



BARSTOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Public Information Office

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Date: 11/16/17

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16th Annual Festival of Lights & Learning in Barstow

Barstow, CA – Barstow Community College (BCC) has been the site of the annual Festival of Lights & Learning since Mayor Lawrence Dale (Barstow Mayor from 2000-2008) read a proclamation declaring that the first “Festival of Lights and Learning Day” would be held on December 9, 2002. Dr. James Meznik, who was then President of Barstow College (1998-2004), spoke during the first lighting ceremony. He stated, “Just as lights illuminate the darkness, knowledge illuminates the soul.” Dr. Eva Bagg, current superintendent/president of the college, said, “Dr. Meznik’s observations that night, continue to inspire us to keep the lights of this college burning bright.”

On that first evening, 1,710 lights, on seven of the buildings at the college, were lit just after sunset. Sandra Baca was the Barstow College Foundation President during the initial year of the festival. As the lights went on across the campus, she explained, “Each light glows in appreciation and memory of someone very special.” The Foundation received \$5,000 in donations for scholarships from individuals and groups who donated in honor of their friends and relatives during that first festival in Barstow.

“Today, the need for scholarships is even greater.” Dr. Bagg, continued, “Our students are very thankful for the generosity of this community.” She also expressed her gratitude for the service and support of the non-profit Foundation of the college, “The Foundation is the driving force behind this successful, wonderful celebration.” The Foundation’s current President, Bob Clemmer, confirmed the Foundation’s on-going commitment. “100% of the proceeds from the Festival of Lights and Learning are given to students as scholarships.” He said, “This is our 16th year of hosting this annual festival in Barstow, and the objectives are still the same.” The new Executive Director of the Foundation, Amy King, who is organizing the event, added, “This year we’ll once again host festivities and our market inside of the gymnasium, but are excited to move our campus lighting ceremony back outside to see the holiday lights come on!” She continued, “Our goal is to have more lights than ever before, and with the help of our community and their donations, we can make that happen.”

The festival will have live entertainment, that has been arranged by the college’s Music and Theatre Professor, Amy Ross. The college choirs and other local choirs will be singing, the High School Band will be playing, and our young dancers will be dancing. Amy said, “We have a great variety of performers in the program this year.”

Delicious food, beverages, and holiday treats will be offered for sale, and many vendor booths will be exhibiting their wares in the Holiday Marketplace inside the Gym. Fun and games will be provided for the children, including a photo opportunity with Santa Claus who be arriving by firetruck. The photo area is decorated by the Associated Student Government (ASG) of the college, and the photography and pictures are provided by the Kiwanis Club of Barstow Crossroads. The Kiwanis Club donated the Christmas Tree for the first festival in 2002, and the club continues to contribute to the annual celebration by offering photos with Santa Claus during the event.

The Festival of Lights and Learning will be held this year on Dec. 5, 2017, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM in the Gym, and in front of the Gym, at Barstow Community College – 2700 Barstow Rd., Barstow, CA. Admission to the event is FREE. Donations for the student scholarships can be made to the foundation online through Eventbrite.com at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-16th-annual-festival-of-lights-learning-barstow-community-college-tickets-39664357160> or in the business office in the Administration Building on campus. Vendors interested in participating can also register at the business office. For more information about this year’s festival, and how you can participate, please contact Amy King via phone: (760) 252-2411 ext. 6709 or by email: bcf@barstow.edu .