

October 12, 2020

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IEBC Establishes Caring Campus Racial Equity Advisory Council

LONG BEACH, Calif. – The Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) has launched a re-examination of its Caring Campus initiative through the context of racial equity issues in higher education with the formation of its new Racial Equity Advisory Council.

Caring Campus is about coaching college faculty and staff to implement intentional and campus-wide behaviors that increase student engagement and connectedness which lead to improvements in racial equity and increased student success for all.

The purpose of the Council is to provide a forum for national experts to advise IEBC on how to ensure racial equity issues are appropriately integrated in, and addressed by, Caring Campus work, its implementation and follow-up activities.

Council co-chairs are Dr. Omero Suarez, retired chancellor of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (San Diego County), and Dr. Jamillah Moore, President of Cañada College (San Mateo County).

Also serving as Council members:

Loretta Adriane, President, Coastline Community College (Orange County, California)
Audrey Dow, Senior Vice President, Campaign for College Opportunity
Maya Evans, Director of Growth Strategies, University of Wisconsin – Madison
Soon Flynn, Former Director of Research, Austin Community College (Texas)
Edward Leach, Executive Director, National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD)
Lauren Sanders, Chaffey College student; Black Caucus California Community Colleges President
Rick Ramos, Educational Consultant, Director of Educational and Career Technical Program Support, Legacy1media
Toya Wall, Program Officer, Ascendium Education Group
Robert Vela, President, San Antonio College (Texas)

“The growing movement seeking racial justice in the wake of multiple tragic events and their ensuing responses across the nation highlight the inequities in our postsecondary educational systems,” said Brad C. Phillips, IEBC CEO. “It leads Black students and other marginalized groups to question educators’ commitment to these students’ success. This new Council will support IEBC in re-examining our Caring Campus program through this lens.

“We have brought together knowledgeable people from a variety of backgrounds to help IEBC determine whether our approach is recognizing today’s reality as it affects the college connection for all students, particularly students of color,” said Phillips.

“Engaging in thoughtful dialogue about diversity and equity is vital to creating inclusive institutional cultures that lead to successful outcomes for all students,” said Dr. Suarez. “We must now continue the work of transforming institutions through meaningful engagement and collaboration.”

The United States is becoming more diverse, and the higher education setting is no exception. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, approximately 45 percent of community college students identify themselves as Black, Latinx, Asian, Native American, and mixed race. In contrast, less than 25 percent of faculty members are people of color. This has created a dearth of faculty role models and lack of faculty familiar with the psychosocial challenges these students encounter.

“If we are going to eliminate institutional racism in higher education, we must start with allies and those who have benefited from their privilege to change and contribute to a more open, diverse and inclusive society. We can only accomplish this by starting from within our organizations,” said Dr. Moore.

Research has documented students leaving 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 interactions with students can set the stage for successful enrollment, persistence, and completion.

It is particularly important for students from historically underserved populations including non-majority students, students less familiar with college, students from low-income households, and first-generation students to feel welcome and that they belong in college.

Unlike typical one-and-done professional development, Caring Campus coaches help faculty and professional staff identify and implement behaviors they can commit to intentionally and campus-wide to foster this vital connection between themselves and their students.

About the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC)

IEBC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping education stakeholders – community colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, employers and others – use coaching, collaboration and data to make informed decisions and craft solutions that improve practice and dramatically increase student success. We partner with our clients to successfully implement customized evidence-based solutions to today’s most pressing issues. Learn more about IEBC at www.iebcnow.org.