

FEBRUARY  
2024

# CARING CAMPUS



**Caring Campus**

LOS MEDANOS  
COLLEGE

Welcome to the February 2024 issue of the LMC Caring Campus Newsletter! We are excited to share Caring Campus news and information with our readers twice a semester. Our newsletter will recognize Classified Professionals "Who Got Caught Caring" and we will also spotlight different departments and their staff.

## What is Caring Campus?



Caring Campus was designed by the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC). IEBC is a nationally-recognized nonprofit organization that implements data-driven models to increase student success. The Caring Campus process provides new support for Classified Professional involvement in student success efforts. Caring Campus work recognizes and leverages the value of connectedness to dramatically increase the likelihood students will succeed in attaining their educational goals. If students don't feel connected to the college they attend, they are far less likely to return next term, regardless of the academic interventions and support services the college has provided. Caring Campus is designed to improve student success at colleges by coaching Classified Professionals to identify and commit to behaviors that increase students' sense of connectedness and belonging.

# Who Got Caught Caring?

## Christa Leach

Caring Campus is happy to spotlight one of our newest classified employees. Christa Leach is an A&R I Assistant in Admissions and Records at the Pittsburg campus and she is quickly proving that she is an asset to LMC!

Christa began her employment in October of 2023. She is an alumnus of LMC and she states, *“I genuinely love being here at LMC. I enjoy a lot of aspects of my job. I work with amazing people and I love connecting with and helping others.”* Christa interacts daily with our students via in person, email and on the phone. *“I am one of the Go-To people in admissions and records for students, staff, and faculty. If I don’t have the answer, I know how to find it. I assist students in many ways including but not limited to helping students navigate their InSite portal, registering for classes, and locating/submitting important forms. I also assist in keeping student records up to date, answering emails and phone calls, investigating and resolving issues, providing reassurance and an open ear to students. I actively work to provide others with a pleasant experience here at the college.”*



She recalls a time when, “I was leaving the office for the day and there was a student outside of the Student Services building hoping someone could assist him. I let him know that we had closed and asked how I could help. He needed some assistance navigating InSite and registering for classes since we were coming up on the first day of the spring semester. I took a moment with the student and helped walk him through registering through his InSite portal. Luckily, he had an education plan built, so it was just a matter of navigating the student portal. I was happy to help him get registered so he could attend courses on the first day of school.”

Christa’s willingness to assist has already made a profound impact at LMC! Caring Campus wishes to welcome Christa to LMC and congratulate her on her efforts thus far!

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# Department Spotlights

## Financial Aid



*Pictured left to right- Malia Valencia, Tamara Carreon, Ivan Urrutia, Debbie Baskin, Beverly Bui, Pierce Young, Aaron Ramos, & Faidra Lopez*

**Malia Valencia** – Malia is one of the new employees at the Financial Aid Office. She also started at LMC as a student worker 11 years ago, then she worked at DVC as an Office Assistant from 2017 to 2021. This month she was just permanently hired as the Financial Aid Assistant I. She loves telling students that when they apply for financial aid, that they pretty much applying for possible free money and free tuition. It makes her happy to see students relieved that majority of their Pell Grant will cover supplies, books, and even transportation.

**Tamara Carreon** – Tamara started at LMC in 2009 as a student worker and she has been with us since. She is our Financial Aid Lead Specialist and she loves helping students with the Financial Aid process to assist them in reaching their goals. As a Lead, Tamara handles the most difficult problems and she works hard to resolve these issues and help students to be able to receive their aid. She has many students that she helped through some difficult situations and she have had connections with them even after graduating from LMC. When Tamara is not working, she loves spending time with family.

**Ivan Urrutia** – Ivan started working at LMC in 2012 as a student worker in the Transfer and Career. He also worked in the Student Retention Office and the Welcome and Outreach Department as a student worker and as an hourly employee. Now, he is a permanent Financial Aid Assistant I employee who loves to serve as a resource for our students. LMC had a large presence in his life that he hopes he can be a small presence for our students. Ivan recalls a time when he was working at the Welcome Center and had to help a Spanish speaking student sign up for LMC and take ESL courses. A few years later, the student came to see him in the Financial Aid Office and they told him he completed hi ESL courses and was graduating with a degree in Journalism. Ivan serves in the Processing Experts Team (PET) committee.

