

# ICT Educator Webinar Series

One-Year Update and Lessons Learned:  
BIW Cross-Disciplinary Certificates at  
College of the Desert

April 17, 2020

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[00:00:00]

## Welcome

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Good morning, everybody. This is the ICT Educator Webinar Series, where we bring to you the very best in what you would expect from a conference, which now you just can't go to anymore! Originally, it was like, "Let's give people an alternative, so if they don't want to spend the money, they get the same quality, and make it regular, at 10 o'clock." But now, I guess you don't really have a choice, do you?



This is our team. Our team is all working remotely, as you are. We have a new member – Olivia Herford has joined us in the San Francisco Bay Region. I think everybody else has been here before.

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And all of our information and all these webinars are, of course, on our website. And on the website, we have an incredible amount of stuff! When I go back and look at what we've already got, it's amazing. I'm periodically going in there, picking stuff, and sending it to people, saying, "Have you seen this? It's what you were talking about yesterday." They go, "Wow! I didn't know you have it!"

All this stuff is transcribed, the video is recorded, and all the PowerPoints are there. So, everything is there, if you want to do something with it. You know, turn it into a grant or teaching class or whatever. We're trying to make these not just a one-time deal, which is fun. It's interactive. We'll hopefully give Pablo some tough questions today. But it's also a resource, going forward.

## WEBINAR PRESENTER

**One Year Update and Lessons Learned: BIW Cross-Disciplinary Certificates at College of the Desert**



### PABLO ROMERO

Born and raised in San José, Costa Rica, José Pablo Romero moved to Los Angeles after high school. He worked for many years in the field of accounting and earned Associate's degrees from LA City College and College of the Desert. Pablo also studied internationally and conducted business strategy studies in India, China and Taiwan as part of his program at CSUSB.

After graduating with a BA in Business Administration and MSA, he worked at a CPA firm as a Staff Accountant and taught at CSUSB and other institutions. In 2016, Pablo received a tenure track appointment at College of the Desert. He is currently studying for his doctorate in Education in Community College Leadership at National American University.

Today, we have Pablo, who is just getting fancier every time I see him! But he has come into the College of the Desert and taken the Business Information Worker that Nancy was so critical in developing back in the beginning, and he has done what we were hoping small colleges (or all colleges) would do – develop the third level and something custom to your region.

We already had one update before, and now, with the latest on progress and everything and kind of a recap of the whole thing, we'll turn it over to Pablo to go ahead and tell us what's going on.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Well, thank you, Steve.

[00:02:07]

## **One Year Update and Lessons Learned**

**PABLO ROMERO:** Hello, everybody. I hope everybody stays safe. I know these are some strange times we're going through. As college instructors, we have to do a very quick switch and move over our lecture classes to online classes. All of a sudden, the number of online students that I have duplicated. And for some reason, there's not enough time. But I'm pretty sure we will get through this, and I hope that everybody stays safe.

Let's talk a little bit about the BIW, and let me go ahead and share my screen with you.

Again, my name is Pablo Romero, and I teach Computer Information Systems and the new Application Information Systems, which I will talk about a little bit in a minute, which is a new associate degree program that we created in order to accommodate the BIW at College of the Desert.

So, let's get started!

By the way, if anybody has any questions, please feel free to interrupt me at any time. I have no problem with that.

[00:03:33]

## The Framework Recap

BUSINESS INFORMATION WORKER CONCEPTUAL PATHWAY		
	Course Name or Topic	Certifications
BIW I	Keyboarding	
	Microsoft Windows	
	Microsoft Word	MOS Word
	Microsoft Excel	MOS Excel
	Microsoft Outlook	MOS Outlook
	Information Systems	
	Business Communications	
	Human Relations/Customer Service	
BIW II	Microsoft PowerPoint	MOS PowerPoint
	Microsoft Excel, Intermediate	
	Microsoft Access or Intro to SharePoint	MOS Access
	QuickBooks	QuickBooks Certified User
	Electronic Records Management	
	Customer Relationship Management	
BIW Specialist	Presentation/Marketing	
	Communication Support	
	Project Management Concepts	CompTIA Project+
	Salesforce Certification Prep	Salesforce Certified Administrator

**PABLO ROMERO:** So, let's do a quick recap. The Business Information Worker Conceptual Pathway was something that was created and handed to us, and it has basically three different stages. They call it the BIW I, BIW II, and then they came up with the BIW/Specialist.

The BIW I and BIW III are very straightforward. They were two types of certifications that would enhance or give students the opportunity to find work in any office at two different levels.

[00:04:18]

## **The COD Approach**

- Small adjustment we made considering the marketability of the diploma...
  - BIW Stage One
    - Business Information Worker
  - BIW Stage Two
    - Business Information Worker - Manager

**PABLO ROMERO:** At College of the Desert, we were not very comfortable with the native BIW Stage One and BIW Stage Two, mostly because the employers wouldn't know what that is, if we were to print it on a diploma, so we decided to just call it Business Information Worker and Business Information Worker – Manager.

So, when the student gets their diploma and bring this to an employer, the employer could read it, and they will have a little bit more of an idea of what it was, instead of 'Stage One' or 'Stage Two.'

