Friends of Bakersfield College,

July 14, 2016

In 1960, an extraordinary promise was unveiled when policymakers unanimously approved the California Master Plan for Higher Education. Our Governor at the time even expressed his thoughts by saying, “This is the most significant step California has ever taken in planning for the education of our youth.” (Edmund G. Brown, April 26, 1960)

But, did you know this remarkable planning began right here in Bakersfield?

Assemblywoman Dorothy Donahoe began her career working as the secretary and then registrar at Bakersfield High School. She ran and won the election for state assemblywoman 38th district and held the position until her passing on April 4, 1960. Her mission was to provide educational equality among underrepresented citizens in order to elevate California’s economy.

Her work approved and was voted into law a few days after her passing and its legacy continues to inspire educational leadership today. Planning and innovation like this from the strong leaders in our community have propelled Bakersfield College and education around our nation to where it has come – but change and evolution is necessary to always keep up with the continued demand of the world we live in.

Fast Forward
In 2014, Senate Bill #850 expanded the scope of California’s community colleges from the 1960 Higher Education Master Plan, to include baccalaureate degrees. Community Colleges from across the state responded to this legislation by submitting proposals to offer baccalaureate degrees. **BC was one of the colleges that submitted a proposal and was approved to offer its first baccalaureate program in Industrial Automation starting in August 2016.** The State of California is confidently standing behind us and we are creating and implementing a program that helps our students and local economy… – *I would say this is one winning situation!*

This fall, our first set of students will begin their junior level classes to obtain a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Industrial Automation. We are counting down the days till they make history and receive their Bachelors at BC in May of 2018.

By honoring the great trailblazing men and women, like Dorothy Donahoe, it is our turn to innovate, contribute, and inspire the next 60 years of quality and accessible education for all. We have been hard at work calculating the needs of our campus and planning for the days to come. November 8th 2016 will mark a monumental and crucial ballot which will define the future learning environment of our campus.

A comprehensive list of projects and details are available on [www.abetterbc.com](http://www.abetterbc.com).

In closing, the city of Bakersfield and the entire Kern County community is a dynamic force of strength, growth, and transformation… Together, **we can build A Better BC.** Your participation is vital to ensure that our campus lights the way for equal opportunity, quality education, and unlimited opportunity for all.