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Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa will be the Honored Speaker at COM's 89th Annual Commencement

KENTFIELD, CA—May 13, 2016—Internationally renowned Neuroscientist Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa, often referred to as "Dr. Q," will be the honored speaker at College of Marin's 89th annual commencement ceremony. Over the past academic year, the College has been reading and discussing his book, *Dr. Q: My Journey From Migrant Farm Worker to Brain Surgeon*, as the selected COMmon Read.

Dr. Q's inspiring story began in Mexicali, Mexico. The first-born of six children, his passion and drive led him to risk his life crossing the border in order to pursue his dreams and help his family and his country. As Quiñones worked in the fields of the San Joaquin Valley, he quickly understood that it would take much longer to realize his dreams on farmworker wages. Refusing to let go of his aspirations, he put himself through school and still found time to tutor other Spanish-speaking students in math and science.

He moved to Stockton, CA and found a job loading railroad cars, which enabled him to attend night classes at San Joaquin Delta College. It was there that he met Norm Nichols, the speech and debate coach that mentored Quiñones and helped him apply to UC Berkeley. In 1992, he received a scholarship to UC Berkeley where he earned a BA in psychology. He was accepted to Harvard Medical School and earned his MD, graduating cum laude. Today, Quiñones's official titles include: Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery, Associate Professor of Oncology, Director of the Brain Tumor Surgery Program at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, and Director of the Pituitary Surgery Program at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

The College is honored to have Dr. Q sharing his story with the class of 2016 graduates. His community college experience of being mentored and encouraged to follow his dreams—and aim even higher—is a powerful example of how lives are transformed through education and training.

One student inspired by Dr. Q's story is Noé Diaz. He was reading *Dr. Q: My Journey From Migrant Farm Worker to Brain Surgeon* and Diaz for class and found the book a little difficult since English is his second language. He turned to COM's Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC) for help with the book and class material. "When I was reading the book there were some words that I did not understand, so I

decided to go to the tutoring center to ask for help," said Diaz. "There I met an excellent and generous tutor. She knew I had borrowed the book from the library, and one day she surprised me with a copy that she had bought for me." While at the TLC, Diaz received the support and help he needed with the text; he also received encouragement and a little prompting.

Diaz explained that the tutor had an idea; she suggested that he send the book to Dr. Q to try to get his autograph. Diaz agreed, and the tutor sent the book off to Dr. Q. A few days later she returned the book, signed by Dr. Q with a personal message that read, "Con cariño y aprecio (With care and appreciation) always follow your dreams and never be afraid to fail but do be afraid to not try again."

Understandably, Diaz was excited and motivated by the message as he thinks of Dr. Q as a role model. "I was so happy because his story is very similar to mine," said Diaz. "The fact that he is very successful makes me think that I can be successful too. When I am working on a difficult assignment and I want to give up, I think of what Dr. Q would do. I am sure Dr. Q would not give up, so I don't give up—I finish the assignment."

COM's 89th annual commencement exercises will take place on Friday, May 20, 2016, at 6 p.m. at the Diamond Physical Education Center, 700 College Avenue, Kentfield.

About the College—90 Years of Transforming Lives Through Education and Training

College of Marin is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, 10 Commercial Blvd., Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949, (415) 506-0234, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education. Additional information about accreditation, including the filing of complaints against member institutions, can be found at: www.accjc.org

College of Marin is one of 113 public community colleges in California and approximately 13,000 credit, noncredit, and community education students enroll annually.

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College of Marin students seeking instruction-related disability accommodations should contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Office, (415) 485-9406. Individuals seeking special assistance to accommodate a disability may call the Student Activities & Advocacy Office, (415) 485-9376.

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