



APTOS
WATSONVILLE

Marketing and Communications
6500 Soquel Drive
Aptos, CA 95003
O: 831.479.6100
F: 831.479.6100
www.cabrillo.edu

Contact: Kristin Fabos, Director of Marketing and Communications
T: 831-479-6158
krfabos [at] cabrillo.edu

August 21, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cabrillo College Builds Student Mentoring Program

Unique, One-to-One Mentorship from Faculty and Staff Increases Student Success Rates

APTOS, CA - Since its launch in 2016, the volunteer Mentor Program has been making a positive impact on the lives of Cabrillo College students. With fall semester starting August 27, Cabrillo staff and faculty are working to improve student success outcomes, by preparing new faculty and staff mentors to participate in the Cabrillo Mentor Program.

The opt-in, volunteer-based program supports Cabrillo students by pairing them with a Cabrillo College faculty or staff member who volunteers their time and energy to support students during the duration of their enrollment at Cabrillo College.

Mentors can offer classroom guidance, personal direction, resource information, career direction, and can be a 'bridge' for the students to help them navigate the college experience. Students also benefit from the program for the unconventional advantages it provides. Mentors fulfill a number of roles, such as knowledgeable soundboards, coaches, supporters, career-building resources, relationship drivers, and teachers.

"Research by Ernest Pascarella finds that mentoring for students in college helps students to feel more connected and engaged on campus, which can ultimately improve student outcomes," said Sue Gochis, Cabrillo Vice President of Student Services. "In our first couple years of the Mentor Program at Cabrillo, we've experienced that – students have improved retention after the first semester, and we're seeing better grades and improved graduation rates, in addition to higher motivation levels and improved self-esteem."

To date, the program has demonstrated great success in helping Mentor Program participants persist in college as well as achieve their educational goals.

"The Mentor Program is brilliant - it is challenging to want more for yourself when there is no one to look up to or to guide you along the way, and this is exactly what my mentor has done for me," said Yesenia Rocha Rocha, a student mentee. "Being a part of the Mentor Program has not only helped me academically, but has also inspired me to be a mentor one day with hopes of changing young students' lives in helping them reach their goals"

In addition to the mentor/mentee relationships, students receive support by being part of the close-knit mentoring program community where they'll meet other mentors and mentees. In addition to the students who are impacted by the program, Cabrillo mentors also report great satisfaction from their participation in the Mentor Program.

"I have gotten so much more out of mentoring than I ever imagined," said Matthew Halter, Cabrillo Mentor Program Director and Biology Instructor. "I have been honored to meet such bright, eager, enthusiastic, and engaging students and each year, I have enjoyed the interaction as much as I hope they have."

During the 2017-18 academic year, Cabrillo had 39 mentors and 49 mentees. Since its inception in the 2015-16 school year, approximately 100 students have participated in the Mentor Program. Mentor orientations are currently underway for Cabrillo faculty, staff and retirees for the 2018-19 academic year, and there is strong interest in the program. The Mentor Program will be made available for incoming students to sign up at the "Seahawks Take Flight" New Student Orientation on August 23.

Current or returning students can visit <https://www.cabrillo.edu/services/studserv/Mentor.html> for more information about the Cabrillo Mentor Program, or they may contact Sue Gochis in the Cabrillo Student Services Office at 831-479-6527.

About Cabrillo College

Cabrillo College is a leading California community college serving Santa Cruz County with locations in Aptos, Scotts Valley and Watsonville. It is ranked #1 in transfers to UC Santa Cruz. Founded in 1959, the college offers over 100 academic and career technical education programs that serve multiple educational goals such as A.A. and A.S. degrees, certificates of achievement, skills certificates, transfer to 4-year institutions or for lifelong learning and personal enrichment. With a commitment to quality and equity, we connect all learners to pathways that propel them from where they are to where they aspire to be, including: academic, personal, and career growth.

#