



**INSTITUTE for EVIDENCE-BASED CHANGE**  
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**Caring Campus**

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## **Seven Community Colleges Nationwide Join ‘Caring Campus Initiative’**

**San Diego, Calif.** - Seven community colleges have been selected as new participants in the “Caring Campus Initiative” led by the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC).

Funded by a second round of Ascendium Education Group (AEG) funding for 2020 following an initial grant in 2019. IEBC will focus on faculty and their non-academic role in increasing student success.

The objective of Caring Campus is to increase student retention and success in community colleges by creating and cultivating Caring Campus environments through intentional behaviors by faculty and staff to improve students’ sense of caring and connectedness to the college.

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, providing student support under the Caring Campus model becomes even more vital to student success than in normal times.

“This project realizes IEBC’s mission of improving student success and closing equity gaps,” said IEBC President and CEO Dr. Brad Phillips. “We hear a lot of words about meeting students where they are. Now we need to meet them in new ways.

“We at IEBC know colleges work hard in ordinary times to ensure student success in many ways. We believe with a new focus driven by the original Caring Campus mission, colleges can continue to engage with students and succeed in helping them stay connected in extraordinary times as well,” said Phillips.

### **Community colleges selected to participate are:**

Harry S Truman College, Chicago, IL  
Delta College, Bay City, MI  
Community College of Rhode Island, Warwick, RI  
Maysville College, Maysville, KY  
Oakton College, Des Plaines, IL  
North Lake College, Irving, TX  
Tulsa College, Tulsa, OK

Delta College, Maysville College, and North Lake College previously worked with IEBC as part of the first grant from Ascendium working with staff on “Caring Campus Initiative” programs.

Ascendium funding allows IEBC to work with two groups of seven colleges each in Caring Campus faculty initiatives. Each group will work with assigned IEBC coaches for one year.

Previous research has documented that students leave college because they do not feel connected to the institution (e.g., *Leaving College* by Vincent Tinto, 1993). Caring Campus recognizes and leverages the value of connectedness to increase the likelihood that students will continue towards, and succeed in attaining, their educational goals.

Faculty and 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.

This grant also supports IEBC's work with the Community College Research Center (CCRC) to better understand how the initiative works to change college culture and improve student outcomes.

#### **About the Institute for Evidence-Based Change**

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](http://www.iebcnow.org).

#### **About Ascendium Education Group**

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'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](http://ascendiumeducation.org).