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Cerritos College's Housing Project for Homeless Students is 2023 Excelencia Award Finalist

The Village housing is boosting student success

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NORWALK, Calif. – August 15, 2023 – Cerritos College was selected as a 2023 [Examples of Excelencia finalist](#) for The Village, an innovative housing project for its diverse student body. Opened in 2020, The Village is California's first community college housing program designed exclusively for students facing homelessness.

Three years after its grand opening, data shows that the college's efforts to address students' basic needs lead to higher success rates among its students. In addition to providing safe and secure housing, students who live at The Village receive wraparound support services including comprehensive education planning and financial literacy education. According to the college's Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning, and Grants, 40 percent of students who were housed at The Village received a degree or certificate in their first two years, compared to 15 percent among the general student population.

"We are honored to receive the 2023 Examples of *Excelencia* finalist recognition," said Cerritos College President/Superintendent Dr. Jose L. Fierro. "At Cerritos College, we know that when we invest in meeting our students' basic needs, we remove barriers to their education and help them to achieve upward social mobility. The results are clear, and the demand for student housing is high. We stand ready to scale up our existing housing program to meet the needs of our community."

Cerritos College is currently seeking state grant funding to build affordable on-campus student housing through the Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program. If funded, the college will immediately begin construction of affordable student housing units that can house over 400 students by 2026.

Examples of *Excelencia* is the only national effort to identify and promote evidence-based practices that help accelerate Latino student success in higher education. Through a yearlong process, *Excelencia* in Education identifies, reviews, and promotes programs at colleges and universities, as well as community-based organizations.

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/>.

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