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State of the College highlights value of a college degree to students and the community

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NORWALK, Calif. – April 1, 2024 – Cerritos College hosted its 2024 State of the College address on March 27. President/Superintendent Dr. Jose Fierro highlighted the college's purpose of uplifting students, employees, and communities.

Dr. Fierro presented the college's initiatives to provide a pathway for students and their families to reach the middle class and beyond. "Our students' annual income increases by approximately \$11,000 with an associate degree and \$30,000 with a bachelor's degree. Additionally, our career technical education program students' hourly wage increases by 60 percent after they complete their program," he said.



State of the College guests and speakers



Asm. Blanca Pacheco

Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco, a distinguished alumna of Cerritos College, delivered the keynote speech, underscoring the college's transformative impact on students' lives. Asm. Pacheco attributed her success to the dedicated faculty and mentors who helped her navigate her path, starting at Cerritos College. "I was inspired by my political science professors at Cerritos College, who fostered educational growth in me as they do for all of their students," she said.

Echoing Asm. Pacheco's sentiments, Dr. Fierro emphasized the college's endeavors to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty and staff dedicated to cultivating student success. He also emphasized the holistic services provided to students through the college's basic needs support program, [Falcon's Nest](#). Dr. Fierro shared that students who receive these services show higher success rates than the general student population.

The president highlighted the college's contribution to the regional economy by generating jobs and cultivating highly qualified graduates who enter the local workforce, which amounts to more than half a billion dollars annually. Showcasing a record-breaking achievement, he announced that the college awarded 6,325 degrees and certificates in 2023. This number exemplifies the college's dedication to enhancing the lives of residents in the region through education.

"A college education is the most reliable route to upward mobility. Our goal as your community college is to continuously explore new opportunities to meet our students' evolving needs and better serve our community," said Dr. Fierro.

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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President/Superintendent Dr. Jose Fierro