

NCMPR District IV

[National Council for Marketing & Public Relations]

Representing Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Wyoming

Nov. 30, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joe Huff, III
Director, NCMPR District 4
Director of Public Affairs, Galveston College
409-944-1302
jhuff@gc.edu

BEST IN THE FIELD

WCJC's Carter joins HCC Chancellor in receiving top recognition

GALVESTON, TEXAS – What does the chancellor of the one of the largest community colleges in the nation, a graphic designer from Arkansas and a veteran communications professional from Wharton all have in common? They all received top recognition this year from the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR).

The NCMPR presented the trio with its most coveted annual awards – Communicator of the Year, Pacesetter of the Year and Rising Star Award – during the District 4 Conference in Galveston, held Nov. 1 to Nov. 3 at the Tremont House Hotel. NCMPR's District 4 comprises six states: Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Wyoming.

The 2015 Communicator of the Year award went to Zina Carter, Director of Marketing and Communications for Wharton County Junior College for the past 20 years. According to NCMPR, the Communicator of the Year award recognizes a two-year college marketing, public relations or communications professional who has demonstrated leadership in the area of college communications and marketing, with emphasis placed on achievements made within the past year.

Carter was singled out for launching new initiatives and developing campaigns that have provided awareness of the college's faculty, athletics and history. During her tenure at WCJC, her department has garnered 28 awards for excellence by NCMPR and other organizations.

According to conference publications, Carter's "attention to detail and superior leadership qualities have inspired her team to achieve new personal standards of excellence." In addition, her "approach to internal and community relations and her unfailing commitment to assist individual departments and college committees with marketing initiatives has made her a beacon of professionalism within the college and the surrounding communities."

“I have personally known Zina for 20 years,” said Joe Huff III, NCMPR District 4 Director. “She is one of the few marketing professionals, like myself, who oversees foundation and development projects in addition to marketing and public relations.”

Carter said she was honored to receive such recognition, especially considering that NCMPR’s District 4 contains 60 community colleges and 289 members.

“Being named Communicator of the Year is a momentous honor and I am humbled to be chosen out of so many highly qualified marketing and communications professionals,” Carter said. “My success is attributed to the dedication and skills of the professionals in my department who work alongside me.”

In her role as director of marketing and communications for WCJC, Carter oversees marketing and campaign strategies, advertising, publications, media relations, publicity, internet marketing, presidential events, crisis communications, employee communications and foundation and alumni relations. She manages a four-member staff.

Carter holds a bachelor of arts in communications with minors in art and marketing from Jacksonville University. Carter has close to 30 years of experience in marketing and communications, having held positions in public relations agencies, as a reporter and editor for a daily newspaper and in corporate communications in Florida, Tennessee and Texas. She resides in Wharton with Daniel Davila and their two daughters, Gabriela and Victoria. She serves on the board of the Wharton Chamber of Commerce, is a member of the Wharton Independent School District Ambassadors, is a member of the Gulf Coast Consortium of Public Information Professionals for Community Colleges and is a long-time member of NCMPR.

The 2015 Pacesetter of the Year award went to Dr. Cesar Maldonado, Chancellor of Houston Community College. The Pacesetter award recognizes a president or CEO at a two-year community or technical college who has demonstrated leadership and support in the area of college communications and marketing.

Maldonado has been at HCC – one of the largest community colleges in the nation – since only May of 2014 but has hit the ground running. One of his highest goals is to meet Houston’s workforce needs. In just 18 months at the helm of HCC, Maldonado has achieved part of that goal through the establishment of 12 “Centers of Excellence,” which are located near businesses and provide specialized training for that particular industry.

“Businesses and industry are excited by the model and are sharing resources and money with the college to support these initiatives,” conference publications stated, and such programs are “defining new pathways for student success.”

Before arriving at HCC, Maldonado served as President of Texas State Technical College in Harlingen and later as Vice Chancellor for Institutional Effectiveness and Commercialization for TSTC statewide. He has served on the Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District board of trustees, the board of directors of the non-profit Houston Technology Center and the Education Committee of the Greater Houston Partnership.

Maldonado holds bachelor and master's degrees in chemical engineering from Texas A&M University, a doctorate in systems and engineering management from Texas Tech University and is an alumnus of the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business. He and his wife, Liz, have four children.

The 2015 Rising Star Award – which recognizes up-and-coming communications professionals who have demonstrated special creativity – went to Justin Froning, marketing manager and design lead for Northwest Arkansas Community College. Froning is credited with creating a 25th anniversary logo and web page for NWACC that allowed the college to “maintain a consistent brand” while “working within the limits of (the college’s) website template.”

Froning joined NWACC’s marketing and public relations department in 2013 as a full-time graphic designer and was later named Marketing Manager/Design Lead. Before arriving at NWACC, Froning served as an Assistant Director of the Rogers Unit of the Boys & Girls Club of Benton County and as a professional musician, touring for five years with the indie-rock band, Deas Vail.

In addition to his work for NWACC, Froning also operates his own graphic design company, Housebear Design, which specializes in projects for internationally-acclaimed bands, companies and corporations. Froning holds a bachelor of arts in psychology from the University of Arkansas and currently lives in Arkansas with his wife, Ciara Long.

Huff, NCMPR’s District 4 Director, noted that this year’s award winners exemplified the professionalism and dedication required to ensure community colleges continue to provide the educational opportunities needed for individuals looking to jumpstart careers, transition to a higher level of learning or move up the corporate ladder of a chosen profession.

“We at NCMPR take seriously our role of recognizing outstanding achievement in college communications,” Huff said. “This year’s recipients were remarkable in their accomplishments and their dedication to their respective colleges and it is only fitting that they received this well-deserved recognition.”

NCMPR is one of the largest affiliates of the American Association of Community Colleges and is currently comprised of 1,700 members from nearly 1200 colleges across the United States, Canada and worldwide. NCMPR supports member colleges by providing professional development, resources and recognition programs. For more information, visit their website at: www.ncmpr.org