Dr. Mike Munoz [00:00:00]:

My name is Angel Adiano and I'm here today because I'm a father who also goes to Mount sac. My name is Angel Adiano and I'm here today because I'm a father who also goes to Mount sac. My name is Angel Adiano and I'm here today because I'm a father who also goes to Mount sac. How can we show up in spaces that provide students the opportunity to fully actualize their educational goals? So that could look at something as simple as, like, you know, demystifying the syllabus to connecting them with resources or just holding space for them when they need it. Understanding that, you know, like, for me, I'll give you a really poignant point. When my daughter, at one point, my daughter got really sick and she was in the hospital with pneumonia, and I had one professor that would not give me any extensions on time for homework, no additional time paper, and I had to drop the class. Another professor worked with me and created a timeline for me to get all my assignments in, and I was able to get still an A in that class and continue. So just something as simple as providing extra flexible time when a student might need it because they're dealing with a childcare emergency. But for me, I think it's really, in the end is making sure that our faculty feel comfortable and empowered to be able to support our students.

Chisa Uyeki [00:00:53]:

Welcome to the Mount San Antonio College Podcast. I'm Chisa Uyeki a Mount SAC professor and librarian, and I'm pleased to be your host for this season. Our goal is to keep you connected to our campus by bringing you the activities and events you may not have time to attend to share the interesting things our colleagues are creating and innovative ways they are supporting and connecting with Mount SAC students. Join me as we explore Mount Sac. Hi, and thanks for joining us on the Mount SAC podcast. While parenting is tremendously rewarding, it is also challenging on many levels. Our students, who are parents, have to balance all that goes into parenting with their academics. Today we'll delve into the topic of how to best support these students.

Chisa Uyeki [00:01:49]:

We talk with Dr. Julie Marquez, who directs EOPS and CARE, a couple of programs we'll hear about. In the interview, Dr. Marquez shares her deep knowledge on the subject and provides insight into services and opportunities available on campus and off, as well as actions we can all take to contribute to a college culture of supporting parenting students. We'll also hear directly from Students attending the 4th Annual Parenting Institute event, which took place just before the beginning of spring semester. Enjoy.

Ivan Sanchez [00:02:29]:

Can you tell us your name and what brings you here today?

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

My name is Angel Adiano and I'm here today because I'm a father who also goes to Mount sac.

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

Wonderful. What have you taken away from today's sessions?

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

What I've taken today that there's about 5 to 10% of parents that are fathers. The other 89% are mothers.

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

Okay, so you learned a little bit about the statistics that you are in the minority. How important is it, do you think that fathers are represented here and that we have services in general at Mount SAC that cater to the needs of students who are also fathers?

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

I think it's super important. You know, I got up early this morning, about 6:30 in the morning, getting ready, got my son ready, dropped him off and then came over here.

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

Same.

Ivan Sanchez [00:03:20]:

It's super important, you know, and the reason why is because if I'm not here, boots on the ground, the how am I going to advocate for fathers like myself.

Student Worker [00:03:20]:

I'm the oldest of nine, so seeing my mom come back to school and wanting to do more, it's just awesome that they have events tailored just for parents.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:03:55]:

I almost didn't show up to class one day and I told her, you know, I don't have anybody to watch my daughter because I didn't have the CDC yet. And it was actually a Saturday because that was my classes. And she was like, well, if you want you can bring your child in with you. And then I was like, no, she's still a little baby. She's like, okay. But the fact that she offered that was just really helpful. Like I ended up finding childcare that day.I went in a little bit late, but still the fact that she was offered that was like, wow. I didn't even think that would have been an option. So that stood out to me.

Facilitator [00:04:05]:

I myself am a parent learner. I went back to school way after our traditional student status. I was 26 when I started again. And I think during that period I did not foresee myself ever as being a future faculty member anywhere. But having professors that just cared and would listen and would be attentive to knowing that my schedule was chaotic. I was full time single parent with a special needs daughter, full time student on top of that. And it was a struggle. There were times where I had to drop below full time because I couldn't manage the coursework and there's a lot of external pressure and I think that becomes so overwhelming that you give up.

