Friends of Bakersfield College,

I invite you to keep up with the happenings at BC by following www.sonyachristianblog.com.

Sonyachristianblog.com

Today is April 6, 2020 and I bring you an update on our work related to systematically slowing the spread of COVID-19 by moving our entire operations to be at a distance.

In his presentation during the President’s Virtual Seminar Series, Music Professor and Director of Jazz Studies Kris Tiner talked about how he has had to rethink the teaching of his face-to-face jazz music classes when we moved all our courses online. His key message to his students is to let the times guide our creativity. He ended his remarks with a 1968 quote from Nina Simone.

I choose to reflect the times and the situations in which I find myself. That, to me, is my duty. And at this crucial time in our lives when everything is so desperate, when every day is a matter of survival, I

Nina Simone, October 1969
Retrieved from https://time.com/4294264/nina-simone-activism-history/
don’t think you can help but be involved. So, I don’t think you have a choice.

As we collectively face a global crisis to defeat a virus that threatens our livelihood, Bakersfield College embraces our responsibility – a responsibility to reflect the times and engage in the solutions. We embrace our duty as the community’s college.

I recall with fondness my early years as the tenth president of Bakersfield College. During my first year in 2013, I spent much time developing a keen sense of the ways in which community affects the work we do at BC and in higher education: the community we serve, the community we develop, and the community we aspire to be.

One of my first projects as President was initiating BC’s development of our shared core values. You see, the word “community” carries significance for us at Bakersfield College. It is one of our six core values.

As always, with our core values front and center, Bakersfield College is rising to the occasion – a reflection of the times – to serve our community while we stay in community.

STAYING IN COMMUNITY THROUGH VIRTUAL FORUMS

To help us stay connected as a Renegade family, I have been hosting almost daily virtual forums on various topics ranging from teaching and learning at a distance to addressing how to organize your workspace to be effective working from home. I start each forum with a short briefing on where we are given the evolving nature of this epidemic and then move onto the topic of the day. By maintaining regular communication with faculty and staff, my goal is to ensure BC faculty, staff, and students maintain our sense of community.

I want to make a distinction between physically distancing from one another and socially distancing from one another. While it is critical that we separate
physically, we know that social isolation can be extremely difficult. We are in this for the long haul, and the wellbeing of our students and employees is critical. Averaging over 250 attendees per seminar, the All-Campus Virtual Seminar Series takes place on Zoom. You can see archived recordings of all of the seminars on our website: https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/covid19

Manny De Los Santos has chunked these videos to have shorter snippets of each of the presenters. Go ahead and watch Prof. Josh Ottum talk about how he is handling the move to online for his commercial music courses. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmcHD9lMkvA

This week I will host two virtual seminars. Please join in the conversation.

**April 6: 3:00-4:00 p.m.**
*Political & Community Leaders*
Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/865855491

Or iPhone one-tap: +16699006833,865855491#
or +13462487799,865855491#
Telephone:  +1 669 900 6833 (US Toll)
Meeting ID:   865 855 491

**April 7: 3:00-4:00 p.m.**
*Student Panelists:*
- Shantelle Rubio – Nursing major
- Sara Navidad – Sociology major
- Krissy Coggshall – Computer Science major
- Izzy Foster – Commercial music major

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/723559098
One devastating effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is rising unemployment. California is being hit particularly hard, with the state seeing as many as 80,000 unemployment claims in one day. The Economic Policy Institute predicts the loss of over 600,000 jobs in California by Summer 2020. The headlines in the past week have been flooded by coverage of a record number of unemployment claims, topping 10 million in the US. Last week, Congress passed a $2 trillion financial relief bill to provide direct payments to many, expand unemployment benefits, assist small businesses, and pour resources into state and local governments. Weeks ago, BC anticipated this need – and, as Wayne Gretzky said, playing where the puck is going to be - turned our attention to supporting our community as many face job loss.

Bakersfield College launched last week a late-start, five-week semester to bring these individuals Back to College. Check out KGET’s coverage of this news item.

**Back to College** courses will not only support students entering or reentering higher education after experiencing job loss, but current BC students may want to make up for a dropped class, or may be ready to take a higher unit load due to a shift in their personal or work life.

Please pass along this message to businesses and other community
organizations to help provide this information to their employees.

BC STUDENTS ON THE HEALTH CARE FRONTLINE...

*Playing where the puck is going to be.*

On Monday, March 30, Governor Newsom announced California Health Corps, an initiative to expand the California’s health care workforce to fight COVID-19. Health care professionals with an active license, public health professionals, medical retirees, medical and nursing students, or members of medical disaster response teams in California are all encouraged to join.

On March 19, Bakersfield College anticipated this call and launched a partnership with Kern Medical, Dignity Health Systems, and the Bakersfield Heart Hospital to place 69 of BC’s level 4 registered nursing students – senior students in their final semester – into externships alongside registered nurse to provide direct care to a team of patients in the face of COVID-19.
This partnership will not only help meet pressing demands in health care during a pandemic on a scale we have never witnessed in our lifetime, it will ensure students who have been working for years toward their goal will not see their achievement put on pause indefinitely just eight weeks before their expected graduation. Be sure to read the Bakersfield Californian’s coverage of this partnership. Also, Jeanette Quezada did a real nice job of covering this story on KBAK which you should check out. See tweet #Saluteto #PandemicHeroes -- Carla Gard, nursing faculty, staff and students.

It has been a joy seeing how our nursing faculty and students have responded to this call for help from our hospitals. Let’s pause and say a big ‘thank you’ to every nurse, doctor, and every other healthcare provider as they work on the front lines to care for our community.
Last week, I wrote about how my Fall 2019 State of the College remarks carry a special meaning as we pioneer the way for higher education, anticipating and meeting the needs of our community... always ahead of the curve.

Another excerpt from my fall state of the college reads:

*Our core values are real; they are not merely institutional formalities. They have consequence.... We take students without judging who they are or how they found us, and in helping them learn we teach them to value the other. As we live our core values, we teach our core values. For each other, for our students, and for our community.*

So, my dear friends, let’s join in community to meet the needs of our community, united not by our fear but instead by our commitment to value the other. As we live our core values, we teach our core values.

That’s how we roll at Bakersfield College.

After all, We Are BC.
And We Are Bakersfield.
That's all for now.

With much Renegade Pride and Collegiality,

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Be sure to keep up to date with BC's ongoing response to COVID-19 on our website [https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/covid19](https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/covid19)

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