

Bakersfield College

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12 Questions

Douglas Grimsley, Political Science instructor

In this edition of "12 QUESTIONS," we talk with Douglas Grimsley. Grimsley is a Political Science instructor at Bakersfield College Delano Campus, teaching American government and leadership courses. He joined Bakersfield College in October 2000.

Artificial or natural bait?

You have to go with natural bait for sure. When I'm fishing streams my go-to bait is crickets. Works every time.

Why do you teach at Delano Campus?

I actually ended up in Delano by chance. After I graduated in 2005, I was offered three classes at the Panorama Campus, but none had more than ten students registered, so they were canceled. After a few days of not knowing what I was going to do, I got a call from Stephen Smith (the department chair at the time) and he told me there was one class available and it was in Delano. Not having a job at the time, I jumped on the opportunity. It must be true that things happen for a reason because I think I ended up in the place I belong.

Why is involvement in clubs important for students?

Involvement in clubs is extremely important for students for a few reasons. First, I think it gives them an opportunity to participate in activities they are passionate about and share it with other students. I also think it gives them a vested interest in the campus and what goes on there. Club members learn practical skills that you would not get as a passive student. They learn about working with groups and the dynamics that go with having to cooperate with people who have different backgrounds, ideas and motivations. A lot of them are growing and learning to become leaders on campus. I've been fortunate to be able to work with a lot of the groups and I'm continually impressed by our students.

If you could lunch with any political figure, past or present, who would it be and why?

Abraham Lincoln. There are a couple reasons: I read a book of letters he wrote and it seems like he had a great sense of humor. And considering the polarization and anxiety in our country it would be interesting to get the perspective of a man who led the nation through maybe its most trying time.

If a student wanted a career in politics, what one tip would you give them?

Clean up their social media pages (see Anthony Weiner).

Republican, Democrat, or other?

Other...I'm registered independent of political party. I think both parties have done their fair share in contributing to the problems our country faces today. These parties are too often

focused on beating their political counter parts as opposed to finding solutions. We as voters and members of the political parties have to share in some of the blame as well. We often rely on the parties to think for us instead of using our own critical thinking skills. It's easy to see this when you look at policies that are promoted by the two parties at different times. When George Bush passed his stimulus packages and bailouts republicans were in favor of them and democrats thought it was bad policy. Now that Barack Obama has passed stimulus packages and bailouts democrats are in favor of them and republicans think they are bad policy. There are a lot of examples of this you can also see it with the passing of NAFTA, deficit spending and the use of military force.

If you had six months with no obligations, what would you do with the time?

If I had the time and resources I think it would be fun to spend it driving across the country. There are a lot of unique and interesting places that I still haven't seen.

How do you relax?

I relax in pretty lazy ways. My weekends usually involve watching a lot of sports, even more so now that it's fall. Baseball is going through playoffs and football is under way. I also like to play sports and bbq whenever I can.

What is your most favorite thing at Bakersfield College?

One of my favorite things in Delano is the lecture hall. It is a building we share with Robert F. Kennedy High School.

What is the best part of working at Delano Campus?

The best part of working at the Delano Campus are the people I get to work with, staff and students. The campus is small so you get a real sense of community and you have the opportunity to form bonds with the people on campus.

Favorite sports team?

I'm a pretty huge sports fan in general but the teams I follow most closely are the San Francisco Giants and San Francisco 49ers, through good times and bad.

What can we expect out of the next presidential election?

A dog fight. Political tension maybe hasn't been this high since the 1960's. People are angry and motivated on both sides of the spectrum. We're at somewhat of a crossroads the tea party protestors and the wall street protestors might both argue that jobs and the economy are what they're out there fighting for. However the direction each of those groups want to take the country in order to solve these problems are polar opposites.



Don't Freak Out

Students duck and cover in earthquake simulation and emergency evacuation exercise

It was a typical fall day at Bakersfield College's three campuses. Sunny skies, a bit breezy, and a haze settling over the southern San Joaquin Valley. Suddenly...a rumble...a shake...the sound of panic...as a 7.8 magnitude earthquake hits the southern portion of the San Andreas Fault and the greater Bakersfield area experiences severe shaking for two minutes or more.

Students and staff alike dive for cover, seeking shelter under desks, tables, or any other area to prevent them from becoming a victim of falling debris. Alarms ring out. Light fixtures swing overhead. Car alarms chirp in the distance. Cries for help and pleas for calm filter through the air. Building facades started to crumble and break away. Suddenly, the shaking stops.

