



Hello Students, welcome to the Fall Semester! I am Norma C. Rodriguez, the director of the CalWORKs program. We are delighted to have you in our program and we want your time at Cerritos College to be memorable and get you closer to your educational and professional pursuits.

I enjoy meeting our students and I invite you to stop by to say hello. I am planning to have a monthly event open to CalWORKs students on Tuesday's from 11a.m. -12 p.m. This social event will be designated so that you have the opportunity to stop by and meet with my staff and I. More news to follow. To conclude, I am wishing you a successful fall semester and please remember, when in doubt, come see us. We are here to serve. Your success is our success!

CalWORKs SEMESTER REQUIREMENTS!

Effective summer 2016 all active CalWORKs students are **REQUIRED** to turn in a new *Continuing Student Form* along with a *Verification of Benefits* at the beginning of **every semester**.

**Work-In Progress (WIP) Form is
DUE the week of October 3-7, 2016**

Upcoming Fall 2016 CalWORKs Events!

Visit our CalWORKs website and sign up to our upcoming events/workshops.

Fall 2016 Workshops Include:

- Financial Aid Application Assistance
- Financial Aid Information
- Expungement Forum
- Overview of legal services
- Probation
- Scholarship Assistance

Space is limited. Sign-up NOW!



CalWORKs Math Tutoring and Computer Lab Hours

The CalWORKs office offers **FREE** math tutoring for all active CalWORKs students who are enrolled in a math class. Our computer lab is available to all active CalWORKs students for any school related items and printing up to 10 pages per day.

**Don't miss out on the CalWORKs
Fall 2016 Scholarship Opportunity
Deadline: October 28**

Get to Know Our Ne



Welcome to Cerritos College and the CalWORKs Program! My name is **Nellie E. Hernandez-Garcia**. I joined the Cerritos College CalWORKs Program in April 2016 as the full-time **CalWORKs Counselor**. It is an honor to work with CalWORKs students. I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Master of Science degree in Counseling from California State University, Los Angeles. I worked at various community colleges, including Rio Hondo College, Citrus College, Mt. San Antonio College, and Los Angeles City College. With each new experience, I hope to better serve students and have a more meaningful impact in guiding them. I am certain that each of you will rise to the challenges and potential of this new semester. I am here to support, encourage, and motivate you through your educational journey. I look forward to working closely with you in order to learn more about your unique talents, challenges and dreams.

My name is **Sergio Alcala** and I have been a **CalWORKs Counselor** since fall of 2013. I am thrilled to be here at Cerritos College and I look forward to helping you accomplish your dreams. I am also excited to introduce *The Men Cave*, a men support-empowerment group this upcoming fall 2016.

During the fall and winter semesters, I passionately coach a Boys Basketball team, ages 10-14 years old, at my alma mater elementary school in South Los Angeles. On special occasions, I put on my "coaching" hat and push you beyond your academic limits. The secret ingredient behind my success is love. I love what I do, whether it is counseling or coaching basketball. I am inspired by the late Maya Angelou when she said, *"people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."* As your counselor, you can count on me to go that extra mile and motivate you to keep moving forward when things get rocky.



My name is **Joanna Alvarado** and I am a **CalWORKs Counselor**. Cerritos College has been my home since I first became a student in 2007. I received my Associate in Arts degree in Liberal Arts and Science, and I have been involved in and worked for various departments on campus. I transferred to California State University, Los Angeles to receive my Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. Shortly after I pursued my passion for working with students and continued my education at Loyola Marymount University where I received my Master of Arts degree in School Counseling. I hope to be able to empower you to go above and beyond and reach your educational goals. Wishing you all the best this fall 2016 semester.

My name is **Yesenia Ramirez, CalWORKs Counselor**. Like many of you, my educational journey began at Cerritos College. Out of high school, I took part of the EOPS Summer Bridge program. This program helped guide me to the road of higher education. I obtained my Associate of Arts degree in General Studies from Cerritos College. I then transferred to Cal State University, Dominguez Hills and obtained my bachelor's degree in Human Services.

As a student at Cerritos College, I was able to work on campus as a student worker and eventually became a full-time classified employee. I worked in Financial Aid for 18 years. This experience helped me find my true passion, which is working with students. This led me to attend the University of La Verne and obtain my Masters of Science in Educational Counseling. Like all the staff at CalWORKs, I am so excited and look forward to meeting with you this semester. Your educational journey begins here!



New CalWORKs Staff



My name is **Zoey Leon**. I am extremely delighted to have had the opportunity to work as the new **Job Placement Technician** for the CalWORKs population.

