Criteria Responses

- In what ways has the educator demonstrated excellence in teaching?

Dr. Phillips demonstrates excellence in teaching that directly and positively impacts her students and our industry partners. Over 70 percent of those attending Highline College are first-generation college students. Dr. Phillips maintains high expectations for her students, believes in their capacity to do well, and is a role model of currency, integrity and professionalism in a field that is developing at record-breaking speed.

She maintains a vibrant Advisory Committee composed of CIS professionals and employers who provide curriculum review, equipment assessment, and direct support to students through resume and interview preparation, internship opportunities, and in some cases, employment. Adhering to best practices in teaching, Dr. Phillips integrates classroom learning with relevant applications. She does this by using laboratory experience in conjunction with theoretical learning and by assuring all students have work-based learning in their associate and bachelor’s degree programs. Real-world experiences provide authentic learning and allows our industry partners to witness and influence the skills and competencies our students acquire. Dr. Phillips guides students in problem-solving and critical thinking using scenarios, builds teamwork and a community of learners, and requires self-reflection practice, all of which gives her students the foundation to achieve.

Dr. Phillips’ leadership for ten years as the Regional Director for the Pacific Rim Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (PRCCDC) allows her students to compete in cyber defense scenarios with students from a three-state region. Her development of the International Collegiate Cyber Defense Invitational (ICCDI), now entering its third year, has elevated students’ experiences to a global level of competition. Dr. Phillips calls on her vast and diverse experience to enhance learning, provide a global perspective, and promote critical thinking opportunities for her students.

A nationally-recognized expert in the field of computer forensics, Dr. Phillips is co-author of Guide to Computer Forensics and Investigations, one of the standard texts in the field globally. Her latest textbook, E-discovery: An Introduction to Digital Evidence, was published in August 2013. She was the lead author on this groundbreaking topic.

- What has this educator initiated and helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?

Dr. Phillips has been the leader in our state for two-year program cybersecurity approval through the National Security Agency (NSA). This distinction brings tremendous responsibility to uphold standards, and gives students advantages in their educational experience and increases their demand by employers. Dr. Phillips successfully submitted the first application to the National Security Agency for Center of Academic Excellence 2-year programs (CAE-2Y) designation for Highline in 2013. She mapped classes to 4011 and 4013e CSS standards. She resubmitted when the program changed to Knowledge Units (KUs). Highline was again awarded the designation, which is now known as CAE-CD and is jointly sponsored by the National Security Agency and...
Department of Homeland Security. She completed the application in time to obtain this level for six years instead of five, 2014–2020. Dr. Phillips was chosen to be a mentor under the National Science Foundation grant “Catalyzing Computing and Cybersecurity in Community Colleges (C5)” to assist other community colleges in becoming a CAE-CD. She has successfully mentored two colleges, Columbia Basin College and Portland Community College, to obtain their CAE designation. She has served as a peer reviewer for other colleges prior to their CAE submission and is currently mentoring another college for the May 1 submission with the National Security Agency. This work builds the structure for a program that is of the highest quality and performance as determined by the National Security Agency.

- How has this educator served on technical or special committees that have positively affected the community, state, or nation?

Dr. Phillips has been a consistent supporter of Highline’s Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) initiative to recruit and retain female students in traditionally male-dominated professions. She has been the keynote speaker at WiSE events and has mentored many women entering STEM programs. When Dr. Phillips shares her experiences — beginning with her work for NASA, as Fulbright Scholar in Namibia, and on to her doctoral program as one of the first women of color to attain a doctorate in this field — our female students are moved and motivated.

In 2014 Dr. Phillips led the Highline committee that successfully created the first state-approved BAS degree at Highline College, in Cybersecurity and Forensics. The applied bachelor’s program has an annual enrollment of over 40 students. This spring there will be 29 graduates. She has since helped other colleges, such as Columbia Basin, develop bachelor’s degrees in this area. Dr. Phillips maintains a strong partnership with Whatcom College and its work in cybersecurity and NSA Center of Academic Excellence and National Science Foundation endeavors.

From 2015 through 2018, Dr. Phillips chaired Highline College’s Tenure Review Committee (TRC). In this role, she was responsible to provide guidance to Tenure Working Committees, and to the TRC committee for recommending tenure track faculty in the continuation of probation and for final recommendation for tenure. More than 20 faculty moved through this process during Dr. Phillips’ time as Chair, significantly increasing the number of tenured faculty of color.

Dr. Phillips serves on the Advisory Board for the Center of Excellence for Homeland Security and Emergency Management, hosted by Pierce College. She has been active in workshops, conferences, and in consultation with many statewide events sponsored by the Center such as “Securing the Supply Chain.” These contributions impact faculty and industry professionals from across our state.

