On October 14, 2014, Victor Aguilar was Captain of the Scripps vessel - Seadipper, in order to perform routine maintenance on a wave buoy. The vessel left from the Port of Long Beach and performed a routine swap out following all required safety procedures including (but not limited to) life vests, personal locators, and safety briefings. On the return trip, a passenger on the vessel spotted a swimmer in distress, in the narrowest part of the main shipping channel directly in the path of an oncoming merchant ship. Acting calmly and collectively, Victor turned the vessel around, led the crew to pull the swimmer on board, maneuvered out of the path of the oncoming ship, and notified the Coast Guard, Vessel Traffic Service, and the merchant ship of the rescue in progress. He performed a medical check to ensure he was not injured or hypothermic.

We later learned that the swimmer was a spear-fishermand who had become separated from his kayak when it swamped. They rendezvoused with the Port of Los Angeles Pilot boat, which had diverted to the kayaker's kayak and took it aboard as lifeguard boats arrived and stood by.

Victor’s swift action saved a life and exemplified the University’s goals of proactive leadership, supporting university practices, and extraordinary service to the community. Without Victor on board going above the call of duty, the kayaker may have been severely injured or killed. I nominate Victor Aguilar for Exemplary Staff Employee of the Year Award.