Facilitator [00:04:42]:

I had faculty who knew my situation and took a really great mentor interest in my well being during my programs that emphasized when I needed something to ask and to never be afraid to ask. And that was hard to do for sure, very difficult to do because you get used to the single mom life of just doing it and not asking. But one of those mentors is still probably one of my closest friends at this point. But I remember one time not being able to get A babysitter. And he told me, I don't care. Bring your daughter to class. And that's hard to do as a special needs mom when your daughter can be a little loud, disruptive. We've got some behavior stuff.

Facilitator [00:05:18]:

And he responded to me, I don't care. This is Shakespeare. She's just adding to the flair. And it was such a, I think, humbling moment of knowing a professor actually wanted to see me there. And I wasn't just a figure. I wasn't just a chair that needed to be filled. I had a purpose. And that person ended up being my real mentor through college, in my grad school programs, research.

Facilitator [00:05:42]:

So I would say just taking a moment to learn our students, get to know their story and. And find out how we can better help them, not just necessarily what they need from us, but us learning what we could offer outside of just the constraints of teacher classroom mentality.

Student Worker B [00:05:58]:

The Parent Institute event today is very important because many parenting students don't really have an outlook or really a shaping role model, at least in the academic field. And I feel like it's really hard for them to navigate themselves on campus with all their personal loads that they hold. And I feel like with Parenting Institute today, we kind of shed that light and let them know that there are many people out there who have similar experiences with them, and we want to assure them that we are trying to build more of a structured program centered around them, and we hope that someday it's going to be more instilled into the education field. So I would say that we're kind of putting a stepping stone in terms of building the basis for parenting students today.

Taja Villasenor [00:06:53]:

So my name is Taja Villasenor, and this is my fourth time attending the annual Parent Institute. I came here today because I love the camaraderie that Mount SAC offers to student parents. This is the only time in my entire life where I get recognition for being a student and a parent combined. There's nobody else at all in my personal life that understands what I'm going through until I come here to Mount SAC to the Parent Institute.

Chisa Uyeki [00:07:26]:

We both attended this year's Parents Institute and Resource Fair and talked with student attendees and presenters.

Ivan Sanchez [00:07:26]:

So we are pleased to have Dr. Julie Marquez, Director of EOPS, CARE, NextUp, Reach and CalWORKS to talk with us about ELPS, CARE's work to support students who are parents.

Chisa Uyeki [00:07:38]:

Dr. Marquez, please tell us about the work you do and the programs you direct that are involved in supporting parent scholars.

 Dr. Julie Marquez [00:07:48]:

So for parenting students, we have care, which is under the EOPS umbrella. And so for care, we serve single parents who are head of household and who are receiving cash aid. And then we also have CalWORKS. And with CalWORKS students, they're students who have children, but they can be married. And so this program doesn't necessarily target single parents. It's just a parent student in general who are also receiving calworks. Then we have what we call the emerging program, Parent Scholars. Parent Scholars is a program that we began to create, and I would say more of an initiative than a program, because it doesn't really have program staff, because we saw a lot of the emerging needs of students on campus that were also identifying as parents.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:08:36]:

And they often come to our office thinking that our program can serve them, but not everyone is eligible. And so because of that, we began creating this Parent Scholars initiative. But it began as the Parent Institute, which was really meant to provide students with the resources that they need prior to starting the semester. So we began by bringing students in for a conference experience. And we felt like it was something that students don't always have the opportunity to attend outside of Mount Sac. So we mimic what a 2 conference would feel like in terms of different workshop sessions, registration, having name tags, making it as professional and as close to a real conference so that they can really experience and also see the dedication of the staff. And so the Parent Institute, although it is the EOPS and CalWORKS program who take the lead on it, we actually do a call out for volunteers across campus. So it's not just planned by EOPS and calworks, but we have other people, including a Board of trustee member who is involved in our committee.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:09:42]:

And basically we start talking about what is our vision for our student parents and what do they need. So when we started thinking about the Parent Institute, it's because a lot of our students, if they're not part of specialized programs, they're not always informed about these opportunities. And so many students, especially parents, because they're so busy, they don't see the information that maybe would be applicable to them, or they are working. And so they're not eligible for care in CalWORKS because for the most part, those programs serve low income. So if you're a working parent, you're not being targeted through these programs. And so we felt there was always a group of students who would always tell us we need more support, mostly coming from an angle of being busy and not always being able to be on campus. They struggle with things that appear not to be academic that are impacting their academics. Oftentimes, it's oh, that's not something that we should help a student with.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:10:43]:

