

## THIS ISSUE

*Game On! Connect to Complete  
 Put a Coach in Your Corner  
 Finding the 'Write' Stuff*

Virginia Garcia and daughter, Jisela



## 'FINDING HELP MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE!'

As the fall semester approached, Virginia Garcia's anxiety soared beyond the usual first-day jitters.

She feared feeling like an outcast because of her race, her single parenthood or her education history. She didn't want to stand out, not in that way. But she was determined to achieve her dream. In a family that didn't value, promote or pursue higher education, "my goal was to get that picture frame with a degree in it!"

On campus, she waded through the mysteries of parking permits and navigating an unfamiliar campus before taking a bigger plunge: reaching out to people who could help.

She was apprehensive at first. "You don't want to reach out, because you're afraid of being judged, but they're not judging. And we're not 'bothering' them."

DSO Coordinator Tina Hardy and Tutoring Coordinator Angela Dunlap supplied test-taking and writing tips, relaxation methods and study skills coaching. Project Success counselor Cynthia Cardoso's advice and reassurance was just an email away. She partnered with Virginia to work out solutions.

Virginia grew comfortable absorbing new vocabulary and new concepts. "It's an emotional challenge when you haven't heard of things

before. I felt dumb, like, how did I not know that word?" She also relied on Google and YouTube to simplify or expand on course concepts.

Instructor Bob Reese stayed accessible to students thrust into remote learning, and made Power Points, recorded lectures and other resources available.

Their best advice led Virginia to arrange – and stick to -- a schedule that worked around her children's remote-learning schedule. "Sometimes I'd lock myself in the bathroom, sit in the tub and do my reading."

She also found IVCC a quiet, peaceful place to study in the evenings. "It was welcoming, knowing I was a student, this is MY school, and I'm part of that."

Armed with her new strategies, she's confident about spring semester, though still concerned about mom-vs-student balance. She wants to show her children that education is important and "if I can do it, they can too."

Finding help "made a huge difference" for Virginia, who is pursuing an office professional degree and perhaps a career in psychology.

"I feel like the support I didn't get growing up, I get at IVCC. (So even if) people around us don't give us support, I have that support here."

(See Virginia's helpful tips on page 2)



## SET YOURSELF UP FOR A WINNING SEMESTER

College SHOULD be filled with questions, but “Who can help me?” shouldn’t be one of them.

The dozens of issues you face when you reach campus don’t have to overwhelm you. IVCC’s Learning Resources division is filled with resources, and now students can have a new friend in their corner: a success coach.

The program is open to all students who need help with:

- Finding assignments
- Test prep
- Note taking
- Logging in to campus technology
- Getting organized
- Staying focused
- Communicating with instructors
- Managing stress
- And more

Discuss your concerns with a coach and develop an action plan, and your coach will help you remain on track through follow-up visits. We’ll also connect you to technology assistance, tutoring, study skills or other resources to keep things moving smoothly.

Make an appointment by calling Peggy at 815-224-0634 or email her at [peggy\\_schneider@ivcc.edu](mailto:peggy_schneider@ivcc.edu)



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- Don’t be afraid, ashamed or nervous to ask for help. You’re not being judged.
- Anxiety is temporary. Take deep breaths (to calm down) before starting something unfamiliar.
- Dedicate the right amount of time to classes. If you procrastinate, it becomes overwhelming.

-- suggested by Virginia Garcia

## WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT SUCCESS COACHING

**“Tina is a great help. I find her reminders and checklists very helpful. We meet once a week and go over the assignments that are due and then she will email me with a reminder and some encouragement. It is extremely helpful.”**



## THE 'WRITE' STUFF IS JUST A CLICK AWAY

Looking for the right stuff to help your writing? There's a free software for that, available right here on campus!

Read&Write is a user-friendly software that makes lots of everyday literacy tasks simpler, quicker and more accurate. You'll be seeing more about it as the year goes on, but for now, you can call Tina Hardy in Disability Services and she'll hook you in to it.

Looking for a dictionary, text reading, language translation, text predicting, grammar and spelling help or vocabulary list-building? They're in Read&Write, which also features the means to scan documents and unlock PDFs for editing.

Students in Jennifer Bubb's English classes get to know Read&Write first thing. The software program is on her class supplies list.

Struggling readers and tentative writers love it, whether they're nursing students buried under science texts, students struggling to learn English as a second language, or adults who've taken up pen and keyboard again after years away from a classroom.

Read&Write supplies something more than dictionaries and grammar checkers, though, Bubb says. It helps create confident writers.

"I have them listen to their essay draft. What does it sound like? Are you saying what you meant to write? Sometimes, you

get so close to your paper, your brain is on auto-correct and fills in the blanks. Just being able to hear what they've written helps them correct their writing."

Looking back over the semester, students nearly always point to Read&Write as one of their best tools. "I overhear students telling other students to use it," Bubb said.

Students' grades improve because "there are not as many grammar or sentence-structure errors. The software helps them identify run-on sentences or catch when they've mixed up words. They hear that it doesn't make sense."

It's a portable and versatile tool they can use in any class, and an alternative if they're nervous or embarrassed to ask for in-person help. And by incorporating hearing, seeing and spelling, Read&Write reaches nearly every learning pathway, Bubb said.

Users can customize the gender and nationality of the reading voice, or activate a highlighting option to keep them on task and focused on the words and sentences they're reading.

"Students who struggle with pronunciation tend to skip words they can't pronounce, but Read&Write highlights the text so you can hear what it looks and sounds like."

# DOLLARS

*make sense!*

26 students  
served by DSO  
received scholarships in '20-'21

Will you  
be on that list  
this year?

**There's still time  
to apply!**

**Submit the application and upload  
the required accompanying essay by February 11.**

Online application available at [ivcc.edu/scholarships](http://ivcc.edu/scholarships)



## START CONNECTING TODAY!

Making connections at IVCC can make you a winner!

Imagine a scavenger hunt with cash and prizes -- but you're not hunting for hidden objects. This game leads you to things that are in plain sight but which you might not realize exist -- like all the great people here at IVCC who are ready to help you.

Connect to Complete is designed to help students discover resources like the Tutoring Center, Student Help Desk, or Disability Services. Complete some short activities, meet the faces behind those office doors, and you could win cash prizes or a swag-bag of IVCC-themed goodies!

The game starts January 12 and ends February 12. Get started by logging into your Blackboard account. Click on the "Community" tab and work through the left menu of activities.

Be sure to complete the "Student Orientation" tab first, because the first 100 students who do get swag-bags. As you work through the activities, you earn points toward a \$100 first prize or two \$50 prizes!

# OBOC

one book one college

COMING JANUARY 13, 2021

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