

Bristol Community College's new Parenting Advancement Pathways program helps student parents reach their goals

Bristol Community College's new Parenting Advancement Pathways program holistically supports student parents who are balancing their education while raising children. The program provides valuable resources inside and outside of the college such as case management, financial and career planning, counseling as well as integrated, wrap-around academic support that leads to earning a degree.

"When parents can focus on their educational, career and financial goals with support and high-impact best practices, they are more likely to reach their goals," said Iva Brito, Director, Bristol Community College Women's Center.

The program is planned to begin in Spring 2021 and is backed by EMPATH's Mobility Mentoring® model and the development of individual goals in five areas that represent the pillars on the EmPath Bridge to Self-Sufficiency®. The initiative focuses on supporting BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color), low-income and single mother heads of a household, but is open to all mothers currently learning at Bristol. The program requires an application and virtual interview process.

The Parenting Advancement Pathways program will work with the college's student centers and departments – such as the Women's Center, Multicultural Affairs, Disability Services, Admissions, Advising, Financial Aid, Career Services and Student and Family Engagement, to customize services and

resources to aid student success.

The initiative will also provide resources such as holistic case management, financial and career planning, counseling and mentoring. Participants will be assigned both a peer mentor and a professional mentor to help stay on track and to provide experience-based guidance and encouragement.

The innovative program, funded by grants from the Island Foundation, Women's Fund of Southeastern Massachusetts and Rise Prize, will also be supported with engaging workshops from community partners, such as the Marion Institute, Around the Bend Farm, Elements Learning Collaborative and more.

Students can apply to be in the Parenting Advancement Pathways program now, by visiting www.bristolcc.edu/parenting or by emailing Iva.Brito@bristolcc.edu.