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Letters from Bakersfield College



Friends of Bakersfield College,

I invite you to keep up with the happenings at BC by following www.sonyachristianblog.com .

[Sonyachristianblog.com](http://www.sonyachristianblog.com)

Today is March 27, 2020 and I bring you an update on our work related to systematically slowing the spread of COVID-19 by moving our instruction and student services to be provided at a distance.

In my search for inspiration during this important moment in world history, I looked to the past to see how Renegades throughout the decades have weathered the storm during moments of crisis. As you would expect, the [Renegade Rip newspaper from September 14, 2001](#) focused on the World Trade Center attacks that had just happened 3 days before publication. The headline read: "This is too big to be real."

I [visited campus last Friday](#) as we were putting up our last set of barricades. Seeing the empty campus, I was struck by the enormity of our current circumstances. We are certainly experiencing something unprecedented... for BC, for higher education as a whole, for the state, the nation, and the world. The [Johns Hopkins coronavirus dashboard](#) shows as of 7:00 a.m. today the confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States surpassed 86,000, placing the U.S. firmly in the number one spot of countries with the highest confirmed case count in the world. The total number of cases in the world has surpassed 550,000.



This is too big to be real.

The magnitude of this global crisis cannot be overstated, and each day the seriousness of this pandemic crystallizes more. The road ahead will be long and it will not be easy, with many of our loved ones getting sick or losing their jobs.

In all of this, I am inspired and in awe of the resilience, adaptability, and can-do spirit our students, faculty, and staff have shown in this transition. As a college community, we have united to do the very difficult work of transitioning a campus serving 40,000 students -- primarily in-person -- to a completely virtual campus. It has been fulfilling to watch that virtual campus take shape over the past four weeks and I am so proud of our BC team's work.



Ahead of the Curve

As BC's instruction and student services have moved fully online, we turn now to taking care of our community's needs, supporting those who are facing job loss as unemployment rises rapidly. Stay tuned for a letter next week in which I will update you on these key initiatives. In the meantime, please visit sonyachristianblog.com to see our faculty and staff in action as #BCGoesOnline.

BC is great – not just good – because, as Wayne Gretzky said, we have been playing to where the puck is going to be, rather than where it has been. Always, ahead of the curve.

Bakersfield College has been ***ahead of the curve*** in anticipating and preparing for business "un-usual" in the face of this pandemic.

BC was ***ahead of the curve*** when our Incident Command team was activated in February, drafting a full pandemic response plan and holding daily Zoom forums for our campus.

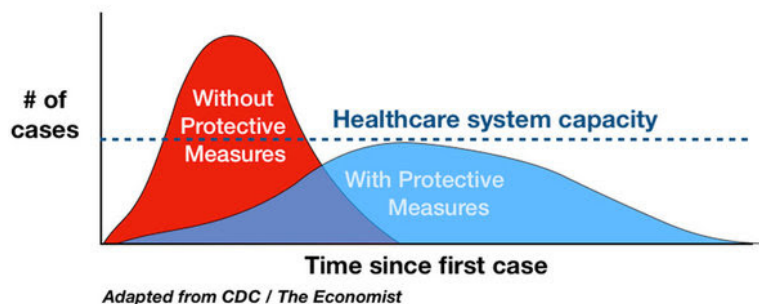
BC was ***ahead of the curve*** when we started in depth professional development for our faculty to systematically move our courses online.

BC was ***ahead of the curve*** when we started cancelling travel and large gatherings and events on March 4, moving to a primarily virtual teaching and support environment in waves to ensure minimal disruption to student learning and success.

BC was ***ahead of the curve*** when we instituted a shelter in place strategy by getting our employees off campus and working remotely.



BC was *ahead of the curve*, systematically flattening the curve of the epidemic, when we closed all of our physical campuses and were completely online for all functions, in the interest of public health hours before the Governor announced his statewide stay at home order.



Something Bigger Than Ourselves

I am proud of BC's proactive, whole-college approach during this time. We have been *ahead of the curve*, working side-by-side -- all the time *with an ethic of care* for our students, faculty, staff, and community.

When I delivered my State of the College Address at Opening Day in August 2019, I could never have imagined that we would face a global crisis of this magnitude. In my remarks on that warm August morning, I called upon the caretakers of Bakersfield College - each and every faculty and staff member - to find their epic thing to do.

An excerpt from my remarks reads:

At BC, we are fully engaged as a part of something bigger than ourselves – bigger than any of us. We are doing something we could not do alone. And in that collective, we have an unrivaled passion and remarkable power.

It is with vigilance, agility, and skill that Bakersfield College made this transition for the *collective good*. In January, BC began monitoring this novel coronavirus and as it spread to be the pandemic emergency, we came together, unified in our commitment to our students, to each other, and to our community.



At Bakersfield College, we take care of each other. And in this time of uncertainty, we join in community - even if at a distance - to ensure the wellbeing of each and every one of those in our community. It turns out, **now is the time and this is our epic thing to do**. That's how we roll at the *Home of the Renegades*.

After all..... We Are BC.

That's all for now.

With much Renegade Pride and Collegiality,
sonya

*Be sure to keep up to date with BC's ongoing response to
COVID-19 on our website*

*<https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/covid19> and stay tuned
for future Letters from BC for updates on how BC is navigating COVID-19 with
students at the forefront.*



Learn More about our COVID-19 response on the BC website



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