



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Record 384 to graduate from GCC May 16**

Guam Community College will confer a record 402 degrees, certificates, and/or diplomas upon 384 graduates at the University of Guam Field House at 6 pm on Friday, May 16, 2014.\*

“We are especially proud of this year’s record number of graduates, due to the high number of associate degrees and certificates being awarded. This signifies that more of our students are completing their degrees and either getting out into the workforce or continuing on with their postsecondary education,” said Dr. Mary Okada, GCC president. “Many of our graduates, from Visual Communications to Culinary Arts to Medical Assisting to our technology grads – already have jobs, due to the excellent practicum and work experience programs we have with island businesses. We value these community and business partners that mentor our students. And of course we are so very proud of the caliber of our graduates – they represent the best our island has to offer,” Okada added.

GCC’s Most Distinguished Graduate for 2014 with an Associate of Science degree in Early Childhood Education is Victoria B. Lizama, 30, of Barrigada. Ms. Lizama has four children with her husband, John Felix Lizama. She went back to school “for the love of learning,” she said.

“The instructors at GCC are very inspiring. Whatever they taught us, they also modeled,” Lizama added. She plans to continue her education at the University of Guam and become an elementary education or special education teacher.

Graduating as Distinguished Graduate in GCC’s class of 2014 with an Associate of Science degree in Medical Assisting is Stephanie Wiley, 25, from Yigo. “It’s a profession where I feel I can make a difference and help others,” she said of her degree. Ms. Wiley plans to get a job in the medical profession and eventually pursue a nursing degree at UOG.

During the Commencement ceremony, GCC will award Joseph Champaco Quitano, Senior Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Retired) with the Most Distinguished Alumni Award for 2014. Mr. Quitano is a 1980 graduate of GCC’s Vo-Tech High School, where he concentrated on computer science. A 28-year Air Force veteran, Quitano currently serves as the National Security Specialist assigned to the Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney’s Office serving the Districts of

Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, and as the Assistant Antiterrorism Advisory Council Coordinator and the District Office Security Manager.

The Commencement Speaker for the graduation ceremony is Edgar Yanger, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret.). Col Yanger is a 1975 graduate of the Guam Vocational Technical High School, where he trained as a Draftsman and participated in the Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program. After attending the University of Guam for two years, Col. Yanger graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 1981 with a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture, and then in 1991 with a Masters of Architecture. He attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 1995, and served the US Army for 30 years in various levels of Command and Staff responsibilities ranging from Company level to the Department of the Army Headquarters in Washington DC.

The number of graduates in each degree category is as follows\*:

Apprenticeship Completers	38
Associate degrees	171
Certificate	83
Adult High School Diploma	14
GED® Diploma	96
Total by degree*	402

\*Please note that some graduates have earned more than one degree or certificate, which is why the total number of degrees awarded exceeds the total number of actual graduates.

GCC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Individuals requiring special accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services please contact 735-5597.

For more information, contact Jayne Flores, GCC Asst. Director of Communications & Promotions, at 735-5638 (office), 483-6409 (cell), or via email at [jayne.flores@guamcc.edu](mailto:jayne.flores@guamcc.edu).