

## **College of Engineering New Employee Award Nomination Form**

The College of Engineering invites nominations of administrative, professional, clerical, and service staff for this New Employee Award.

Name of Nominee: Francisco Montalvo

Position of Nominee: Assistant Director, Global Projects, Office of Professional Practice

Hire in Engineering: March, 2020

Date of Hire in University: March 2020

Basis for Nomination:

Francisco Montalvo is being nominated for the College of Engineering New Employee of the Year Award for his dedication to student service, development of new experiential learning programs, and contributions to successful grant applications and scholarly research.

Francisco started in his position during turbulent times. In March of 2020, the GEARE program, for which he oversees, had 80 students abroad. As the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the world, Purdue University rapidly made decisions to evacuate students from the study abroad and global internship locations. Francisco played a key role in locating students and assisting with their evacuation. This included a tremendous effort to evacuate 5 students studying in Ecuador. On a Saturday, the Ecuadorean government announced it would discontinue all air traffic in and out of the country by Monday evening. Francisco was the first person at Purdue to learn about this. He initiated emergency conversations with Purdue's risk management team including the Provost. He located the 5 students, who were travelling throughout Ecuador during a spring break period. He personally booked flights with his credit card, so that the students would be able to leave Ecuador before the transportation shut down.

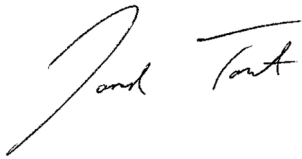
In addition to his efforts to go above and beyond to help students, Francisco has developed several new programs to provide experiential learning opportunities within the limitations presented by COVID-19. Starting in Summer 2020, the OPP launched Remote Global Engineering Design Projects in collaboration with university partners in Ecuador, Mexico, France, and Germany including partners from governmental organizations like the World Health Organization and from private industry including Daimler Labs 1886 and Siemens. The program has already touched more than 200 students from Purdue and our university partners. It has provided students with a significant global teamwork experience during a time when travel was impossible. More than 80 Purdue students pursuing a minor in Global Engineering Studies were able to complete the minor due to

these opportunities, and the programs will continue long after we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to Global Engineering Projects, Francisco has played a key role in organizing, promoting, and administering the Milestones program. Milestones is a series of technical skills modules designed to provide students hands-on experience in Electronics and App Development and Prototyping and Manufacturing. All modules that were meant for in-person instruction were transitioned to online instruction. Since it's launch in spring 2020, 276 students have enhanced their technical skills while earning Milestones certificates in Intro to Electronics, CAD, Arduino, GD&T, Smart Healthcare, and others.

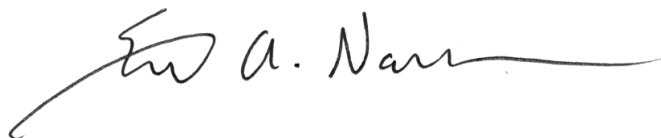
Finally, Francisco has played a key role in successful grant applications and the enhancement of program reputation via collaborative research. Francisco has collaborated on successful grant applications from the National Endowments of the Humanities (\$35,00) and 100K Strong in the Americas (\$25,000). Via the National Endowments of the Humanities grant, Francisco helped establish a new course, LC 490 Humanities Informed Engineering. These efforts have allowed us to move on to the next phase of the grant process with a strong chance of earning a \$250,000 grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities. Additionally, Francisco has been leading efforts with campus researchers to produce studies related to global competency development, teamwork, and design thinking. Three papers have been submitted for publication, with more to follow.

Francisco's extraordinary efforts have allowed the Office of Professional Practice to increase its capabilities and program offerings during a time where experiential learning programs have been limited. His 1.5 years as a full-time employee with the Office of Professional Practice has been extremely productive, and his current efforts will lead to increased opportunities for Purdue students while enhancing the reputation of Purdue Engineering across the globe.

Nominator Name, Signature, and Date: Joe Tort, 10/8/2021

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Tort". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Supervisor Name, Signature, and Date: Eric Nauman, 10/8/201

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric A. Nauman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "E".

Submit electronically as a single file to [Will Sondgerath](#)

October 4, 2021

Dear College of Engineering,

As one of the students who was evacuated from Ecuador during the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, I can strongly attest to the fact that Francisco Montalvo is an excellent candidate for the College of Engineering New Employee Award. I met Francisco three years ago when I applied for a pilot program within GEARE, the Global Health Track. The original goal of the program was to have students work with prosthetics in a lab setting in the US, and afterwards work on prosthetics projects in Ecuador. I am currently a master's student doing research in the same lab, and I am thankful to Francisco for helping find this position. A part of this program was also helping test the Milestones program, and while I did this before it went online, it certainly did a good job covering important technical skills that are not typically covered in a standard engineering education.