# Department Spotlights

**Deborah (Debbie) Baskin** – Debbie started her career at LMC in August 2013. As a Financial Aid Specialist, she loves giving students money to go to college. Deborah recalls a time she helped a student who needed additional assistance. *“I have worked with him to gather necessary documentation to get his financial aid application completed and to work through other items that had blocked his ability to get aid. We worked together quite a bit, as the federal regulations can be daunting and the red tape is frustrating to students.”* Deborah served on the Classified Senate and participated in Shared Governance Council (SGC) and District Governance Council (DGC). In her spare time, she loves to read and she volunteers at Norsled, a local dog rescue that find good homes for abandoned Huskies.

**Beverly Bui** – Beverly started her career at LMC in May 2018. As our Financial Aid Scholarship Specialist, she enjoys educating students and our community about the available aid and scholarship opportunities. Beverly described a moment she helped a student who was ready to quit school, because her parents would not provide their information on her financial aid application. She found a workaround to the student's application and she was able to award the student a fee waiver and additional aid to help through the semester. Beverly also helped the student apply to the LMC foundation and where they received several awards. She finds it rewarding to help students remove financial barriers so they can pursue higher education and reach their goals. Beverly is part of the Asian Pacific Islander and Desi American (APIDA) committee and had previously served in the Processing Experts Team (PET) committee. She is a new mother to her 6-month-old son and in her spare time, she enjoys baking for her friends and family and caring for her indoor plants.

**Pierce Young** – Pierce started working in the Financial Aid Office in 2023 as an hourly employee. Recently, he was hired as a permanent Financial Aid Assistant I. Pierce loves meeting and talking with students and hearing about things he personally would not have the opportunity to experience himself. He recalls a time he helped a student with their FAFSA application, *“We started talking about music genres and just music in general. Afterwards, we both shared a few of our favorite bands.”* Pierce loves listening to music, watching movies, and playing Warhammer 40K.

**Aaron Ramos** – Aaron started working at the Financial Aid Office in July 2023 as an hourly Financial Aid Assistant I. He enjoys being around his colleagues and he enjoys helping students get the money they need to attend college. Aaron had helped students iron out issues with their financial aid as well as helping them apply for financial aid. Outside his job at LMC, he is a programmer and makes 3D art.

**Faidra Lopez** – Faidra is our Financial Aid Assistant II. She has been with LMC for 14 years but before that she had worked at DVC for 8 years. She finds her job rewarding and it brings her much joy assisting students from all walks of life to reach their educational goals at LMC. Faidra looked back on a time she helped a student at the front counter; *“A student was concerned she did not have the funds to pay for registration. I looked into her records and let the student know she had a fee waiver and all she had to do was accept the award and her classes would be paid within 24 hours. The student left the office relieved and thankful.”* In her free time, Faidra enjoys spending quality time with her family. She also loves to cook and travel.

# Join us at Classified Senate!

**LMC Classified Senate represents the diverse voices of our Classified Professionals, and Caring Campus would like to invite you to attend the Classified Senate meetings.**

The meetings are twice a month and are held in a hybrid format from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Join us in person at SS4-412 and via Zoom ID: 585 278 8369.

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## Spring 2024 Meeting Dates:

- January 29
- February 12
- February 26
- March 11
- March 25
- April 8
- April 22
- May 6



Learn more about our Classified Senate, meet your council members, join committees, get involved in campus activities, and get your voice heard.



# Caring Campus Kudo Cards



In November 2023, Caring Campus initiated the Kudo Cards project. This included several volunteers who wrote 185 personalized, handwritten notes of appreciation to each LMC Classified Professional.

**Thank you to all of the Kudo Card Volunteers!**

Aaron Nakaji  
Abigail Duldulao  
Irene Sukhu  
Lawrence Punsalang  
Linda Jackson  
Lucia Garces  
Sarah Ryan

# Look Who Else "Got Caught Caring!"

**Aaron Nakaji**  
**Catt Wood**  
**Christian Diaz-Galarza**  
**Clark Muir**  
**Cynthia Geddes**  
**Debbie Baskin**  
**Denise Uribe**  
**Faidra Lopez**  
**Jen Fay**  
**John McDermott**  
**Leticia Webb**  
**Lyssa Shabusheva**  
**Michael Simpson**  
**Mika Mobley**  
**Robert Delgado**



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