



Press Release

For Immediate Release:
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Assemblywoman Presents Bell Gardens High with \$5,000 Grant from Barona Tribe for College Center Technology

MONTEBELLO – Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia took the stage Sept. 22 during Bell Gardens High’s Back to School Night to present a \$5,000 grant check from the Barona Band of Mission Indians to fund new technology for its College Center, a computer-equipped classroom where students receive guidance and encouragement when pursuing their higher education dreams.

Many Bell Gardens High students come to school early or stay late after school to use computers, Wi-Fi and other resources they might not have at home. The College Center, which opened last year, gives all students a place to apply for college, find scholarships and ask questions.

"We are beyond grateful for this College Center grant," BGHS senior Christopher Perez said. "Seniors are in here daily, getting help from our college counselor throughout the whole process. This new equipment will help us get the assistance we need."

Tracy Brendzal, a college counselor at Bell Gardens High, opened the College Center and jumped at the opportunity to provide students with more equipment that will help them achieve their goals.

"Having a College Center on campus is ideal for helping students pursue higher education," Brendzal said. "Many of our students are not only first-generation high school graduates, but also the first ones in their family to attend college. Being able to provide that support and guidance to our students as they navigate through the college-going process is not only essential, but pivotal to their success."

Bell Gardens High plans to use the grant to purchase a laser jet printer, Officejet printer/scanner, three laptops and an iPad Air 2 for students to use in the College Center.

Garcia, a Bell Gardens High alumna, contacted the school about the Barona tribe’s grant program at the end of the 2015-16 school year and offered to endorse an application for funding. The tribe awards these grants with the belief that education is the key to a successful cultural relationship and foundation for society’s future.

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Montebello Unified School District is a dynamic learning institution employing top-quality educators. It is the combined work of many that allows the District to continue educating more than 30,000 students every year using the 40 Developmental Assets at all of our school sites. It is through everyone’s efforts – students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators – that we are achieving the District’s number one goal of raising student achievement. Learn more online at www.montebello.k12.ca.us.

“Montebello Unified is so fortunate to have alumni like Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia, who always strive to return to their alma mater and give back,” Superintendent Susanna Contreras Smith said. “The additional technology at Bell Gardens High’s College Center is going to allow our school to further support students in following their higher education endeavors.”

PHOTO CAPTION

092616_MUSD_GRANT: Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia and Bell Gardens High college counselor Tracy Brendzal hold a certificate dedicated to Brendzal in the high school’s College Center on Sept. 22. Garcia joined the Lancers during Back to School Night, where she delivered a \$5,000 check for new College Center technology and commended Brendzal on her dedication to motivating and helping students get into college.

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