- BI Specialists:
  - BI – Marketing Specialist
  - BI – Legal Office Specialist
  - BI – Medical Office Specialist

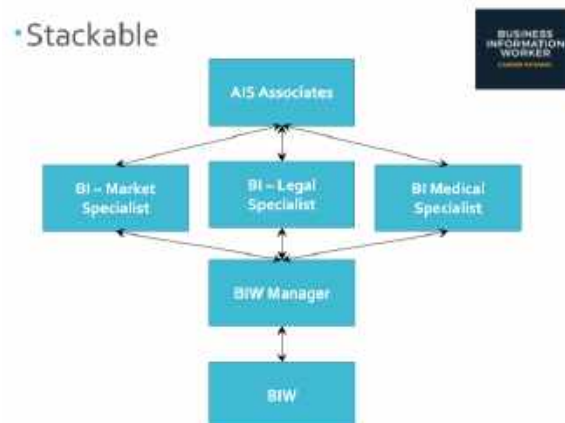
But then, after that, we decided to take the third part, and that was great because we were able to run with it and just do a little bit of research on our own end to see what the market demand was, what the students were looking for, what employers were looking for, and try to fine-tune those certificates according to that demand, and we came up with the first three certificates. We call them BI – Marketing Specialist, BI- Legal Office Specialist, and BI – Medical Office Specialist. Those are based on the demand here in the Coachella Valley, things that students are looking for.

- Fulfill the need of the community and job demand, virtually and geographically
  - Include students and local businesses
- Maximize the use of available resources
  - Use existing courses as much as plausible
  - Build alliances with other departments

The idea was to fulfill the need of the community and job demand, virtually geographically. The reason I say ‘virtually’ is because the BIW – Marketing Specialist. It’s made for students to be able to work anywhere. You know, work from home and have clients all over the state or even out of state.

In the effort to put these certificates out, we included students’ opinions and the local businesses’ as much as the research that we did from the resources that were provided for us. But we took into consideration a lot of what the students were asking for.

And the idea was the maximize the use of the available resources. This was actually very important because we did not try to reinvent the wheel. We were trying to create specialties, but our college already had certain specialties – for example, with the Medical Office Specialist, we already had a health and nursing department at College of the Desert. There was no reason to try to recreate courses and basically step on their toes. We just built an alliance with them, told them what we wanted to do, and they actually were very supportive. They allowed us to start sharing their courses, so we didn’t have to recreate. Basically, what we wanted to do was just adapt the Business Information Systems part to the particular field that they had.





So, what we ended up coming up with was a set of stackable certificates. I like this graph because it shows you. If you start from the bottom, you can see we have the BIW to the BIW – Manager because they're all stackable. That basically means the student needs to take a few more courses, and they will go on to the next one up.

Then, on top of the BIW – Manager, we have the three different specialties. That means that, if somebody makes it to BIW – Manager, all they have to take is just a few more courses, and they are able to specialize in one of these particular fields. Obviously, all of them are under a BIS associate degree. This is the one that we created in order to accommodate this whole thing underneath.

Now, the way that I say it is we're actually tricking the students into getting an associate degree, getting them to get an education, because they start in, "Well, I just want to work in an office. I just want to get a little bit of experience with Excel and Word and Outlook and those things." So, we start at the bottom and then say, "Well, just a couple more classes, and you can get this."

I have had students come into my office for what they used to call an Office Professional Certificate, which we don't have anymore. We replaced them with these certifications. You start talking to them and, "Well, you know, if you just take a couple more classes, you can get into this," and some of them have a little bit of an interest in legal classes, some of them have a little bit of interest in medical classes, and other ones in marketing classes.

They'll say, "Oh, yeah, well, let me try that."

By the time that they are all the way up there, all they have to take is the general courses, and they can get an associate degree. Bingo – I just tricked you into getting an education!

Not only that, but the idea is also that, if one of the students ends up going... Let's say one of them gets Legal Office Specialist and gets an AIS Associate Degree and starts working for a law firm, the court system, or something like that, and they start to find out that they really have an interest for the law, maybe – just maybe – it will incite them into later on getting an education, continuing

their education, and becoming an attorney. I would love to be the one that actually put that thought in their minds, you know?

[00:10:10]

## The Framework Update

- All the BIW Program Specialties and new Medical Billing course made it to the 2019 – 2020 Catalog
- The **NEW** Applications and Information Systems Associate Degree also made it to the catalog

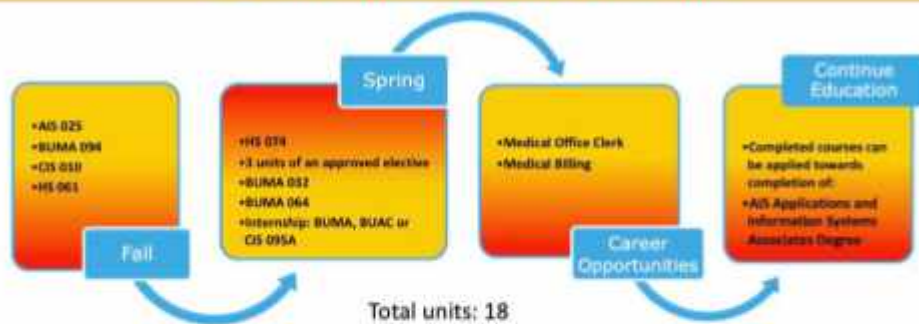
**PABLO ROMERO:** So, this is the structure that we have currently. Thank god, we were able to include all the programs into the 2019 – 2020 catalog. So, we started in the fall.

