Bakersfield College President Sonya Christian Selected as Recipient of the Annual Educational Award

It has been announced that Bakersfield College President, Sonya Christian is being recognized alongside Assembly Member Rudy Salas by the Delano Chamber of Commerce as recipients of the Educational Award for 2018.

Bakersfield College is committed to post-secondary education in our rural communities, offering quality education at an affordable cost with targeted programs which lead to skillful employment. In July, Rudy Salas secured $1 Million for career technical education programs in local rural communities for workforce development.

Assembly Member, Rudy Salas, advocated for these funds and has been a consistent supporter of educational initiatives, especially those affecting the more rural areas of Kern County. “This is a budget that delivers for the Central Valley, bringing funding to improve public health and public safety and investing in job training and education. To help train and grow our workforce, the budget allocates $1 million to Bakersfield College for expanded workforce development programs. Together, we are working to keep the Valley strong,” said Assembly Member Salas in July.

Funding will support expansion and creation of Career Technical Education courses and open pathways for students to complete their education in through our Rural Initiatives programs including:

- Launch of the first HVAC Certificate and Associate of Science Degree programs in Fall 2018 targeting North Kern, which includes the cities of Delano, Shafter, Wasco & McFarland
- Establishment of a new chemistry course designed to satisfy the local general education science requirement for CTE degrees.
- Expansion of the Bachelor of Science in Industrial Automation to the Delano campus, for the North Kern community.
- Expansion of the mobile welding program, to provide a broader welding program to Arvin/Lamont and other rural areas.
- Expansion of the Rural Initiatives Distance Education (RIDE) project.
Event: Bakersfield College President Sonya Christian Selected as Recipient of Annual Educational Award
Day: For Immediate Release:
Contact: Marlene Heise, 661-978-8594

“The Kern Community College District and Bakersfield College understand that a skilled workforce is essential to a vibrant economy in Kern County and that education plays an integral role in workforce development. Unfortunately, our rural communities have been plagued by high poverty and unemployment rates for too long,” said Romeo Agbalog, KCCD Trustee representing Delano and northern Kern County. “These funds, secured by Assemblyman Salas, will help BC continue and expand its very aggressive and intentional rural outreach efforts to help reduce unemployment and poverty by offering affordable, high quality educational programming and services to give our students the education, training, and skills they’ll need to compete in tomorrow's workforce. Thank you to the Delano Chamber of Commerce for recognizing Bakersfield College's efforts to transform rural communities through higher education, one student at a time.”

Bakersfield College’s student headcount has grown significantly in local rural communities. Between 2013 and 2017, the North Kern region saw a student growth of 79%. This past May, 38 Wonderful Academy high school students in Delano received their Associates degree concurrently with their high school diploma.

Bakersfield College offers a rigorous and supportive learning environment that fosters students’ abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world, while simultaneously contributing to the intellectual, cultural, and economic vitality of the communities it serves.

###