But if that's not taken care of, then they're not able to fully engage at school or be part of the campus community. For example, child care. Most of our schools are not structured around the Mount SAC calendar. The students in the summer, they don't have a lot of childcare options like through their schools, they often have lottery systems where they have to get a spot on their campus. But even then it's not always a full day. And then the other part of it is that you have to be low income. So sometimes if you're working, you're still having to pay a fee for these programs. And so oftentimes students are not enrolling for summer courses because they don't have the child care support.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:11:27]:

With our program, we began to be more intentional with the Parent Institute. We offer workshops that cater to the whole student, meaning we're looking at not just what they need academically, but we're looking at what do they need from a holistic standpoint in terms of being aware of childcare options, being aware of how to manage student discipline in terms of their kids, and not knowing how to be the parent they want to be. Because in their family histories there was not a lot of knowledge about what the best techniques to manage their kids behavior. And so we try to empower the students by not just providing like, okay, here's the academic support that's offered at Mount sac, but also here's the mental health aspect, here's the other elements that are also needed for them to be successful. And the Parent Institute, we build in a resource fair, which I think is one of the favorite things or pieces of students that they like because they often don't have the time to seek resources. So we bring programs that include like domestic violence and child custody issues so they know how to address those issues. Because we do have a lot of students that are going through custody situations and they don't have legal advice in terms of how to approach that. And because they are having such big legal problems, they often don't have the energy to then focus on school.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:12:51]:

So by equipping them with these tools, we try to assess, okay, what do they need? So I would say that Parent Institute offers the workshops, they offer the resource fair and then the keynote speaker, which we try to be more inspirational because we want them to see themselves in someone who's been able to be successful and see that there is people who have shared similar struggles, who have been able to be part of our examples, Dr. Martha Garcia, she was a former CalWORKS student. I think when students see her and she was a keynote for a year prior, students are able to see themselves in her and say, okay, that's attainable. I think sometimes students don't know what's attainable because in their respective circles or families, that has not been a trend. When they see people like Dr. Garcia who are an example to their community, specifically the parent community who were parent students, I think that's very powerful. So that's our largest effort is the parent Institute that leads into workshops. So beyond that we offer two parent dinners and these events are funded out of as.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:14:01]:

So we went through associated students and we requested funding because EOPS CARE funding cannot be used for these efforts because they're not in our programs. So because we do have the knowledge base and the expertise, we run them, but we use AS funds to pay for these initiatives. So a parent institute is funded out of AS and also the parent dinners. The parent institute in the spring begins in February. Then in March and April we have a parent dinner for the parents to get together. And we bring in different topics. We build in one piece. One hour is the holistic need that is outside of academics.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:14:41]:

So last, for example, we focused on mental health and basically we did about like sound bath so they can know how to manage stress. But then we paired it with learning how to use AI tools appropriately and the ethical considerations of using AI, but also equipping them with like, how do you use it when you're struggling and how can it give you ideas and then how can you use it to check your kids homework? Because as we all know, the Common Core is, teaches things differently than what we were learning things. And so sometimes getting that through AI and having them explain to you how they're being asked to solve these problems, I think that's been very helpful. So we try to pair something academic with something that will help their mental health or just their other needs that they're telling us they need. And so we do two parent dinners in the spring and two in the fall. The Parent institute in the middle. We also do zoom based workshops. And so we hire like Harriet.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:15:41]:

Well, we don't hire Harriet Buhai. They do it for free. They do workshops with our students to tell them how to navigate custody issues. We also bring in Project Sister to talk about domestic abuse sometimes we also bring in other organizations to talk about students who have children with disabilities, because that's been something that a lot of parents don't know how to navigate. Ieps or they don't know how to navigate the resources available in their school. And so we do try to do different workshops online. And then whenever they need anything, we do have, like a Parent Scholar website, so parents scholarsountsac.edu. and we're the invisible people that answer those emails just to point students in the right direction.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:16:24]:

So that's kind of like the overview in terms of what we're currently pushing to focus on. And we're hopeful that maybe in the future there'll be more opportunities to request funding so we can make Parent Scholars into a program and not just, you know, these individual events and workshops.

