

Dear Bakersfield College Student Government Association,

Hello again! My name is Elizabeth Diaz and I am a sophomore here at Bakersfield College. I am studying Political Science and History and through my studies I have learned how each position in every government holds a very important position, which is why I am also applying for the senator position. I really want to be more involved in my community as a Bakersfield College student. Though I have no previous experience in SGA, I am a fast learner and dedicated to making time in my schedule to fit that of what is needed from a BCSGA position. Bakersfield College holds a special place for me in my heart because I have been able to connect with many different people who have really built and shaped my identity as a first generation college student. I had my doubts and assumptions when I first walked onto the Bakersfield College campus. Especially with the stereotypes and stigma around attending a community college before a prestigious university or public 4-year university. It felt discouraging. But that quickly changed once I became involved on campus in clubs, student organizations, and overall in the Bakersfield community by volunteering. However, I still see those same attitudes that I once held reflected onto the new incoming students on the Bakersfield College campus, and those who are returning those the Bridge to BC program. Interacting with the students and speaking with my peers, I have come to realize how different and difficult it can be for every individual who arrives onto the BC campus. Many come with the burdens of maintaining a household on their own, many currently or formerly incarcerated, some recently arrived from a foreign country, and most struggling with financial and family burdens. College can be discouraging for many reasons, and having the ability to have resources at those campuses to make college possible is important. I believe that is why I am interested in this position. As a Senator, I want a connection to what students want from Bakersfield College. What is it that we can do as students to make this experience of going to college easier, and more inclusive. To me, diversity and inclusion is most important to be included in our campus and community. Coming from an immigrant background, I share similar experiences with many of the students on campus who feel like an outsider. My goal is to maintain the community at Bakersfield College lively and inclusive by listening, answering, and responding to the needs of every individual that we can get in contact with. I am eager to learn and grow my skills to be able to represent, participate and overall gain skills that will be a part of me as I move forward in my educational pathway. I have participated in many organizations in our community that I believe have built my experience as to what it means to represent and connect. Volunteering alongside UFW I have seen and experienced what it means to work hard in the fields, and how to connect families to grow and learn as our community adapts to changes. Participating in student organizations like L.U.P.E have connected me to conferences and events where I have been able to gain a deeper understanding of hurdles and challenges it takes for first generation and immigrant students in the educational system that weren't formally built for people like us. Being able to share those resources with fellow peers, and my own family members has been one of the greatest privileges. Overall what has made my interest most into BCSGA has been my participation as a student worker in the Tutoring Center and a Peer Mentor for Bridge to BC, in T.R.I.O, and the student organizations on campus. I have created friendships, mentors with professors and overall gained experiences into what it takes to be a part of the Bakersfield College Community. Bakersfield College has given me the chance to discover what my passions are and without a foundation that makes these resources and community available, it would have not been possible. I believe that those foundations are created through the voice of what the students want on campus through BCSGA. It has become an outlet for many students to voice their opinions, concerns and overall experiences into what it takes to be there for our students. I only want to learn from current BCSGA members and aid the growth of the vibrant and inclusive community on the Bakersfield College campus.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Diaz