

Dear Colleagues,

Fall Semester is Finally Here

The new fall semester is underway, and we are already off to an exciting start! Thank you to everyone who welcomed our students back to campus with so much enthusiasm. I spent time walking around campus meeting students, and it was great to hear the excitement in their voices about starting a new semester. I also heard from students who were a little nervous about their transition to college, and these encounters reminded me of the importance of the great work we do to provide our students with excellent support services.

The more support we provide our students, the better they perform. **Graciela Espejo** is an example of what can happen when we invest in our students. She was recently named a 2018 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar by Phi Theta Kappa (PTK). Graciela was among 207 PTK members in the prestigious honor society to be chosen for a \$1,000 scholarship from a pool of more than 1,200 applicants. She is a Psychology major and plans to transfer to the University of California, Irvine. Graciela hopes to become a psychologist. Congratulations, Graciela!

1,000 New Students in Cerritos Complete

I am also very excited to share that we welcomed 1,014 new students to [Cerritos Complete](#) earlier this month. As many of you know, Cerritos Complete is our official California Promise Program that enables more students from our local high schools to have an opportunity to complete a degree or certificate in less time. Not only does we give students access to education, they receive personalized, targeted support services and a step-by-step guide to finishing their educational goals. More than 2,500 students have participated in the program to date. I would like to thank the entire **Educational Partnerships and Programs** team for all of their work to make Cerritos Complete a continued success.

Speaking of [Cerritos Complete](#), the program continues to gain national recognition as a model for student access to higher education and degree attainment. Cerritos College has been named one of five community colleges in the nation selected as a finalist for the 2018 Examples of *Excelencia* Award. *Excelencia* in Education is a national program that recognizes innovative, evidence-based practices that accelerate Latino student success in higher education. Last November, Cerritos Complete was also named a finalist for the prestigious Bellwether Award. Regardless of whether or not we win the 2018 Examples of *Excelencia* Award, we should all be very proud of the number of students who continue to benefit from the program.

Partnering With Amazon Web Services

To help address the digital divide, Cerritos College will offer a new cloud computing certificate next year through a partnership with [Amazon Web Services](#). Our goal is to expand technological resources and training that will make students more competitive in the marketplace. The 15-credit curriculum will focus on providing students with the skills they need for jobs in cloud computing, one of the fastest growing areas in software development. We will be partnering with at least one high school to offer concurrent enrollment and professional development opportunities, including curriculum development workshops and Amazon Web Services trainings. Stay tuned for more details.

I am looking forward to another exciting semester and to working with each of you to better serve our students. Feel free to contact me with any questions or feedback.

Have a great semester!

Jose

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