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Science instructor connects with students, named PCC's faculty of year for 2008

PUEBLO – In his four years as a science instructor at Pueblo Community College, Nick Alfonso has consistently drawn praise from students, and it's easy to understand why. Their comments are that he is committed to helping them succeed through his innovative classroom teaching techniques, office time availability and communication skills.

Those qualities have earned Alfonso the 2008 Faculty of the Year award at PCC. He was honored recently during an awards ceremony held on the Pueblo campus.

In his Faculty of the Year nomination comments, Nick's enthusiasm for his subject matter was termed "contagious." He was selected PCC's Shining Star award recipient in January 2008 for going above and beyond the call of duty in his profession.

The Pueblo native was first introduced to PCC in 2004 when he served as an instructor for both PCC's Health Academy and its summer Kids College, and he became an adjunct science instructor in 2005. A year later, he was hired as a full-time science instructor, and he now teaches biology, physics, chemistry, and earth and life science courses.

Nick's leadership skills are praiseworthy. He chairs PCC's Curriculum Committee, is the Arts & Sciences Division representative to the State Faculty Curriculum Committee and is co-advisor of the Phi Theta Kappa student organization. For several years, he also has served as one of the chairs of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life planning committee and is PCC's liaison for that annual event.

Nick has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and a Master of Science degree in Applied Natural Science, both from Colorado State University-Pueblo.

Other employees of the year honored at the awards ceremony were music/drama instructor Judith DeRosa, top part-time faculty member; Student Services administrative assistant Lori Denney, top classified employee; and the Economic & Workforce Development Division's operations and state grant coordinator Amanda Ackerman, top professional/technical employee.

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Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21st Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.