BC Alumni Association Ramps Up Efforts

The Bakersfield College Alumni Association board of directors has been hard at work to grow the governing board and put plans into effect to boost outreach and engagement efforts with fellow Renegade Alumni. The Bakersfield College Alumni Association was formed in 1946 and recently there has been a resurgence of action! The group is evaluating membership benefits and association activities, and they are planning events to connect alumni with each other and to the campus and, as a result, to foster that Renegade Pride!

At the October meeting, a slate of officers was elected and 12 new board members were selected. The BC Alumni Association board of directors is comprised of Becki Whitson (President), Alex Dominguez (Vice President), Bob Meadows (Treasurer), Sally Hill (Secretary), Ali Bakoo, Christine Alburger, Clayton Fowler, Heather Spring, Holly Arnold, Jay Boydston, Mary Jones, Mary Trichell, Mitchell Patel, NaTesha "T" Johnson, Rob Parsons, and Sandy Woo-Cater.

If you ever attended BC, please visit www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/alumni/join-alumni-association to join the BC Alumni Association. For more information or to get involved, contact Heather Pennella, Alumni & Donor Relations Manager, heather.pennella@bakersfieldcollege.edu.
From the Executive Director

Support from Alums and Community Abound!

Work continues full speed ahead at the BC Foundation, even as we continue to spend most of our time off campus, offering “assistance from a distance,” as our team likes to say. We aren’t missing a beat, pandemic or not!

Community Honors Local Icons Through Contributions to BC Foundation

Bakersfield recently lost two local icons who were also BC alums. Herb Walker and David Young Milazzo were both graduates of Bakersfield College who went on to significantly impact our community, Herb through the creation of Herb Walker’s Clothing (now called H. Walker’s), and David through his architecture that continues to define much of Bakersfield’s landscape. Herb and David’s families generously requested that friends contribute to the BC Foundation in lieu of sending flowers. Thank you, Tracy Walker Kiser and Linda Milazzo. Students’ lives will be impacted because of your generosity!

Foundation Team to Move into Campus Center Building

The Foundation team is especially excited to see construction on the new Campus Center building approach completion! For the past several years, the Foundation has operated out of Levinson Hall, the old residence halls. We’ll soon be moving into the Campus Center building, just one of 14 current projects funded by Measure J! We hope you will stop by and say hello after COVID-19 is behind us!

Debbie Zuech Retires

Finally, please join me in wishing Debbie Zuech well as she retires after 23 years of service to Bakersfield College. Debbie worked in various departments during her time at BC, beginning as assistant to Dr. Chuck Wall, and spending the past 10 years with the Foundation. Best wishes to you, Debbie. We will miss you!

And to you, our friends and supporters, I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!

Cheryl
Cheryl Scott
Chevron's Support Continues to Impact Bakersfield College

Bakersfield College has been the beneficiary of nearly 35 years and over $1.5 million dollars of philanthropy from Chevron, and the partnership continues to grow and serve the students of Bakersfield College. This year in particular, Chevron demonstrated their deep commitment to higher education through their flexibility and concern for our students.

As Bakersfield College transitioned to a virtual learning environment in March 2020, Chevron reached out with a “can-do” attitude and was instrumental in re-allocating funding to purchase technology to help STEM students stay on course to continue their classes. “Without question, we always know we can count on Chevron. The company was already instrumental in providing state-of-the-art STEM education at BC, but they really have come through for us during the pandemic,” Cheryl Scott, BC Foundation Executive Director said.

Chevron gives to the college annually, focusing on STEM initiatives and programs. On top of that, many local Chevron employees put their human energy to work, by serving on advisory boards for campus departments, contributing to STEM camps, and mentoring students. “Through our partnership with Bakersfield College, students across Kern County are able to access a quality STEM education, even during challenging times. As we look ahead to the future of our community, it is important we remain focused on continuing to develop the next generation of innovators and problem solvers.” Gina Pettit, Community Engagement Advisor for Chevron in Kern County. Chevron’s community giving program helps BC reach local middle and high school students, and demonstrates the positive impact that education - and STEM jobs - can have on their lives.

