

COMMUNITY COLLEGES HONOR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

One California community college honored with Exemplary Program Award, two others selected as Honorable Mentions.

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—January 21, 2015—The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is pleased to announce that Bakersfield College has been selected to receive the 2014-2015 Exemplary Program Award for being the best embodiment of this year's theme, *Transitions from High School to College: Assisting Students in Meeting Their Educational Goals*. Additionally, Los Angeles Pierce College and Santa Barbara College have received Honorable Mention for this prestigious award. Each of these programs has improved student success and retention by assisting students with their transition to college.

Winner

Bakersfield College was selected to receive the Exemplary Program Award for its *Making it Happen* (MIH) mentoring program. MIH began as a holistic approach to better serve first-generation, economically disadvantaged students transitioning from rural high schools to college. The program assigns first-time, first-generation students to mentors who include faculty, classified staff, and administrators. The structure of MIH involves the entire college community (part- and full-time faculty, administrators, management, and classified employees) and allows the institution to operate collaboratively across departments and between instructional and student services professionals. The program strives to set students on a path to success by placing them in the highest appropriate level, which has increased the number of students placed into higher level courses and shortened basic skills pathways. These placements, combined with the last several years of basic skills curriculum revision, have saved students over 571 semesters of student work. “Because of the close contact with these students through the mentorship component, we have identified institutional problems which must be fixed, immediately, because they represent great barriers for our first-generation students.” stated Sonya Christian, President of Bakersfield College.

Los Angeles Pierce College earned an Honorable Mention for its *GO Days* (Get Oriented, Get Organized, Get Onboard) New Student Conference that assists new students by providing resources to help them acclimate and transition to the college environment. The GO Days conference brings together faculty and staff from around the college to support new students. A committee including administration, student services faculty, academic affairs faculty, and classified staff oversee the planning of a one- to two-day student conference that provides a unique way to help students transition to college without additional staff or other significant budgetary resources. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops on successful habits, study skills, transfer requirements, course selection, financial aid, and major selection prior to beginning their first semester. “The data consistently shows that students who attend GO Days have higher levels of persistence and retention, along with higher grade point averages and number of completed units, as compared to new students who do not attend” said Kathy Oborn, Academic Senate President of Pierce College. “The college hopes to expand GO

Days as we strive to have all our new students attend.” As part of Pierce College’s Achieving the Dream Strategy, GO Days have been integrated into basic skills, student equity, and student success and support program efforts.

Santa Barbara City College earned an Honorable Mention for its *Get Focused...Stay Focused!*TM (GFSF) initiative. The initiative evolved from the College’s Dual Enrollment Freshman Transition and Career Choices course that was initially funded by a grant from the Irvine Foundation. GFSF provides students with a pathway to post-secondary pursuits via dual enrollment and contextualized learning opportunities. Currently, the college offers more than 100 dual enrollment sections at the public high schools in the college’s area, serving more than 2,500 high school students each semester. While partnering with local high schools, Santa Barbara sought to address equity issues with a freshman transition class for all 9th graders, which is now a required course for graduation. “The [GFSF] initiative was designed to provide every student with the necessary information and experiences to develop essential college and career readiness skills,” said Kimberly Monda, Academic Senate President of Santa Barbara College. “Our college is proud of our Dual Enrollment Program, which we believe is one of the most dynamic and well-regarded programs in California.”

The Award recipients were honored at the January 21, 2015, Board of Governors’ meeting. The Award winner received a plaque and cash award of \$4,000 from the Foundation for California Community Colleges, and the Honorable Mention Award winners received a plaque.

For more information on these programs, please visit the Exemplary Award page on the Academic Senate website at <http://asccc.org/events/exemplary-program-award-0>.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is a nonprofit professional organization for the faculty of California community colleges. It serves 58,000 faculty members throughout the state who impact millions of students annually. For more information, visit its website at www.asccc.org.