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MSCC Accountant Earns National Excellence Honor

Ellie Selden, an accountant at Mid-South Community College, has been selected as a National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Excellence Award winner.

“I was surprised and honored,” said Selden, a native of South Korea. “I didn’t expect to be chosen for the award since there are so many good workers here. This is the first time I have won an award for my work, so I feel very excited.”

Her coworkers say Selden is well deserving of the honor.



“Ellie has worked in the Finance Office for eight years, and she is a great resource for the College,” said Susan Marshall, MSCC Vice President for Finance and Administration. “She deals with as many as 50 grant programs and compiles monthly, quarterly, and yearly financial reports for each one.

“Her work is detailed and precise, and that is no small task considering the complexity and diversity of her responsibilities. Ellie always demonstrates a high level of professionalism and dedication.”

Karyn Weaver, Associate Vice President for Finance, said Selden fits the excellence award criteria perfectly.

“Ellie is one of the most hard-working, dedicated employees that I have ever had the pleasure of working with,” said Weaver who supervises Selden. “Her attitude and devotion to MSCC are what make her stand out and truly be an asset to the college.”

In addition to her work with grant program finances, the honoree also performs Foundation accounting and handles fixed assets.

While at MSCC, Selden completed the College Business Management Institute through the Southern Association of College and University Business Officers. The intensive course of study includes an overview of current issues and procedures applicable to institutions of higher education large and small, public and private. Selden participated in 28 hours of instruction each summer for three years to earn a certificate of completion.

MSCC's honoree earned a bachelor's degree in Public Administration at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea, a private research university encompassing an educational system from kindergarten to graduate school. Selden said her degree helped her prepare for a career in public service.

While in college, she participated in a six-month International Trade Internship with Hyosung America, Inc., in New York City. She also spent time in New Zealand as an exchange student.

"That's how I learned English," she said.

After the internship, Ellie returned home and met Pete Selden, her husband-to-be, in 2002. Pete was working as an English teacher for the 21st Century Foreign Language Institute in Suwon, South Korea, at the time. In 2003, Ellie relocated to the U.S. in 2003 and became Mrs. Selden.

"When I went to New York City for the internship, I thought it might be very interesting working abroad," she said. "I was thinking when I got a job in Korea I might work for a company with branches in other countries that might give me a chance to work abroad. But I didn't expect I would marry an American and actually live here."

When the Seldens located in the Mid-South, Ellie wasn't sure what her job prospects would be.

"When I came to U.S.A. for my internship, there were so many Korean and international companies, but here in the South, there aren't as many," she pointed out. "So I was kind of worried about whether I could find a respectable job, but MSCC gave me the opportunity.

“I really appreciate their faith in me, and I want to make sure to express that through my work performance. After I started here and saw how friendly and nice the people were, I asked Pete to apply for a job here. He came to the College the year after I did.”

Pete serves as Associate Vice President for Workforce Programs at MSCC.

Ellie said accounting is a good fit for her interests and skills.

“During my internship in New York City, I worked in the accounting department and liked it. I’ve always liked math and numbers, so accounting works well for me.”

Before coming to MSCC, Ellie served as an office manager for a spa in Collierville, Tenn., an assistant at a restaurant, and a math/English tutor in Suwon.

The Seldens are the proud parents of a daughter, Alexis, who is in first grade, and a son, Easton, who is in pre-K.

A tradition since 1989, the NISOD Excellence Awards program supports individual colleges in recognizing and celebrating their finest at home and on an international stage. At MSCC, recognition criteria includes a positive attitude, commitment to professional development, college service and commitment to institutional advancement, community service, and innovation, integrity, professionalism, and fairness.

Previous staff award winners at the College include Letory Collins, John Easley, LaToya Roberson, Deborah Webb, Rita Hulen, Linda Graham, Melissa Cox, Sherry Fountain, Verna Davis, Leslie Anderson, Jeremy Reece, Jerry Webb, Nancy Hogan, Don Threm, Tom Cook, Barbara Stewart, Debra West, and Sandra Williams.