BC Family,

It’s so exciting to see so many students returning to our campuses, many of them for the first time in 18 months.

Happy first week of Fall 2021! The campus is filled with activities everywhere, and it is a welcome sight. This morning I saw a group of BC Nursing students in the new cafeteria and noticed the beautiful mural of the Memorial Stadium field on the wall behind them. I hope you will come see our new Dining Commons. It is really something special. The Office of Student Life also had an active flow of students who were seeking help and getting their ID Cards.

**What I Know:**
As we start another semester, Kern County is in the middle of a fourth wave of coronavirus infections, with daily new cases at their highest rate since early February of this year, before vaccines were widely available to the public. On Monday, August 23, Kern County Public Health reported 1,149 new cases of COVID-19 over the weekend.

In just the past seven days, there have been a total of 1,683 new cases, and several Kern County hospitals have announced that they will be postponing elective, non-emergency procedures as they begin to exceed their capacity of ICU beds for COVID-19 patients. Kern County’s Test Positivity Rate is now at 8.1% (This information is available at the [California Department of Public Health website](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)).

Today, the Food and Drug Administration announced that the Pfizer vaccine has received full approval for everyone 16 and older. Full approval of the Moderna vaccine could come by the end of September, according to Newsweek.

**Helpful Information and Tips for Faculty and Staff**
As of Monday evening, 768 Students and 318 employees who have received their Blue Campus Pass and over 700 more are in queue for review. I am very excited to see so many Renegades embracing the app and actively using its features. I encourage you to submit for a Blue Campus Pass via the [KCCD Campus Pass App](http://www.kccd.edu).

Here are some tips:
1. At this time we are focusing our efforts on getting our students who are accessing campus facilities to be fully vaccinated by November 1. Get them to the Student Health and Wellness Center.

2. If a student informs you that they have a potential exposure, have that student
   a. report this via the Daily Health Checker from within the app and
   b. email covid19@bakersfieldcollege.edu.

3. If a student comes to class with a Red Campus Pass, have them leave class and call the BC Response COVID Hotline at 661-395-4773 for immediate attention.

4. Please share the syllabus statement linked here to help students understand our COVID protocols and guidance

Work the Process; Trust the Process. We have a team of individuals who care for our community and will work diligently to ensure we are safe.

**COVID-19 Vaccines**

You have probably heard, by now, that all BC students and employees are required to provide proof of first vaccination by September 7 and proof of full vaccination by November 1.

Vaccinations are available through the Student Health and Wellness Center Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We’ll also be offering vaccinations at BC home football games all season. Visit the Get Vaccinated website for more information.

You will want to keep the vaccine card as proof of vaccination, but you should also familiarize yourself with the online vaccination record. To retrieve your free vaccination record electronically (QR code), visit the Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record.

I encourage everyone to stay safe and follow the COVID-19 protocols that have served us well. We are constantly updating our COVID-19 webpage.

**Summary of Current COVID-19 Protocols**

- **Masks are required** to be worn by students, employees, and visitors indoors on our campus properties until further notice. The mask must cover your mouth and nose. Face coverings will be available upon request.

- **For individuals attending in-person classes, the Kern Community College District has implemented a vaccine requirement.** BC students and employees are required to provide proof of first vaccination by September 7 and proof of full vaccination by November 1. More information about the vaccine requirement, including frequently asked questions and information about exemptions, can be found on the KCCD Coronavirus Update page.

All students and employees must use the KCCD Campus Pass app before coming to campus and entering classrooms or offices. The Kern Community College District App for Campus Pass is where you will:

- Complete the "Daily Health Checker" form to receive your daily Campus Pass
- Save your Campus Pass to show your faculty or office personnel
- Scan classroom or office QR codes as you enter campus spaces
- Complete COVID Test Self-Reporting form

Detailed protocols and guidance are available on BC’s Coronavirus Update webpage.

**Student Aid Funding is Plentiful, and Available:**
Students can receive thousands towards tuition and other educational costs. Bakersfield College has significant funds in additional HEERF resources to assist students with the greatest needs and financial challenges during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Please encourage students to apply for Financial Aid.

**District-wide Accessibility Team Recommends Additional Training:**

Last year's opening day you heard from our Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, John Means and our BC leaders for accessibility, Andrea Thorson and Matt Andrasian-Jones.

Our district wide accessibility work has adopted the recommendations made by our accessibility evaluator. These recommendations include training and evaluation processes for employees. More information is coming, but in the interim you may find non-credit accessibility courses in our Education department offerings.

**SID, Our One-Stop Online Help Desk, is Setting Records**

While campus operations have returned to the swing of things, the easiest way for faculty and students to get quick answers might still be to connect to BC’s online Student Information Desk (SID). The SID provides the ability to quickly and conveniently connect to a Zoom room where knowledgeable representatives are available! This week SID served over 3,000 students and faculty.

Have a question but don’t know where to go? Connect today: https://bit.ly/bc-sid

**Recognizing Renegade Stars**

Now, let’s celebrate some Renegades! As promised, each week I will highlight some exceptional renegades.

One of very own Automotive Faculty members, **Richard Range**, recently took the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) exam and was one of six who passed the course out of a class of about 16 students!

BC's journalism program, led by Professor of Journalism, **Erin Auerbach**, was one of eight programs in the entire state to receive a Cal Humanities Grant for the Informed Citizen Emerging Journalist fellowship worth $11,000.

The students' work will be posted on the Rip's website and Cal Humanities will also post the podcast.

Thank you for celebrating these amazing achievements.

If you or someone in the BC family has achieved something wonderful recently, please share with us by submitting through our online webform.
Assembly Member Rudy Salas Secures $6 Million in Funding for BC

Bakersfield College is set to receive $6 million dollars in state funding to expand and implement workforce training programs focused on healthcare education. The projects proposed will include expanding the college’s Rural Health Equity and Learning (HEAL) collaborative, the CNA and RN nursing programs, and the allied health programs such as the new Physical Therapy Assistant program. This funding also enables for new post-pandemic student health and wellness services, and new certification programs, such as the Mental Health Worker Certificate. Read more on BC’s website.

BC Students Work to GOTV (Get Out the Vaccine!)

Last month, Gloria Dumler, Professor of English, asked me if there was something special BC could do “in recognition of the BC […] students who have been volunteering to help the county health department by going door to door to educate people about vaccinations.”

I am proud to share this story: Bakersfield College participated in the statewide “Get Out The Vaccine” project, utilizing canvassers to share vaccine knowledge, information, and awareness with residents in specific areas of Bakersfield. This door-to-door canvassing program is a collaborative grant funded program that we have developed in partnership with UCLA. Each canvasser was trained in accordance with the guidelines developed by the UCLA public health program, and monitored on a regular basis. Some of the individuals who are doing door-to-door canvassing are our regular students who are looking to pick up extra hours, and some other community members.

Earlier this month, healthcare partners including Dignity Health, Kern Health Systems, and Hall Ambulance came together to provide on-the-spot vaccinations for residents in their home during the canvassing activities. This work has also been positively supported by Kern County Supervisor Leticia Perez. Thank you BC Renegades!

Concluding Thoughts:

It’s up to each and every one of us to ensure that we have a safe and successful return to campus this fall. I’m confident that we can all work together as a Renegade family to create a healthy and productive learning environment because that’s what we do at BC.

Have a wonderful week at BC! Thank you for reading this Renegade Update and for all you do to make Bakersfield a better place, one student at a time. That’s all I have for now. I look forward to communicating with you soon.

Zav