

2005 CCCSFAAA AWARD NOMINATIONS

OUTSTANDING SERVICE - Nominee – RICK RAMS

Not only has Rick revived “The CCCSFAAA Report” newsletter, he went much, much further. He set the bar at a much higher level for the future. He hounded executive board and members for news! (That makes him eligible for the outstanding service award just by itself!!!) He delivered on his promise of four issues - a full-color beautiful publication featuring 12 to 16 pages in each issue of informative news, articles, announcements, and photos. He insisted on specific information in each issue of “The News” including federal issues, web features, leadership, outreach, committee reports, Chancellor’s Office updates and event coverage. Rick has left his personal legacy and thumbprint on this publication. “The CCCSFAAA Report” newsletter represented each of the 109 California Community Colleges within our segment (the largest system of higher educational in the world) and the entire CCCSFAAA organization as financial aid professionals. I applaud his hard work and dedication to excellence with a standing ovation!!!!

LEADERSHIP AWARD – Nominee – SUSAN JONES

Although Susan’s dynasty (year as CCCSFAAA President) is about to come to a close – there is no way the legacy she has left us will be soon forgotten. Susan’s brainchild “May is Financial Aid Awareness Month” is testament to her dedication as a financial aid professional. Her leadership has built bridges with many of our financial aid partners at the state level. And, her journey hasn’t always been smooth sailing, but her personal and professional integrity has tenaciously led us onward and upward at every turn in the road. It’s been a political and trying year with budget shortfalls, federal reauthorization, reorganization, and Capitol Hill politics on the both the state and federal level, and Susan has been relentless in her desire to stay “plugged in” to keep her board and membership informed and involved in shaping the outcomes as an outspoken advocate for community college students and community college financial aid staff. We don’t call her the “Susan-nator” for nothing!

HALL OF FAME – Nominee – CRAIG YAMAMOTO

Ah! What to say about the infamous “Flaming Yamamoto”. He is a man of many, many quiet talents. In Craig’s caring and soft spoken way, he has been leading the charge and carrying the flag for a number of years now for CCCSFAAA. I did a bit of research on Craig in preparation of this Hall of Fame nomination. Allow me to extract Craig’s own words from his “President’s Message” in the April 2004 edition of “The CCCSFAAA News”. And I quote, “These are some of the ambitious goals we set for this coming year. – Strengthen our partnership with CASFAA, CSAC, Chancellor’s Office, EDFund, USA Funds, the U.S. Department of Education, and other vendors and sponsors. – Work closely with CASFAA on site selection for the upcoming conferences. -- Improve the directory and newsletter. - Improve our fund development and fiscal planning. -- Create a historian committee to document our history and accomplishments (there’s still time to get this done, Craig!). – Clarify and strengthen the role of the CCCSFAAA liaisons. - Expand our training offerings and work towards a master training calendar. -- Update the policies and procedures. -- Encourage 100% participation for regional representatives. -- Research a consultant position to assist the association on state legislative advocacy and to help protect our administrative funding.” Whew! That an ambiguous list even two years ago.

Craig speaks, writes, represents, reads, dreams and mentors on behalf of our association everyday! He gives credit where credit is due. He embodies all the characteristics and qualities of a great leader. Craig Yamamoto is a mentor to each and every one of us! He works tirelessly on behalf of our association! He believes in us. He is a shining example for us of the importance our work to the students on our campuses. Nothing sidetracks him from his work – his passion – student financial aid.

I have always made my decisions for “Hall of Fame” nominations by asking myself two questions. Do we need to clone him or her? And, would our professional lives been different without his or her personal legacy left behind? I really cannot think of one person who has had such a positive impact on CCCSFAAA...and thankfully, he’s still around! Like Craig says, our association is only as strong as its volunteers. Thank heavens Craig still volunteers and gives us strength!

B. Asmus
9/23/2005