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## **Vincent Tinto to Inspire National Conversation on Student Belonging at Caring Campus Conference**

**LONG BEACH, CA** – Dr. Vincent Tinto, one of the nation’s most influential scholars on student success and belonging in higher education, will keynote the inaugural [Caring Campus Conference: Building a National Culture of Care](#) this November in San Diego.

As Distinguished University Professor Emeritus at Syracuse University and former Chair of the Higher Education Program, Tinto has dedicated his career to advancing research on student persistence and the power of connection to transform college experiences and improve student outcomes. In distilling the research on college retention, Tinto found student success could be captured by two simple thoughts: students must want to persist – that is, be motivated to persist – and they must have or acquire the ability to persist.

“I have always been intrigued by what influences student motivation and the question of what institutions can reasonably do to influence their motivation,” Tinto said. “One of the key factors is a sense of belonging. Students must know that they matter and that they have value and a voice.”

As a first-generation student and son of Italian immigrants, Tinto has long been interested in the idea of student retention and success. While pursuing a doctorate in physics, he decided to drop out after experiencing a strong sense of isolation on campus. He joined the Peace Corps, serving for two years in Turkey before returning to pursue a doctorate in Education and Sociology at the University of Chicago. There, his advisor asked him to develop a report on student retention – a project that became the lynchpin of his lifelong work.

Tinto went on to write two influential books on student success and institutional policy – *Leaving College* and *Completing College* – which remain foundational texts in higher education. Over the course of his career, he has shared his research across the globe, speaking in countries from Australia and New Zealand, to Chile, South Africa, Norway, and beyond.

“Developing a true Caring Campus is more than just helping students graduate,” Tinto said. “It’s about creating an environment in which students not only achieve academically, but are enriched and empowered to succeed in a welcoming, supportive community.”

In addition to Tinto’s keynote, the Caring Campus Conference will feature Dr. Peter Felten, another leading educational theorist who has spent decades researching the power of human connection in higher education. The conference will also include approximately 35 presentations from Caring Campus colleges and universities across the nation, spanning four distinct strands: staff, faculty, leadership, and researchers.

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“I am most excited to learn from others at the Caring Campus Conference,” Tinto said. “It’s incredibly valuable to have the chance to talk across boundaries, engage with new perspectives, and ensure that every voice is heard. That is one of the things I’ll be emphasizing in my own presentation.”

The inaugural conference will bring together national leaders, researchers, and practitioners who are reshaping higher education through connection, care, and belonging. [Registration for the conference is open](#), with early-bird pricing available through Sept. 30.

“Having Vince Tinto as a keynote speaker is a tremendous honor,” the Institute for Evidence-Based Change CEO and founder Dr. Brad Phillips said. “His work has shaped how colleges and universities around the world think about belonging, persistence, and success. There is no better scholar to help us engage with this national conversation about fostering campuses that truly care for students.”

#### PHOTO CAPTION:

**IEBC\_TINTO1:** Dr. Vincent Tinto, one of the nation’s most influential scholars on student success and belonging in higher education, will keynote the inaugural Caring Campus Conference: Building a National Culture of Care this November in San Diego.

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