BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE TO HOST STATEWIDE EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM TO DISCUSS POLICY AND ALIGNMENT OF PATHWAYS FROM K-12 TO A COLLEGE DEGREE WITH A GOAL TO INCREASE DEGREE ATTAINMENT THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA

Intersegmental Pathways Symposium: Meeting California’s 2030 Baccalaureate Goals
November 15, 2019 | Bakersfield Marriott at the Convention Center, Bakersfield, CA

Bakersfield College is leading the charge to connect statewide educational leaders and policy influencers at the Intersegmental Pathways Symposium to imagine, plan, and strategize for a streamlined educational process toward baccalaureate completion.

In 1960, statewide policymakers unanimously approved the California Master Plan for Higher Education. This important promise was the work and vision of Assemblywoman Dorothy Donahoe, whose lifelong career of public service began locally at Bakersfield High School. Her work and vision continues to inspire educational leaders throughout the state of California so that students today and tomorrow continue to find equal opportunity and quality education throughout the golden state.

According to recent data, higher education is more necessary today than ever before with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reporting that 60% of new jobs being created within the state will require education past high school. To emphasize the urgency to prepare an educated workforce, the Public Policy Institute of California suggests that our state will fall short by 1.1 million educated workers holding a bachelor’s degree by the year 2030. Bakersfield College President, Dr. Sonya Christian is proud of the work being done locally in Kern County and hopes the numbers can trend upwards all throughout California.

“This symposium is happening at an important time in our state’s history. The rapidly changing technological landscape is reshaping the skills and abilities required of the State’s workforce. By 2030, there will be an unprecedented demand for an additional 1.1 million graduates with baccalaureate degrees. This rapidly growing need requires our educational and industry leaders to come together now to craft effective and comprehensive policy solutions,” said Dr. Sonya Christian, President at Bakersfield College. “On November 15th, industry partners and K-12, community college, CSU, and UC colleagues from across the state will meet in Bakersfield to work toward creating these solutions together.”

Years ago, Bakersfield College staff, faculty, and administration realized the need and focused on a data driven, results focused approach to address the shortcomings. “Bakersfield College has now held two guided pathways summits, and our President and other college leaders chair and sit on multiple statewide task forces. In our experience engaging Sacramento and helping them understand our needs, we have developed a keen understanding of the importance of elevating our work – of giving our results visibility. This symposium will do that,” said BC’s Director of Student Success and Equity, Lesley Bonds.

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Numerous and complimentary strategies were developed in every area of the college community so students felt recognized and they knew support existed. BC staff developed an intensive and thoughtful outreach and support program for rural students living in the college's service area. With over 37,000 students, most of whom are first generation, BC realized outreach, support, clear pathways, and financial efficiency were key.

The Intersegmental Pathways Symposium brings California Community College’s State Chancellor, Eloy Oakley to the stage, alongside Dr. Lande Ajose, Governor Newsom’s Senior Policy Advisor, and Tony Thurmond, California’s State Superintendent of Public Education.

“It’s fitting that this event takes place on the same day as BC’s statewide recognition as a Champion of Higher Education for 2019 by The Campaign for College Opportunity. The award celebrates exemplary work to increase the number of awarded Associate Degrees for Transfer and is a testament to the role Bakersfield College plays as a leader statewide in developing innovative solutions to address student equity and completion,” said Bonds. She added, “Our work to increase Associate Degree for Transfer is critical in advancing the baccalaureate completion rate statewide. For many students, community colleges exist as a bridge to a bachelor’s degree and so it’s a rewarding statistic that students who transfer from the community college system to a CSU or UC do very well. At most institutions, transfers complete at a higher rate and in a shorter amount of time than students who enrolled at that CSU or UC as freshmen.”

Media are invited to attend and encouraged to be present during the 8:30AM Opening Remarks by Bakersfield College President, Sonya Christian and Kern Community College District Trustee, Tom Burke. Bakersfield College President, Sonya Christian will be available for interviews between 7:30-8:00AM. Details and agenda are available on the Bakersfield College webpage for the event at: https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/conference/intersegmental-pathways-symposium

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Bakersfield College provides opportunities for students from diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds to attain Associate and Baccalaureate degrees and certificates, workplace skills, and preparation for transfer. Our rigorous and supportive learning environment fosters students’ abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world.