Emerging voices sound orders with directions to evacuate. Hallways and stairwells fill with the sound of 18,000 pairs of feet fleeing for safety in open spaces. Bakersfield College staff, trained as emergency responders and ready for a situation just like this, gather students and staff and begin offering instructions.

These were the sounds at Bakersfield College's first-ever Great California ShakeOut exercise and emergency evacuation drill. No earthquake struck the San Andreas. No one was injured. But the practice, for a very real event, was very real.

"Conducting an emergency drill helps ensure the proper response and reaction during a true emergency situation," said Sergeant Chris Counts of Bakersfield College's Office of Public Safety. "From all indications, the drill was a success, and clearly demonstrates that our staff and students responded and acted accordingly."

The drill, and others the College has conducted before, are part of compliance requirements with California Educational Code, which stipulates colleges and districts adopt emergency response plans to be used in disaster preparedness. The Bakersfield College Emergency Response Plan, developed several years ago, and practiced through building evacuation exercises each semester, continues to undergo reevaluation and updating with every new exercise.

"Campus safety is the single most important duty that we have here at Bakersfield College," said Dr. Greg Chamberlain, president of Bakersfield College. "By practicing the plan through an active exercise scenario, we are able to evaluate and update areas where we believe we need to see improvement."

The largest challenge for Bakersfield College emergency responders is the sheer size of the Panorama Campus and the need for emergency responders to oversee the evacuation of multiple buildings. That aspect of the plan is currently

being reviewed and will change based on feedback from participants.

The exercise, which began at 10:20 a.m. across California, started the simulation with a Duck! Cover! Hold On! earthquake response effort, signaled to begin with a short chirp of fire alarms in all buildings. After a two-minute earthquake response, Bakersfield College then expanded the exercise with the full evacuation measure, signaled by activation of all fire alarms in all buildings for a sustained alarm until all buildings were evacuated. In 19 minutes, it was over. Students, faculty and staff were directed to return to class or work, which they did, safely in buildings which were not really damaged by an earthquake.

"Real-time training is a key component of emergency planning and preparedness at California's community colleges. Today's earthquake exercise gives first responders, faculty, staff and students a sense of their surroundings and first-hand knowledge of what to do if an earthquake strikes," said Peter Wright, director of emergency preparedness for Disaster Resistance California Community Colleges, who served as an observer for the College's exercise. "The Great Shakeout provides an invaluable opportunity for conducting an earthquake drill so as to reduce panic and increase the likelihood of successfully mitigating a real disaster."

As part of the full evacuation, Bakersfield College activated the Incident Command Center, which is the central nervous system of the College's emergency response plan. The group, huddled around a conference room table, went through prescribed emergency management protocol as stipulated in the National Incident Management System developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Following the completed evacuation, the Incident Command Center continued to evaluate the response and exercise to determine opportunities to revise practices and procedures for emergency response at Bakersfield College. Shortly after, an email to all students and staff at the College requested event feedback to help evaluate the exercise and improve future emergency response efforts.

Student Belinda Hess responded to the email with a simple statement: "Thank you all at Bakersfield College for ensuring our safety," she said.

Bakersfield College is planning to participate in The Great California ShakeOut again in 2012, and will continue fire drills in every building each semester.

"It is one thing that we have the plan and we are trained on what we are supposed to do," said Counts. "But practicing the plan and reviewing the training are essential elements to a proper response when a true emergency hits Bakersfield College. Without the practice, we might lose what we learn."



Photo courtesy KGET-TV 17 NBC



Bakersfield College student
Sean Ryan Smith finishing his guitar

Guitars and Grades

STEM project class mixes basics of technological learning with handcrafted finery

It was an impromptu jam session which would make Carlos Santana himself proud. No sheet music was anywhere to be found, but nearly ten Bakersfield College students launched into strains of *Oye Como Va* on handmade electric guitars while a single set of bongos kept the beat.

After several weeks of work from design to conception, the students had fully-tuned, completely original electric guitars, which, along the way, taught them about technical career skills in the area of electronics, woodworking, computer-aided drafting and design, music and more.

Over the course of just four weeks, the students spent four days a week, four hours a day in class and labs, designing and constructing their own electric guitars.

