

Congrats Class of 2024



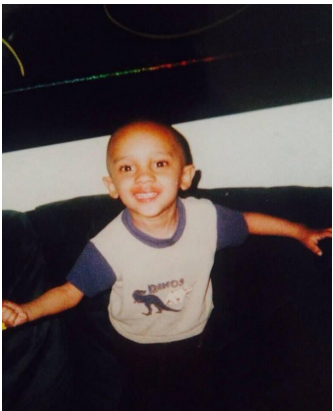
Dekyla Waler

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.”
-Malcolm X



Rose Lloyd-Williams

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13
God’s strength has carried me through my journey at East-West University. No matter my current circumstances or the challenges I’ve encountered, I take comfort in knowing that God is the source of my strength and accomplishments!



Keonte Space

“Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.”



Jocelyn Bernal

“Proper Preperation Prevents Poor Performance”



Guadalupe Ramirez

“Para mis padres que llegaron sin nada y me lo dieron todo. Para mi esposo que me dio la motivación que necesitaba para terminar mis estudios y para mi hijo que llegó en el mejor momento”



Juribeth Mondragon

“Cheers to the great years I’ve had & to the accomplishments that are coming our way”



Briuna Amos

“I wish people were like money so I, can hold them to the light & see who’s real & who’s fake?”



Naila Khan

“As I leave East -West,I carry with me not just a degree but a legacy of growth and preserverance”



Yash Dholakiya

“Remember, life is a marathon, not a sprint. So, lace up those shoes, hydrate with laughter, and stretch those smile muscles. Its gonna be a hilarious ride!”



Tyan Walker

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”- Philippians 4:13”

Lets Go Seniors !

East West Events! Cinco De Mayo

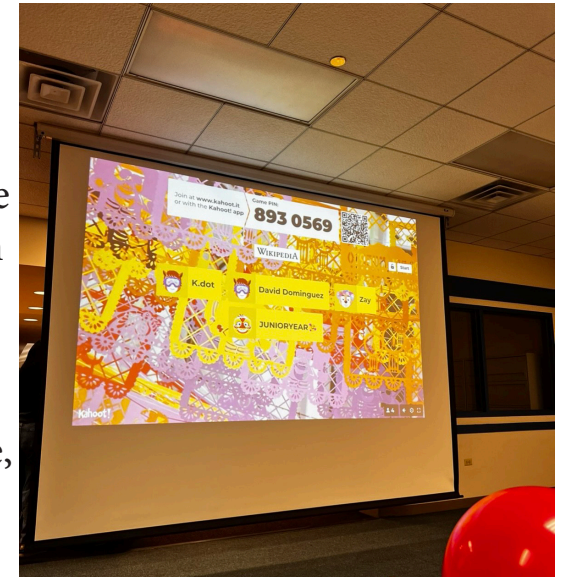


The **Cinco De Mayo** event was held on Tuesday May 7th in the 1st Floor lounge room. Jose Godinez, Carlos Trejo, Lizzie Valera, and Milagro Ramirez-Reyes organized the event with the help of Norma Aguilar, and donations we received from Sams Club, Kankakee's State Attorney's Office, Dr. Polski, and some anonymous donors. Our event was to showcase the real meaning of Cinco De Mayo and to show East West a glimpse of Mexican culture.

Cinco De Mayo is NOT Mexican independence day. Mexican Independence day is September 16 but celebration of it actually starts September 15. Cinco de Mayo is a holiday that celebrates the Mexican army's May 5th, 1862 victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican

war. Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in the U.S, but in Mexico, Puebla is the only state that celebrates.

We served aguachiles, Mexican Rice, Beans, Flautas/Tacos dorados, Guacamole, Corn, Diced Fruits, Chips, Agua de Horchata, Agua de Jamaica, Agua de Tamarindo, and Conchas. We had a playlist with different genres of Mexican music. We played a popular Mexican show called "Chavo Del Ocho". We had games and Kahoot, and we finished off our event with a Pinata.