Prior to travelling to Ecuador, Francisco was very helpful in preparing us for things we might encounter. This included helping us understand cultural differences we might experience as well as practical advice. Once in Ecuador, Francisco was always there if we felt overwhelmed or if there were any concerns about our safety. On multiple occasions students became ill and spent time in the hospital. Being in a new country, this was a stressful situation. Francisco made it easier for everyone, as he was always available by phone to help with our communication. And with regards to stressful situations, I certainly would not recommend anyone find themselves in a position in which they have less than 24 hours to evacuate a country, but Francisco helped make the situation manageable as it was clear he cared deeply about our safety. Moreover, once we got back, he helped us find research opportunities during the summer. Considering the pandemic this was not an easy task, and I am thankful for his assistance in helping us find them.

Another area in which I have worked with Francisco was a global design project, which was a unique experience. The specific project I worked on was a solar dryer project with students in Guayaquil, Ecuador. This was a fantastic opportunity in learning how to work in a remote environment. Not only did the project give us the opportunity to practice our technical skills, but it also helped us improve our cross-cultural communication. In fact, the second semester I was on the project I was the only student in the US who spoke Spanish, so I got to practice translation skills, which helped me think differently about working on intercultural teams.

Outside of his official responsibilities, Francisco still works hard on behalf of the students. Personally, I asked him for various letters of recommendation upon looking for jobs after graduation, and he was always very helpful in this regard. He is a Purdue staff member I feel I can approach if I ever feel overwhelmed. I'm glad I have gotten to work with and be advised by him.

In summary, Francisco is a fantastic employee who works very hard to ensure students can have unique experiences which will prepare them to work in a globalized world. More importantly, he cares deeply about all the students he works with. I am confident his position within the Office of Professional Practice will lead to continued improvement of Purdue's engineering opportunities. Purdue is lucky to have him as an employee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tyler Witzig". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Tyler Witzig



October 8, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to support Francisco Montalvo's nomination for the College of Engineering New Employee Award. Francisco is the Assistant Director for Global Projects in our Office of Professional Practice and he has already distinguished himself as a top-performer and genuine student-focused employee. Among his many noteworthy contributions, there are two particular ones I would like to emphasize in this letter: a) his extraordinary care and selfless dedication to student success and well-being, b) his out-of-the-box thinking and willingness to always go above-and-beyond what is expected of him.

During the pandemic, Francisco demonstrated, more than once, his extraordinary care and selfless dedication to our students. Francisco impressed everyone in the office with the way he handled the early pandemic-induced emergencies for our GEARE students. In Spring 2020, there were dozens of GEARE students studying abroad. These students were facing an imminent danger of being trapped outside of the United States for an unknown amount of time. In one of these cases, Francisco located and literally helped rescue five students from Ecuador merely days before Ecuador ceased commercial flights. Not only was he proactive and found out about the emergency before everyone else did, but he also did not hesitate to use his personal credit card to help students evacuate Ecuador just in time. It is so reassuring for all of us to know that we can rely on Francisco to responsibly and selflessly manage such an emergency!

Francisco has already demonstrated an extraordinary out-of-the-box thinking ability that has been instrumental in helping us pivot to address unexpected challenges. Providing global experiences to our students in 2020 where international travel was practically impossible is not something we face every day. Addressing such a challenge is certainly not expected as 'regular work' from any employee, let alone a new one. Yet it was an urgent need to address, not only for GEARE students, but particularly for the more than 80 students pursuing a minor in Global Engineering minor. Francisco was a key player in creating new opportunities for all these students so they could successfully complete their programs. Specifically, he was able to connect with international partners to create new collaborative meaningful experiential learning opportunities for our students. Moreover, it is likely that such programs will become permanent offerings for our students even in the post-pandemic world. Creating such high value for Purdue is highly unusual for a new employee.

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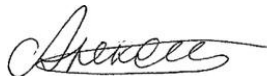
Neil Armstrong Hall of Engineering  
701 West Stadium Avenue  
West Lafayette, IN 47907  
<https://engineering.purdue.edu>

Francisco also worked tirelessly through many difficult international and academic policy changes to enable a new cohort of exchange students to come to Purdue as early as 2021-2022. As a faculty host of an exchange student in AAE, I have a first-hand knowledge of his genuine care for students helping them figure out the difficult process of global education during the pandemic. One of the students Florian Hoeft already arrived to campus this week from Germany and is very excited about his thesis research on propulsion at Purdue. Florian would not be here without Francisco's support.

Another example of Francisco's remarkable achievements in the short time since he joined CoE is his leadership on successful collaboration with Universidad Aeronáutica en Querétaro (UNAQ) in Mexico that won Innovation Fund award in the 2020 Mexico-U.S. Innovation Fund Competition. This program will allow Purdue students from different majors to continue their work on global design projects with UNAQ students that began remotely in 2020.

Francisco is truly an extraordinary new partner for all of us and truly deserves our recognition. We really need to reward our staff members that show such remarkable attention to our students and to our mission. I am confident that Francisco's 'small steps' towards supporting every single student he interacts with, will lead our Office of Professional Practice and the College of Engineering as a whole to continue making giant leaps!

Sincerely,



Dr. Alina Alexeenko  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education  
Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics  
Professor of Chemical Engineering