We only had to create one new course for this whole thing. Everything else we had already at College of the Desert. We just started sharing classes with the Business department and the Administrative Justice department.

With the Health and Nursing department, we only had to create one course – we call it AIS-025 Medical Billing (I'll talk a little bit more about it in a minute), but we were not able to schedule it until the spring of 2020 because this was able to hit the catalog just for the fall.

But we have gotten a lot of interest, and students are getting very interested. Right now, you're not studying to be a glorified secretary. You actually have a purpose, and you have something that you really, really, really like.

## Business Information – Medical Office Specialist Certificate of Achievement



### First,

- See a Faculty Advisor.
- Visit the Career and Workforce Solutions Center to explore an internship and/or work experience opportunity.

### Next,

- Meet with career counselor at the Career and Workforce Solutions for career related resources (e.g. resume writing, job search, and interview skills).

### Final

- Apply for certificate.
- Seek career opportunities or continue education to earn an additional certificate or degree.

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Where did we go from there? Well, once the programs hit our catalog, we started with a promotion. This is an effort that I can tell you hasn't been only me. I have Michelle Richards, who works very closely with me, and Aubrey Weston, who works very closely with me, in the promotion of this, and they have done an excellent job in getting the word out.

We have pathways... You know, information like this, where the student can see how many units they have to take, how we will arrange the classes so that they can finish it all in one year. We're trying to get everything as simple as possible for them, and they have been very receptive to it.

- Spring of 2020
  - AIS-025 Medical Billing was full and waitlisted
  - The demand is so high that we decided to open a section every semester and give students multiple points of entry
  - Many students have visited advisors wanting to change from Office Professional to BIW
  - Interest in getting multiple certifications
  - Awarding BIW Certifications at Graduation (data pending because of social distancing regulations)

Michelle Richards and Aubrey Weston have worked very hard to promote, putting the Medical Office certificate, and the response has been overwhelming, actually.

I told you we created this Medical Billing class as AIS-025 Medical Billing. It was full!

The first semester we ever scheduled this class, it was full and waitlisted and then some more. There were people trying to get into the class. Originally, we thought that the class should be scheduled only in the fall, but with such a high demand, we talked to the dean and decided to see if we could schedule it every semester, giving the students all entry points into the program. So, now, instead of just starting it in the fall and finishing in the spring, the students can start at any time.

The other things about this is that students have actually visited the advisors, asking for recommendations, because they were originally inclined to get the Office Professional or Administrative Office Assistant certificates. Like I mentioned before, we ended up canceling those, but some students started the program, so we had to finish them, but we have been able to talk to them, explain how this works, the stackability of the certificates, and how they can get multiple certifications. They have been very, very receptive about that. They are very excited.

As a matter of fact, since a lot of our students already had many of the courses taken from before – even before the program started – we should be awarding BIW certifications at graduation this year. Unfortunately, our graduation has been postponed, and I do not have the data available. I wish I was able to have that data for you today, but hopefully, maybe later I can pass that to Nicole, and she can follow up, because that would be our first graduation with BIW certifications, and I know there are plenty of them out there. In such a short time, the response has been overwhelming!

- **BI – Medical Office Specialist**
  - Eisenhower Medical Center has shown us their support
  - They will offer applications for a selective process due to high response in the program
  - Students will get work experience credit
  - We are currently looking for other community businesses to step up and do the same as Eisenhower

**PABLO ROMERO:** So, let me talk a little bit more about probably our most successful certificate that we have right now, the Medical Office Specialist. I believe a lot has to do with it because of the area where we are located, the geographic area where we are located. We have a very large senior citizen population here that requires care, and there is a lot of medical offices and doctors, so Medical Billing is in big demand.

But we have also found support in Eisenhower Medical Center. They have shown us their support. They are a big hospital here. We just had a meeting with them a month and a half ago, I think, on what is going to be the process for the first cohort to be able to apply for internships in the hospital. The only thing that I'm worried about right now is that we have a huge cohort, and they can't take everybody, so it's going to be an application system, and they're going to be able to select the students that they want to keep there.

Right now, what we were thinking about is going and speaking with the other two hospitals here in the Coachella Valley and saying, "Hey, well, Eisenhower is doing this for us. Would you be able to do the same thing?" – hopefully, in order to expand the opportunities for students to do their internships in these hospitals.

But the whole idea is for the students to get work experience credit for it as part of the certification and get them to network and get a feel for how it is working in a hospital. One of the very funny things that the gentleman from Eisenhower mentioned was that some of these jobs are going to be in the emergency room. Personally, I wouldn't be able to do it. I could be admitting patients that come in bleeding and stuff like that. I'm not there, you know? It takes a certain kind of person, and I'm just not it!

But anyway, they have been very receptive. We're starting a system and, hopefully, since our first cohort started this spring, they should be able to finish, and we're trying to see if we can get the applications submitted and everything to see who they want to choose for the fall.

But at the same time, we have other hospitals that we're looking at. We also can work with medical offices. There is really a lot of different employers here that would be able to help us, and they

would definitely benefit from this program. We're really trying to get the word out not only to the students but also to the employers.