We definitely felt the pressure when organizing the event, as organizers we wanted to make sure this event was one that students felt interested in coming to. We had gathered ideas on what we wanted to do at this event, for example what food we wanted to serve, what we planned on doing to entertain the students as well as not only making this event only a fun event but also an educational one. We felt pressure on making this event successful as well as finding ways to fund it. Before this event and in the process of planning my group did a great job on communicating with each other which led to a great

event. After the event we were all very joyful that it went a lot better than we expected, we also had a sense of relief that the stress of the planning and execution of the event was over. -**Milagros Ramirez-Reyes**

East West Events!

Cinco De Mayo Celebration By Isaiah Rufus

What do you get when you put a festival atmosphere, inspiring Students, and a clean refurbished area available to meet in? You get East-West University's Cinco De Mayo Student Celebration! My name is Isaiah Rufus and I attended the Cinco De Mayo celebration hosted by Dr. Polski's Group Dynamics Class. I've been here at East-West University for less than a whole school year and every time something like this happens the atmosphere is just amazing, and I believe it's because of the student engagement. As you walk in you'd see students laughing and talking, connecting in different ways in which they normally would not be able to. The student's laughter caught my eye before I even walked in. The celebration was held in our very own student lounge room located in the east building on the first floor. Unfortunately because of its location being so distant from most classes, a lot of students mostly settle in the west building's third floor study room instead. So seeing maybe 40 to 50 students gather together in the lounge was amazing. As you walked in you saw purple, orange, blue, red, and so many more colors that intrigued your mind and encouraged you to stay. The smiling and familiar faces kept you occupied as you waited in line for the amazing food.

Speaking of food... there were SO many options and combinations of different tastes you could try out and put together. The guacamole and chips, beans, rice, candies, cakes and sauces screamed love and joy, also there was a fundraiser that you DIDN'T mind supporting because the Churro Cheesecake made up your mind for you. The pin the tail on the donkey, pool, kahoot, and piñata challenge all gave off back in the day birthday party vibes. It felt like somewhere you can call home... somewhere you go on that sunny day out of school that your family hosts for the holidays. I believe the school needs these kinds of events more often and once again I believe this works so well because of the student engagement. It's nothing more that a student loves than seeing all their friends and classmates

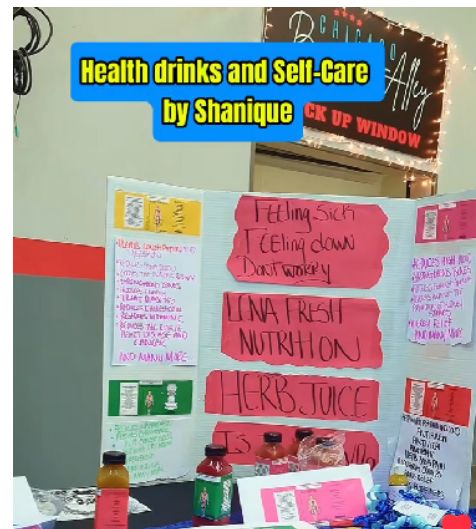
who normally walk pass them or barely talks because of class, in the same vicinity for a whole hour and a half playing games, eating food, and learning about something interesting. I would love to attend these kind of events more often, and possibly host them.

East West Event! Pop Up Shop

The students of East West University put on a student pop up shop, where students who had a small business showcased their work and network with other students. We had many tables with various businesses like knitting, lashes, jewelry, body oils and more! This year was a great turn out, students sold a few of their products, we also got to learn about our colleagues' hobbies. This event took place May 9th, the day before national small business day. we hope to keep promoting students' entrepreneurships and have an even bigger turn out next year' - **Alyssa Hernandez**



