



# El Centro College

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **El Centro College Offers Retail Management Certificate**

(September 17, 2018) Dallas, TX – El Centro College has partnered with the Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC) to offer the Retail Management Certificate, offered at community colleges across the country.

The certificate program allows schools to partner with local grocery chains to get their existing employees who want to stay in the industry a certificate, which would put them on the path to eventually earning their associate degree.

In 2016, El Centro was approved to offer the nationally recognized RMC program that was developed to prepare retail employees for positions in management. Students who complete this online program earn an industry recognized certificate that provides 24 credit hours. Each course maps to the Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS) from El Centro College with pathways to a bachelor's degree 4-year institutions such as Western Governor's University, University of North Texas at Dallas, and Columbia College. Most importantly, students gain the knowledge and skills that empower them to become successful leaders in retail and service oriented companies.

"I am very pleased with the partnership that Kroger and El Centro College have built around the Retail Management Certificate," said Dana Zurcher, Kroger Division President. "This is such an important benefit to our associates and reinforces our company's commitment to invest in our people."

"Through the Retail Management Certificate program, the associates benefit from a continuing education program with the flexibility that works for them. The curriculum is designed to focus on the growing and evolving business of today, and fosters leadership skills that help them continually improve."

"Investing in our associates, through educational growth and development is an investment in their future. It is an investment that cascades into the strength and talent of our current workforce, and even further if they stay for a career."

Bethany Blankmeyer, Kroger Division Human Resources Manager said, "Last year, we had less than four Dallas associates enrolled in the RMC Program. Through the diligent efforts of Andrea Martinez, Recruiting and Talent Manager for Kroger Dallas, partnering directly with El Centro, Dallas now has over 50 enrolled associates!"

"Together, Kroger and El Centro continue to refine the program; making it more accessible and convenient for our associates. El Centro's commitment of a dedicated staff to ensure a seamless enrollment process, and ease of scheduling classes for Kroger associates has been instrumental in growing enrollment. El Centro has been a valued business partner, sharing a common goal of ensuring our associates achieve a positive educational experience."

WAFC Director of the Retail Management certificate Cherie Phipps says most students finish the program in two years, but it can be completed in one year.

"This is a highly relevant community college certificate, but the special thing about it that makes it unique is that it's a dual certificate," she says. "It combines the expertise of academia and the credential from the college with industry-driven expertise."

Each of the retailing classes for the certificate is eight weeks long and will be offered face-to-face, online and as hybrid classes. The program also allows classes to be taken on-site at the employer's store. WAFB's partners in North Texas include Kroger and Albertsons.

For more information, please contact Sherry Jones, Dean of the Business, Design and Public Service Division at El Centro, at [sljones@dcccd.edu](mailto:sljones@dcccd.edu). Visit <https://www.elcentrocollege.edu/cd/special-programs/pages/retail-management.aspx>

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