Ivan Sanchez [00:16:41]:

Well, thank you so much for laying out sort of where you are and where you eventually want to be as a program. And thank you for the wonderful insights on the myriad of experiences faced by our student parents. And you shared many of the wonderful sources of support that you all are providing. I think that's so important for faculty to know about so they know what is being offered and what they can share with students as being offered. I have many students who are parents, and I was just thinking it would also be really helpful to get an idea of the magnitude. Do we know how many Mount SAC students are parents? What percentage of the Mount SAC student population are parents? Could you give us some information about that?

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:17:25]:

When we last pulled the report, There was about 3,400 students who identified as parenting students. However, you have to be aware when you're talking parent students, you also have a larger population of older students who have adult children, and they still consider themselves parent students. We began to do more marketing for students who are parents who have dependents. So we use the word like a student parent with dependents under the age of 18 to kind of capture that population. That is difficult because the FAFSA does not require that information any longer. We do know that There is about 900 students requesting priority registration through admissions. To request priority registration, they have to provide the birth certificate of the youngest child, an id, something that has the age or a school record with the age of the youngest child. And so they get priority registration.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:18:21]:

They put in a ticket to expire their priority registration when that youngest child turns 18. And so that's how priority registration works. But it is something a student has to ask for. So typically, what I do on the back end is I ask for information about the students who have said that they are parents. Then I target them and send them. Here is the priority registration steps so they can benefit from that. And all we can tell is that there is just about 900 students who are requesting it. And so that helps us gauge a little bit in terms of how many have dependents.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:18:55]:

But then there's also all the parents that are probably not aware that this is a thing because priority registration for parents barely began a year ago. And with the understanding that sometimes for parent students it's difficult to schedule classes. And when they are enrolling at the end and classes are full and the classes that are left don't meet their needs because they're confined to where their children are in school. And if they have a younger children, most Preschools are only 8 to 12 programs, not full day. And so I think that's the challenging part and why priority registration is so important for parenting students is that they can work around their schedule. The other piece of it is informing students about things like upwards. Upwards is a token based system that runs through basic needs and a student can ask for a basic needs credit towards upward so they can have childcare secured for students or for their children on times that things are outside of class. So when they have midterms, I know sometimes this change is in schedule finals.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:19:59]:

And so the student may have daycare available, but maybe during finals week they don't because their schools are already out of session. Since we are working with parenting students who come from Orange County, Louisiana County, San Bernardino county, and most students, they're out of school in May. So when we talk about finals and one of the biggest problems that we currently see is that our students do not have anyone to leave their child with. And so they end up either missing the final or taking their child near final. So it is important for, I would say for faculty to make students aware that there is an upwards token available to them that they could use at a agency that's been vetted through that company and that they can take their student for what they call drop in care. And I think many people are not aware of drop in care as a resource because they don't know that child care centers are equipped to drop them off for just one day or one time. I would say there is challenges with that because when you drop off a child you still have to provide their immunization record and their health record. But that is a possibility.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:21:02]:

And I think for myself, navigating my daughter's school calendar with the work calendar, I'm like, what am I going to do? Since we have still a couple weeks left when my daughter's school is out, I started looking into the one time and I started using it so I could see how My students would have to interface. It's easy to say, go get childcare. There's these drop in centers. I'm like, that's great. But what does the process actually look like for them? And when it's unexpected, it is difficult because again, you have to provide the immunization records and everything else. And so that is an added challenge. But it is a possibility to access drop in care. And I don't think many of our students know that possibility.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:21:44]:

Like, I didn't even think about it until I was going through tutor time for my daughter. And then I asked them like, hey, she's going to be starting school, but in the chance that she doesn't have school and I have to work, can I bring her? And they're like, yes, we have drop in care. Never had heard of it. And they're also accepting of calwork. So they do have their rates that are semi. I would say I wouldn't call it affordable. But with Mount SAC being able to partner, sometimes that is a possibility to offset that cost.

