



# California Community Colleges

## SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY (March 2023): ADVANCING BACCALAUREATE ATTAINMENT

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The webinar focused on community college baccalaureate degree programs. Guest presenters included Dr. Constance Carroll, President and CEO of the California Community Colleges Baccalaureate [Association](#), Lisa Kamibayashi of West Los Angeles College, Billie Jo Rice of Bakersfield College, and Harris Escobar and Nick Pressley, students enrolled in these two CCC BA programs.

### What is the Value of Community College BA Degrees?

- Community college baccalaureate programs can address regional [workforce](#) needs and increase educational attainment to help California meet its 70% college attainment goal.
- The high school diploma is no longer the entry requirement for most jobs, and a bachelor's degree offers economic [benefits](#) to students.
- While there are other ways to increase baccalaureate attainment, community college programs can serve students whose needs are not met by those options.
- Community college baccalaureate programs are increasingly common, currently offered at more than 140 colleges across 25 states. California recently [approved](#) the degree as a permanent policy, after 15 colleges saw success in pilot programs.
- [Students](#) served by these programs are more likely to be from underrepresented or underserved [backgrounds](#), and many say they would not otherwise have pursued a bachelor's degree so the programs can increase equity in access, especially for [place-bound](#) students.
- Student [outcomes](#) also point to increased [equity](#), with most graduates finding [employment](#) in their field of study; students in CCC programs can generally avoid loan debt due to the lower cost of the programs.
- The programs are generally built on existing associate degree programs, making use of experienced faculty and high-quality facilities and equipment.

### How are CCCs Approaching Development of BA Programs?

- West Los Angeles College's BS in [Dental Hygiene](#):
  - Started in 2016, building on a long-standing AS degree that is affiliated with UCLA's School of Dentistry.
  - Has students enroll full time over 21 months, including 4 semesters, 2 winter sessions and 2 summer sessions (14 units per semester, 6 units in winter/summer).

- Accepts two cohorts per year; a fall cohort attends 8am to 5pm, Mon.- Fri., and a spring cohort has later hours with some weekends/nights.
- Offers a pathway into multiple careers in addition to clinical dental hygienist, including in education, sales, research, and public health.
- Provides the degree at considerably lower cost than similar programs at private schools, including \$8,450 for 65 units of upper division courses, \$10,000 for specialized educational materials, and some required fees.
- Saw applications increase when the BS program started (compared to AS); application numbers have recovered from pandemic-era declines.
- Includes a completion program for people holding AS degrees in dental hygiene.
- Bakersfield College's BS in [Industrial Automation](#):
  - Relies on an advisory committee and strong relationships with industry partners to ensure the program meets local workforce needs and offers employability at a living wage for students.
  - Includes general education courses tailored to the program's focus.
  - Offers pathways into the program via multiple certificate and degree programs at the college, through intentional alignment efforts.
  - Enrolls a racially diverse student population and engages in outreach to increase female enrollment in the traditionally male-dominated field.
  - Has partnerships with K-12 to provide pathways through dual enrollment and is working to scale its efforts to enroll justice-involved students.
  - Provides students with internships through partnerships with local employers.
  - Has seen its graduates find immediate employment with an average starting salary of \$70,000.

## What is the Student Experience in these Programs?

- Students appreciate the opportunity to complete a bachelor's degree at the same institution where they initially enrolled in college, as many are place-bound with work or family obligations that make it difficult to move to attend a university.
- Students report receiving a rigorous, quality education and finding great support from faculty, staff, and other students to achieve their educational and career goals.
- Students appreciate the lower cost of the programs, and the opportunity to pursue programs with a hands-on, career-relevant focus and good connections to employers.
- See some student [feedback](#) about Bakersfield College's BS program, and a [discussion](#) of the program by recent graduates.