"In a normal semester, this would be the perfect class," said Steve Hageman, Bakersfield College woodworking instructor who guided students through the design and crafting of the bodies of the electric guitars. "But in just 16 days, it was an extreme push of the students' talent and ability. Each student was spending at least eight more hours outside of class working on the components and completion."

The class, designed as a Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) project made possible by a grant from the National Science Foundation, allowed students to achieve completely custom guitar designs. In looking at the guitars, the only similarity was in the required elements, such as the bridge, electronics and housing, and the neck. Bodies were of all shapes, sizes and type of wood, reflecting the diversity and individuality of the students themselves. It was an eclectic group of students - incoming high school students, classical musicians and even professionals in automotive service.

"The quality of the project is as individual as the students doing the work," said Hageman. "It is clear who spent many, many hours working on their project."

The National Science Foundation grant, through Sinclair Community College in Ohio, College of the Redwoods in Eureka, and Butler Community College in Kansas, brings technology back to community colleges to help students acquire skills directly related to careers. Students in the class were admitted through a democratic application process outside the College's traditional enrollment process. The class reflected a balance of students designed to bring together differences in career goal, age, sex, race and background.

"The need for this intelligence is universal," said Hageman. "We are taking STEM and making it real. This isn't a hobby class. This is physics, science, electronics and many more areas of technological study."

At the end of all the hard work and learning, students have a hand-crafted electric guitar, but it is simply a testament to their academic dedication and ability to integrate many areas of STEM education into their process.

"It's not about the guitar," said Klint Rigby, Bakersfield College industrial technology instructor. "It's important to remember that this is all related to STEM. Students will take what they learn in this class and apply it out there in the workforce or in their further education. It's all integrated."

But all the learning is not exclusive of a little fun along the way. In addition to the jam session rocking the Science and Engineering building early one morning, each student had to play a song of their choice on their guitar. On the last day of class, a volunteer from Guitar Center helped students tune their masterpieces in preparation for the concert-style final exam.

Jose Salinas is a senior at Independence High School in southwest Bakersfield. After visiting a Bakersfield College engineering class on a field trip, he realized the field of engineering interested him. As an acoustic guitarist, moving to playing an electric guitar - and understanding the instrument's innerworkings - was a stretch for him, but he saw it all relating to his ultimate career goal.

"I've learned so much, and it is all related to what I want to do," said Salinas. "This class is a way for me to reach into engineering in a very interesting way."

Salinas' final exam song was *Fade to Black* by heavy metal band Metallica. The song, the band's first ballad, stayed within Salinas' comfort zone with an acoustic guitar-style introduction, which, progressively becomes heavier as the song goes on.

As a musician, the STEM components challenged Salinas. For technogeek and musician Sean Ryan Smith, the project challenged his computer science sensibilities. But Smith's *Batman* guitar, as it came to be known, has a specific future ahead of it which combines Smith's computer science education and his love of video games.

"I used to play guitar and had planned to study music in college, but decided instead to study computer science," he said.

Smith, an avid gamer, plans to integrate his electric guitar with his computer science studies and compose and record tracks for video games he designs.

His final exam song was a medley of well-known video game theme songs. "I'm gonna close out the day," Smith laughed.

Bakersfield College offered the course as a one-time special project taught by Hageman and Rigby, but the pair see the potential in a class which takes staid classroom lectures and transforms it into practice skills-building.

"We watched the transformation of the students as they learned these skills over a brief time," said Rigby. "Expanding it to other students allows the training to be real and applied to something which the students can understand."

SAM I AM?

Extensive modernization underway for Bakersfield College's Speech Arts Music building

Change is a-coming, as they say. Over the next few years, the more than 50-year-old Speech Arts Music (SAM) building in the center of Bakersfield College's Panorama Campus will undergo a much-needed modernization project.

"Many of our buildings are nearly 55-years-old and need to be brought current with safety standards," said Dr. Greg Chamberlain, president of Bakersfield College. "Just a few minutes in the Indoor Theater make it apparent to anyone that modernization is not only due, but definitely necessary."

Funded by state construction funds and money from the Kern Community College District's Safety, Repair and Improvement District ballot Measure G from 2002, the SAM building modernization will total nearly \$16 million. The Safety, Repair and Improvement District was formed in 2002 following a public hearing. Voters approved the \$180 million bond, which, finances the improvement and renovation of buildings at all three colleges in the Kern Community College District.

