## Special Thank You!

CLP Career Ladders Project

MERCED COLLEGE

CENTRAL VALLEY MOTHER LODE REGIONAL CONSORTIUM
BUILDING THE WORKFORCE, PARTNERING IN CAREER EDUCATION

LE GRAND HIGH SCHOOL

WE Will!
workforce + education

## We Value Your Feedback!

**Please take a moment to fill out our post event survey.**

# Transformative Counseling Regional Convening

November 7, 2026

## WiFi:

Username: mc-guest3
Password: Transformative25!

CLP Career Ladders Project

# Welcome Message

Welcome to the Transformative Counseling Regional Convening, a partnership between the WE Will! Collaborative and Career Ladders Project. Together, we are committed to advancing equity-driven counseling and student support practices that strengthen educational pathways across the region.

This convening reflects the WE Will! Collaborative's mission to build seamless, student-centered systems that expand opportunity and remove barriers to success. Through our partnership, we aim to uplift the transformative role of counselors, educators, and support staff in creating inclusive environments where every student can thrive. Thank you for joining us as we work to shape a more equitable future for all learners.

*McKenna Salazar, WE Will! K-16 Executive Director*

# Outcomes for Today

***Join*** *a regional community committed to advancing equitable counseling and student support.*
***Engage*** *in interactive workshops on student success, counseling redesign, and dual enrollment.*
***Leverage*** *shared expertise to drive collaboration and effective practices.*
***Strengthen*** *capacity to deliver equity-centered student services.*
***Impact*** *student success through actionable, systemic solutions.*



**Dual Enrollment Strand**

**Merced College Pathways Counseling Program** **Main Room**

**Greg Soto,** Dean Outreach Dual Enrollment A&R
Guided Pathways Student Services, Merced College

The Pathways Counseling program at Merced College offers comprehensive college counseling services to Dual Enrollment students directly on their high school campuses. Pathway Counselors—who are jointly employed by both Merced College and their respective high school sites—provide personalized academic guidance, assist with course planning, support educational goal setting, and connect students to college resources. This collaborative model ensures students receive consistent, high-quality support that enhances college readiness and empowers them to make informed decisions about their academic futures. Learn how Merced College has created an innovative way to serve Dual Enrollment students from Application to Graduation.

# Student Panel

Facilitated by: Ernesto Hernandez, Director of the Career & Transfer Center, Merced College

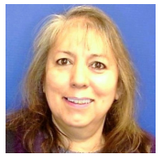
## Panel Members: Merced College Students

Diego B. - Mechanical Engineering / Industrial Electronics Major
Nikki D. - Communications Major
Angel G. -Psychology Major
Andrea M. -Psychology Major
Maria P. -Mechanical Engineering Major
Trevor T. - Engineering Major

# Session 2  10:45-12:15

## Tranformative Counseling Strand

**Delivering Equitable Counseling** **Room 201**



**Belen Robinson,** Counselor, Modesto Junior College

Are you clear on the distinct and vital role of the California Community College (CCC) Counselor? Often confused with university advisors, the CCC Counselor's impact on student success is comprehensive. This workshop, grounded in the practices at Modesto Junior College (MJC), will define and demystify the CCC Counselor's role. Learn about implementing equitable counseling practices and applying transformational approaches to effectively guide and empower every student on their educational journey. Walk away with practical insights in elevating advising and maximizing student outcomes.

## Wrap-Around Student Support Services

**From Connection to Completion: Reimagining Counseling Through Unit-Based Student Success Teams** **Room 222**

**Dr. Ivan Peña,** Dean of Student Services and Counseling, Crafton Hills College

In this interactive session, Dr. Ivan Peña, Dean of Student Services and Counseling at Crafton Hills College, shares how his team reimagined traditional counseling structures through the Unit-Based Student Success Team Model, an equity by design framework that organizes student support by academic milestones rather than by chance encounters. Grounded in collaboration, equity-minded redesign, and student-centered innovation, this model led Crafton Hills College to achieve a 44-point increase in student education plan completion, become ranked #1 in Region 9 for UC transfer admission, and close transfer equity gaps for Latine and Black/African American students. Participants will explore how proactive, data-informed outreach and networked support teams can be adapted locally to ensure every student has a clear, supported, and equitable path from connection to completion.



# Event Agenda

| | |
|---|---|
| Breakfast and Networking | 7:30 |
| Welcome Message | 8:00 |
| Transition to Breakouts | 8:25 |
| Breakout Session 1 | 9:00 |
| Break | 10:30 |
| Breakout Session 2 | 10:45 |
| Lunch | 12:15 |
| Student Panel | 1:00 |
| Activity: Practice into Action | 1:40 |
| Adjourn | 3:00 |

# Session 1 9:00-10:30

## Tranformative Counseling Strand

**Culturally Grounded Counseling as Consciousness-Raising Transformative Practice in a Failing System** **Room 201**

**Dr. Kassie Alexander,** Promise Counselor, Cañada College
**Dr. Jerel McGiffert**, Umoja/ASHE Counselor, Sacramento City College

This dynamic, interactive workshop is designed for counseling professionals, educators, and student advocates who seek to deepen their equity-driven practices. In this workshop, student advocates will enhance their critical consciousness to continue to provide equitable counseling. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in critical self-reflection, identify opportunity gaps in student service delivery, and interrogate their role in supporting students.

## Wrap-Around Student Support Services

**From Access to Achievement: Embedding Support for Every Student Journey** **Main Room**

**Ernesto Hernandez**, Director of the Career & Transfer Center, Merced College
**Brooke Boeding**, Dean of Student Services, Merced College

Merced College's School of Success Teams embody a comprehensive, equity-driven approach to Guided Pathways by embedding counseling faculty, outreach and retention specialists, library support, and instructional leadership directly within student supports. Through innovative partnerships, data-informed tools, and wrap-around services—from Rising Scholars to Promise Housing—the college is reimagining what it means for every student to belong, persist, and achieve their goals.



# Session 1 9:00-10:30

## Dual Enrollment Strand

**Bringing the University-2-You: Centering Student Experiences in Dual Enrollment Pathway Offerings** **Room 222**

**Annette Roberts Webb**, Dean, Division of Professional and Continuing Education, UC Merced
**Michael Pierick,** Director of Strategic Initiatives & Degree Completion Program, UC Merced

**Steven Hobbs,** Principal, Merced Adult School
**Ed Vaca,** Principal, Riverbank High School

Traditional stand-alone dual enrollment courses may not sufficiently meet the evolving needs of learners—especially in California's Central Valley. Today's high school and adult students are seeking flexible, purpose-driven pathways that prepare them for both college and career success. UC Merced's Division of Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) responds to this demand by partnering with regional LEAs to deliver dual enrollment programs that prioritize student experience and reduce barriers to access and completion. This session will explore how the "University-2-You" model brings higher education directly to students through innovative partnership structures. Attendees will learn how these models address equity gaps in enrollment and outcomes, and how intentional design and support systems can transform dual enrollment into a powerful tool for educational and economic mobility.