Path to college mapped

PROMISE: LBUSD students who do their best are assured place in higher education.

By Steve Sobotka

TWO DAYS BEFORE school begins this week, students at Long Beach City College are being encouraged to set their sights on college. The college is promoting its Promise program, which offers free tuition to eligible students. The program is expanding this year to include high school students.

"From beginning on end, we will be here for you," said Laura Schepens, the college's vice president for student success. "If you have a goal and you want to get there, we will help you get there."

The Promise program is a partnership between the city of Long Beach, the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, the Long Beach Unified School District, and the college. It provides free tuition to students who meet certain criteria, including being a resident of Long Beach, having a high school diploma or GED, and maintaining a 2.0 GPA.

"We want to make college accessible to everyone," said Schepens. "We know that education is key to success in today's economy."

The program has been in place for several years, and this year it is being expanded to include high school students. Students who meet the criteria can apply for the program during the school year and receive tuition assistance starting in the fall.

"This is a great opportunity for students to get their feet wet in college," said Schepens. "We want to make sure they have a seamless transition to higher education."

The college is also offering support services to help students succeed, including counseling, tutoring, and financial aid assistance.

"We really want to support our students," said Schepens. "We want to see them succeed and reach their full potential."
Long Beach City College (LBCC) is committed to extending the promise of higher education to every member of the greater Long Beach Community.

As an open access institution, our doors are literally open to everyone who is looking to improve their lives through education – whatever their goals may be.

LBCC offers a full range of degree and transfer programs for students who want to earn degrees in dozens of fields.

LBCC also has over 90 career and technical certificate programs which prepare students for entry into a broad range of careers.

Helping Every Student Succeed

LBCC is working to help every student succeed by providing academic and financial support to every student who needs it. The demands of our students are changing – and we are changing the way we teach to help them meet their goals.

Our new student success initiative and student success centers provide individualized instruction to help students master the skills needed to successfully complete college coursework or compete in their chosen careers.

LBCC already has the largest financial aid program among all California community colleges, but it will expand its scholarship program dramatically to offer every graduate of a Long Beach area high school a free first semester beginning in 2011.

Offering College Promise to All

Through the Long Beach College Promise, we are working with the Long Beach Unified School District and CSULB to meet the needs of all Long Beach area students.

LBCC works with LBUSD to help its students and families in elementary school to prepare for higher education beginning in elementary school.

Through the LBCC Foundation – and the generous support of the community we serve – hundreds of scholarships are awarded to students each year to help them succeed.

Beginning in 2011, the Foundation will guarantee every Long Beach area student a tuition free first semester at LBCC – to make sure that every student knows as early as the 6th grade that they can go to college.

Empower.

LBCC empowers its students to tackle their next challenge – either by continuing their education or building their career.

Transferring Students to Success

Through the Long Beach College Promise, LBCC students receive guaranteed admission to the highly sought after and impacted CSULB. All transfer students who meet minimum CSU requirements are guaranteed a place at the “Beach.”

LBCC truly prepares our students to succeed. Our transfer students graduate at a higher rate than those who begin their careers at CSULB.

But CSULB is only one option. Hundreds of students each year transfer to other fine universities including: UCLA, USC, CSU Dominguez Hills, among many others.

Building Successful Careers

LBCC has dozens of programs which prepare students for successful careers immediately upon graduation. LBCC’s nursing and medical imaging technician graduates are in high demand as are graduates from technical programs like our FAA-approved Aircraft Maintenance and alternative fuels programs.

Many people come to LBCC to advance their careers further by learning new skills and LBCC provides workforce training for many large and small employers to help their workers keep up with the changing demands of the information economy.

LBCC is the sponsor institution for the Small Business Development Centers for Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties and provides one-to-one counseling and training services to help small businesses grow and prosper.

Individuals and businesses are essential partners in extending the promise of higher education to the greater Long Beach community.

We need partners who can make commitments to help our students succeed.

The Long Beach Rotary Club and the AES Corporation are two examples of many organizations and companies that have made multi-year commitments to this effort to support our students through the Long Beach College Promise. If you or your company or organization is interested in supporting this effort, please contact the Long Beach City College Foundation at (562) 938-4134.

For more general information about the Long Beach College Promise, please contact LBCC’s Community and Relations Marketing Department at (562) 938-4206 or www.LBCC.edu.