East West Events! Pop Up Shop



On Thursday, May 9 2024, students from the East West University held a pop-up to showcase their small business. This happened at the 829 South Wabash building entrance, from 2pm - 4pm. My class and I went downstairs at 2 pm to support our fellow classmates. There were 6 stands all around showcasing beautiful and unique items. Some students were selling food and drinks to support what they held dear to their hearts. Others were selling items like jewelry, hats and beauty supplies. The first small business I decided to interview was called "Las Divinas", the stand was by a woman called Jessie Virafuentes. She was selling all kinds of jewelry, from necklaces to nose rings. Jessie said she always wanted to have a business from a young age and started her business at 17 with no kind of help. She struggles along the way but made it through just like any good story business. Jessie is a re-vender and gets her supplies in big bundles and she sells it to other small businesses. She spends her time selling her items in flea markets and around her local neighborhood areas. "I sell 7 hours out in the sun but it's worth the money." Jessie says. - **Abigail Gonzalez**



East West Events! Intercultural Day!

The Intercultural Experience By Malissa Lewis

On May 23, 2024, was a day of acceptance, a day where many cultures embraced one another through food, drinks, music, and dance. Here at East-West University on something that will now and forever become a tradition. The students were able to see more than the people from their culture but other cultures as well. Students danced the night away with traditional dancing from different cultures and the students embraced the harmony. Students learned the history of the different cultures, the way that they dressed, different cultures traditions, learned a little bit about their day to day living. This year's intercultural experience was by far the best. I was actually surprised to see how the students embraced each other in harmony and laughter. The cultures really grasp the concept of intercultural communications. Everyone was mingling with each other as if they had known each other for years. The cultures taught each other their traditional dances, it was an exciting experience. It seems that intercultural day will only get better and better for years to come. That we can say is East-West University's tradition.

East West Events! Intercultural Day!

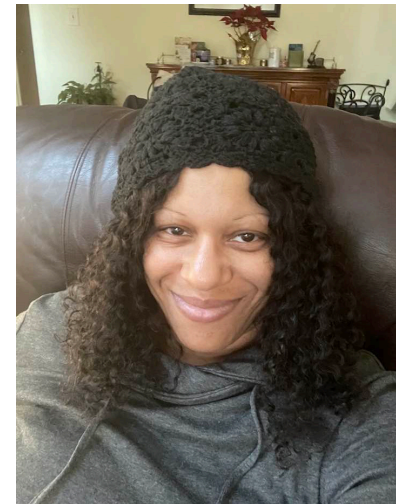


Alumni Bios: English and Communications



Vesna Lazar is currently an artist and children's book creator. She graduated from East West University with a Bachelors in English and Communication. Ms.Lazar also attended American Academy of Art and graduated with an associates degree in Fine and Commercial art, and Depaul University and graduated with a Masters of Arts; furthering her education she received training in ITTT international TEFL and TESOL leading her to become an English Teacher in Dalian and Suzhou, China up until 2019. In 2021 Lazar changed her career path and became a Children's book creator, showing off her artistic skills. Even though she was a teacher, she has much time to practice her art, since she has been volunteering at Shriners Hospitals for Children Chicago since 2005.

Melody Christine Johnson is a MS teacher, Worship Minister, and Craftswoman. Her education started at East West University, where she earned her Bachelors in English and Communication in 2004-2008. She focused on Literature and incorporated Communication in her studies. While at East West, Ms.Johnson was an English and Communication Department Assistant. Ms.Johnson continued on to earn her Masters in Literature, Ethics, and Systematic Doctrine at Wesley Theological Seminary. While at Wesley, she also was the president of the Association of Black Seminars. In 2018 she earned her TEFL Certification, and became an instructor teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. In 2014-2015, she worked for Friendship Public Charter School as a Special Education Teacher for 6th/8th grade. In July of 2015 she worked for Democracy Prep Public Schools as a ACT teacher (special education), in 2018 she became a Math/Science teacher (special education) for 5th grade. Friendship Public Charter School, Ms. Johnson became a Special Education Resource Teacher for 8th grade in 2018, then an Intensive Language & Sensory Special Education Teacher in 2020, and a virtual teacher for both special education and High School in 2023. With her education, she volunteered to teach English at Advanced learning levels at Washington English Center. She continues to tutor both English and



