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Hernandez Williams 206-683-4101
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Liliana Luna is being recognized as a Woman of Achievement by the Oregon Commission for Women for her outstanding leadership in promoting equity and diversity opportunities at Portland Community College.

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Multicultural center advocate honored

The coordinator of Portland Community College's Multicultural Center on the Rock Creek campus, a young immigrant woman who has battled to stay in the United States, is being recognized for her outstanding leadership in promoting equity and diversity opportunities for students at the school.

Liliana Luna will receive a Woman of Achievement award from the Oregon Commission for Women during a ceremony on March 1 that will be part of the Women's History Month proclamation signing by Gov. Kate Brown.

Luna, 26, serves as an educator, advocate and role model.

A DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipient, Luna possesses an associate degree from PCC, a bachelor's in criminal justice from Portland State University, and is working toward a master's in counseling education, also at PSU.

She is responsible for providing an inclusive environment at the Multicultural Center and does this by supporting, retaining and empowering diverse students to help them achieve academic excellence and become leaders within the college and their communities.

"Liliana has truly made a difference at the Rock Creek Campus," said Rock Creek President Sandra Fowler-Hill. "She has made a marked and sustained impact on equity and inclusion. Because of her, this is a better place. She exemplifies leadership and accomplishment in Oregon, in education and civic engagement. She has had a demonstrable impact on the community she serves."

Additionally, Luna leads the Diversity Council at the campus, developed a partnership with the Mexican consulate to provide scholarships to undocumented and DACA students from Mexico, and founded the annual DREAMers Gala to raise money and awareness for undocumented students.

Her latest accomplishment is helping to open the first Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Center at PCC. The center is the first of its kind in Oregon at a community college or university, providing resources and support for undocumented and DACA students and their families. According to Luna, there are roughly 400 DACA students at PCC, with an estimated 200 based at Rock Creek.

"This is a huge accomplishment for me, too," she added. "When I was a student I couldn't say I was undocumented because it was taboo. Now, I can hold my head up high."