Ivan Sanchez [00:22:12]:

Well, I'm really glad you brought up the upward care credit. One of the goals of this episode is to highlight how students who are parents have a community here on campus and the services offered, as well as the faculty can serve as pillars of support. We also, before we started our interview, if you're listening to the episode, we just heard from voices from the students who attended the Parent Institute. This is an annual event like you mentioned, that usually occurs in the winter. And we're interested in learning more about the background of the Parent Institute. Can you talk a little bit more about the vision that started it all? Where did it come from? What did the first institute look like? And what are the goals going forward for the institute?

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:22:55]:

I think the Parent Institute began. I think the idea was there before it began. I've been here seven years. So when I first started Mount sac, I came in with a three month old. So I had a very small child. And I think one of my colleagues who was also here and serving as the coordinator, we began talking about those challenges as parents. And I'm like, if we're having challenges when you know we are in a different position, imagine what our students are facing. And at that time I had taken on care and we had a student who was a very, she was a very good advocate.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:23:28]:

And so she advocated seven years ago to get a crosswalk from the Child Care Development center to the parking lot because every morning they were almost run over with drivers not being careful. And there's a child Development center. So we began with small things like that. It was, okay, let me support you with your request to do the crosswalk. Then it became, we noticed that there was no lactation rooms. So I think there was just. I was more aware because I was going through some of the same experiences. And I'm like, where are the lactation rooms? And realizing that there were almost two in buildings that lock after five.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:24:04]:

And I'm like, so what do you need to do if you're an evening student? Which many of our parents are, what rooms are they using for lactating purposes? And that's when we realized that there wasn't. So then andy Farhan Sims, Dr. Farhan Sims, she basically formed a committee to basically come together with facilities to identify where these mama lava pods could be put. It began with just, I think, the smaller efforts in terms of getting one resource at a time to then starting to imagine a future where there was more resources for students. That's when we began to say, okay, well what can we do to support parenting students? Right after the pandemic, I think parenting students struggled a lot because they had to balance having children in the room, being the teacher, plus taking their own online courses. And so it stemmed out of the pandemic. We came back and we saw that a lot of our parenting students were struggling to re acclimate and struggling to figure out how to support their children and how that was impacting them at college. Here at Mount Sac, we began to talk about the idea of hosting an in person conference, the Parent Institute, which is very controversial at that time because we were coming back from COVID the callback to come back to campus came and I didn't want to do it online.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:25:21]:

I think we need to build community. And I think our students, because they were so disconnected during the pandemic, there wasn't this like, hey, you're a parent, I'm a parent. We're struggling. How can we support each other as we return back to an in person state? And so we began the parent Institute shortly after with an in person, which, you know, semi controversial because of, again what I said, people like, are you kidding me? You're going to do it in person? I think that's the whole point. They want to meet other parents in person. And so we proceeded with the in person conference. And I think that's why the in person became really important for us. Although we knew it was not going to be able to serve everyone's need, we knew a space was needed for students to come together to talk about their shared challenges and also shared resources.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:26:07]:

And so the first parent institute looked very similar to what we have now. We brought in a keynote speaker. We had breakout sessions. The structure was pretty much the same from the beginning, and we just keep improving upon it. But it was always our intention to give students a space where they're not the outlier, because oftentimes students feel that they're the outlier in the classroom because nobody else is a parent. No one else is going through the same challenges. And so that seems to create a lot of community building that we know is important for them to maintain. And we stay at Mount sac is oftentimes students don't have that sense of belonging.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:26:42]:

So I think that was where it came from. And I think moving into the future, I continuing to do the parent institute, we want to institutionalize it. So we have made requests for funds to make sure that it continues happening. It is very popular. We do have about 200, 250 students who attend this event. And our students always provide really good feedback. I think every year they're like, oh, we didn't think it could get better, but it did. I think every year we add small, little elements that create a more personal touch, because we want to make sure that the event that we put in or put out for the community and specifically the parent scholars, is an event of quality, because oftentimes they're an afterthought.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:27:22]:

And the amount of detail that we like to put into things to know, like, they're important to us, and we're going to pay attention to everything from beginning to end. So next year likely will look very similar. We're exploring, you know, having more workshops and expanding in terms of our marketing, but we hope to continue it. And I think now it's just hoping that we can eventually get to a place where we can build a program, not just these isolated things that we do.

Chisa Uyeki [00:27:47]:

Thank you so much. I'm so interested in you mentioning the need for community. That definitely came up as students that we spoke to, that they felt they were finding community and how much they relied on the support of community. I think. I don't know. Before I had kids, I did not realize how isolating community parenting can be, and so that surprised me. And you have to be very intentional about finding that community. So I think providing that is such an amazing.

