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Irvine Valley College Joins 'Caring Campus Initiative' Launch Across the US

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Irvine Valley College (IVC) is one of 10 community colleges across the U.S. now hard at work with the **Institute for Evidence-Based Change** (IEBC) to incorporate the '**Caring Campus Initiative**' into their student success efforts for the fall 2019 semester.

Supported by IEBC coaching and guidance, staff teams at IVC are engaging in work developing specific behavioral commitments, helping staff to better connect with, and support, students to help them reach their educational goals.

Funded through a **\$1 million** grant from **Ascendium Education Group**, one of the nation's leading higher education philanthropies, the objective of IEBCs Caring Campus program is to increase student retention and success in community colleges by creating and cultivating Caring Campus environments through the intentional inclusion of all staff in student success efforts.

Under the grant, IEBC will work with 20 colleges across the U.S. including IVC over the next two years. Each campus agrees to participate in the Caring Campus Initiative, a coaching-based approach ensuring all staff play a role in enabling students to achieve success. The second group of 10 colleges will begin work in spring 2020.

"Who do students meet first on campus? It's the staff," said **Dr. Brad Phillips, IEBC President and CEO**. "With Caring Campus, they encounter a warm, welcoming, friendly environment with staff professionals who are glad they're there."

The Caring Campus approach covers a semester of intensive work with IEBC coaches who meet with staff teams, returning every three weeks. "You have to go back to your department, share what's happened, and then get feedback," said Dr. Phillips. "This is what starts the next meeting. 'What did we learn? What do we need to change?' They involve colleagues and supervisors. It's an intensive process."

"We're excited to bring Caring Campus to IVC," said **Amy Hunter, IVC Classified Senate President**. "We are pleased to have the support of our campus leadership and look forward to working across the college in a new model of connection to help students succeed," said Hunter.

"If we all work better, together, the overall campus environment will improve and the entire college community will be happier and more positive. This kind of change should help attract more students and boost our enrollment. If we can build a culture of caring for our students, we should improve student success metrics significantly," added **Glenn R.**

Roquemore, IVC College President.

"Caring Campus is designed to leverage and enhance a college's existing student success efforts, with little to no cost to the institution to implement these interventions," explained Dr. Phillips. "Smiles don't cost anything. Asking a student his or her name doesn't cost anything. You don't have to buy software, or build a building."

"Our Ascendium funded program is tapping an under-utilized resource for colleges. Staff will be forever changed in the way they see their role as they are integrated into student success efforts," said Dr. Phillips. "What happens: staff satisfaction goes up because they are making connections with students and their colleagues, connections that would have otherwise not been made."

Research has documented students leave college because they do not feel connected to the institution. Caring Campus recognizes and leverages the value of connectedness for increasing the likelihood that students will continue towards, and succeed in attaining, their educational goals.

Staff interaction with students can set the stage for successful enrollment, persistence, and completion. It is particularly important for students from historically underserved populations, students less familiar with college, non-majority students, students from low-income households, and first-generation students to feel welcome and that they belong in college.

Along with IVC, the fall 2019 Caring Campus colleges are:

Baltimore City College, Baltimore, MD

Delta College, University Center, MI

Eastern Gateway Community College, Steubenville, OH

Estrella Mountain Community College, Avondale, AZ

Hinds Community College, Raymond, MS

Maysville Community & Technical College, Maysville KY

Mountwest Community & Technical College, Huntington, WV

North Lake College, Irving, TX

Yakima Valley College, Yakima, WA

About IEBC and Ascendium:

IEBC is a nationally-recognized nonprofit organization dedicated to helping education stakeholders – K-12 school systems, community colleges, universities, employers and others – use evidence-based data, collaboration and coaching to make informed decisions and craft solutions that improve practice and dramatically increase student success through our

innovative approach. Learn more about IEBC at www.iebcnow.org.

Ascendium Education Group (formerly Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates) is the nation's largest federal student loan guarantor, a leading postsecondary education philanthropy and a provider of student success services for postsecondary institutions. Ascendium, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, provides information, tools and counseling to help millions of borrowers nationwide avoid default and keep the door to re-enrollment open. Ascendium's philanthropic mission is to elevate opportunities and outcomes for learners from low-income backgrounds so they can better achieve postsecondary educational and career success. To learn more, visit ascendiumeducation.org.

About Irvine Valley College:

Irvine Valley College draws more than 15,000 students a year. IVC is #1 in transfers to UC Irvine among all community colleges in California, and #1 in transfers to UCLA, UC Berkeley, UC San Diego, UC Davis, and UC Riverside among all Orange County community colleges. IVC also has among the highest rates of student transfers in the state, including to prestigious universities like Brown, Columbia, Caltech, Harvey Mudd, Penn, and USC. Initially established as a satellite campus, IVC became an independent institution in 1985, becoming the 105th California Community College. The college serves the residents of Irvine, Tustin, Laguna Beach, Newport Beach, Lake Forest, and surrounding communities, as well as international and online students. To learn more about Irvine Valley College, visit ivc.edu.

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