[00:18:18]

## What's New? BIW – Real Estate

- We started working on getting a BIW Real Estate certification to help students find work at...
  - Real estate agencies
  - Property management companies
  - Real estate development companies

**PABLO ROMERO:** This is the fun part! We started a BIW – Real Estate certification. This is just at the very, very beginning stages, in the planning stages, but we are very, very excited. Probably this is one that we would be able to share with everybody else because real estate is big here in the Coachella Valley – well, all over California. That's the reason homes are so expensive.

We started the real estate one, and it allows students to be able to work at real estate agencies and property management companies. We have a lot of those here also in the Coachella Valley because we have a lot of gated communities with associations, so there are tons of property management companies. There are also commercial property management companies. They can also work with real estate development companies.

- Also
  - Get industry certified and become an agent themselves
  - Continue their path with the AIS Associate Degree

And most important is that what we are trying to do is be able to see if the students will take an interest in becoming certified and become agents themselves and, obviously, continue their pathway to the AIS Associate Degree because, just like the other specialties, this one would be stacked underneath it.

So, what's the idea? The idea is always to provide a Business Information Worker pathway into different types of real estate offices. However, just like all the other ones, like we did with Medical Billing, we put in a couple courses that would allow the student to take industry certification – in,



this case, it's to become a real estate agent – for a fraction of the cost that it would be if they were actually doing it on their own or taking those online classes or face-to-face classes. They are extremely, extremely expensive.

[00:20:37]

## Requirements

- Required courses for license...
  - Real Estate Principles
  - Real Estate Practice
  - One course from the following list...

**PABLO ROMERO:** So, what do we need in order to do this? OK, according to the DRE, these are the courses required for somebody to take a real estate license exams: Real Estate Principles, Real Estate Practice, and then 'one course from the following list,' and then they give you this big list...

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| • Real Estate Appraisal             | • <b>General Accounting</b>            |
| • Property Management               | • <b>Business Law</b>                  |
| • Real Estate Finance               | • Escrows                              |
| • Real Estate Economics             | • Mortgage Loan Brokering and Lending  |
| • Legal Aspects of Real Estate      | • Computer Applications in Real Estate |
| • Real Estate Office Administration | • Common Interest Developments         |

Now, it's right there, but I wanted to point out that it says 'General Accounting' or 'Business Law' – that's the reason they are highlighted. Well, those are courses that we already have at the college, and I'm pretty sure every college has them.

Now, the other ones are definitely courses that we would like to introduce once we get more demand in there, because they are very interesting and very important, but we are trying to get this off the ground, so if we have what it takes, I think that we should use it.

- BIW Real Estate Specialty
  - Required Courses
    - Real Estate Principles **NEW**
    - Real Estate Practice **NEW**
    - Computer Literacy
    - Advanced Excel
    - Business Research
  - Elective Courses
    - Financial Accounting
    - Business Law
  - Total Certificate Units 17 or 18

So, we thought about just taking those courses, which is Real Estate Principles – I put ‘NEW’ right next to it – and Real Estate Practice because we will have to develop curriculum for those. Now, the good thing is that there are other colleges that already have this curriculum out there, and they are looking forward to sharing this with us. It has been very, very helpful.

Once we put those two courses in there, add the Computer Literacy class, Advanced Excel, and Business Research... Now, you see those three other courses are just a regular part of the BIW, you know? Anybody with a BIW will probably have those three courses already.

And for the elective courses, we’ll just add the Financial Accounting or Business Law. They just need to pick one, and we will end up having a certificate with 17 or 18 units – it depends on the number of units that these have. I believe Financial Accounting is a 4-unit course, and Business Law is a 3-unit course. So, we will have a BIW certification right there, and all these courses will be under the AIS Associate Degree.

Does anybody have any questions so far?

[00:23:04]

**STEVE WRIGHT:** I think that’s great. I mean, I’ve been having discussions with people on how things are changing with this new virus environment we’re in, and property management and helping people exist in their homes, whether it’s through refinancing or whatever, is going to actually

become more in demand. And as long as all these people have these basic skills and understand the industry enough, I think that... I mean, your home is going to be more than your castle! It's also going to be where you work. It's going to be a lot of other things. So, this could be a growing thing.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** I love what you've done here. Personally, I went through the real estate licenses process many, many years ago, when I thought I was going to make a million bucks.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Oh, yeah!

**STEVE WRIGHT:** But now I'm more sane about things. It looks great. I think your students will get a lot out of it. Are these going to be on the schedule?

**PABLO ROMERO:** No, the BIW – Real Estate specialty is in the works. That's why I have the little 'Under Construction' thing. This is something we have been organizing. Before this whole virus thing, we were able to gather the information for the two classes that we need to create a curriculum. We have not created that yet.

So, I'm giving it a timeline, with creating two new courses and putting the certificate in, probably by the fall of 2021. That depends on how quickly we can get those courses up. We'll get them submitted sometime this spring.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** This is great.

[00:24:44]

**KENT MOSER:** This is Kent Moser. I had a question.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Sure.

**KENT MOSER:** So, we just started ours. In fact, we just got it approved through the Chancellor's Office, all 22 courses, 3 levels of certificates, and an AIS degree as of January. We're excited about it, but we went exactly like the model curriculum for the BIW.

But we want to do some of the things like you did eventually, to have a few stackable additional certificates. Do you require the first two levels of everybody, and then they branch off into a more specialized certificate when they get to the third level? Am I understanding that correctly?

