



BARSTOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Public Information Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Barstow Community College Launches Barstow Community Connection

Providing Access and Technology to the Barstow Area

Barstow, CA- Barstow Community College is launching an innovative program—the Barstow Community Connection--- in collaboration with the City of Barstow, area businesses and churches to offer free Wi-Fi access to current and prospective students.

With approximately 70 % of Barstow residents relying on some form of government assistance, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an even greater impact on employment and the ability to access higher education in our city. Dr. Eva Bagg, Superintendent-President of Barstow Community College, challenged her employees to come up with an equitable solution that would provide maximum access to educational opportunities for Barstow area residents. Dr. Bagg also contacted Dr. Nikki Salas, Barstow City Manager, and local businesses to be part of the answer to the growing digital divide. The result is the Barstow Community Connection---a program that provides free wireless access to students and potential students in certain areas of Barstow.

The free Wi-Fi is possible by placing Wireless Access Points (WAPs) inside partner buildings using an existing internet source. This allows the internet to reach up to 600 feet without disrupting the partner's internet. Current students will benefit by having multiple areas in town to access the free internet services while city residents who want to attend college but thought it impossible, can now access the college for application, financial aid, support services and enrollment via a mobile phone or other technology.

The college has also launched a technology loan program for enrolled students.

The Barstow Community Connection free Wi-Fi access will launch on October 19th, in conjunction with the start of the Fall 2020 second 9-week session. Initial partners include; city parks (Dana Park), as well as local businesses (Gesiriech Realty, Treasure House Mall, Dee-Lux Realty, Billie's Kitchen, Rosita's, Villareal & Sons Roofing, and Fitness MD), and area churches (Silver Valley Baptist Church, Calvary Chapel, and Union Missionary Baptist Church). To view a map of where the free Wi-Fi is available, please go to www.barstow.edu/bccconnect.html.

The college has plans to expand this free Wi-Fi access to the surrounding areas, including Yermo and Baker, and are continuously adding new Barstow Community Connections Wi-Fi locations.



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For more information on how to access the Barstow Community Connection or for how to get involved to help support this city and district-wide effort, please go to:

<http://www.barstow.edu/bccconnect.html>

(760) 252- 7279