



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 over two 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.



Credit: Dustin Peterson, Allan Hancock College

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 over 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.

California's largest workforce training provider

- Serving over two 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.

The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official foundation to the California Community Colleges' Board of Governors and Chancellor's Office. The Foundation's mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community College system, the largest higher education system in the nation. Incorporated in 1998, the Foundation works with Community Colleges and partner organizations to manage donations, grants, programs, and services that drive excellence in education. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation and receives no direct state support.

For more information, visit www.foundationccc.org.