



PRESS RELEASE

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**The California Community Colleges Launch Task Force to
Boost Completion Rates over Next Decade**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott today announced that the state board of governors appointed 21 individuals to a Student Success Task Force during its January 2011 meeting. The task force will meet regularly during the next 12 months and develop a strategic blueprint to help community college students to succeed.

“California stands ready to lead the nation in developing innovative reforms to foster improved certificate and degree completion rates,” said Chancellor Jack Scott. “Attaining a college degree is a key indicator of how an individual will fare over his or her lifetime. Community colleges are on the front line of serving all students seeking a degree, however, many of these students must overcome significant life challenges in order to graduate. Ensuring access to higher education is only half the equation, equally important is granting students a legitimate opportunity to succeed upon entering the classroom,” Scott concluded.

The task force includes a broad array of academic, research and business leaders and will be chaired by board of governors member Dr. Peter MacDougall. The task force will examine strategies for promoting student success, including improving student assessment, delivering remedial instruction, increasing access to financial aid and academic counseling and identifying national funding models to incentivize completion rates.

“Throughout the nation college administrators are facing shrinking budgets and increasing demands to enroll and graduate more students,” said task force chair Peter MacDougall. “The only possible way for improving graduation rates is to realign funding priorities to coincide with academic performance. Courses and programs geared toward helping students walk across a stage wearing a cap and gown on graduation day must be our first priority.”

Californians holding an associate or bachelor’s degree are likely to earn \$1 million more in their lifetime than a person who holds only a high school diploma. For every \$1 invested in higher education, an additional \$3 is generated in tax revenue. Yet, studies indicate educational attainment is declining nationally with each

younger generation. Considering these findings, in 2010 Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger approved Senate Bill 1143, authored by Carol Liu. SB 1143 calls upon the California Community Colleges Board of Governors to adopt a plan for improving student success by 2012. It also authorizes the creation of a task force on student success.

“A robust community college system assures access to higher learning for all Californians,” said state Senator Carol Liu. “I am hopeful my legislation will stimulate systemic change among our state’s 112 community colleges and tip the scale of access and student success back into balance.”

Additional facts:

- The Chancellor’s Office is seeking grant funding to support the 12-month effort.
- The California Community Colleges enroll more than 70% of the public undergraduate student population in California and 25% of all students enrolled in a community college nationwide.
- 52% of degree-seeking community college students complete a certificate, associate degree or transfer to a four-year university within six years (source: California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office).
- California stands to be nearly 1 million degree holders short of meeting the workforce demand by the year 2025, reported the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).
- Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that occupations requiring an associate degree will grow the fastest of any occupations from 2008-2018, at about 19%.
- In 2010, Hispanics for the first time surpassed the 50% mark of California’s K-12 population.
- College success rates among Latinos and blacks are disproportionately low.

Note to Editor: Attached is a list of the 21 member task force.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.7 million students in 2009-10. Community colleges provide workforce training, teach basic skills math and English courses, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The [Chancellor’s Office](#) provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors.

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2011 Student Success Task Force Members

Dr. Manuel Baca

Professor of Government, Rio Hondo College
Member, California Community Colleges Board of Governors
Member, Board of Trustees, Mt. San Antonio Community College District

Christopher Cabaldon

Mayor, West Sacramento
Project Director, New America Foundation's California Education Program

Dr. Constance M. Carroll

Chancellor, San Diego Community College District

Tara Cooper

Matriculation Student Personnel Assistant, American River College

Dr. Yasmin Delahoussaye

Interim Vice Chancellor of Educational Programs and Institutional Effectiveness, Los Angeles Community College District

Dr. Benjamin Duran

Superintendent/President, Merced College
Co-Chair, Commission on the Future

Dr. Dennis Gervin

Vice President of Student Learning, Columbia College

Dr. Robert Gabriner

Director, Ed.D. Program for Schools & Community College Leadership, San Francisco State University

Mr. Richard Hansen

Mathematics Instructor, Foothill College
President, California Community College Independents

Dr. Brice Harris

Chancellor, Los Rios Community College District

Carol Liu

Senator, 21st District

Rubén Lizardo

Associate Director, PolicyLink

Dr. Peter MacDougall

President Emeritus, Santa Barbara City College

Member, California Community Colleges Board of Governors

Dr. Jeannette Mann

President, California Community College Trustees

Member, Board of Trustees, Pasadena Area Community College District

Dr. Ted Mitchell

President and CEO, New Schools Venture Fund

Dr. David Morse

English Professor, Long Beach City College

Alex Pader

President, Student Senate for California Community Colleges

Dr. Jane Patton

President, Academic Senate

Cynthia Rico-Bravo

Counselor/Professor, Counseling Faculty, San Diego Mesa College

David Rattray

Senior Vice President of Education and Workforce Development, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Nancy Shulock

Professor/Director, Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy, California State University

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