As the Regional Director for the Pacific Rim Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (PRCCDC), a position she’s held since 2014, she has established a premier regional collegiate competition that serves as a qualifier for the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition. This brings an
opportunity to the students at our college, across our state, and in a three state-region to prepare for national competition.

For 10 years (2005–2015), Dr. Phillips participated in the Colloquium for Information Systems Security Education (CISSE), a forum in which members of the academic field of cybersecurity gather to present and discuss new ideas. CISSE also provides an avenue for a variety of government, industry, and academic institutions to discuss improved content and curricula for cybersecurity teaching. During this time, she was co-author on two papers selected by double-blind review and presented at the annual Colloquium, representing the best scholarship in the field of cybersecurity education: “Increasing Awareness of the Multijurisdictional Nature of Cloud Computing” (15th Colloquium, 2011) and “Expanding the Educational Boundaries of Cyber Defense Exercises” (14th Colloquium, 2010).

- How has this educator provided leadership in helping to solve challenges facing two-year postsecondary education?

Workforce demand for prepared cybersecurity expertise exists in every area — from retail giants Starbucks, Amazon, and Nordstrom, whose headquarters are just north of Highline in Seattle, to local and regional medical centers, school districts, and libraries. Every sector needs protection and security. There were few opportunities for community college students to gain the education necessary to enter this developing profession. Dr. Phillips had both the skill set and the vision to design an associate degree curriculum that prepares students with employment-ready competence. She recognized the need to continue the educational pathway for advanced learning and led the development of the BAS in Cybersecurity and Forensics. Our respected graduates are leaders ready to enter their profession. Dr. Phillips was early to address the challenges our students face in access to higher education. She has supported flexible scheduling of classes with day, weekend, evening, online, and hybrid offerings in her content areas. Dr. Phillips dedicates countless hours of individual academic advising so her students can attain their goals.

During her six years serving as Chair for the Pure and Applied Science Division, Dr. Phillips highlighted the need for culturally responsive teaching. Highline College’s student body is more than 70 percent students of color and represents more than 130 languages, so becoming culturally responsive is a serious responsibility. Teachers in the K-12 system in our state are 89 percent white, resulting in the unfortunate fact that many of our students have never had an instructor who looks like them or understands their cultural perspectives. As a member of Highline’s Faculty Learning Community “Becoming a Culturally Responsive Educator,” Dr. Phillips developed curriculum for faculty, staff, and administrators to address the need for curriculum materials and working scenarios that represent all aspects of human diversity. The “Becoming a Culturally Responsive Educator” course is offered at our college and has been shared with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges for availability to other colleges. As a woman of color, Dr. Phillips is well aware of the academic achievement and opportunity gap for students of color. She works every day to be an excellent representative for our students of color, demonstrating to students that they belong and can be successful.

- How has this educator been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary associations?
Dr. Phillips successfully applied with the National Security Agency to attain the Center of Academic Excellence status for a two-year institution for Highline College. She mentors and supports other colleges in our state and region to also achieve that distinction. Her active leadership in this acclaimed post-secondary association adds value to the education of countless students. In addition, her dedication to two-year colleges having opportunities to participate competitively in the Pacific Rim Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition illustrates her tenacity in assuring that two-year post-secondary students are prepared for and engaged in events previously reserved for university attending students. Dr. Phillips’ credibility as an exemplary faculty member, educational leader, and student advocate are documented in these endeavors. They require immense scrutiny and painstaking research. Dr. Phillips is always motivated by what she can do to best prepare her students — and all students — in this field despite the challenges involved.

- What awards or honors has this educator received in recognition of leadership in the college or community?

Dr. Phillips has received the following awards and honors:

**Fulbright Ambassador:** Earned distinction from the Fulbright Commission to speak and engage in outreach and recruit potential Fulbright scholars from community colleges.

**Y.E.L.L. to Excel (2016):** Earned the Y.E.L.L. to Excel Award for her mentoring discussions / workshops for young women of color during the Young Educated Ladies Leading (Y.E.L.L.) summit. The annual Y.E.L.L. summit serves over 400 high school and community college young women of color.

**100 Inspiring Women in STEM (2015):** Named as one of the 100 Inspiring Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in the USA at the college and university level by Insight Into Diversity. She was one of only seven recipients from two-year colleges. (http://www.insightintodiversity.com)

**Fulbright Scholar Awards (2004 and 2005):** Taught at the Polytechnic of Namibia from March 2005 to December 2005 and from July 2006 to December 2006.

**Black Women of Achievement Award (1985):** Was one of 20 women in Southern California to earn the Black Women of Achievement Award in 1985 by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.