

# Bridging the Gap

Supporting Students  
Through Change

Thursday, April 24 | 6-7:30 pm



**FEDERAL WAY**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS





# Empowering BIPOC Scholars: Navigating Campus Support Systems at Highline College



# Presented By : Cristina Bautista

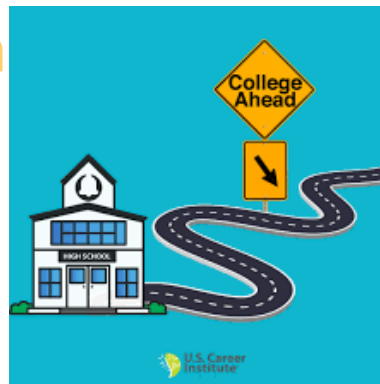


- First Generation Mexican American
- Daughter of Immigrants
- UC Davis Alumni
- Oaxaca, Mexico
- Outreach and recruitment Advisor at Highline College



# Understanding the Students Journey

- Transitions: high school to college, changing majors, cultural shifts, graduating, etc.
- Emotional and academic challenges during these phases
- Importance of recognizing that each student's journey is unique.



It's not always linear.

# Why is the sense of community important?



## 1. Belonging and Support

- College can be overwhelming—new environment, academic pressure, being away from home. A strong sense of community helps students feel like they belong, which can ease loneliness and reduce stress. It's comforting to know there are people who “get” what you're going through.

## 2. Academic Success

- When students feel connected, they're more likely to engage in class, collaborate with peers, and seek help when needed. That kind of environment can boost motivation, improve grades, and even increase graduation rates.
- Access to resources? Computer rooms or computer lending programs

## 3. Personal Growth

- A diverse, supportive community exposes students to new ideas, cultures, and perspectives. That can challenge their thinking and help them grow into more open-minded and empathetic people.





# The Role of Community

- Definition of “community” in the college context
- Builds a sense of belonging
- Reduces isolation and anxiety
- Encourages participation and collaboration





# Shoutout! CLC STAFF



Sudon DeSuze



Krystal Welch



Anthony Grant



Antaknea Majors



Tyswanekwa  
Crosby



Gaby Osorio



## WHAT IS THE CULTURAL LEARNING COMMUNITY?

Highline's Cultural Learning Communities are small groups of students who come together with a shared set of academic goals. Within these group, students collaborate closely with one or more professors. When students join a learning community, they enroll in courses that are either thematically related or enriched through peer-to-peer learning experiences.





# UMOJA BLACK SCHOLARS

- Umoja is a community dedicated to the academic success and personal growth of African Americans and other students.
- It emphasizes holistic education encompassing body, mind, and spirit.
- Umoja draws inspiration from African and African-American intellectual, cultural, and spiritual contributions.
- Education within Umoja is viewed as a liberatory act empowering students to critique and transform harmful social and institutional practices.
- Umoja promotes civic engagement, fostering the integration of learning and service to make positive differences in students' lives and the broader community.

# HC PROMISE SCHOLARS

The Promise Scholars program at Highline College is dedicated to empowering Black and Brown/Non-Binary male students with the resources, community, and support they need to excel academically and beyond. Grounded in the values of Brotherhood, Leadership, Professional Advancement, and Academic Excellence, we foster a collaborative environment where students from diverse backgrounds can thrive. Our mission is to create pathways to success by addressing financial barriers, cultivating personal growth, and equipping scholars with the tools to achieve their educational and professional aspirations.





# HC PROMISE PILLARS

- **Brotherhood**

This is your squad, your crew, your safe space. Brotherhood is about having a community that has your back—people who understand your struggles, celebrate your wins and help you level up. It's about showing up for each other, building trust, and creating a bond that feels like family.

- **Leadership**

Leadership is stepping up and owning your power. It's not about being the loudest in the room—it's about inspiring others, making moves that create change, and being the kind of person people want to follow. Whether you're leading a group project, your community, or your own life, it's about making decisions that lift you and others up.

- **Professional Advancement**

This is about getting your bag and setting yourself up for success. Professional advancement means gaining the skills, knowledge, and connections you need to turn your dreams into reality. It's about preparing for that career that excites you, building your personal brand, and learning how to secure opportunities that set you apart.