Plans for modernization of the SAM building began in 2006, with an original start date in 2006 or 2007.

For public institutions such as Bakersfield College, money for capital projects, such as will be spent for the SAM modernization, is considered separate from funds spent for course offerings or college operations. Capital improvement funds have specific requirements for use, and may only be used within the stated guidelines, or the institution risks losing the funding altogether.

"It may seem as though the timing is odd, what with California in the midst of its greatest recession since the Great Depression," said Chamberlain. "But, the reality is that the voters, who approved the bond in 2002, expect Bakersfield College to spend the funds wisely on improvements and modernization efforts which will keep our facilities serving students for another 50 years."

The SAM building modernization will improve 29,000 square feet of space—the rough equivalent of two floors of a high-rise building. Modernization projects will take place in all areas of the building.

Indoor Theater

The Indoor Theater will be expanded to seat more than 400 people in the audience, and all seats in the theater will be replaced to provide additional comfort for guests. Behind the scenes, new curtains, rigging, catwalks, lighting, sound system and sound booth will be installed. In addition, acoustic panels will be placed along the ceiling to improve sound quality.

Classrooms

Classrooms in the SAM building will be fully remodeled, and will include the addition of a new computer-operated

music lab for 25 students, four practice rooms, and the development of a bullpen-style area for faculty offices.

Outdoor Theater

The Outdoor Theater will be expanded to accommodate 1,500 guests, and their comfort will be addressed through a series of shade sails suspended over the amphitheater area. A new stage canopy and Soji screens will allow for quick set changes. To accommodate guests of all needs, a new Loge-level seating area will be developed, and an exterior elevator will be added.

Architecture and Landscaping

All new concrete and pavers will surround the SAM building, and low shrubbery with a drip watering system will be installed. The roof will be replaced with a new "cool roof" to reduce sun absorption, and therefore will reduce the cost to cool the building during warm summer days. The entire exterior will be reinsulated with new energy-efficient insulation, and as a final measure, the building will be completely integrated with the college's photovoltaic field and energy-efficient air conditioning system.

"The Speech Arts Music building is in dire need of repair and renovation, both for safety and instructional reasons," said John Gerhold, chair of the Performing Arts Department and Bakersfield College music faculty member. "The newly renovated building will be a state-of-the-art place to see plays and hear music and to learn about these things, which will be a huge benefit to the community and our students. I'm hoping the end result will be the re-emergence of Bakersfield College as the cultural hub of Bakersfield. I can't wait to play host in our new 'house!'"

"We are working toward platinum status in LEED certification," said Craig Rouse, construction project manager for the Kern Community College District.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is an internationally-recognized green building certification system through third-party verification. When a building is designed and built, or remodeled, using strategies to improve performance in energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, indoor environmental quality and use of resources, points are awarded. Incentives and rebates then are available to help with project cost.

Based on official go-ahead notifications, awarding of the construction contract is expected at the January 2012 board meeting and hammers were first swinging shortly thereafter. Completion of the SAM modernization is expected by spring 2013, just in time for events around Bakersfield College's centennial anniversary.



bfgc/IBI Group rendering of the SAM Outdoor Theater modernization



Bakersfield College student Hanan Harb plays a game with preschoolers.

Formación/Formazione/Formation

In any language, new international partnership means prepared future teachers

This coming spring, four Bakersfield College students will travel overseas for an in-depth perspective on early childhood education in diverse cultures. Their work and education will focus on best practices and sensitivity in the areas of child development, education and special education.

Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Atlantis Program and in partnership with the European Commission, the program sends 16 students from colleges and universities in the United States, Italy and Spain on international exchange with the ultimate goal of increasing international cultural awareness in order to modify existing early childhood education practices. An additional 16 students will be participating in the program without exchanging, but still receive the benefit of the global education through video conferencing with fellow cohort members and faculty who are exchanging.

The European and American students are participating in the Globally-Focused Inclusive Early Education Project, funded by the \$180,000 grant. Awarded to the partnership between Bakersfield College, California State University Dominguez Hills in southern California, the Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and Universitat de València, in València, Spain, the grant is a four-year project, beginning in 2010 and ending in 2014. Development of project criteria and curriculum preceded the selection of the first cohort of students who will exchange between January and June 2012. The Atlantis Project grants are highly competitive and quite prestigious, especially so for community colleges. Of the \$6.1 million in grants awarded the same year as Bakersfield College's Globally-Focused Inclusive Early Education Project grant, Bakersfield College's was the only one which included a community college partnership.

