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Caring Campus

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Caring Campus Comes to Texas A&M University – Kingsville, Building a Culture of Care for Students

LONG BEACH, CA – The Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) is bringing [Caring Campus](#) to Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK), the first university to adopt the program as IEBC expands its reach to establish a culture of care on campuses nationwide. TAMUK joins the more than one hundred community colleges across the country who have implemented Caring Campus at their institutions, thereby improving student connectedness and boosting their determination to succeed.

Data shows that if students do not feel connected to the institution they attend, they are far less likely to persist and graduate. With that in mind, IEBC has developed its Caring Campus program to increase students' sense of belonging and increase student success for all students.

Caring Campus coaches will train TAMUK professional staff on the fundamentals of how to increase student connectedness to their college, which has been shown to increase retention, persistence, and academic performance. Coaches will also help TAMUK departments and divisions develop plans and behavioral commitments to implement campus-wide.

“Our ‘north star’ at TAMUK is student success, and Caring Campus will help to ensure every aspect of our behaviors and attitudes align with this mission,” TAMUK President Dr. Robert Vela said. “Caring Campus will help us develop specific plans and priorities that staff and faculty can be all-in on to ensure students feel cared for and equipped to achieve their academic and personal goals.”

Dr. Vela first saw the benefits and impact of Caring Campus when he brought the program to San Antonio Community College in 2020, where he served as the school's president. Dr. Vela said he was impressed by how the program served students from diverse backgrounds and how it moved the school's strategic plan forward.

Now at TAMUK, Dr. Vela is looking forward to implementing the program to not only deepen connections to the school for students from all parts of the United States and the world, but also to intentionally reach those in the university's own backyard.

“Being a rural and diverse college, it's incredibly important for us to establish a framework that serves all students and meets them where they are,” Dr. Vela said. “We want to ensure we are empowering our staff and faculty so they are prepared to welcome students and make them feel like this university is their home.”

Caring Campus helps colleges transform their campus culture into one where students feel a sense of belonging and connectedness, ensuring every student has the opportunities, resources, and support to achieve their goals. Dr. Vela said that the program will help TAMUK staff and faculty continue to build a campus-wide culture of excellence for all students.

“We are honored to welcome TAMUK as our first Caring Campus university, and we can’t wait to see how the program will help them transform their campus culture,” IEBC President and Chief Executive Officer Brad Phillips said. “We are thrilled to now offer Caring Campus at the university level, and we look forward to the continued expansion of our mission in creating a culture of care on campuses nationwide.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

IEBC_TAMUK1: (From left to right) Chief of Performance Excellence and Strategy at Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK) Dr. Kristina Ramirez Wilson, IEBC President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Brad Phillips, Caring Campus Coach Dr. Loredana Carson, and TAMUK President Dr. Robert Vela gather at the Caring Campus kick-off on Dec. 12. Dr. Vela chose to bring Caring Campus to TAMUK to train faculty and staff in the best practices to support students from all backgrounds as they work toward their educational, professional, and personal goals.

IEBC_TAMUK2: Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK) President Dr. Robert Vela listens to a Caring Campus presentation at the kick-off meeting on Dec. 12. TAMUK is the first university to join Caring Campus, which coaches faculty and staff in establishing a culture of care on campus to support student success.

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