**PABLO ROMERO:** No, we do not require anything – actually, each certificate stands on its own. If somebody comes in and says, “Hey, I want a Legal Office certificate,” they will just get it.

But the thing is, the way that they are created, if you take the Legal Office certification, you would automatically get a BIW because it's just a few more courses than what the BIW was. It's kind of step by step. Yes, but a student can just choose whatever they want. If they just want a particular certification, that's it. If a student comes in that says, “Oh, I just want to take this Real Estate specialty,” they would take this that's right here, and they could easily get a BIW – Manager... I don't remember the exact courses that they have, but BIW – Manager will come with this one.

**KENT MOSER:** OK.

**PABLO ROMERO:** So, they will get BIW – Manager with a Real Estate specialty at the same, and then they will be like, “Hey, you know, if you just want to take those general courses, then you can just get an associate degree.”

But most importantly, once they've completed this certification, they can just go and say, “Hey, let me try for the real estate license.” Obviously, they will probably have to pay for that. I mean, we still haven't gotten any breaks on that. It just would be a good idea to figure out if we can get a break from the DRE for the cost of that for our students. That's something that I'm going to write down, right now.

But they would be able to just try the license. They will have the education to get their real estate license, and now they can start working in the field, you know? And with everything that's going on right now with this virus, I think that we're going to go into a recession, and students are

going to find all different types of certifications that they're going to want in order to get work quickly.

**KENT MOSER:** OK, thank you. Yeah, right now, we're just going with level 1, level 2, and level 3, just like they had in the model curriculum. But yeah, we definitely want to shake it up a little bit, like you have done – maybe a little different stackables.

But one thing I want to throw out is, before we got started, we asked a whole bunch of students what they thought of the type of certificate, and they all loved the concept, but they hated the name.

**PABLO ROMERO:** The BIW?

**KENT MOSER:** For some reason, they didn't like the name 'Worker.'

**PABLO ROMERO:** Oh, really?

**KENT MOSER:** So, we actually did the exact same model curriculum, but we're calling it BIP, Business Information Professional, and that seemed to get almost a 100% positive feedback on that.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** I'm going to take the arrow in my back for the name because I'd been so impressed with Peter Drucker my entire life that when he talked about the modern information worker and wrote books about it, I just assumed that that was considered an elevated word when you put 'information' with it. Apparently, I'm wrong, OK?

**KENT MOSER:** I think it wasn't about that. A lot of them thought it was more demeaning or blue collar, so we decided to go with 'Business Information Professional.' It's the same program. We just decided to call it a different title.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah, that's not a bad idea. We have to figure out what the response is, how we market this. We got rid of the stage 1 and stage 2 because, for us, they were basically meaningless for the employer, you know? It really didn't say much. We wanted to market it in a way that the

employer, which is someone who is going to hire these people at the end, understood what they were coming with. So, I can see that.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** My escape strategy on this issue is that we came up with a conceptual model, and the idea was that colleges could hybridize it or take it where they wanted to go. I think the CID work that Nancy helped spearhead was sensational. There's an early short certificate in that thing that I think is helpful for a lot of people. I'd love to see somebody implement that and get some success on that.

But Pablo, what you have done recently... We've always been excited about your work because you walked out into the community (of course, when we're allowed to walk out), and you actually met with people. You found out how they wanted it customized.

Regardless of what you call it, we know that set of skills is valuable. It may be ordinary. You're doing Outlook? It's ordinary? Yeah, uh-huh – that's how you get a job! But then you did that finishing touch, and that's what I love about the work that you've done. I don't want to interrupt you. I know you have more to go here, so please proceed.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Well, actually, thank you for that. Yes, the biggest part of this is to network with the community – with the students and the employers – because they're the connection. We're just the middleman. We're just providing them the tools, so they can have a working relationship. If we listen, that's great.

For example, there are geographical areas where maybe a Medical Billing certificate will have a market but not as big of a market as we have here, and there may be a different type of area or industry that would be more appropriate for the geographical area. And it's things to think about. I mean, if I was doing this in Los Angeles, I would probably start looking into the entertainment industry and how the students can work in offices in the entertainment industry.

[00:31:34]

## For the Future? BIW – Hospitality

**PABLO ROMERO:** So, this is what we have right now as an update, but for the future, we have been talking about a BIW – Hospitality specialty. Here in the Coachella Valley, hospitality is big business.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Well, you know, one skillset we're going to have to add is this Zoom. I was talking to a fellow who was consulting with Airbnb yesterday. Airbnb is practically out of business right now because nobody can go to an airport or anything. But what they're trying to pitch is Airbnb as a purveyor of Zoom experiences. So, whether it's with a yoga coach or with this, that, or the other, they want to be in the middle of brokering that.

So, to a certain extent, the hospitality and retail... We're going to see some changes. I'm not really sure what they are. But like everybody else, I'm just hoping everything gets back to normal pretty soon.

**PABLO ROMERO:** I really hope so, too. So, I have been speaking with our new Hospitality instructor here at College of the Desert about maybe developing this and have people being able to work in the offices for the hotels, restaurants, country clubs, golf courses. There are all kinds of different areas where this could go. We haven't even started – it was just one of those conversations we've had, and it will be very interesting to get it off the ground.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** All right, I'm looking forward to this one. I've always thought that's a very strong play right there, because the basic office skills that somebody has... Well, any profession... I go back to when we were showing this to people in the entertainment community and saying, "This is the Business Information Worker and we'd like to do a kickoff program for the entertainment industry that would take it to the critical first steps." They said, "We want that!"

