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2017 Arthur S. Marmaduke Award Winner Announced
High School Counselor Receives Prestigious Statewide Honor

Sacramento, CA (2017) – Lynda McGee works hard at her job. She’s been a staff member at Downtown Magnets High School in Los Angeles for nearly 20 years. For 17 of those years she’s worked as a college counselor - not a simple job considering that she’s the only college counselor for over 1,000 students.

But not only has her hard work paid off for two decades of senior graduates, her dedication and resolve has now been recognized by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). The Commission is the principal state agency that administers college financial aid and the majority of Mrs. McGee’s students need that state aid to get into college.

Mrs. McGee has been named the winner of the 2017 Arthur S. Marmaduke Award. This is the 31st annual Marmaduke award honoring outstanding achievement in high school counseling. She received the award before over 200 graduating seniors who clapped, cheered, and gave her a standing ovation. McGee beamed, "This is an emotional job and the students mean everything to me. The job never gets old and I really love what I do because the smallest efforts can lead to the biggest changes for my students."

Nominated by her vice-principal, Dr. Dickson Perey, he described Lynda as “a gem.” And added, “Her long-lasting relationships with current and former families is a testament to her skills as a counselor.”

The Marmaduke Award is a statewide competition that comes with a \$1,500 gift, compliments of the ECMC Foundation, an inscribed plaque, and the winner’s name on a perpetual plaque that is hanging in the Commission’s Boardroom, located in Rancho Cordova, California.

Lupita Cortez Alcalá is Executive Director of the California Student Aid Commission. “Lynda McGee is a dedicated advocate for *all* students. Her extraordinary commitment to assist students in applying for college and receiving state and federal financial aid has resulted in thousands of dollars in grants and scholarships for students.” Alcalá added, “Lynda is truly in service to students and families and deserving of this honor.”

Mrs. McGee’s achievements include:

- Serving over 1,000 students on the campus annually – over 75% of which move on to attend college;
- Visiting students’ homes to discuss college plans with families;
- Coordinating fundraisers for homeless students to help them go to college interviews;
- Supporting alumni who enter college and have difficulty navigating the system because they are often the first in their families to attend college;
- Engaging students on campus with the Get Schooled FAFSA completion competition.

According to one student, “Mrs. McGee is one of the reasons why I believe counseling is just as important as teaching for a student's life...”

Marmaduke Award nominations were evaluated through an established review and selection process by the California Student Aid Commission. Arthur S. Marmaduke was executive director of the California Student Aid Commission for 25 years from 1960 to 1985. He had a passion for helping students reach college. The award was established in 1985 in his honor as the longest-serving executive director in the history of the Commission, which was founded in 1955. Mr. Marmaduke also served as the first President of the National Association of State Grant and Aid Programs. He died in 2005 of Parkinson's disease.

For more information, contact Patti Colston at (916) 206-1285. Photographs are available.

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