

Bethany Davis is a dedicated California Community College professional in rural Northern California, where they serve students of various backgrounds, including many first-generation and low-income students. Bethany's passion for higher education began when she made the decision to go back to college in her early 30's as a full-time single parent, raising two young children on a preschool teacher's salary. While she loved teaching her young students, she was living below the poverty line and struggling to make ends meet. She recognized that the key to creating a better life for herself and her children was through education. She took the scary leap and quit her full-time job to work two part-time jobs, allowing her more flexibility so she could begin her bachelor's degree program and still be available for her children.

Through her personal experience as a returning college student, and the interactions she had with some supportive and inspiring educational counselors, Bethany gained a sense of purpose for her life. She graduated from her bachelor's degree program with high distinction, and began her career in higher education by first working in financial aid. With a valuable foundation in the financial aid process, Bethany moved in to the Transfer Center where she has walked students through understanding the transfer process, assisted with transfer applications, and coordinated any transfer-related activities and outreach. Bethany has become recognized as a dedicated and knowledgeable ally to students and colleagues, and has often been called upon to support students in the Counseling Department, Admissions & Records and Financial Aid. She also accepted the opportunity to add duties as an Articulation Assistant, which has rounded out her comprehension of the higher education experience.

Working in the Transfer Center and as an ad hoc for other departments has allowed Bethany to get to know the college students she serves on an individual basis and hear about their lives outside of the school. Many are overcoming barriers to pursue their education and they need to know the resources available to them that will give them an equitable chance to succeed. She has tried to use her own experiences with overcoming barriers, coupled with her knowledge about services and programs available, to provide holistic support and encourage students to be persistent. She also began working alongside a dedicated Transfer Counselor that showed her the impact a caring, knowledgeable, and thoughtful counselor can have on the success of a student, which further strengthened her desire to become an educational counselor.

As the recipient of National University's Life Changer Scholarship, Bethany plans to obtain her Master's Degree in Educational Counseling and pursue work as an Educational Counselor or as an Administrator working for a specialized program geared toward equity and student success. She hopes to one day pay this scholarship forward by creating a scholarship geared toward single parents pursuing their postsecondary education. Bethany recently accepted a position working as Assistant Director of Gateway to College, which is a program designed to help high school students who are behind in credits earn their high school diploma while concurrently earning college credits on the college campus. She also plans to use the tools and knowledge gained from her master's program to help the population of students she now serves.