Rich Hayes "Experienced and Innovative Higher Ed executive spanning 15 years with a demonstrated history of strategic initiatives & budgeting, business development, enrollment management, financial aid administration, Business Administration Curriculum Design, Data Analysis & Articulation, Microsoft Excel, Customer Service and Higher Education Administration." Mr.Hayes currently works at UIC as the Executive Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships. Mr. Hayes attended East-West in 2002-2006 and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in English and Communication. He then earned a Masters in Business Administration at the University of Phoenix from 2007 to 2008. In 2008, Mr.Hayes attended Keller Graduate School of Management of DeVry University, in 2011 he earned a Masters in Public Administration. Starting his career at DeVry University as a Solution Center liaison in 2008, and made his way up to a Director in Student Finances in 2011. In 2013 he became a transfer specialist at Governors State University. Mr.Hayes had different jobs from 2014 until 2020 all having to do with education. In 2021 Hayes became a Chairman for Diversity and Professional Conduct. He worked for The City Colleges of Chicago in 2017 as a District

Director in Financial Aid. Progressing his career to an Adjunct Professor of business and an Associate Vice Chancellor in Financial Aid and Scholarship up until 2023. As of August 2023 he is at his current job as an Executive Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

Alumni Bios: English and Communications



Carl Ann Pinkston is currently an associate attorney for the City of Montgomery. She attended East West University in 2006-2009 and earned her Bachelor's Degree in English and Communication, focusing on Pre-Law. In 2012-2016 she continued her education at Cooley Law School where she earned her Juris Doctor and studied Litigation. As a child, she was orphaned and passed between various relatives; when Ms. Pinkston was a student, she was also a single mother raising two children; she created "family homework time" when she and her children did homework together. Ms. Pinkston supported herself and her children by working in law firms. In 1995-1996 she was a legal secretary for Price Barrick and Associates, where she directly assisted three attorneys with respect to diction, drafting correspondence and court documents. In 1996-2006 she was a Legal Secretary and Case assistant for Seyfarth Shaw LP, where she assisted multiple partners and associates in terms of diction, document revision, document drafts and time entry. prepared charts and reports for clients,

class action case management and media retrieval, and performed document research and retrieval. In August of 2006-2015 she was Legal Administrative Assistant for Eckhart Kolak LLC. In 2014 she was a legal intern/ Public Sector Law Clinic at Western Michigan University, where she created a homebound policy template for MI Secretary of State, she performed research about Americans Disability Act, Identity Theft, and Voter ID laws. In September of 2015 she was a Law Clerk for Cook County State's Attorney where she worked closely with multiple Assistant State's Attorneys in criminal Litigation. She was involved with teaching, and assisting with trial preparation and participated in Bench trials and motion hearings. In 2017 she became a Real Estate Paralegal for Klien, Thorpe Jenkins, and In 2023 she became an Associate Attorney for the City of Montgomery.

Sharon Sy Lewis is the founder/executive director at Meadows East Side, which is a Non Profit Community Resource Organization. In 2004 she attended Roosevelt University and earned her associate degree in English Language and Literature/Letters. In 2005 she attended East West University and earned a Bachelor's degree in English and Communication. While at East West, she was the editor of the Phantom Press, President of the Black Student Union, 2006 Alumna Commencement Speaker, National Honor Society, National Scholars Honor Society, Chicago Defender Intern, and Clear Channel Radio Intern. Ms. Lewis earned her ISBE Substitute Teaching Certificate In 2007 for k-12, Special education from the Illinois State. In 2018 she has a fellowship with Organizing for Action (OFA), where she bided for public office, launched NPO, and trained in grassroots organizing with the Capstone project. Also in 2018 she attended DePaul University for a certificate in Values-Centered Leadership. In 2006-2007 she worked for CMW & Associates as a Data Analyst where she would review immigration Applications using Employment Training Act-Federal Regulations. In 2007-2013 she worked as a Substitute teacher, where she performed instructional and classroom management processes for teachers who were on extended absences. In 2007 -2015 she worked as an Educator K-12, Seca for Chicago public Schools where she specialized in Diverse Learners K-12, she worked with students with various disabilities. In 2008-2009 she worked as an Education Coordinator at Community Assistance Programs where she facilitated adult computer literacy, learned resume Writing and interviewing skills, and did training workshops. In 2019 she founded Meadows Eastside Community Resource Organization (non profit) where she develops workflow planning, organizational vision, mission and foundational structure to facilitate early growth. In 2023 she became Vice President of Jackson Park Conservancy. Ms. Lewis is also an Activist for Civil Rights and Social Action.