Chisa Uyeki [00:28:13]:

Being intentional and thoughtful about how that's provided for our students is such an amazing service for them. We also know from research that belongingness has a direct impact on student achievement and academic success. So one of the things that we're interested in hearing more about is from your perspective, what do you feel like faculty and staff can do to best support students who are parents? Can you maybe share some of the successful practices or approaches or strategies that you know, have worked for students?

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:28:52]:

Yeah, I think when it comes to staff, it's just pointing them to the right direction so you don't have to have all the answers. But even letting them know like, hey, start with the ops, they'll kind of guide you. And I think we've always shared with people, even though they're not EOPS eligible, we're not going to say, okay, we're not going to help you. We'll at least point them to the right resource. And I think that's what's important is one connecting them and saying, okay, I don't know a lot about that, but go to the EOPS office. I'm sure they can give you a little bit more information about what resources are available to you. And then the other piece is maybe including it in the syllabus and saying, here's, are you having childcare issues? Like here's the basic needs department, they have upwards credits, maybe including a flyer. I can see that working most of the time the way that it's currently working is that because it is not a specific effort, it's mostly emailing them through EAB and saying, I noticed that you said you're a parenting student.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:29:46]:

Here's the upwards flyer, this is how it works. And trying to guide them through that. So that has worked. I think our students could benefit from having a dedicated staff and counselor. And so one thing that we are exploring as we're moving forward is emailing general counseling and saying, hey, who wants to be like a parent ally? And basically we can have this designation for them to know, like, hey, this is a person who understands the challenges that you may be experiencing as a parent. And that I think goes a long way to show that there's some kind of understanding. And again, reminding them at finals, because parents are so busy, if they're not in the middle of it, they don't pay as much attention because they have other priorities given their kids situation. So just reminding them at finals, hey, remember, if you're having a child care problem as we go into finals, check in with basic needs and see what options are available to you.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:30:38]:

I think that can go a long way. Just the reminders before testing because I know every year we do have situations where children are left outside of the classrooms and then they're Told they can't do that. And so that often prevents them from successfully taking the final. So just make, I guess it's just creating awareness and letting them know. I think it's good to point students to basic needs, pointing them to eops. And I say EOPS meaning a lot of times EOPS because it is a program that has been here for 55 years. People for the most part hear EOPS and they know where we're located because we are a program that has historically been here for a long time. EOPS did stem from the civil rights movement.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:31:19]:

And so it's something that's been here. It got in September 1969. And so at Mount Sac it started in 72. So we are celebrating our 55 years of having been here at Mount Sac. And so that's the important thing is letting them know where to go. So I think even providing them with a campus map and saying here's basic needs here at the ops. Start with these two departments and they can probably guide you to other resources that are available. So I think just having that communication with students and letting them know in terms of engagement and community building, it's advertising and making some events child friendly.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:31:56]:

And I know that's a little bit controversial, but our students, one thing they always say is that they appreciate when they can bring their children. And so we often see that students don't participate because after school they have to bring their kids or they have to pick up their kids around noon for preschool age kids. So when they can bring them, they're like, okay, perfect, I get to be engaged, meet other kids, parents and what have you not. So with eops and care and calworks and we do include some of the parent students is we do Easter extravaganza, what we call it like a spring extravaganza. And we basically do like an egg hunt for the kids and their families so they can participate in that. We also have care adoptive family, that event is family friendly. So our events that are family friendly tend to be better attended because they don't have that additional barrier of having to figure out the child care portion of it. So I would say I would encourage people to consider as much as they can because I know there's still parameters that we have to be mindful of, but it's very helpful when they can actually bring their children.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:33:01]:

So I think highlighting things like the planetarium and the free events that happen through the planetarium, which letting them know about like the wildlife sanctuary and being able to bring their kids on campus and Walk that area is not just helpful for that, but it's also to create a college going culture. So we pride ourselves in making sure that we help them break that generational cycle and we provide them with like, hey, bring your kids so they can see what it's like to go to college. They can be familiar with the campus setting as opposed to it being, oh, mom's away and I don't know where she's at, but hey, here's my school and this is where I'm at when I'm not with you. I think that goes a long way. So just support doing more advertising of the kid friendly events and welcoming kids on campus when they are here.

