

## Candidate Statement: Dr. Brad Baker

Dr. Brad Baker is a higher education professional with over three decades of academic and administrative experience across multiple institutions, including community colleges, universities, and professional theater companies. His career reflects a comprehensive background in arts, humanities, public communications, and social sciences, with an extensive record of leadership in curriculum development, faculty management, shared governance, and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Dr. Baker currently serves as the inaugural Dean of the School of Arts & Humanities and Interim Dean of the School of Social & Behavioral Sciences at Connecticut State Community College (CT State), the third-largest community college in the United States. In this role, he provides oversight for 300+ full-time faculty and staff and 400+ adjunct faculty across 37 academic departments and 98 academic programs at twelve campuses statewide. He leads curriculum development, program review, faculty engagement, and academic quality assurance. His responsibilities span a wide range of disciplines, including English, Social Sciences, World Languages, Communication, Theater, Visual and Performing Arts, and Human Services.

During his tenure at CT State, Dr. Baker helped implement a statewide academic reorganization following the Governor-mandated merger of twelve independently accredited colleges into a single institution. His work included aligning over 1,200 courses and 300 programs, leading the development of course outlines, program crosswalks, and new curriculum governance models. He collaborated to create election processes, curriculum proposal systems, and shared governance structures. In response to additional mandates, he navigated legislative compliance through advisory committees, such as the ACME initiative.

In his interim role for the School of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Dr. Baker managed an additional portfolio of academic programs and secured \$3.5 million in grants from the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood to update Lab School sites and support NAEYC accreditation efforts.

Dr. Baker was Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Behavioral & Social Sciences at Naugatuck Valley Community College from 2018 to 2022. There, he oversaw general education programming, interdisciplinary curriculum, and student support initiatives. His efforts led to consistent annual enrollment growth and the creation of targeted student success programs, including three initiatives supporting male students of color. He secured funding for these through grant programs such as PASS, the Male Empowerment Network, and a community mentorship initiative. He also managed Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Grants and annual events such as the International Center for the Arts, designed to highlight student diversity through cross-cultural performance and scholarship.

From 1992 to 2018, Dr. Baker served at Collin College in Texas in various leadership roles, including Endowed Dean of Visual and Performing Arts, Chair of Theater, Artistic Director, and Tenured Full Professor. His contributions included growing a theater program from six to over 600 majors, developing a 40-course curriculum, overseeing a \$25 million budget, and producing an eight-show season annually. He also spearheaded tenure and advancement processes and repurposed unused facilities for student performance spaces. Concurrently, he co-founded Our Productions, Inc., a regional equity theater company, where he served as Co-Artistic Director and Co-Producer, securing funding and producing critically recognized work.

Dr. Baker's academic background includes doctoral and master's work in Public Communications and Theater from the University of Maryland, and undergraduate degrees in Theater and Speech Communication from Northern Kentucky University. He began his academic career teaching at institutions such as Chadron State College, Central Wyoming College, and the University of Maryland, where he also coordinated acting programs and developed socially engaged projects, such as a touring performance of Endgame for incarcerated audiences.

In addition to his academic career, Dr. Baker worked in arts administration and film production as Executive Producer of Film Properties for the Maryland Film Commission, where he managed budgets, coordinated film productions, and worked alongside notable artists and producers. His early theater work includes serving as Artistic Liaison for New Playwright's Theater.

Throughout his career, Dr. Baker has received numerous distinctions, including being named United States Professor of the Year by the CASE/Carnegie Foundation (2000), Theatre Educator of the Year by the Texas Educational Theatre Association (2001), and Texas Professor of the Year (1996, 2001).