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PCC Phi Theta Kappa students honored with All-Colorado Academic Team selection

PUEBLO – Two Pueblo Community College students have been named to Phi Theta Kappa's All-Colorado Academic Team and were honored recently at a luncheon and ceremony held in Denver. Garrison Ortiz and Dena Rodriguez were selected for their academic achievement as well as participating in PCC and community activities. Both are 4.0 GPA students who will graduate in May with associate degrees.

Ortiz is a Dolores Huerta Preparatory High School who has been enrolled in the Pueblo Early College program since he was a sophomore. Since then, the 18-year-old has excelled academically, earning 61 college credits with a perfect 4.0 grade-point average. He's taken on a leadership role, serving as vice president of the Phi Theta Kappa scholastic honors organization for the past year and a half. He's embraced the college resources that are available to him.

Ortiz also has had to juggle his classroom and study time with wrestling practices, meets and tournaments for Dolores Huerta, for whom he competed since his freshman year. He finished fifth in the 119-pound division at the state tournament recently.

Garrison will graduate from PCC in May with an Associate of General Studies degree and from DPHH (probably second in his class) soon afterward. He has been awarded a Kane Foundation scholarship to attend Colorado State University-Pueblo and plans to study pre-med, with an ultimate goal of becoming an anesthesiologist. He also has been nominated for a Jack Kent Cooke national scholarship.

Rodriguez is a 27-year-old California native who was raised in Pueblo and graduated from South High School. She has compiled her 4.0 GPA while focusing on psychology. Married and with two young children (4 and 5 years old), she still finds time to tutor students both in the Learning Center and for the TRiO Project Success support organization.

Rodriguez has been a PTK member since April 2008 and has served as its secretary. Dena previously was a member of P.S. CARE, a psychology and social work student club. She has had support from a PCC Foundation scholarship this academic year and previously received a Pueblo Hispanic Education Foundation scholarship.

Dena plans to continue her studies by pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology at CSU-Pueblo and go on and work toward a master's degree as well, probably at Adams State College. Her eventual career goals are first to be a clinical psychologist working with children, and eventually she would like to become a college-level psychology instructor.

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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.