Chevron has been operating in Kern County for over a century, and is recognized as the #1 property tax payer in the county. Chevron’s local social investments impact over 50 nonprofits annually. Chevron offers a robust employee giving matching program. Chevron employees volunteered over 8,000 hours in 2019, and hosted several events to introduce local nonprofits to their employees to encourage volunteerism and financial support.
Contreras Family Foundation: Unity Through Giving

The Contreras Family Foundation, a 30-year supporter of BC-bound high school seniors, is partnering with Bakersfield College to offer three new $1,000 scholarships that will be awarded for the 2021/2022 academic year. Since 2006, the Contreras Family Foundation has contributed $30,000 to BC students. This recent pledge is for $40,000.

The Contreras family was established in Kern County back in 1889, when Carmen “Nani” Araujo married Vicente “Cito” Contreras. Since then, the family has grown to include more than 400 people and seven generations.

From the first family reunion in 1979 to the most recent in 2019, the Contreras family has been committed to family and the benefits that can be provided by giving back to communities within Kern County. According to Contreras Family Foundation Board Member and Scholarship Coordinator, Renee Johnson, “The Contreras Foundation was founded to award college scholarships to Kern County students based upon need, grit and determination. In the last 10 years, we have distributed over $70,000. We practice family unity through giving.”

The newly established opportunity is available to incoming, returning, and transfer students at Bakersfield College with a minimum GPA of 2.5 who demonstrate financial need. Applicants also need to submit an essay and a letter of recommendation to be considered. The application for The Contreras Family Foundation Scholarship, and all other BC scholarships can be found at bakersfieldcollege.edu/Apply4Money.

Scholarship Application Season Opens

Bakersfield College is proud to offer nearly 300 unique scholarship opportunities, totaling close to $500,000 in funds to incoming, returning, and transfer students. Students can apply for hundreds of scholarships with a single and simple online application. Applications for the 2021-2022 academic year are open until February 1st, 2021.

November was National Scholarship Month and The Bakersfield College Office of Financial Aid hosted four (4) virtual scholarship workshops, LIVE on Facebook, to help students with the application process. Scholarship funding is made possible through generous private and corporate donations and endowed funds established through the Bakersfield College Foundation.

If you know someone who would benefit from one of BC’s scholarships, encourage them to visit: https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/apply4money.
Foundation Links Campus with Local Project Management Professionals

The BC Foundation may be best known for rallying and shepherding financial support for the College, but its partnership with BC goes far beyond that! In many ways, the Foundation expands the College’s connection to individuals, organizations, and employers that can help BC create and augment programming that is in alignment with the community’s current needs.

One developing relationship is with the Project Management Institute’s California Central Valley Chapter. This fall, the Foundation sponsored and helped plan the group’s annual Professional Development Day. The virtual, day-long event brought together project management professionals from local industries including energy, health care, education, and more. Foundation ED Cheryl Scott emceed the event, and BC’s Vice President of Administration and Finance, Mike Giacomini, presented a session on the challenges and opportunities of managing multiple publicly-funded projects simultaneously.

After the event, Cheryl and BC’s Maryam Farahani (engineering faculty and long-time member and former board member of PMI), and Interim Career & Technical Education Dean Tony Cordova created an exploratory committee including Jason Dixon and Paul Murray from the Industrial Automation Department. The team met with local PMI chapter board members to discuss how BC might integrate PMI principles into current classes, along with how to give students the chance to learn from, and maybe even work with, local project managers.

If you are interested in helping BC students prepare for a successful career and/or transfer to a university, please let us know! Perhaps you can place one or more students in an internship, or maybe you’d like to participate on an advisory council to help ensure curriculum is relevant to current industry practices.