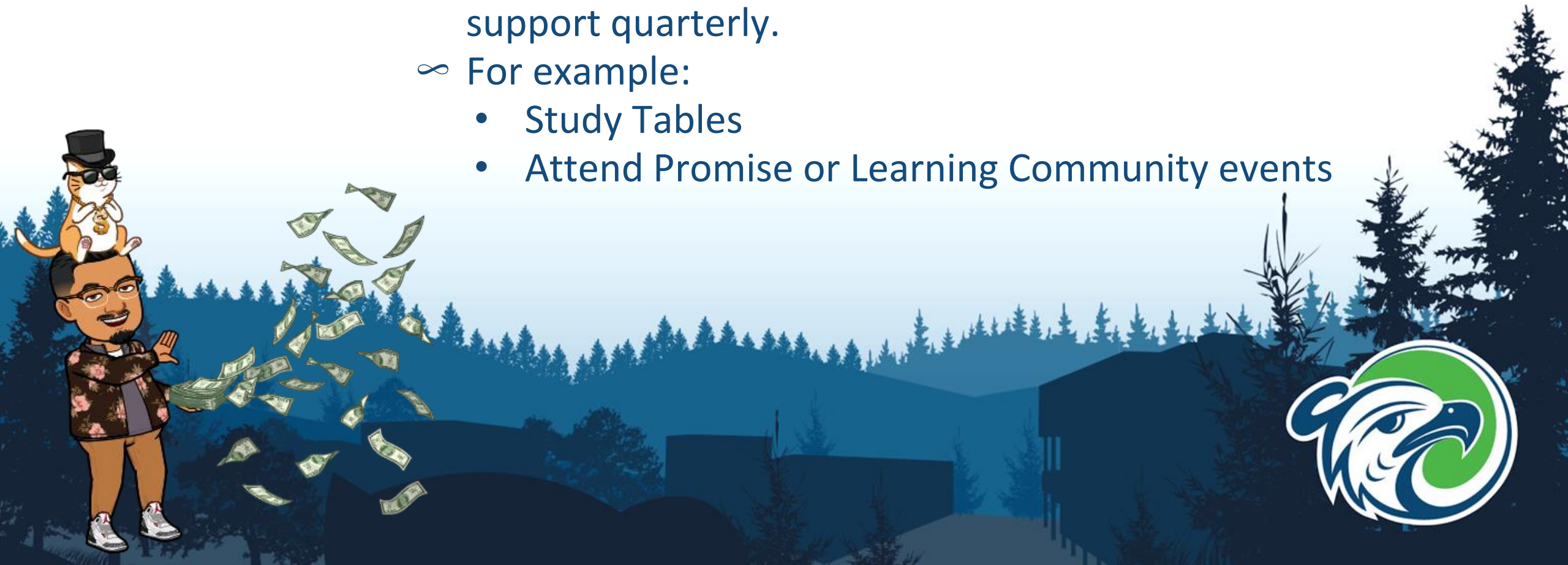
- **Academic Excellence**

Academic excellence is about being your best self in the classroom and beyond. It's not just about grades—it's about mastering what you're learning and finding ways to apply it to your goals. It's pushing through challenges, staying focused, and proving that you're more than capable of achieving greatness in your education.

# Grant?!

**Promise** awards grants to students for two quarters. To receive grant students will:

- ∞ Meet with a Promise Advisor twice per quarter
- ∞ Engage in 2 activities of community learning support quarterly.
- ∞ For example:
  - Study Tables
  - Attend Promise or Learning Community events







# HIGHLINE JUNTOS

## HIGHLINE COLLEGE JUNTOS

The Juntos Learning Community at Highline College aims to create a supportive and inclusive academic environment where Latinx students feel welcomed, supported, seen, and encouraged to excel academically. Juntos provides students with structured coursework, culturally relevant programming, and intrusive academic support to ensure their success.



# HIGHLINE JUNTOS CORE VALUES

- Familia (Family)
- Echale Ganas (Give it all you've got)
- Ponte Las Pilas (Work Hard)
- Valentia (Courage)



# WHY JOIN JUNTOS?

- **Para el pueblo, por el pueblo (For the community, by the community)**
  - Latinx staff and faculty supporting your educational journey
- **Tu eres mi otro yo (You are my other me)**
  - Latinx staff and faculty with shared lived experiences (mixed-status families, DACA, bilingual, bicultural, etc.)
- **De aquí y de allá (From here and from there)**
  - You belong here. Juntos gives you a sense of belonging whether home is here, or another part of the world.





# *Resources*

## **Running Start**

- HS students can earn dual enrollment credit at Highline

## **High School Re-engagement Program**

- Finish High School at Highline, and earn college credit until you are 21 (FOR FREE!!)

## **Women's program**

- promoting student success by promoting a safe and welcoming environment. Also offering child support care, daycare, and financial assistance.

## **Math/Writing/Tutoring Center**

- Available for drop in and scheduled appointments

## **The Hub**

- Satellite campus in Federal Way

## **Transfer Center**

- Helps prepare students for a smooth transition to a four year institution





# Food for thought:

How do you feel supported? What does that look like?





# QUESTIONS ?





# Feedback Survey

**Please help us improve by sharing your feedback about today's event through a 3-minute survey:**

*Encuesta posterior al evento: !Ayúdenos a mejorar!*

*Sau buổi sự kiện: Hãy giúp chúng tôi cải thiện!*

Опрос мнения по окончании мероприятия:  
Помогите нам учесть недочёты!

پست-نظرسنجی : رویداد به ما کمک می کند  
بهبود یابیم!



**Scan the QR code or, Visit:**  
**[www.fwps.org/FamilyAcademySurvey](http://www.fwps.org/FamilyAcademySurvey)**

# Please make your way to your next breakout session

6:55-7:30 pm

- Ready, Set, Kindergarten!
- Future Ready: How Your Digital Footprint Shapes Opportunities
- What Happens When the Bus Stops? Supporting Secondary Transitions for Scholars with IEPs
- Navigating Change: Empowering Scholars for Successful Transitions
- Together We Grow: Family Strategies for Emotional Support in School Changes
- Family Tech Empowerment: Helping Families Navigate District Tools
- Ready, Set, Register: How to Enroll in College Classes