Chisa Uyeki [00:33:45]:

I love that. That's so helpful. I think that, you know, we do have some of the events that are specifically for family, like there's Chemistry day and farm day and those, those ones. But now I'm thinking about events I've been to maybe in the last two, three months that would be completely appropriate to have family at as well. And you're right, not everything is that way, of course, as a college, as a higher education institution. But there are a lot that could be open. A lot of the cultural events that we have would be great to include families. So some of that is just, as you said, being aware and sharing that I wanted to ask you in terms of the work that faculty are doing with students, and this episode is helping faculty learn more about student needs, their experiences, what's happening in their lives.

Chisa Uyeki [00:34:34]:

So as we think about what faculty can do, are there things that you want to make sure that faculty understand about student parents? And I think one of the places that might present problems for faculty is how to balance maintaining boundaries with practicing empathy and flexibility. I think that's something that we're all always trying to do. But I think in working with students who are parents, that may be also something to consider.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:35:06]:

And that's where it's challenging. I think what's important for faculty to know is that our students are equally committed because I think sometimes they're perceived as not being fully committed to their education and not prioritizing academics or their class or their homework. I guess remembering like they also have to help their kids complete homework. They are limited for time. Sometimes they're also working and that presents an added challenge. So I think it's just being aware and remembering that, not assuming that it's because a student doesn't want to do the work or isn't being responsible by getting to know the student saying, hey, is there a Situation. So for example, drop off. Sometimes a student had no choice but to enroll in that 8am class instead of assuming that the student's late because they just don't care, is asking them okay, like is there a possibility that this student might have a drop off time that is doesn't coincide with this class and them knowing, you know, okay, There might be 15 minutes late and being like, okay, can I give them a little bit of wiggle room there? Because I understand on our end we try to encourage the student to share that information with the professor and let them know, hey, I have drop off.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:36:13]:

I may always be, you know, five to 10 minutes late because of my drop off situation, which sometimes is complete chaos. So I think it's just asking questions, not assuming. Students who are parent students are not as committed. I have heard our students feeling that way that they feel that oftentimes because they have this parent identity that they're seen as not as serious students. And it's trying to figure out like for that student sometimes when they may be dealing with a child who is having difficulties in their own school and trying to figure out how to manage that while also trying to manage their school is very difficult. Basically I would say like as long as they can at least refer students and say, hey, go see these departments. And that's just showing like I may not be able to do a lot because I understand like they still have to complete the work, they still have to, you know, meet deadlines. And we do try to enforce that with our students.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:37:07]:

But where are the areas that do lend to some understanding in terms of they may need an extension? Right. Like there are times that our students and I think in this time the mental health component has come into play a lot more where a lot of their children are experiencing mental health issues or they're experiencing issues at the school because of their learning disability. We do see that a lot with our student population and because of the amount of time it takes sometimes it's not that they don't think it's as important they prioritize their students lives, their children's lives. I think sometimes it's just being mindful of those things. Like I said, I think that what could help is the basic needs information on the syllabus and letting and outlining what basic needs is for in terms of like they provide upwards child care credit or referrals. Basic needs like the pantry. So things that are normal that our students are experiencing is like food insecurity with their parenting students. Resources for like summer programs like so for our students, we always email them.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:38:08]:

Here's what we found. That's free in the community. So we do a little bit of homework, but it does depend by region, so we can't expect faculty to have that information. But again, always just saying, okay, talk to basic needs or eops and see if they are aware of a resource that I may not know about.

Ivan Sanchez [00:38:23]:

Well, I think that about wraps it up. We just want to thank you for sharing your time with us and just giving us so many insights about the resources on campus. But I think more importantly, the resiliency that is being shown by our student parents. And hopefully this conversation takes us towards a campus culture that does, you know, take student parents seriously and their struggles are seen, but their resiliency is also equally seen. We just want to thank you so much, Julie, for your expertise on all this and for everything that you do on campus for our students. So thank you.

Dr. Julie Marquez [00:39:00]:

No, thank you both for highlighting parenting students. I really appreciate it.

Chisa Uyeki [00:39:06]:

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