



## Office of the President

August 25, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

The fall semester is off to a powerful start, and together we are showing what happens when Cerritos College stands united as one community.

From the very first day, the dedication of our faculty has been clear, and for that, I thank you. In your classrooms, you do more than teach: you create belonging. That same spirit was felt across campus at the Ask Me Tables, where **75 volunteers guided 2,321 students** to classrooms, services, and connections that set the tone for a confident beginning. During President's Hour, your Executive Council team served more than 450 tacos to our students, a small but mighty reminder that we succeed when we gather, when we share, and when we welcome every Falcon as family.

Behind the scenes, our classified professionals work tirelessly to ensure our students learn and grow in beautiful, safe, and well-maintained facilities. From classrooms and labs to student spaces and outdoor areas, the care and pride you bring to our campus environment uplift the student experience every single day. I appreciate all you do. To our managers and our Board leadership, thank you for providing the direction, resources, and governance that allow Cerritos College to deliver excellence with integrity and purpose.

While we each hold different roles, we are united by one mission: to serve students and strengthen our community. Faculty, classified employees, managers, and trustees are equally important to the remarkable progress we have achieved together. **Different jobs. One mission. Student success.**

That progress is real, measurable, and inspiring. Over the last ten years, our graduation rates have steadily increased, opening doors to opportunity for thousands of students. This growth tells a story of progress, but the true impact is seen in our graduates who step into careers, transfer to universities, and build lives of meaning.

The wider world has noticed. Cerritos College is ranked **#1 in Los Angeles County and #10 in California for Return on Investment in higher education**. Our students recoup their costs faster than anywhere else in the region and move into careers that sustain their futures and strengthen our community.

But the real impact is seen in the faces of our graduates. When I met Jennifer before our May commencement ceremony, she shared that she was the first in her family to attend college. In hearing her story, I understood she carried with her the care of faculty, the support of classified staff, the guidance of managers, and the leadership of our Board. Her achievement is living proof of what happens when Cerritos College works as one.

If the last decade has shown us what unity can achieve, the next decade will prove there is no limit to what we can become. We are more than a college. We are a community, a family, and a force for opportunity.

Together, we are Cerritos College.

I invite you to join me at Convocation on **Thursday, August 28, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** in the Performing Arts Center (PAC). Together, we will celebrate the accomplishments of the past decade and set our vision for the years ahead.

### **Forward as One**

Jose

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