

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT/SUPERINTENDENT  
PRESIDENT'S CAMPUS UPDATES



November 7, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

This was certainly an unprecedented Election week for our communities, our state, and our nation. As the week came to a close, Cerritos College once again came together (virtually) to participate in our third annual **Falcon Day**. Many thanks go to the Employee Development Committee who worked incredibly hard to make this event a success. The day's sessions, which focused on academic, health, and work-from-home strategies, were relevant and informative. In addition, our keynote speaker Dr. Scott Poland talked about managing anxiety related to COVID-19 and modeling coping for co-workers, students, and families. I am very proud of Dr. Dilcie Perez, Dr. Elizabeth Miller, Damon Cagnolatti, and Rebecca Pang for participating in an insightful panel discussion on managing conversations about race. As you relax and unwind this weekend, I would like to provide you with a few updates.

### **Celebrating Diversity and Raising Awareness**

As we continue our efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive campus, cultivating a culture of respect is an important part of the solution. When we learn from one another, we grow together. At Cerritos College, I am proud of the many ways we celebrate diversity through cultural events and other activities. Our diversity is just one reason Cerritos College is a special place.

October was a busy month filled with celebrations and awareness campaigns. **Latinx Heritage Month** celebrated Latinx culture from around the world with great presentations and community engagement. This year's **LGBTQ+ History Month** featured community-building activities and a special art gallery showcase. **Domestic Violence Awareness Month** brought awareness to issues around domestic violence and prevention. Cerritos College also participated in the statewide **Undocumented Student Action Week**. The campus hosted presentations and workshops to introduce our support services and resources to our undocumented and AB 540 students. Activities included a legal support session, ally training, and several sessions to empower our students. Lastly, I had the honor of representing Cerritos College in the **2020 American Cancer Society's Real Men Wear Pink Fundraising Campaign**. This event was in support of the City of Norwalk's **Paint the Town Pink Breast Cancer Awareness** month to promote early detection and raise funds for breast cancer treatment and research. Thank you to everyone who organized and contributed to these events.

### **Mercedes-Benz' New Program and Donation**

I am happy to share the **Automotive Import Technician Training Program (ITTP)** recently received an E300 sedan donated by Mercedes-Benz USA. The company also donated proprietary technology that gives students access to web-based training materials for Mercedes-Benz Registered Technicians. The college joined Mercedes-Benz's MB Campus program and is currently the only automotive program in Southern California to offer MB Campus as part of its curriculum. I am excited this program is opening more career opportunities and hands-on training for our students.

### **Alumna Helping People with Disabilities**

Meet **Elyse Ares**. She is making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Elyse attended Cerritos College as a dual enrollment student while she was in high school at Christ Heritage Academy in Bellflower. Elyse graduated with an A.A. in psychology in 2008 and transferred to CSU Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) where she began working as a special education student worker at Bellflower USD. Elyse later obtained her B.A. from CSUDH and earned a master's in special education at Whittier College. She was recently appointed to the City of Long Beach Citizens' Advisory Commission on Disabilities. As a Commissioner, Elyse will serve a two-year term providing recommendations and resources on issues affecting people with disabilities. Elyse is another example of how Cerritos College alumni positively impact their local community through leadership and service. Our Falcons never stop working to make the world a better place. Congratulations, Elyse.

### **State of the College 2020**

This year's **State of the College** was especially important as we highlighted our efforts to meet the basic needs of our students through the ongoing health crisis. Despite operating mostly online, we have remained open and actively working to keep students in school. One of the ways we've been supporting students is through our partnership with the L.A. Regional Food Bank. As you know, we host a monthly food drive to serve students and the community. Since 2017, we've served approximately 20,000 families with food donations, and more than 10,000 during the pandemic. Access to technology was a huge barrier for many students at the start of the pandemic. To address this need, we set up a Study Hall to give students a quiet, safe space to finish their assignments with access to free Wi-Fi. We've also distributed more than 600 laptops and over 100 hotspots for internet access. The Cerritos College Foundation is also helping us to serve students with much-needed resources through its Student Emergency Fund, including grocery and gas cards, and financial support. Thank you to faculty, staff, and managers who make our efforts to support students seamlessly.

Keep up the good work!

Jose

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