Bakersfield College dean of students Hamid Eydgahi explained the project benefits as a "great opportunity for Bakersfield College students to gain an international dimension which will ultimately benefit children they work with throughout their careers in early childhood education."

Members of the first exchange cohort from the United States are Bakersfield College students Amna Harb, Hanan Harb, Anamariksa Caldera, and Rocio Resendiz, and students from California State University Dominguez Hills. Members of the first exchange cohort from the European Union are Universitat de València students María Ejarque González, and Laura Quintana-Brotons, and Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia students.

"When I came from the middle east to the United States, I found big differences in the child development philosophy," said Hanan Harb. "I'm really interested in this program to learn other philosophies and cultures about children.

Organizing faculty from all four educational institutions

agree that the exchange program provides strong insight into how other cultures deal with similar problems. Ultimately, participation encourages broader thinking on a global scale through a hands-on, practical experience working directly with children.

"Global education is essential," said José Ramón Insa Agustina, lecturer of foreign language teaching at Universitat de València. "These students will become early childhood education teachers in the next three or four years. València is a diverse community where children learn Spanish and Catalan at first, then learn English."

Both Bakersfield College and California State University Dominguez Hills have on-campus child development centers, while both Universitat de València and Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia partner with preschools in their cities. A key aspect of the Globally-Focused Inclusive Early Education Project is perspective on and practice in special education within the three participating countries, with focus placed on family and understanding a child's background and how best to reach out to them. Special education does not simply refer to students with disabilities, but rather, applies to any student of differing needs or backgrounds.

"Reggio Emilia has the highest percentage of immigrant families in all of Italy," said Roberta Mineo, faculty of education at Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia. "About 30 percent of children in schools in the area are from first-generation immigrant families. It is imperative that students have a cross-cultural understanding of all children which will be in their care."

As part of the program, each student spends one year in the program, starting with coursework at their home institution in the fall, and continuing to a spring international exchange.

"This project encourages intercultural competency, personal growth, identification of differences across ethnicities, and cross-cultural awareness of one's own cultural bias," said Dr. Lynne Cook, dean of the College of Education at California State University, Dominguez Hills.

All students participating in the Globally-Focused Inclusive Early Education Project will be learning new and varied techniques from all four institutions, and will have the opportunity to share the philosophies, strategies and techniques with one another.

"Our students, despite the ethnic melting pot that is southern California, can be quite isolated and limited in their understanding. Expanding their social boundaries is important to a complete education, said Eydgahi. "Our goal is to prepare future teachers, through the project, to meet the needs of young children and their families in today's increasingly interconnected world."

Field of Dreams

Cornejo keeps Dean and Adah Gay Sports Complex in playing condition year-round

While fans of the game like to think it's them, to the coaches and players of Bakersfield College's softball and baseball teams, someone specific is the proverbial 10th man on the squad. He's responsible for the field they play and practice on every single day, and it's not a role that ends when the season does, either.

Patrick Cornejo can often be seen riding around Bakersfield College's campus in a beat-up golf cart with tools of his trade tossed behind him. Wearing dirty jeans and his faded baseball cap, his countenance is one of a man who works hard in the sun and enjoys his job.

Three times a week during the year and daily during the playing season, Cornejo is perfecting the look of Bakersfield College's baseball and softball fields. But for this Bakersfield College alum, it's more than riding a mower on grass. Over the last four years, Cornejo has perfected a system which keeps the fields looking good for practices and games while providing a little creative outlet.

"It's important to maintain it as much as I do," Cornejo explained. "It wouldn't work to leave the field alone all week and then just mow for games. Of course, the fields look best in cooler weather, and we have the perfect fall and winter. But when the temperature's over 100, wow, I can only do so much."

Cornejo's responsibilities as head groundskeeper include all aspects of keeping the baseball and softball diamonds within the Dean and Adah Gay Sports Complex in top condition year round. This includes preparing the non-grass areas of the field — such as the mounds, bases and baseline areas, as well as home plate, prior to the game. It's a solitary, but important role.

"It's nice to be outside and left alone," said Cornejo. "I work by myself, and that's a luxury."