If you’re interested in lending your professional expertise, please call the Foundation office at (661) 395-4800 and we’ll put you in touch with the right people on campus!
Campus is Alive with Measure J-Funded Construction Activity

Most college campuses throughout the state are quiet as student learning is being conducted virtually, but that’s not the case at Bakersfield College! The BC campus is a frenzy of construction activity as a variety of Measure J projects are simultaneously marching toward completion.

When voters approved the $502 million Measure J four years ago, they made a commitment to education and to the future students of the Bakersfield, Cerro Coso, and Porterville Colleges. The pandemic hasn't slowed progress at BC; in fact, the project management team has taken advantage of the opportunity to accelerate certain elements of construction.

“Even though this Pandemic has forced the College to change many of the traditional ways we deliver education and student services, the construction with Measure J and maintenance projects have carried on. There have even been some cases where not having students on campus has enabled us to do some projects that we just could never seem to find the time with class scheduling to complete,” said Mike Giacomini, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services.

The Vernon Valenzuela Veterans Resource Center and several parking lot and infrastructure projects (plumbing, electrical, air conditioning) are already complete. The new Campus Center (where the Foundation, Student Government, the bookstore, a 400-seat conference center and other administrative offices will be located) is nearing completion. The adjacent Dining Commons will be finished in the spring.

Other current projects include:

- **Science & Engineering Building** - This 67,000 sq. ft. building will house state-of-the-art laboratory space that will help prepare students for careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) is currently in construction.

- **Memorial Stadium** – Phase 1 included the replacement of the football field turf to a synthetic field surface and the track and related event field have been upgraded as well. Phase 2 is in the final stages of construction with improvements to the restrooms, concessions, stadium lighting, electrical infrastructure, new scoreboard and PA system.

- **The Delano Learning Center**, **the new Gym/Fieldhouse**, **the BC Welcome Center**, and **the Administrative Services Center** are all being reviewed by the Division of the State Architect (DSA).

- **The Agriculture Building** (featuring a quad with greenhouses, a horticulture shop, and a mechanized agriculture lab) are currently in design.

- **The 31-acre Arvin Campus** is currently in design.

If you'd like to follow the progress on BC’s Measure J projects, visit [www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/abetterbc](http://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/abetterbc).
Panorama Feature: Your BC Story
In every issue of Panorama we will be highlighting a few of our proud BC alums. You can share "Your Story" at https://www.supportbc.org/tell-us-your-bc-story/

Paula Reynal-Class of 2016

I attended BC from 2012 to 2016, during which time I pursued 3 majors: History, Political Science and Anthropology. The faculty at BC had a lasting impact on me. I am now on my way to grad school in D.C. and it is partly due my professors at BC setting me up for success. Professor Stratton made history fun and engaging. Professor Moreland made anthropology come to life through her lectures. Professor Reggie Williams made us question ourselves and everything around us. Last but not least, Professors Holmes and Borgens set me on the path I am on now.

Starting this Fall I will be pursuing an MA in International Affairs at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. I have the BC faculty, as well as CSUB faculty, to thank for helping me pursue my dream career in diplomacy.

I grew up in Bakersfield and graduated from South High School in 1981. Even though I graduated with honors, my grades weren’t good enough for me to earn any scholarships. That, coupled with my parents' financial situation, meant that BC was my only option for college. That was a good thing for a few reasons: 1) I was not ready for a 4-year college, 2) I was not ready to go away to school, and 3) I had Carol Cunningham Ruiz for my English 1A instructor.

Carol was a demanding instructor with high expectations. I remember getting 97/100 on a test and her telling me that I should have gotten all of the answers correct. I said to her, “Why, do you think I’m smart or something?” She looked at me fiercely and said, "Yes!" That exchange changed my self-perspective and, as a result, I worked harder, got better grades, and was accepted at Cal Poly, SLO.

Carol had a profoundly positive impact on my life so, when I returned to BC a decade later as an adjunct professor, I earned the reputation of being a demanding instructor with high expectations.

Carol and my other instructors at BC taught me how to be a student. Thus, when the time came that I could attend a 4-year college out of town, I was ready.

Robin Paggi-Class of 1983
Get to know the BC Foundation Team

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