Shaping the Future of the Diamond Industry

By: Rakesh Yadav

In an era defined by environmental consciousness and technological advancement, the diamond industry is undergoing a profound transformation. At the forefront of this evolution is the emergence of lab-grown diamonds – a sustainable alternative that challenges traditional norms while offering a glimpse into the future of ethical craftsmanship.

Shifting Paradigms: Keeping up with sustainability

Lab-grown diamonds have garnered attention not only for their ethical provenance but also for their indistinguishable quality from natural diamonds. The shift towards sustainable practices and innovative technologies in the diamond industry is not just a response to consumer demand; it is a reflection of broader societal shifts towards environmental stewardship and social responsibility. Rakesh Yadav's dedication to sustainability and AI integration exemplifies the values instilled by his alma mater, East-West University.

Achieving true sustainability in the diamond industry requires a collaborative effort that transcends individual expertise and borders. Through partnerships with research institutions, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations, industry leaders are driving innovation. As the diamond industry continues to evolve, the integration of lab-grown diamonds represents a significant step towards sustainability and ethical sourcing. With manufacturers like Rakesh Yadav championing these initiatives, the future of diamonds is brighter than ever, promising a world where beauty meets responsibility in every facet of the trade.



1. How do you envision the integration of lab-grown diamonds shaping the future of the diamond industry, and what inspired you to champion this cause?

Mr. Yadav: “Lab-grown diamonds represent a sustainable and ethical alternative to traditional mining practices. By harnessing cutting-edge technology, we can create diamonds with identical properties to natural ones, without the environmental and social impacts associated with mining.”

2. Your commitment to sustainability and ethical practices is evident in your advocacy for lab-grown diamonds. How do you ensure that these values are reflected in every facet of your work? **

Mr. Yadav: “Sustainability and ethics are core principles that guide every decision I make. From sourcing materials responsibly to minimizing waste, I strive to ensure that every aspect of my practice aligns with these values.”

3. What motivates your advocacy for AI integration in the industry, and how do you perceive its impact on sustainability? **

Mr. Yadav: “AI offers a pathway to greater efficiency and transparency, contributing to a more environmentally conscious diamond industry. By streamlining operations and reducing waste, it enhances sustainability and ensures the longevity of our craft.”

4. As a seasoned professional with a wealth of experience, what words of wisdom would you impart to aspiring jewelers and industry enthusiasts eager to follow in your footsteps?

Mr. Yadav: “My advice is to embrace change and innovation, while staying true to your values. The diamond industry is evolving, and those who adapt will thrive in this dynamic landscape.”



East West Poetry

By: Leila Navarrete

You know your own story in a honest way. Heres an example, On June 10 2004 a star was born. She was raised in a 3 story apartment with long yellow stairs.

During those years, she learned 2 languages, she learned how to love herself and how to live in her truth

Also during that time she lost the most valuable person in her life

Her name is Leila navarrete.

I am a chicago girl at heart but I have history traced back to conothlan Jalisco Mexico.

I am no regular teenage girl ... I am a first generation college student , I am journalist major, I am Afro Latina , I am bilingual, I am a big sister, I am a influencer with a platform of over 315 thousand followers and over 20 million likes, I am a leader.

