



Cerritos College
Building Futures Through Learning



News Release

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2020 State of the College Underscores Efforts to Support Students through the Global Health Crisis

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Cerritos College hosted a virtual 2020 State of the College on October 28.

President/Superintendent Dr. Jose Fierro delivered the State of the College address focusing on the College's efforts to support students through the ongoing health crisis. Despite the College's abrupt transition to an online format, the campus remains open online and continues to support students as they pursue their education.



Although COVID-19 worsened conditions for many students who were already facing a number of obstacles, Cerritos College continues to serve as a safety net. According to the 2019 #RealCollege Survey Report conducted by the Hope Lab, more than 65 percent of Cerritos College students who responded to the survey experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity in the past year. These students often struggle to meet their basic needs while navigating the demands of college life. As such, the campus swiftly streamlined its support services and made emergency resources available for students.

Dr. Fierro highlighted the following areas of student support during his presentation:

- The Cerritos College Foundation created a **Student Emergency Fund** to help students meet their basic needs during the pandemic. The campaign has raised more

than **\$73,000** to support students. The Foundation has allocated an additional **\$25,000** for emergency support using existing funds, totaling **approximately \$100,000**. Nearly **300** students have received financial assistance and/or grocery store gift cards. Phase two of the campaign is underway, with a goal of raising another **\$50,000** or more. The Foundation's new community effort to raise emergency funds is its [Race for Falcon Futures](#). Participants are encouraged to donate their time and dollars to complete a self-guided 5K, 10K, or half marathon race to raise money. More information about the campaign can be found at [FalconsCare.org](#).

- Over the summer, Cerritos College opened [The Village](#), **California's first community college housing development exclusively for students facing homelessness**. The Village is an innovative model that provides a safe place for community college students facing housing insecurity.
- [Falcon's Nest](#) provides centralized support services for students who need help with meeting their everyday needs. Students can access on- and off-campus resources.
- The College also distributed over **600 laptops, 100 hotspots** for internet access, gas cards, and metro passes to students in need.
- Through its partnership with the L.A. Regional Food Bank, Cerritos College hosts monthly food drives to help students and community members who need access to food and resources. The College's food drives have served more than **20,000 families** since 2017, and more than **10,000 families** since the pandemic.
- When students needed a safe, quiet place to focus on their studies, the Board of Trustees worked closely with College leadership to quickly establish a [study hall](#) equipped with free Wi-Fi.
- To avoid gaps in job training, the College safely re-opened on-campus instruction for students enrolled in programs that train first responders and essential personnel. Some of these programs include nursing, dental hygiene, culinary arts, and welding.

"We are fortunate to have a Board of Trustees that remains steadfast in its commitment to the health, safety, and success of our students and employees. With the Board's support and the help of our campus and community partners, we are providing our students with resources to ensure their success during these unprecedented times," said Dr. Fierro. "We will continue to develop and implement innovative programs and services to support our students as they continue their studies."

The Zoom recording of the 2020 State of the College will be available soon at <https://www.cerritos.edu/state-of-the-college/>

About Cerritos College: *Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college's district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and South Gate. Cerritos College offers degrees and certificates in more than 180 areas of study in nine divisions. Annually, more than 1,200 students successfully complete their course of studies. Enrollment currently averages 21,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at <http://www.cerritos.edu/>.*