



Serving the Communities of
Compton, Lynwood, Paramount and Willowbrook, as well as portions of Athens, Bellflower, Carson, Downey, Dominguez, Lakewood, Long Beach, and South Gate

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May 27, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Senate Budget Chair
State Capitol, Room 5094
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable John Laird
Senate Education Budget Chair
State Capitol, Room 8720
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Assembly Budget Chair
State Capitol, Room 3173
Sacramento, CA 98514

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Assembly Higher Education Budget Chair
State Capitol, Room 4250
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: \$16 million for CSU and CCC Collaborative to serve Asian American, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander higher education students

Dear Senator Skinner, Senator Laird, Assemblymember Ting, and Assemblymember McCarty,

I respectfully write in support of the \$16 million ongoing budget request for the California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges (CCC) Collaborative with \$8 million going to CSU and \$8 million going to CCC. This Collaborative will create a consortium for culturally responsive on-campus student support programs specifically for low-income, underserved, first-generation Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students to increase higher education retention and attainment. This funding would prioritize CSU and CCC schools that are federally designated as minority-serving institutions which, by federal definition, require that “an institution must have at least 10% full-time AANHPI students, of which 50% must be low income according to Pell Grant requirements.”

Compton College and Compton Community College District serve a diverse student population in Los Angeles County, where the Pacific Islander population has grown over the years, however, our Pacific Islander student population has remained at 1%. With additional support, we would focus on innovative approaches to assisting our Pacific Islander student population to achieve their educational goals. Compton CCD encompasses an area of about 29 square miles, making educational services available to nearly 300,000 residents of Compton, Lynwood, Paramount, and Willowbrook, as well as portions of Athens, Bellflower, Carson, Downey, Dominguez, Lakewood, Long Beach, and South Gate. About 290 full and part-time faculty teach more than 40-degree programs and 30 certificate programs.

Over 80 percent of AANHPI students in California’s public higher education attend either a CSU or CCC. This budget request will serve to cultivate the strengths of campuses and communities to increase retention and timely graduation for predominantly low-income and first-generation AANHPI college students. This funding will also serve to promote and develop

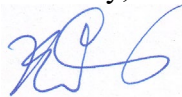
AANHPI identity empowerment, academic resilience, community service, and holistic well-being to ensure student success. California is home to the most significant number of AANHPI residents in the nation and also is home to the most low-income and first-generation college students in the nation. These students represent the future of our state, and they deserve intentional support. The retention and graduation rates of AANHPI students show vast differences in the support necessary to help students meet higher education attainment goals to sustain a healthy workforce in California. There is a lack of state investment in addressing the low education attainment of low-income and underserved AANHPI higher education students.

In the past couple of years under COVID, our AANHPI, especially our NHPI communities, have been devastated. Many AANHPI students have left their academic pursuits for varying reasons – to take care of family members, find a job and help with family bills, and address mental health concerns related to the pandemic and anti-Asian sentiments.

California has established a precedent in funding underserved and underrepresented students for improving access, retention, and attainment for Black, Latinx, and underserved student populations. California can make history by institutionalizing support specific to serving underserved and underrepresented AANHPI students.

I urge you to support the \$16 million ongoing for CSU and CCC Collaborative to serve Asian American, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander higher education students. If you have any questions, please contact me at 310-900-1600, ext. 2000 or via email at kcurry@compton.edu.

Sincerely,



Keith Curry
President/CEO

- c. Honorable Senator Steven Bradford
- Honorable Senator Lena A. Gonzalez
- Honorable Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
- Honorable Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson
- Honorable Assemblymember Cristina Garcia
- Compton Community College District Board of Trustees