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** It's what people need to know, and a lot of them don't.

[00:33:54]

## Questions

**PABLO ROMERO:** Well, I just wonder if anybody has any questions...

**KENT MOSER:** Yeah – can we get a copy of your slide presentation? That would be great.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Absolutely. Nicole, do you have it? Do you want me to send you another?

**NICOLE SHERMAN:** I have it. We will post the slide deck and this webinar replay in a few days.

**PABLO ROMERO:** OK.

**NICOLE SHERMAN:** I'll send a link to everyone who registered for this webinar.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Nicole, I have a question. I can always send it to you. I'm pretty sure I have it, the original one that I had from last year?

**NICOLE SHERMAN:** Yes, we have that. That whole webinar is posted with its materials already.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Oh, OK, because it kind of makes sense if people watch the slides. That one had a little bit more detail on the process of how to do this, and then they can watch this one. This one basically is giving you an update on what happened, but last year, we talked about what are the steps to follow in order to create these certifications and to respond correctly to the demand, so it might be interesting to watch both.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Pablo, I had a question.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Sure.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Our business area currently offers skills recognition for the real estate professional – I assume they call it 'Real Estate Sales' – so that the person who wants to go get their license takes a series of three courses. Similar to what you have – the first two and then a



following one. Do you plan to do that in addition to the specialist? Because it really is a different skillset...

**PABLO ROMERO:** I'm sorry. I did not understand the question. I thought I did, but I didn't.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Well, your Real Estate Specialist that you're proposing has the three courses that are the real estate specific, if I read that correctly?

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Is that true?

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yep. Let me go back to that. Yeah, the three courses would be Principles, Practice, and then one of the electives, which is the Financial Accounting or Business Law.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Right. Our Business area currently offers that series of three courses as its recognition certificate already, so I'm wondering, for us, do you see that as an offshoot from your program as well? Being able to offer that skills recognition? I'm just wondering for the duplication for my students.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Well, and that's what mentioned before. We did not recreate the courses. If the courses are already there, then we do not recreate them. The reason I'm putting them in there is we don't have them.

Now, in your case, since you already have them and students are taking them, what I would do is just package it as a program so they can also get certified from your college. Do you see what I mean? Because right now, if a student goes in and takes the two Real Estate classes and the elective and then go do the real estate license and you don't see them again, they basically get on your records as a skill-builder, and this person was not a completer. He was a completer for their purposes but not for your college.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Right, yeah, I realize that skills recognitions don't meet within the 9-unit CTE credibility at this point for funding.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah. So, if you have already packaged those three courses as a certificate, then yes, if you were to create a BIW – Real Estate specialty, it will put it in competition for the program. So, I don't know, but you want to make sure that there's some kind of completion there. Well, first, for funding purposes, if you get skill-builders, then you're not going to get the funding that's required.

The other thing is, the way that this one is structured, it's under the associate degree. It's stuck right underneath it, so they can keep on going and then complete. And from what I understand, right now, with the way the new funding formula has morphed into (feel free to correct me if I'm not getting this right) is that the college gets paid for the highest-level program completed by the student in each year. So, if a student wants to do this and complete it in one year and then continue and get their associate degree the following year, you would get paid for both.

[00:36:25]

**NANCY BACKLUND:** OK, yeah, I didn't realize that. My other question – have you requested the CID approval for your BIW courses?

**PABLO ROMERO:** CID approval for BIW courses? You know what? I don't think so, and that's actually a good idea. Well, I'm going to be honest with you. The only course that we have created is the Medical Billing. This BIW – Real Estate specialty we haven't done. It's in the works. It's just barely starting, and we were trying to organize how we were going to do, so I just wanted to present that to you and say what our plan is.

Now, for the other ones that are in the catalog already, the only one that we created was the Medical Billing course, and we could definitely share the curriculum that's actually got CID approval on it. We're willing to share all this information with everybody.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Oh, no, I'm just talking about your previous courses. As Steve mentioned, you can go through the CID approval for those Excel courses, Business Communication, Outlook, all of those, through the BIW process. So, I just didn't know if you had done that.

**PABLO ROMERO:** No, actually, I didn't. Our courses are the same ones that we have ever had. What we did here was just basically rearrange what we have in order to make it a little bit more effective and efficient for the students and for the college.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** Right. You could still submit those older courses for CID approval, and then, if a student does come to you... You know, the whole purpose was so that if they go from college to college, the courses are the same.

**PABLO ROMERO:** OK, I see.

**NANCY BACKLUND:** I would encourage you to go back and...

**PABLO ROMERO:** You know what? The answer to that question is, actually, I don't know. When I started in the department, everything was already created, but it is definitely something that I'm going to look into because, yes, we want to be able to make sure that students can just jump from one college to the other and be able to take the courses. I mean, they might be approved already, but the answer is I don't know.

[00:41:05]

**STEVE WRIGHT:** You know, Pablo, you've woken up a back part of my brain that has not been working for a while. I think it's that Business Information Professional... I think that's a wonderful name.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yes, it is.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** And I've been talking to so many people recently about how things were shifting in the new environment with the demand for remote work. And maybe it's a question to the group right now. I'd love to hear your thoughts and I know Roopa is on here, too, and a lot of people that have been involved with BIW for some time.

