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## Temple College Boosts Student Success Through Caring Campus

**LONG BEACH, CA** – Temple College has seen a dramatic increase in student engagement in part by integrating tools and strategies that staff and faculty learned through Caring Campus, which helps educational institutions create welcoming and supportive campuses to promote success of all students.

The Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) created Caring Campus to provide higher education institutions with the knowledge and tactics to increase students' feelings of connectedness on campus, thereby improving overall persistence, retention, and graduation rates. Temple College credits Caring Campus as a contributing force in their student population reaching a full-time majority, with 52% of students enrolled full-time in 2022, compared to 46% in 2020.

"Caring Campus has profoundly transformed our campus, empowering staff and faculty to embrace tangible, research-backed practices for student engagement and seamlessly integrate them into our supportive environment," Temple College President Dr. Christy Ponce said. "I have loved seeing the major shift that has come out of Caring Campus and how our employees are sprinkling personalized creativity into the strategies they develop."

As a result of Caring Campus, faculty have adopted a proactive approach, implementing the "Caught You Caring" campaign. This campaign involves faculty members surprising their colleagues with personalized cards, acknowledging their commitment to upholding the principles of Caring Campus. These "Caught You Caring" nominations are then considered by the "Fun Fairies," who choose one Caring Campus Champion every month and surprise them with an assortment of goodies.

"What's most inspiring about these efforts is that it's not just a few people carrying it," Shannon Bralley, Associate Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management said. "Faculty and staff alike are collaborating with people outside of their departments to recognize each other for the great work they're doing in making students feel cared for and seen."

Rebekah House is in her second semester at Temple College, where she is studying diagnostic medical sonography to become an ultrasound technician. House said there have been countless staff and faculty members who have made her feel supported, cared for, and loved.

"So many people have impacted my life here at Temple, both in my academics and my personal life," House said. "From Shannon Bralley offering to be my academic mentor and helping me find housing when I was homeless, to numerous professors who have consistently offered guidance, answered my academic questions, and provided invaluable support during personal challenges, so many Temple employees have gone above and beyond for me."

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House said the culture of care extends to everyone on campus, as even a friendly maintenance worker frequently greets and acknowledges her as “Ms. 4.0” in recognition of her academic achievements.

“We’ve always had a positive campus and family-like environment at Temple College, but Caring Campus has allowed us to be intentional with our actions and has presented us with a great opportunity to support our students like never before,” Dr. Ponce said. “We also serve a large rural population who face unique barriers, but Caring Campus helps us to build a culture in which everyone can feel connected and have a great experience with many resources and support as if they were in a larger urban area. We have high engagement in class and a supportive faculty and staff that go the extra mile to support students.”

Dr. Ponce recommended all schools go through Caring Campus trainings with both their staff and faculty, ensuring the entire campus community is equipped with the tools and strategies to collaborate and be inspired by the culture of care they are establishing.

“Temple College’s dedication to implementing Caring Campus has contributed to a transformative shift in their campus culture, fostering a supportive environment where every student feels valued and empowered to succeed,” IEBC CEO Dr. Brad Phillips said. “Their commitment to personalized creativity and collaboration among faculty and staff is truly commendable and serves as a model for other institutions seeking to enhance student engagement and retention.”

#### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**IEBC\_TEMPLE1:** Temple College employees set up a welcome table on the first day of class to ensure students feel a sense of belonging and care. Temple staff and faculty go above and beyond to make students feel supported both in their academic and personal lives, perfectly encapsulating Caring Campus principles and commitments.

**IEBC\_TEMPLE2:** A Temple College employee welcomes and helps a group of students on the first day of class. Temple College staff and faculty have both completed Caring Campus, where they learned to build upon their existing positive campus environment with strategies and tools to establish a culture of care and help all students succeed.

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