

## Creating a Culture of Caring Benefits Staff and Students Alike

Throughout her career in education, from her days as an anthropology instructor and institutional researcher to her current role as president of Barstow Community College, Dr. Eva Bagg has a longstanding working relationship with IEBC President/CEO Dr. Brad Phillips. Phillips' approach to making data accessible to help educators improve outcomes "was exactly what I needed," recalls Dr. Bagg.



Dr. Bagg and her team have completed work on significant curriculum updates, and are integrating the Guided Pathways approach. When Dr. Bagg learned about IEBC's latest initiative, Caring Campus, she knew it would be a good fit for the college's culture. "I have a great deal of respect for Brad and Jordan (Horowitz, IEBC Vice President)... It was so timely for me in this new position, trying to continue to guide the culture (at Barstow) that's really all about Caring Campus," said Dr. Bagg.

Horowitz worked with Barstow's key leaders and classified staff through three coaching sessions. Dr. Bagg said she knew for the classified staff to embrace the approach, "it had to be well done, so the data wouldn't make peoples' eyes glaze over.

Dr. Bagg received enthusiastic reviews. "(Staff) loved the homework – everyone is tired of committees and not getting things done. The framework, it was so structured you really can't help but come out with behavioral changes. That's

the kind of work, that's the space where Jordan is living and trying to make changes.

"I really appreciate Jordan's style of coaching. It's so genuine. It reflects my philosophy... He elevated the staff voice, respected them, and supported them," said Dr. Bagg. "People were excited. They felt respected, and their ideas have become clear action plans. It's been organic. They felt good they could accomplish so much in a short amount of time.

"I love the way it's structured, that it happens quickly and you have an end product you can roll out and start doing. I'm a strong advocate and see great promise. I encourage people to learn more about what it is," concluded Dr. Bagg. Dr. Bagg said classified staff are now working proactively to request the tools and resources they need to implement the program, "a real collaboration to making it happen for students," said Dr. Bagg.

An unanticipated outcome of IEBC's work with Barstow Community College has been an improved professional relationship between the college administration and the classified staff's leaders. "It helped us build trust," said Dr. Bagg.

As the college prepares for the fall semester, Dr. Bagg said she will integrate the Caring Campus steps into the all-campus 'in service' program to start the school year as part of shared college initiatives.

“Caring Campus provides validation for the work we are already doing... it validates the attitude and desire that has been largely successful already. People want to take it to another level,” said Dr. Bagg. “(Caring Campus) helps me to balance efforts that support the work of faculty as well as the critical contributions of classified staff. It requires the whole college. It helps to make the argument easier for me. Caring Campus also helped me with validating the role of classified staff as part of Guided Pathways.”

Dr. Bagg summarized how Caring Campus supports her approach to improving student success: “I’m always reading about transformational change. What are the conditions to make this work happen? The whole notion of care sounds so soft and weak when transforming culture. But it’s not such a wimpy idea after all. When are we best able to transform students’ lives? Creating a culture of care is very powerful and can help an institution transform.”

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*Dr. Eva Bagg, President of Barstow College, was interviewed by IEBC June 2019.*

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