Being biracial was not easy at first. I didn't feel like enough. I wasn't black enough I wasn't Mexican enough but I was always enough for myself. Trying to find yourself in people that don't look like you is hard. It took me years to finally be comfortable in my skin. There's nothing easy about finding your way through a world loaded with obstacles that others can't or don't see. But I DID so it is not impossible.

I chose my major journalism because thousands of people tune in everyday to hear what I have to say.

With my voice I can impact a nation .

My voice matters and there are millions of girls that go unheard just like me everyday.

When little else is reliable in life you could rely on yourself

I came to win

To conquer

To thrive

Dear daddy as I walked to school I was stopped by my friend

Hey girl I'm surprised your at school today, I replied why you say that

She said because your dad died

At that moment I felt a spirit leave my body

I felt lost and confused

Not the man who came into my life and treated me like a princess

Not the man that made my family feel complete

Not the man that taught me street smarts and kept me in the latest fashion

I went the whole school day heartbroken and hopeless

I walked home after school to find out that the news I heard at school was in fact true

I sat on the couch with disbelief

How could this be true

Days past and your funeral came

How I wish I could go back for one last hug

You left me with the best gift tho, my baby brother ... I love you

I promise I will teach your son every life lesson you instilled in me

You thought me blood does not make you family loyalty does

You thought me to always keep money in my pockets

And to always be respectful

I grown now, I'm 18 and I'm in college

I've gotten this far because I kept your lessons in mind

I made myself a promise and that the world is going to know your name

Michael Martes wright



East West Poetry


Midnight Revelations By Emily Nemecio

Constant scrolling on my blue screened pocket
computer
Pushing down the midnight revelation
I don't want to know
I don't want to hear
I just want to forget
If I drink the liquor
The liquor that tempts from the corner
Will it quell this ache
Or
Will it add to the burn
With it fuel the fire of past generations
Make their choice mine
At that point am I drinking for my ache or theirs
Am I drinking for myself or the instructions
Embedded in my very being
Or
Am I drinking my pain and theirs

Fun Date By Emily Nemecio

Forget the movies or dinner
What field will you take me to
For us to gaze and marvel at the beauty around
us
That we get to share with this one person
Who seems the most important in the moment
And so they are and will always be
The most important thing in this moment



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East West Poetry

She is me By Taylor

Her lips are too big
Her ass is too fat
Her hair is too colorful
And why isn't it real?
Her lashes are too long
Her name is too ghetto
She has no class
And just plain angry
She is too loud
Too bitter and too broad
To be a woman
She has no place at the table
As her food is too salty
She can barely keep a man
Because she is seen as one
She is Ill-tempered
Ill mannered
And extremely Illogical
SHE is a black woman



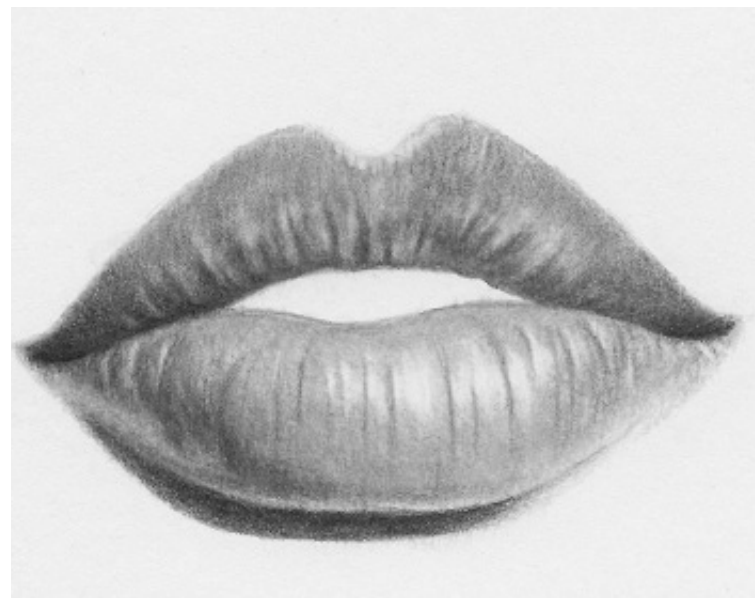
But what have my lips ever done to you?
Is it bad, is it my bad that I was born with juicy plump lips
Lips that make my kisses soft to the touch
And just imagine what else they can do.
Is it my fault that I was born with hips?
Because my dips and my curves might intimidate you.

