming of all athletic contests & events.

Dr. Brown was also instrumental in re-building the partnership with the Chaffey College Foundation & has helped Athletics raise over \$150,000 from the annual Foundation/Athletics Golf Tournament. Last year, under Dr. Brown's direction, graduating Kinesiology Major students and Student Athletes were gifted stoles to wear during our commencement ceremony. She is also responsible for the Partnering with college wrap, Heat Team, and Panther Pantry to bring mental health and student success workshops to our department, along with free snacks for students. She also developed a working group of professionals to create a 50th anniversary celebration and marketing campaign of Title IX across campus. Additionally, she has worked with our campus to be more inclusive and gender equitable.

Lastly, she was a contributing member of our Fitness Specialist Certificate program initiation process. She also held the First Annual PAW event (Panthers Athletics Welcome). In addition to serving as the Director of Kinesiology & Athletics, Dr. Brown serves on the Inland Empire Executive Officer's team, the IEAC's Gender Equity Committee, IEAC's sport rep for Women's Basketball, and was selected to the 3C2A Management Council as the Southern California Women's Basketball representative. Dr. Brown is a member of the National Athletic Director's Association and most recently was one of eight Athletic Directors throughout the country to receive the CBIZ Borden Perlman Sports Convention Grant, and in 2022 earned the Panther Pride Award recognition from Chaffey College managers.

2023-2024



KINESIOLOGY STUDENT OF THE YEAR- NORTH



MEGAN SHIUDELUS

Santa Rosa Junior College

"My long-term career goal with these degrees is to be a geriatric and special needs physical therapist, and the dream is to run my own practice in which I can give patients the care they deserve as they work hard for themselves."

Megan has been in the sports medicine program preparing to transfer for undergraduate work in physical therapy for over a year. During her time at Santa Rosa Junior College, Megan has taken the lead on projects such as sanitization of prophylactic braces, and taking charge of daily operations and delegation of duties with other students. Megan also has worked extensively as an adapted physical education aide during her time at Santa Rosa Junior College which broadens her understanding of illness and injury as well as the field of physical therapy. Megan's leadership has been invaluable to the sports medicine program both academically and clinically, and is extremely appreciated in her position as an adapted physical therapy aide as well.

"I come from the Marin County public school system, which steered me towards college while my family struggled under a single preschool teacher's salary. I have attended SRJC for 3 years and developed priceless skills here, such as studying, communication, and teamwork. These skills have allowed me to excel with A-grades in difficult courses like Anatomy, Chemistry, and Biology, all amidst financial hardship of supporting myself and housing insecurity. I pay my rent by working mornings and weekends at a small coffee shop. FAFSA and SRJC's Doyle scholarship have also helped me immensely. SRJC has given me amazing extra-curricular opportunities in my field. I have worked 60 paid intern hours and 55 unpaid volunteer hours for our Adapted Physical Education (APE) program, as well as 229 unpaid intern hours for our Sports Medicine program, either in the athletic training clinic or out on the field at games. Our athletic trainers have taught me countless valuable medical protocols and have given me a jumpstart on my education of research and medical knowledge, for which I am extremely grateful. The APE physical therapists and teachers, along with their incredibly resilient and bright students, have completely changed my personal goals as I build my career. The adaptive element to exercise – especially for a patient with limited mobility, speech, sensory, cognition, etc. – has become my favorite part. It clears space for creativity in the medical setting. I am also a musician and artist, and I strongly believe that the main factor harming people in our country's medical, educational, economic, and political systems is the mass absence of creativity. Everybody is not the same, every brain is not the same, and adaptation to the individual's needs is the only effective treatment. I take this belief with me everywhere I go, attempting to spark change as I enter the medical world. I am a student who asks questions, looks out for others, and speaks up for myself. To my knowledge, that is what leadership is, which is why I am so honored to be awarded as a top Kinesiology student of California Community Colleges this year." Megan Shiudelus

2023-2024



KINESIOLOGY STUDENT OF THE YEAR-SOUTH



BREONNA MARTINEZ

Chaffey College

Breonna will obtain her Bachelors Degree in kinesiology while continuing to compete in basketball and plans to become a firefighter in her home community of Rancho Cucamonga.

