



## Patricia Carter: Mentor, role model, mother and 2010 San Mateo Community College District Classified Employee of the Year Nominee

As I followed Pat through the laboratories and storage rooms of the Science Building at Skyline College, I soon recognized why she has been nominated for the 2010 District Classified Employee of the Year award.

*Patricia Carter*

*Biology Lab  
Technician*

*Skyline College,  
Building 7  
(Science Building)*

*Science, Math,  
Technology  
Department*

*25 years of service*

Pat is a competent organizer. How else could she juggle the many tasks associated with five student laboratories, equipment and materials storerooms and specialized specimen storage areas? It means coming up with creative ways to organize the vast inventory in these areas so it is accessible to students and faculty. Here everything is in order and everything is in its place

Pat monitors a multitude of on-going student science projects in the labs. When she interacts with students, she offers insight into and support for their projects. Her hands-on approach to her work in the labs and her accessibility to the educational needs of students underscore her confidence in her knowledge of the subject matter.

Pat is amiable and down to earth. She is a good listener. Her calm demeanor belies a passion for her work. Pat cares about her students.

On the day of my tour, Pat and short term temp Yvonne Malloy were examining specimens gathered from the Skyline campus and from the beach near the campus and answering questions from students in BIO 230, Cell Biology, a majors biology class. She barely had time to talk and share with me her answers to my questions.

### **CSEA Voices: Tell me about the essential work you do every day for your job.**

**Pat:** My duties first and foremost are to provide materials for the various biology labs—Anatomy, Physiology, Microbiology, General Biology, Organismal and Cell Biology, Biotechnology. I maintain the stock of all supplies and live materials that are needed. I keep track of the budget for the biology department, do requisitions, maintain procurement card records, keep equipment in order, and supervise student workers. I orient many part-timers to the lab and help students that work on independent projects. I maintain stock cultures of bacteria, fungi, protozoa and algae, as well as growing plants for labs and collecting specimens from our surrounding environment.





### **CSEA Voices: What makes your work valuable to students at Skyline?**

With around 28 sections of labs this semester, I provide services to over 800 students per week. I monitor open lab sessions so that students can have more time to work on their experiments in microbiology, the majors biology classes and anatomy. Over the years, I feel I've been a mentor to many students that have worked for me, by providing a support system that has helped them get through the stress of school. The skills they learn by working in the biology department have helped many of them gain valuable knowledge in their field.

### **CSEA Voices: What aspect of your job is unique to Skyline?**

One of the unique things we do at Skyline, promoted by the full time biology professors, is the student's participation in independent study leading to their working at a level that most students only get to do at the university level. Many of our students have presented their work at the nationwide conference SACNAS conference, supported by their professors and the MESA department here on campus. I play a small part in this by helping them with their materials and giving them moral support.

### **CSEA Voices: What qualities do you bring to your job that have a positive impact on students?**

We strive to keep an open door for students and faculty, to help them in any way necessary. I try to accommodate the needs that come up and be open to possibilities. Live is ever changing—that's biology!



### **CSEA Voices: What was your most important contribution to students at Skyline in the past year?**

Helping make the Expanding Your Horizons conference a success for the 800+ girls that attended this year was a really rewarding experience.

### **CSEA Voices: What is the most satisfying aspect of your work?**

I love working with the diverse group of students and faculty here. I really enjoy the many facets of my job—I don't get bored with just one repetitive task!



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### **CSEA Voices: What is the most challenging aspect of your work?**

Most challenging is the increased workload over the years, which makes it difficult to get out around campus or be available for participating in things like Classified Council. The labs are pretty much around the clock and I need to be here for the minor problems that can arise. So many details!!!



### **CSEA Voices: Do you participate in committee work on campus? Please tell me about that work.**

I have been a member of the Health and Safety committee on and off for at least 15 years. I've been on numerous hiring committees, for every type of position from classified staff positions such as Chemistry Lab Technician and Staff Assistant, to hiring Biology instructors and even the Dean of SMT. I have been a member of the Planning Committee for Expanding Your Horizons, a conference for young girls promoting education in Math and Science since 1989. I am a member of the SMT scholarship committee, where we honor students nominated by their professors.

### **CSEA Voices: Tell me what it means to be nominated for the Classified Employee of the Year award.**

I feel very honored to be nominated by the faculty I have worked with for many years at Skyline. It means so much to be appreciated and for someone to go out of their way to recognize my efforts. I work very much behind the scenes and don't get out around campus as much as I'd like to due to the constant needs of my world of the biology lab! I am humbled as well, because I know there are many more wonderful classified staff that are deserving of this award.

### **CSEA Voices: Did I miss something?**

I face each day with a feeling of gratitude for all the opportunities Skyline has brought into my life. I started here as a student, a young woman looking for a meaningful career and I took advantage of the Classified Staff Development funds to finish my Bachelor's Degree in Biology at SFSU. My two children also graduated from Skyline and SFSU. We all graduated with honors and as members of Phi Theta Kappa.

