PRESS RELEASE
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HI-TEC 2019 Educator of the Year Award Presented to John Nelson

WACO, Texas (May 24, 2019) – The HI-TEC Educator of the Year Award will be presented July 24, 2019, at the High Impact Technology Exchange Conference (HI-TEC) in St. Louis, Missouri. This year's recipient is John Nelson, Associate Professor, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Del Mar College, Corpus Christi, Texas.

HI-TEC (www.highimpact-tec.org) is produced by the National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education (NSF ATE) community. The HI-TEC Educator of the Year Award recognizes a community college educator for outstanding contributions to advanced technological education. Nominees for the award must have had a demonstrated impact on technology education on both a local and national level.

John Nelson has been a member of Del Mar College's GIS program since 1999. He began as a student and has since served as program technician, adjunct faculty, and now full-time associate professor.

Between 2008 and 2013 Nelson served as co-principal investigator (CoPI) and GIS subject matter expert (SME) for the GeoTech Center, an NSF ATE National Center of Excellence. During that time, he developed several GIS training modules and provided workshops to students, K–12 teachers, and professionals. Nelson served as GIS SME for the National Information, Security, and Geospatial Technologies Consortium (NISGTC) Center from 2011 to 2014, during which time he participated in producing five new GIS courses using an innovative accelerated eight-week format. The goal of preparing GIS-ready technicians in as little as six months was achieved, and numerous technicians graduated and are now employed.

Many of Nelson's modules now serve as open educational resources (OER) on the U.S. Department of Labor website. Nelson pioneered the innovative use of continuing education-to-academic-credit workflow, which enables unemployed/underemployed adult learners to accelerate their technology training through intense eight-week-long cohorts. Once employed, adult learners are able to convert the CE courses into credit-bearing academic transcript entries and achieve academic degrees at a later date.

Since 2016 Nelson has served as CoPI, SME, and instructor for the NSF-funded Unmanned Autonomous Systems Technology Education Consortium (UASTEC) project. He authored two new UAS courses and coauthored a third UAS course with Dr. Michael Starek of Texas A&M Corpus Christi. These courses are now used to educate UAS technicians throughout South Texas.

This award represents HI-TEC's commitment to supporting and recognizing community college faculty who make significant contributions to the education and training of today's technology workforce.

Contact:
Thomas Stout, HI-TEC Awards Chair
tstout@tcc.edu
(757) 822-5230
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