Is it my fault that I express myself? That I was born with coarse hair
Strong enough to deal with the heat and the dyes and the chemicals,
Because just maybe the way society views me makes me want to change myself.
Because my lashes make me feel pretty
Because my name rings a bell
And Just because I'm not scared to speak my opinion

DOES NOT mean I don't have no class
I may be loud and I may be broad but I will
Never be a bitter black woman.

I didn't ask for no place at yo table
Because I don't want no handouts
no invites
no approval
And my ass is so fat because of my cornbread and
collard greens
And no I did not make enough for you because it
ain't my fault
You have mistaken salt with flavor
I am not ill-tempered but I am passionate
I am not ill-mannered but I am witty
I am not illogical but I am creative

She is me
I am she
They are her
WE are BLACK WOMEN.



Winter 2024 Dean's List

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Abogourin Mazidatou | • Lelik Vasil William | • Patel Ravikumar |
| • Andrade Lopez Isabella | • Lelyk Sofiya Mariya | • Patel Virang |
| • Asmatha Unissa | • Lelyk Ulyana | • Radisic Filip |
| • Aviles Fhernando | • Lloyd-William Rose M. | • Ramirez-Reyes Milagros |
| • Baltazar Cesar | • Maldonado Bryan | • Salgado Evelyn |
| • Beal Jacob | • Martinez-Mayer Mordecai | • Syed Meraj Ali |
| • Burinova Gulnaz | • Mata Abigal | • Thakkar Bhumi |
| • Campos Eulises | • Melgar Andrea | • Trejo Carlos |
| • Chauhan Rehnuma | • Mendez-Herrera Kevin | • Truss Maurice |
| • Compton Brandon | • Mohammed Abdul Wasey | • Turner Taniya |
| • Conejo Gisselle | • Morales Adrian | • Vahora Arsilbhai |
| • Deres Hibert | • Morales Natalie | • Vahora Mahamad Arsh |
| • Fernandez Bordon Leticia | • Moreno Raul | • Vahora Zaid |
| • Glispie Cameron | • Nassuuna Mary | • Vohra Ayan |
| • Gosnet Elvis | • Nemecio Emily | • Zendejas Yesenia |
| • Hajeera Unissa Fnu | • Ortega Tania | • Zmali Meftah Mehdi |
| • Hasanov Hiayat | • Padilla Cristopher | |
| • Hernandez Ariel | • Patel Ammar Siraj | |
| • Jani Khushi | • Patel Ami Ashvinbhai | |

Winter 2024 Honors List

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| • Arshia Noori | • Olea Salgado Denisse |
| • Camargo Abigail | • Ortiz Andreus |
| • Carrera Jederit | • Patel Naiyaben |
| • Dominguez Tamara | • Rodriguez Soledad |
| • Fatima Aiman | • Sanchez Diego |
| • Gupta Nagesh | • Siddiqui Saniya |
| • Jamison Rodger | • Vhora Asra |
| • Juan Delmoral Heidi | • Walker Dekyla |
| • Magallanes Alexandra | • Yakubu Ashraf |
| • McNair Joshua | • Yturriaga Javier |
| • Morales Aaron | |

East-West University would like to offer an extent Congratulations to our Dean's List and Honor's List Honorees for all of their commitment, dedication and passion. All your hard work in the Winter 2024 Quarter has reaped the benefits of this scholastic achievement!