Gone are the days of staid fields with simple patterns. Now, Cornejo and groundskeepers like him across the country are pressing temporary works of art into the playing fields. Fields have come in checkerboards for years, but these days the trend is for something original, if not a bit funky.

"It's just imagination, I guess," Cornejo said. "If you can picture something in your head, you can put it down on the grass. You do have to complete it by a certain time, though. So once you start, you just keep going and hope it's not too difficult."

For his hard work and creativity, Cornejo received the Stabilizer Solutions National Fastpitch Coaches Association Junior College Award for Field Maintenance. He's in good company, as the winners from the other educational levels include the University of Alabama, Columbus State University and Wellesley College. Cornejo

explained away the honor as part of the job.

"I like the way it reflects on both teams," he said. "Any time the programs get attention, it's a great thing. It doesn't mean much to me, personally, to get an award. I think [a beautiful field] makes the players feel pride."

According to Cornejo, fields like those at the Dean and Adah Gay Sports Complex aren't common in the community college world, so he takes pride in his work.

"I've seen a lot of other fields in the conference and they are depressing to look at," he said, shaking his head. "It means a lot to our players that their fields look good, and that means the most to me."

Bakersfield College softball coach Sandi Taylor nominated Cornejo for the Field of the Year Award. Between the major renovation and Cornejo's dedication to appearance, the softball field has become a major league-feeling playing environment.

The softball field has undergone significant renovation in recent years.

"This award is the culmination of all the modernization efforts made possible by the Gay family's donation, along with hard work and dedication of our coaches and ground crew," said Taylor. "We are thankful to all those who have made the Dean and Adah Gay Sports Complex tops among college fields."

The Stabilizer Solutions' award honors Cornejo's outstanding field surfacing and ground maintenance, as well as the qualities which make the Dean and Adah Gay Sports Complex softball field unique. For his work, Cornejo received a plaque commemorating the award, along with a pallet of Hilltopper mound clay.

While looking good is nice, Cornejo adds that the well-manicured field has an important role in the game. He would know, after all, he played baseball as a student at Bakersfield College in the 1996-97 season, and has been an assistant coach of the baseball team since 2002.

"Infields are kept at a half inch and outfields at three-quarters of an inch," he explained. "Players really like it because they can play and practice on a field like this every day. The advantage really is to the home team because the ball plays true."

So how can Cornejo draw those lines and curves on the field and have the ball still play true? Simple, he says: a roller — 21 inches wide for the infield and 6 feet wide for the outfield — is attached behind a mower reel. It rolls over the grass so the color of the blades change tone when the sun hits at different angles. The grass is never cut to different heights nor is it colored.

"It's all in the bending," Cornejo explained.



From Combat to College

New Veterans Resource Center provides valuable link for armed forces members returning to Bakersfield College

Today's military veterans aren't easily defined. They are as diverse as the population of the United States. Men and women. Young and old. Black, white, Latino, Asian, and Eastern Indian. Tall and short. They aren't readily identifiable, and many don't want the fact that they are a veteran widely known. But they all want one thing: an opportunity for a normal life.

Ongoing United States military drawdowns in Iraq and Afghanistan will increase the number of returning veterans heading to college to study for a new career. The United States is expected to withdraw 10,000 troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2011 and another 23,000 in 2012. According to data from the Veterans Affairs Department in California, some 30,000 veterans will return to the state each year, on top of the already 60,000 veterans enrolled in college in the state on the new G.I. Bill. That number has doubled since 2008.

Opened on September 27, the Bakersfield College Veterans Resource Center facilitates student veterans' education at Bakersfield College, and provides access to referrals to resources and services in the community which benefit military. Located in the John Collins Campus Center, the Bakersfield College Veterans Resource Center provides a casual and friendly location for student veterans to receive information or just feel at ease on campus.

Bakersfield College's student veterans are all ages, races and sexes, and come from all branches of military service. No matter the background, student veterans identify social isolation as a barrier to a successful educational experience. There are nearly 250 identified student veterans at Bakersfield College, with the majority from the most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Bakersfield College is recognizing the need to provide additional support to veterans returning to school after leaving the military," said Dr. Greg Chamberlain, president of Bakersfield College. "Providing services specifically designed to benefit our student veterans is an important undertaking. By working with resources through the Veterans Administration, and bringing in community resources, we are able to provide a comprehensive point of contact for student veterans."

