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MCC names 3 outstanding adjunct faculty

tribune news Staff

Sep 5, 2023



Mesa Community College has named, from left, Minh Nghiem, Pamela Lizardi and Jorge Pierce as recipients of the 2023 Outstanding Adjunct Faculty awards. (MCC)

Three Mesa Community College teachers have been selected as recipients of the 2023 Outstanding Adjunct Faculty awards.

Pamela Lizardi, Minh Nghiem and Jorge Pierce were honored for their contributions to the college community.

“Meaningful instruction occurs best when students feel connected and included, whether in the classroom or on a virtual platform,” said MCC President Dr. Tammy Robinson.

“These outstanding educators promote inclusion and diversity, use technology and available resources to enhance student learning and provide students, staff and their teaching peers encouragement, care and respect.”

Lizardi for over 20 years has taught current issues in criminal justice, ethics and victimology and crisis management in public safety.

A retired first sergeant who served for over 22 years in the United States Army as a military police officer, she became the training and staff development administrator for the trial courts of Maricopa County following military service.

Lizardi has a doctorate in educational leadership from Northern Arizona University, a master’s in education from Ottawa University and a bachelor’s degree in business management from the University of Phoenix.

“I love helping students succeed in their continued education by showing them where to look for information and guide them in their growth of knowledge,” she said.

An MCC adjunct faculty member since 2019, Nghiem teaches upper division applied science courses.

A first-generation immigrant from Vietnam, Nghiem overcame hardship in the pursuit of higher education in the U.S. Like many of the community college students he teaches, Nghiem first obtained his Associate degree from Roane State Community College in Harriman, Tennessee.

After earning a bachelor's in civil engineering from Lipscomb University and a master's in construction management from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, he moved to Texas and then Arizona to pursue a career in general contracting and real estate development.

"I strive to help students connect theoretical principles with practical and real-world applications through a sensible teaching style and relevant contemporary construction practices," Nghiem said.

Pierce, a member of the Psychological Science Department at MCC since 2011, currently teaches "Introduction to Psychology and Psychology and Culture" and is a dual-enrollment instructor for the college.

Since 1996, he has served as full-time instructor at Dobson High School where he teaches psychology and started an AP psychology program in 2004.

He also wrote the curriculum for the sports psychology program for the Mesa Public Schools District in 2013.

Pierce has an education specialist degree in educational leadership with an emphasis in technology from the University of Kentucky, as well as a master's in education in human relations, and a bachelor's in social studies education from Northern Arizona University.

"I love teaching psychology and helping students realize how the concepts apply to their everyday lives," he said.

Several adjunct faculty members received honorable mentions: Jennifer Jordan and Seth Tyler, Administration of Justice Studies Department; Jaime Escobedo, Michael Johnson, Sr. and Jennifer Moyer, applied sciences and technology; Natasha Murdock and Minou Faiz, English; Adriana Diaz, communication, theatre and film; Jarod Bodine, computer information systems; Fred King, health sciences; Charles Hammarstrom, life sciences; and John Holaday, social sciences.

“We are exceptionally proud of our honorees, honorable mentions and each of the 15 faculty members nominated by our college community,” Reyes added.

“It is the willingness and dedication of our faculty in sharing their knowledge and professional wisdom that are major factors in our students’ success.”