If we were to try to reorganize our Business Information Worker effort to a Business Information Professional and have a carve-out called a Remote Specialist or something like that to help people

position themselves for being a remote worker in what will be an evolving demand for people that work from home or whatever, does that sound like something that would be of value that different colleges would want to participate in?

[00:41:03]

**KENT MOSER:** Yes. In fact, one of our next stackables we wanted on our BIP program was a Virtual Manager or Virtual Assistant stackable certification.

**PABLO ROMERO:** That sounds like an amazing idea. I would jump all over that right away because it is in high demand.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Is it an add-on in the end? Or is it something that just gets contextualized to through the whole thing?

**KENT MOSER:** We want to have ours so that everybody does the same first two certs, and then for the third cert, they have the choice of getting the regular BIP or emphasizing, almost like when you choose your major, except they can emphasize in a different area – Virtual Assistant, Logistics. I mean, we have Amazon going out here in Antelope Valley in a ton of different warehousing type facilities. We think that logistics and supply chain would be a high-demand item – for us, anyway.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Yeah.

**PABLO ROMERO:** That would be great. Now, the question is, would we want to create a new course to be included with the BIW that we already have? Or would it be just a whole new certificate in itself?

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Well, I think anytime you can accommodate what you've already got... "Remote? No. Virtual? Yes."

You know what's funny? We've gone from an environment where 'locationless' was kind of the buzzword – you could do anything from anywhere. Now you can do a whole lot of things from one place, and you can't leave! We've changed.

But yeah, so maybe 'Remote' is a bad word. I heard recently on one of our prior seminars, someone said, "Don't call it 'social distancing.' Call it 'physical distancing' because we still need to be social, just physically 6 feet apart!" Terminology is important.

Anybody here on the call here who wants to pursue something or help us put together or brainstorm on this idea of a virtual or remote add-on to this... Pablo, you're obviously interested. Anybody else, let us know. I think we can do a little convening on that. I mean, it's very timely and appropriate for our colleges to have some guidance from a collective wisdom of people like yourselves, willing to share what that looks like.

Yes, we would have that brainstorming session soon. We'll probably organize it. Nicole, let's talk about that afterwards, how we want to set that up, because a brainstorming session like that is not our typical approach to the ICT Educator Series, but we could have a one-off, maybe a different day of the week or something like that.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Absolutely.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** It's an idea!

The other thing I wanted to ask today, based on Pablo's example, do others of you have BIW success stories? If you go back a couple weeks, we just had this incredible presentation by Karen Beltramo of WestEd looking at all the data for all the ICT-type subsectors and everything else, and the whole concept of the Business Information Worker skillset still comes out as a huge opportunity, with opportunities for maybe 200,000 people! I mean, it's like, come on! This is the hottest thing and a low-hanging fruit, and it's the skillset people most commonly need, so I'm more than happy to bring the focus on best practices and share that information. If those of you out there have been doing this for a while have a story to tell, let us know.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Well, Steve, one of the reasons this appeals so much to our students is a lot of them are working while they're going through school, they're planning on transferring to a 4-year university and get their degrees in whatever it is that they want to do, but this would allow them to actually get higher paying jobs while they're in school also. So, it's not only for students that

say, “Oh, I just want to get the certificate and just get a better job, and that’s where I’m going to stop.” A lot of students that do want to transfer don’t want to be working in a coffee shop or working in retail or something like that, just making minimum wage, when they can actually be working in an office, making a little bit more money, getting involved, starting to get noticed and get to network with other people in business while they go to school. And then they get a better paying job at the same time.

You can actually see the faces in the students, when you explain this to them, and they are like, “Oh, yeah, I can actually get certified, make a little bit more money, go through school a little bit more comfortably.”

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Some of the students are 40 or 50 years old, too.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Absolutely. Then we have some students that are coming back. You know, they have been in the workforce for a long time, they’re coming back, and they just want to get acquainted with the new technology, and that’s great, too.

That’s the good thing about these particular types of programs – the BIW fits almost everybody. It doesn’t matter if you’re just starting, you’re 18 years old, and you’re trying to get your associate degree so that you can transfer, or if you’re coming back. This is a skillset that you can use either way.

Not only that, like I tell a lot of my Excel students, but this is a skillset that you’re going to use for the rest of your life. I don’t see Excel... I’ll see it morphing through the next hundred years, but I don’t see it going away ever.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** You’re right.

**PABLO ROMERO:** So, it’s something that you need to learn, even for your personal use, for business use, for college use. You’re going to need it even for your future classes.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** And most of these people here I think already know about the Business Information Worker program concept. On our website, Nicole has gathered all the information,

including all the toolkits that she has done over the years to get cohorts going and that sort of thing. We also have the model curriculum for the CID Business Information Worker approach, which has a very good quick-start program. Excel made me think about it, Pablo. Sometimes you don't need to know everything about Excel. You just need to know enough!

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah, exactly. I don't think anybody can know everything about Excel.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** So, a one-credit course in Excel is an extremely powerful opportunity. Same thing with Word and everything else. I think I get by at this stage of my life with basically one credit knowledge in Excel, and it works fine for me.