The Bakersfield College Veterans Resource Center provides a relaxing place for student veterans to meet, receive the latest information on veteran benefits, organize through the Bakersfield College Veterans Club, and receive referrals to services and organizations in the community.

Made possible through financial support by the Bakersfield College Student Government Association and generous donations of time and support by community organizations, the Veterans Resource Center is currently staffed by

volunteers and is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

"Ensuring that those who have served our country have access to everything they need to facilitate their education at Bakersfield College is an essential part of the new Veterans Resource Center," said Bonnie Wilson, president of the Bakersfield College Veterans Club and U.S. Navy veteran. "I am honored that Bakersfield College is able to provide this service for our student veterans and honored to be a part of this new era for Bakersfield College student veterans."

One of the features of the Bakersfield College Veterans Resource Center is a combat map, where student veterans can post a pin showing where they were stationed during their time in the military. Pins of five colors were provided, with red representing the United States Marine Corps, yellow signifying the United States Navy, blue signifying the United States Air Force, green signifying the United States Army and white signifying the United States Coast Guard. On just the first day that the center was open, staff ran out of green pins - signifying the United States Marines Corps - and the area around the Middle East became a rainbow of colors.

Released on November 4, the National Survey of Student Engagement included students who served in the Armed Forces for the first time in the survey's 11-year history. The NSSE results are based on the responses of approximately 362,000 total freshmen and seniors at 564 colleges and universities in the United States. More than 11,000 of the students surveyed were veterans, including 4,680 (44 percent of the veteran students) who had been in combat in their tours of duty. Three-quarters of the veterans polled were seniors and the others were freshmen.

"Bakersfield College has a deep commitment to facilitating the academic success of our nation's fighting men and women," said Dr. Joyce Ester, former Bakersfield College assistant vice president of student services and now president of Kennedy-King College in Chicago, Illinois. "These brave individuals have placed their personal safety on the line to protect our American way of life. It is only fitting that we at Bakersfield College do all we can to make sure that they achieve their educational goals, whatever they may be."

Men and women in the military face a unique set of challenges, and Bakersfield College's Veterans Resource Center will be a one-stop shop to assist them in the transition from military to civilian life. Beyond that, the center provides a place where veterans can hang out with other veterans, who can become mentors.

All Bakersfield College student veterans are welcome to visit the Veterans Resource Center at any time the center is open.



Bakersfield College students mark world-wide locations where they've been stationed.

ShortTakes

News in brief from up on the hill

AMGEN Tour of California Returning to Bakersfield College

Bakersfield College will once again play host to California's answer to the Tour de France on May 17, 2012, as AMGEN's Tour of California rides into Bakersfield for a day-long time trial competition. The event will take place from Bakersfield College and ride a yet-to-be-determined route through the Kern River Valley below the College.

Levan Named Philanthropist of the Year

In honor of his historic donation to Bakersfield College last March, Dr. Norman Levan was named Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year by the Network of Community College Foundations at a dinner event last month. Levan, who donated \$14 million to Bakersfield College, was on-hand to accept the award and was joined by Bakersfield College President Dr. Greg Chamberlain and Bakersfield College Foundation Executive Director Mike Stepanovich.

Rippey Honored for Knight Development

It was an event 55 years in the making. Clayton Rippey, the artist behind Bakersfield College's landmark knight mosaic at the corner of Panorama and Haley in northeast Bakersfield, was honored with a showing of some of his most treasured works in the Norman Levan Center for the Humanities. In honor of the event, Rippey donated the newest painting in his abstract series to Bakersfield College for permanent display. Rippey collectors and Bakersfield College benefactors David and Catherine Gay also donated a work - Rippey's *Seagull* painted in 1969. *Seagull* will be on permanent display in the Dean and Adah Gay Reading Room in the Grace Van Dyke Bird Library.

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Bakersfield College

Sterling Silver

Saturday, January 28, 2012
6:30 p.m. • Bakersfield College Campus Center
\$175 per person • \$1,000 for a table of six

**Featuring William Bloxsom-Carter,
Executive Chef of Playboy Mansion West**

An evening of culinary delights awaits you at the 4th annual Sterling Silver dinner. The dinner will benefit the Bakersfield College Culinary Arts program and The Renegade Fund.

Culinary Arts students will assist in the preparation and serving of the dinner. We hope you can join us for this extraordinary experience.

Please call 395-4850 for more information



Bakersfield COLLEGE