



## PRESS RELEASE

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### California State University, Bakersfield Receives ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education

Washington, DC – Today the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) and ETS presented California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) with the 2023 ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admission through Completion. Debra Jackson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs at CSUB accepted the co-sponsored award during a ceremony held at the CGS 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

The ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education recognizes promising, innovative proposals to enhance student success and degree completion at the master's and doctoral levels while promoting inclusiveness. The winning institution is selected on the strength of its proposal to meet the award's goals and to serve as a model for other schools. The winner receives a two-year, \$20,000 matching grant.

Graduate education leaders from eight of the California State University (CSU) campuses have agreed to pilot an initiative titled, "***The Next Step: Building Career Readiness Among Graduate Students across the CSU.***" This initiative is designed to develop and deliver high-quality, co-curricular programming to graduate students that addresses the eight career readiness competencies identified by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE): career and self-development, communication, critical thinking, equity and inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology.

With an additional 14 campuses agreeing to promote this program to graduate students on their campuses, this project will provide the 50,000-plus students enrolled annually in a CSU graduate program with access to innovative career readiness programs that prepare them for future career success across all fields of study, across the state of California.

CSUB enthusiastically accepted the 2023 Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admissions through Completion. Jackson said she was inspired to launch the initiative after learning about a similar one several Colorado institutions were doing at the Western Association of Graduate Schools 2022 annual conference.

"I presented the idea at a statewide graduate deans meeting and received enthusiastic support from 21 of the campuses. The next month I met with Ganesh Raman, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research, and he was able to secure the required matching funds for the project from the Chancellor's Office. I then worked with

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seven other graduate education leaders—Kevin Brown from East Bay, Elaine Frey from Fullerton, Dina Perrone from Long Beach, Amy Levin from Northridge, Chevelle Newsome from Sacramento, Tracy Love from San Diego, and Stacey Bosick from Sonoma—to hammer out the details of the project,” Jackson said. “Thanks to our incredible collaboration and the award from CGS and ETS, graduate students across the CSU will soon have access to high-quality professional development programming to prepare them for their future careers. I couldn’t be more thrilled.”

CGS’s President, Suzanne Ortega, noted that the project has the potential for replication at other state systems and will help support a career-ready workforce.

“This project models the collaboration and teamwork CGS members can use to deliver high-quality career readiness programs to ensure that graduate students are ready for the workforce, whether in academia or industry,” Ortega said. “We are so grateful to ETS for their support in recognizing this innovative way to promote best practices among graduate schools.”

“Awards such as this are what will help shape the future leaders of tomorrow,” said Amit Sevak, CEO of ETS. “ETS is proud to recognize CSUB’s program that goes above and beyond to support learners on the path to success.”

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#### **About CGS**

*The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

#### **About ETS**

*We believe in the life-changing power of learning. For the last 75 years, we’ve been driven by a vision of what’s possible when all people can improve their lives through education. It’s why our uncompromising commitment to equity and fairness is behind everything we do. ETS serves learners, educators and government agencies by providing measurement solutions, and conducting research, analysis and policy studies. ETS develops, administers and scores tens of millions of tests annually — including the TOEFL® and TOEIC® tests, the GRE® tests and The Praxis Series® assessments — in more than 200 countries, at over 9,000 locations worldwide. [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)*