

# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

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## CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

*Comprised of 72 districts and 112 colleges, the California Community Colleges make up the largest higher education system in the nation—providing a gateway to higher education for nearly 3 million students per year. Community Colleges offer associates degrees, prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions, provide opportunities for lifelong learning, and train the workforce that sustains California's economy.*

### **The largest system of higher education in the country**

- California Community Colleges have the highest rate of public attendance of all community college systems in the nation.
- One-quarter of community college students nationwide are enrolled in a California Community College.
- Three out of every ten Californians age 18-24 are currently enrolled in a Community College.

### **The primary gateway to higher education, serving all Californians**

- Over 60 percent of Community College students are people of diverse ethnic backgrounds and nearly 55 percent are female.
- Community Colleges enroll the state's lowest-income students. Full-time students have an annual median income of \$16,223, with one-fourth having incomes of less than \$5,544 per year.
- Over half of California veterans receiving GI Bill educational benefits attend a Community College.
- Over half of Community College students are age 25 or older and are already working adults.

### **A pathway to four-year universities**

- Almost 60 percent of graduates of the California State University system and 30 percent of the University of California system transferred from a California Community College.
- When Community College students transfer, they earn grade point averages equal to or better than students who started out as freshmen at the same four-year universities.
- Community Colleges are a cost-effective alternative for students who cannot afford to go to a four-year university all four years.
- Two-thirds of California's first-time higher education students begin their academic careers at a Community College.



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## California's largest workforce training provider

- Serving nearly 3 million students annually, Community Colleges offer more than 175 degree and certificate programs at 112 colleges in every area of the state.
- Community Colleges train 80 percent of all California firefighters, law enforcement officers, and emergency medical technicians. Thirty-nine colleges have police academies and 64 colleges train firefighters.
- Seventy percent of California nurses received their education at a Community College. Nursing programs are offered at 74 colleges, which graduate 7,700 nurses a year.
- Approximately 25,000 apprentices are educated by 35 Community Colleges offering 160 apprenticeship programs.
- California Community Colleges offer 160 employee professional development programs that increase the knowledge and skills of 25,000 working Californians each year.
- Over 80 percent of Community College students work, many attending college for retraining, skills upgrades, and license retention and renewal.

## A good investment

- For every dollar California invests to get students in and through college, the state's economy receives a \$3 net return on investment.
- Students receiving a degree or certificate from a Community College see an 86 percent increase in their wages from \$25,600 to \$45,571 three years after earning their degree.
- For every dollar spent on economic and workforce development programs at Community Colleges, there is a \$12 increase in California's business income and employee wages.
- A 2 percent increase in the share of the population with an associate's degree, combined with a 1 percent increase in the share with a bachelor's degree, results in \$20 billion in additional economic input, \$1.2 billion more in state and local tax revenues annually, and 174,000 new jobs.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there is a shortage in the nation's labor force of workers with up to two years of postsecondary education.