I am an alumni of Cerritos College where I received my Associate of Arts degree in Business Administration and Liberal Arts and Science. I transferred to California State University, Dominguez Hills where I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management and Human Resources.

Currently, I coordinate the CalWORKs Work-Study Program in which I help eligible CalWORKs students find on-campus employment based on their major, job skills, and/or work experience while completing their educational goal. I welcome every CalWORKs student to meet with me and further discuss the CalWORKs Work-Study Program and the steps to joining. I look forward to meeting you all.

My name is **Blanca P. Gamez** and I am the new **Program Facilitator** for the CalWORKs Department. I recently received my second master's degree in Counseling from California State University, Dominguez Hills. However, before arriving to Cerritos College I worked as a K-12 Teacher for the Paramount Unified School District. I currently hold a Master of Science in Bilingual and Bicultural Education, and a Bilingual Multiple Subject Credential from California State University, Fullerton.

I am super excited to start my career here at Cerritos College. I currently lead the Early Alert Program (EAP) and help all new and existing CalWORKs students transition into the college. I look forward to meeting all new CalWORKs students and to continue helping students achieve their educational goal.



Elizabet Rodriguez



Karina Loza



Erika Gonzalez

Congratulations to the Spring and Summer 2016 CalWORKs Scholarship Recipients!



Brandy Leekley



Maria Soto



Martha Gonzalez



Monique Burt

Join the CalWORKs Work-Study Program

The CalWORKs Work-Study Program provides CalWORKs students with on-campus work opportunities in order to develop and/or strengthen workplace skills while completing their educational goals. Students learn how to enter and re-enter the workforce with the confidence needed to achieve career satisfaction and economic self-sufficiency.

For more information, and program eligibility schedule an appointment with a CalWORKs Counselor Today! (562) 860-2451 Ext. 2593

Meet one of our CalWORKs Work-Study Students

Brandy Leekley, Clerk, Student Health Services



How did you hear about the work study program?

During my first semester, I heard about the work-study program on campus through the CalWORKs department. Not knowing anything about the work-study program, I had many questions. At the CalWORKs office, I received step-by-step directions, guidance,

support, but most importantly, I felt the staff genuinely cared about me. My CalWORKs counselors are wonderful, they answer and clarify any questions I may have. After meeting with the CalWORKs Work-Study Coordinator, Zoey Leon, she explained in depth what work-study was, the benefits of the program and how I could participate. Zoey clarified and answered all of my questions. After our meeting, Zoey helped me through the process of obtaining a job on campus. My placement has allowed me to gain experience, skills, and knowledge in an environment in which one day I look forward to be working in. In all, it has been a wonderful experience.

What do you like about being a CalWORKs Work-Study student and how has it helped you?

I love that I can go to school full-time and work decent hours. I also like that my employer understands that school is my priority, they are flexible with my class schedule and work with me to rearrange my schedule when I have major exams. Nowhere in my past 23 years of employment have I had a job that cared about my education. Without the CalWORKs Work-Study Program, I would not be able to be a full-time student. The program has allowed me to grow as a mother, a student, and an employee. I am finally succeeding in all areas of my life due to this wonderful position and the CalWORKs Work-Study Program. Lastly, the Pre-Employment Preparation (PEP) Workshops are amazing! They are very informative and beneficial to me.

What advice do you give any Cal-Works student thinking of applying to our work-study program?

To anyone looking to apply - don't wait. Inquire now. It is not as hard as you might think and the payoff is well worth it. You will have all the support and guidance you will need from the wonderful staff in the CalWORKs office. You won't find a better job or anyone who will put your education first like they do here. It's a stepping stone in the right direction. In addition, the income you make is not deducted from your cash-aid benefits, which is great!



Career Corner

Of all the stress associated with searching for a job, the one that causes some people the most anxiety is the interviewing process. Knowing how to present yourself as the best candidate

for the job is no small task, however, here are three tips you can use to **Put Your Best Self Forward**.

Don't Ramble When you are asked a question, take a few seconds to consider what you want to say. Answer what is asked and give an example.

Be Honest If you don't have a skill or the experience that the employer is looking for, try to give an example of a skill that can be just as appropriate.

Over-Dress No matter what type of position you are applying for, be sure to dress in a very professional manner. Wearing a suit or a dress even though you are applying for a job that does not require that type of dress tells the employer that the job is important to you, and you will give 100% to the position and the company.

Visit the CalWORKs Office and schedule an appointment with the career counselor, Janis Pizer or the job placement technician, Zoey Leon for more interviewing tips or with help setting up an appointment for a mock interview.