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Triton College

For immediate release: **May 10, 2023**

The Triton College Alumni Association Hosted “Wall of Fame” Ceremony
Exceptional Alumni Inducted into “Wall of Fame”



Pictured, left to right ...

Seated: Joseph Prignano; Rocco Spizzirri; Dominic Panico; and Katrina Thompson.

Standing: Chris, Valerie and Rosemary Cleary (children and wife of Thomas Cleary, posthumous inductee); Michaleen Lewis; Michelle Spizzirri; Triton College President Mary-Rita Moore; Bill Kim; and Adrian Schaffer.

RIVER GROVE, Ill. – The Triton College Alumni Association hosted the 2023 Wall of Fame Ceremony on Friday, April 21.

The evening included the induction of nine outstanding alumni into Triton College’s Wall of Fame (B Building Foyer).

“This honor is for those who have gone ‘above and beyond’ in their community and their work,” said Tina Lilly, director of Business Services. “Their names and pictures will be admired for generations.”

The 2023 alumni honorees included Bill Kim, Michaleen “Micki” Lewis, Dominic G. Panico, Joseph Prignano, Adrian Schaffer, Michelle (Sirants) Spizzirri, Rocco Spizzirri and Katrina R. Thompson. Thomas Cleary was honored posthumously.

“It feels good to recognize those who have been exceptional in their careers and life after Triton College,” noted Lilly.

The evening began with a cocktail hour of light appetizers, drinks and desserts provided by Triton’s culinary students.

The cocktail hour was followed by a ceremony where each honoree was able to share personal remarks with college Mary-Rita Moore, Triton College president, the Alumni Association Council and over 90 other guests in attendance.

Honored alumna Bill Kim, an award-winning Chicago chef, restaurateur, and cookbook author, said being inducted into the Wall of Fame was a “full circle” moment for him.

Kim immigrated to the United States from Seoul, South Korea, at the age of 7. He realized he liked to cook when he first arrived as an immigrant, making his family bologna sandwiches and English muffin pizzas.

“I enjoyed cooking for myself and for others,” he said. “Triton gave me the foundation to build a career out of my passion.”

Kim decided to attend Triton after attending a college fair his junior year of high school, realizing Triton had a Hospitality Program. He felt attending a community college was an ideal situation for him since he could stay at home while receiving his degree.

“This is very magical for me,” he explained. “I used to take the Route 331 Bus to Triton every day and now I’m receiving this great honor. Thanks to Triton, I am now a chef.”

Katrina R. Thompson, village president of Broadview, had similar sentiments.

“Triton College is the foundation that started my livelihood,” she said. “To get this type of recognition is truly an honor.”

For more information, contact alumni@triton.edu.

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ABOUT TRITON COLLEGE

Triton College is a two-year college dedicated to helping members of the 25 Western Cook County communities in our district and beyond to achieve educational, professional and personal success. Located in River Grove, Ill., Triton offers more than 120 degree and certificate programs on its 110-acre campus, featuring a comfortable, friendly and diverse atmosphere. Triton also holds classes at satellite locations and offers online learning opportunities. Triton's dedicated faculty and staff work to provide high quality, convenient and affordable educational opportunities to more than 14,000 students each year. Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Learn more at <http://www.triton.edu/>.