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## **Cerritos College earns Seal of *Excelencia* certification for its transformative work toward Latinx student success**

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**NORWALK, Calif. – October 1, 2024** – Cerritos College earned the prestigious Seal of *Excelencia* certification, recognizing its transformation in advancing Latinx student success. Cerritos College is now part of a collective of 46 certified institutions, making it the third community college in California to earn this achievement.

*Excelencia* in Education is a non-profit organization dedicated to accelerating Latinx student success in higher education by supporting successful strategies from institutions nationwide. Its Seal of *Excelencia* is a national certification for institutions that go beyond enrollment, intentionally serving Latinx students and creating scalable practices to transform higher education across all institutions.

As a Hispanic-Serving Institution with nearly a 70 percent Latinx student population, Cerritos College adopted a holistic approach to recognize the needs of our diverse student body. The college designed new paths for our community to enter high-wage and high-growth job markets so they can thrive after graduation. As a result, Cerritos College has more than tripled the number of degrees and certificates in the last decade, with our Latinx students' awards increasing by 179 percent.

"The colleges and universities that earn the Seal of *Excelencia* lead the charge in meeting our nation's degree attainment goals," said Deborah Santiago, co-founder and CEO of *Excelencia* in Education. "They demonstrate commitment to Latino student success through impact and ongoing self-assessment."

"This honor is a result of the hard work, dedication, and innovation from our Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, and community," said Cerritos College President/Superintendent Dr. Jose Fierro. "We hope it signals to our community that we are a premier institution, ready to support them in achieving their goals and upward social and economic mobility."

**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 nearly 300 degree and certificate programs in nine divisions. Annually, more than 5,000 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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