

Napa Valley College Participates in California ‘Caring Campus’ Initiative

NAPA CA, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020 – Napa Valley College is one of 18 California community colleges selected to work with the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) to incorporate the ‘Caring Campus’ initiative’ into its student success efforts this year. Despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic on higher education, Napa Valley College is committed to implementing its college-specific Caring Campus approach to student success.

Participants in the Caring Campus initiative adopt a coaching-based approach ensuring all staff play a role in enabling students to achieve success. Currently, one-third of all California’s community colleges are participating in IEBC’s program. One in ten community colleges nationwide is located in California.

Funded through a grant from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO), the objective of IEBC’s 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.

Napa Valley College hosted its first work session on September 10, 2020, with 15 Classified Professionals, representing each main area of the college (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Administrative Services). Dr. Brad Phillips, president, founder and chief executive officer of the IEBC, as well as founder of the California Partnership for Achieving Student Success (Cal-PASS), convened the first of four meetings with Classified Professional employees, and participants discussed what it means to be a caring campus, and began work towards creating general, as well as department-specific commitments to articulate these ideals.

During its first meeting, the team developed three behavioral commitments for virtual and in-person, intended to help staff better connect with, and support, each and every student to help them reach their educational goals. During the next three meetings, Classified Professional employees will develop a monitoring plan, a communication plan and an implementation plan. In spring 2021, the team will implement the behavioral commitments college-wide.

“The Caring Campus initiative supports Napa Valley College equity efforts by creating a campus where all students—including those traditionally underrepresented—feel connected and cared for,” said Dr. Kraft, superintendent/president of Napa Valley College. “The core of this work is understanding students’ perspectives when interacting with them in the classroom, in an office, or anywhere on campus. I am excited that Napa Valley College’s excellent Classified Professionals want to lead by example and to support the college in improving its student success efforts.”

“Caring Campus directly connects to our strategic planning goals — to equip incoming students with the skills and resources needed for college success; to expand career development leading to meaningful work with sustaining wages; to increase retention, graduation and transfer rates; and to achieve equity in these outcomes and promote equity-mindedness,” added Dr. Kraft.

“Our CCCCCO funded program is tapping an under-utilized resource for colleges,” said Dr. Phillips. “At a time when connection is more valued than ever, more necessary than ever, Caring Campus can help colleges continue to engage with students and succeed in helping them stay connected in extraordinary circumstances.”

“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 Phillips, “Making the effort to personally connect with a student doesn’t cost anything. You don’t have to buy software or build a building.”

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 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. Christina Rivera, NVC training & development manager, serves as the onsite coordinator for the Caring Campus initiative and as liaison to IEBC.

About Napa Valley College

Napa Valley College prepares students for evolving roles in a diverse, dynamic, and interdependent world. The college is an accredited open-access, degree- and certificate-granting institution that is committed to student achievement through high-quality programs and services that are continuously evaluated and improved. The college serves students and the community in the following areas: transfer courses, career-technical education and training, basic skills, and self-supporting contract education and community education classes. Napa Valley College is located at 2277 Napa-Vallejo Highway in Napa. Learn more at napavalley.edu.

About the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC)

IEBC is a nationally-recognized nonprofit organization dedicated to helping education stakeholders — community colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, staff, faculty, students, employers and others — use coaching, collaboration and data 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 or contact IEBC at info@iebcnow.org.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Holly Dawson
707-256-7112
holly.dawson@napavalley.edu

Dana Quittner, Communications Director, IEBC
619-206-5738
dquittner@iebcnow.org