Anyhow, we have a whole lot of resources there. The work we've been doing on this for years has been very significant. And if it's time to look at a remodel, like the Business Information Professional, then maybe that's the right thing to do.

[00:49:30]

**KENT MOSER:** I had a quick request... Since we just barely got approval for our program, we were going to start it this fall, but because of all the situation we're in, we're going to start in the spring. But my question is, what have you guys done, once you got it all approved, to market it to the community and to the businesses?

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Yeah, well, that's true. I tried to tap into state funds for that, and the state hired Ogilvy Meyers, who did the ads and everything else. And I said, "Look, we've got 80% of the colleges saying they're doing this. Could we get in on that?" The answer was, basically, "I'll call you back." So, we had a very hard time getting it raised.

We've tried different approaches. We tried working statewide with the California Chamber of Commerce. We tried placing press releases and that sort of thing. But building the momentum for this, I believe, is a grassroots effort, Pablo – like you've done, talking to these businesses and building demand.

I do believe there's value in having a consistent naming thing. That's why I'm happy to relook at the name or core naming structure or something like that. Not that it's... The main purpose would be that the word-of-mouth from one college in one area would help the word-of-mouth for another college in another area because of the similarity, and people wouldn't be confused.

But I think it's a slow-growth kind of thing. I mean, we've learned that you can go out, and Amazon Web Services can come out with a certification, and I get college presidents calling up, saying, "How do I do the Amazon Web Services certification?" Or if Google comes out with an IT thing, even though we have wonderful, robust curriculum in IT, they want the branded thing that everybody hears about.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yes.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** So, one of the challenges we've had is we've tried to come up with an original brand. When Google or Microsoft or those other step in, they've got instant recognition. So, for part of our strategy, maybe we need to look at where we can piggyback on some of those name brands to get the word out.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Absolutely. In regards to the community, it's like influencers do nowadays. You have somebody who has a big influence in the community. You just get them on board. The rest will follow.

That's what we're doing with Eisenhower for our Medical Billing certificate. They have been very responsive. They're very interesting. We're taking advantage of that to say, "Well, Eisenhower is in it," because then you will see other medical offices, other hospitals, "Well, they are in it, so we have to be in it because there's definitely something for us in there, too." So, we take advantage.

Of course, the Coachella Valley is a smaller community compared to Los Angeles and some others, and the big businesses like this know each other, so we take advantage of that relationship to show them that this is something that they need.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Yeah.



**PABLO ROMERO:** They don't know they need it. I mean, sometimes you don't know what you don't know, right? But once you get the big guys in, everybody else is going to want a piece of it, too.

[00:52:48]

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Well, one thing I have noticed repeatedly throughout the California Community College system is, whenever anything succeeds, it's because someone has taken a personal leadership role and become an evangelist for it. And Pablo, you have definitely done that with College of the Desert and your region. That's why we view you as a champion and someone who is doing wonderful work.

I mean, we would like to think that we could brand something and market it statewide, and that would be very clever, but I do believe it takes getting out there, talking to businesses – what you've done exactly.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Well, thank you so much.

[00:53:22]

**STEVE WRIGHT:** All right, are there any other questions for Pablo? Or any other discussion points? I'm looking at the chat line... Roopa wants to know the status of the CID – Nancy, do you have an answer? I mean, it's done, right?

**NANCY:** Yes, it is. We're approving courses as they are submitted, so talk to your Articulation Officer at the college, and they just need to submit your outlines and maybe take a look at what the CID outlines look like, to make sure you meet the expectations, but yes.

[00:53:58]

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Is Karen O'Connor still involved in that? Has she retired? What's the deal with her?

**NANCY:** No, she is still a reviewer, as am I.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** OK, that's good. You guys did terrific work on that, and I'd love to see that quick-start certificate take off because, I think, for a lot of people that just don't know what to do, taking those credits and getting that done right away is like, all of a sudden, going from not relevant to relevant in one little package, and it's an incredible quick-start.

All right, good. Well, with that then, I think we'll wrap it up. I want to thank everybody. I look forward to notices for our next thing. I would definitely like to do more Business Information Worker presentations, proposals, and discussions because that's where a big market is, and as a college system, I don't think we're doing everything we can do. Maybe we can do more.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Yeah, absolutely. I think that the more that we share with each other what we're doing... Like, I'd never thought about wanting Logistics, but that definitely works. I went, "Boom! Yeah, this is a great idea for an area with big warehouses and big commerce." And it's good to know what other people have because we can just help each other, like I said. "Oh, we have Real Estate. You can have it." "Oh, maybe we need Logistics." I don't think that one here would be as big, but you never know. I would have to do my research on it. But if we share with each other, then we can actually come up with a uniform program that we all can benefit, and the students can benefit.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** Well, and the consensus is the key. When faculty and deans and department chairs form a consensus and move forward with it, that's what seems to work. There's no top-down organizational structure in the community college system, so it's really got to be consensus, bottoms-up, grassroots.

And the more we involve industry, the more credibility we have talking to each other. If you just say, "Hey, this is my idea," people kind of... You know how it is. But if you say, "I've been talking to businesses, and this is what they want," which is what you've been doing, Pablo, that is a totally different story, and that's great.

I want to thank you all for joining us today. Thank you, Pablo, once again, for being an example of how to get things going.

**PABLO ROMERO:** Thank you.

**STEVE WRIGHT:** We look forward to hearing from everybody there. See you next time.