

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 27, 2026

CONTACT: Katie Emerson

(909) 324-0345

katharine.emerson@vmapr.com

Los Angeles Pierce College Strengthens Human Connection Through Caring Campus

LONG BEACH, CA – Faculty and staff at Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC) are strengthening a culture centered on human connection, embracing Caring Campus as a framework for intentionally supporting students at a time when higher education is increasingly shaped by technology.

Motivated by a desire to improve student persistence, retention, and success, LAPC made the strategic decision to invest institutional funds to implement Caring Campus campuswide, a commitment rooted in reconnecting students and employees following the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We chose to invest institutional funds to go all-in, spark cultural change on our campus, and meet students where they’re at,” LAPC President Aracely Aguiar said. “Caring Campus is unique because it can grow from every direction of our campus: top down, bottom up, and peer to peer. It doesn’t have to wait for one area to move to succeed; it’s truly organic.”

Since launching Caring Campus, LAPC has focused on empowering employees across departments to model caring behaviors and strengthen everyday student interactions. One such strategy is through an Ambassadors Program, made up of approximately 50 staff members who serve as leaders within their departments by modeling Caring Campus behaviors.

“Caring Campus has been an invitation for our employees to engage differently with students,” Aguiar said. “Many employees have realized they can do more within their roles – not just directing students somewhere, but walking alongside them, having conversations, and creating meaningful connections.”

LAPC capitalizes on the Caring Campus momentum by hosting ongoing orientations for both staff and faculty, highlighting campus behaviors and instructional behaviors that foster welcoming and supportive learning environments.

Those efforts are reflected in the experiences of students across campus, including Early Childhood Education major Esbii Pereira Almanza, who is in her third year at LAPC.

“I had so much trouble finding a college where I could enroll, and when I arrived at Pierce, multiple staff members in the International Students Office took the time to help me through every step,” Pereira Almanza said. “That very first moment of welcoming was what attracted me to this college.”

Pereira Almanza said faculty and staff continued to check in throughout her academic journey, offering guidance, encouragement, and reassurance as she navigated college as an international student.

MORE

“One day I was running across campus trying to find my classroom and feeling completely overwhelmed,” Pereira Almanza said. “Then someone from the International Students Office called my name and helped me calm down and get where I needed to go. It was such a relief that someone knew me by name and cared about me. Moments like that, along with professors taking the time to motivate and help me, make me feel like I truly belong here.”

LAPC’s progress recently earned the college its Caring Campus Bronze-Level Certification, recognizing its intentional efforts to embed care into daily campus practices while continuing to pursue growth.

“It was important for us to see how we measured up against standards of excellence,” Aguiar said. “Earning bronze shows how far we’ve come, but it also reminds us there’s always more we can do. We don’t want to become complacent. We want to keep improving and raising the bar for how we serve students.”

Looking ahead, LAPC leaders envision Caring Campus becoming even further embedded into the college’s identity, from onboarding new employees to everyday campus interactions.

“Los Angeles Pierce does an outstanding job of connecting with students on a human level while advancing systemic change across the institution,” Caring Campus Founder and CEO Dr. Brad Phillips said. “Their commitment to continuous improvement and student success truly reflects what Caring Campus is all about.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

IEBC_LAPIERCE1: Faculty and staff at Los Angeles Pierce College are strengthening a culture centered on human connection, embracing Caring Campus as a framework for intentionally supporting students.

IEBC_LAPIERCE2: Since launching Caring Campus, Los Angeles Pierce College has focused on empowering employees across departments to model caring behaviors and strengthen everyday student interactions.

###



(562) 688-5721



iebcnow.org



3711 Long Beach Blvd., Suite 6044 | Long Beach, CA 90807