Breonna recently completed her sophomore season with the Chaffey College women's basketball squad and was a two-year team captain. Both seasons, she earned All-Inland Empire Conference postseason honors as she was a second team selection in 2023 and received first-team accolades in 2024. Breonna was named to the Pasadena City College as well as the San Diego City College All-Tournament team as a freshman in 2023. Off the court, Breonna is a member of the Evolve Club where she discusses her experiences as a female student-athlete and equality in women's sports. During the holiday season, she helped collect and donate 200 toys with campus organizations Panther Care and EOPS: Next Up Foster Youth to provide Christmas gifts to children.

"I started playing basketball in fourth grade. I didn't grow up in a financially stable household, but my parents always found a way to support their 6 children. We moved around a lot due to our financial situation (13 times in 13 years). Basketball gave me a lot of stability in my life, and motivated me to stay positive and keep pursuing my goals. Going into high school I faced social anxiety, and loneliness. Most of my friends attended other schools, and I needed to get out of my comfort zone. I joined the basketball team and I was recognized as Conference Player of the Year and team MVP. After two years, I made a decision to transfer to a more prolific basketball school so that I could be challenged further. I grew up in predominately black communities and in my new high-school I was a minority. This was difficult for me to adjust to and I faced continued social anxiety and isolation. I persevered and graduated high school in 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic posed incredible challenges for my mental health. I had a hard time adjusting and found myself very depressed. I decided I needed to stop basketball and drop out of college. After 2 years I realized how much I missed playing basketball and being a part of a team. I decided to join the Chaffey College Women's Basketball Team. It was exactly what I needed. Chaffey first exposed me to the Firefighting Program and I always knew that when I stopped playing basketball that my career would revolve around helping others. I decided that Kinesiology would be my major and I'm excited about my future. In spite of the challenges I have faced growing up, and through my college academic and basketball journey, I have learned that I'm capable of getting myself where I want to be and that everything I've gone through shapes me to be who I am today. I recognize that there will be continued challenges but I won't let that define my life outcomes. I can stay motivated through hard times." - Breonna Martinez



DANCE STUDENT OF THE YEAR

ARLENE RIVERA

Rio Hondo College



Arlene plans to transfer to a Cal State University to earn her BA/BFA in dance. She aspires to be a choreographer and future educator.



Arlene Rivera has been a dance student at Rio Hondo College, taking many classes to achieve her AA in dance and transfer to a university dance program. She has advanced to performing and choreography solo and ensemble works, along with traveling with the dance program to the American College Dance Association conference. Her work was presented on stage for adjudication alongside other university level pieces. She has volunteered her time at Montebello High School to assist and inspire the younger dancers ever since she graduated. She is a great role model, and despite starting dance training later in life and not having full access to the arts in her low-income community, she has definitely proven herself a strong individual. Additionally, Arlene dedicates many hours dancing at a studio for more training, offering volunteer opportunities to help cover class costs. She fills her time with as much of the dance training focus as she can.

"One thing that has made me who I am today is dance. I have been dancing for a few years now and wish I had started sooner. Throughout my years, I constantly trained at home with what I had. I never had the luxury or financial means of taking dance classes to train professionally. During high school, I finally had the chance to take a professional dance class on campus through ROP. I have learned to be a leader throughout my years of learning and observing by taking chances in dance to choreograph and work with others. I realized how much I enjoyed helping other students, cheering them on, and keeping a positive environment for myself and my friends. Dance has helped me be the person I am today because it has helped me stay grounded and genuine to myself. With this experience, I decided to pursue dance as a career and have started working towards that dream at Rio Hondo College. Dancing in college has been challenging as I am now exposed to many more styles. Learning these styles has been fun and I value all the different trainings that I am offered. I have felt defeated many times due to my thoughts of being unable to improve because I started training later in life. My parents still drive me to school to make sure I get to my classes, and I will be the first generation to graduate with a degree. I want to have as many accessible options to choose dance as a career in my life, and I have always stayed true to myself and never let anything hinder my goal. I will take full advantage of my opportunities to continue my dance career dreams, and I always hope to make my family proud by doing what I love." - Arlene Rivera