



# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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## CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

### PRESS RELEASE

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### **Three State Legislators Recognized as Being Committed Advocates for the California Community Colleges System**

*Assemblymembers Warren Furutani, Marty Block and Ira Ruskin Honored*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Community Colleges Chancellor [Jack Scott](#), Board of Governors President [Debbie Malumed](#) and [members of the Board of Governors](#) honored three California legislators who have supported the community colleges through key legislation and by showing leadership on challenging higher education issues.

“This year we are recognizing three outstanding legislators,” said Chancellor Scott. “Two will receive the Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award and one will be honored as the Board of Governors Legislator of the Year. These award recipients have been committed advocates for the California Community Colleges which, in this fiscal environment, is not always easy. There are often many competing priorities but these legislators have stuck by our system and worked diligently on behalf of our students.”

The Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award is given to members of the Senate and Assembly who have been committed leaders and supporters of the community colleges. Chancellor Scott presented Assemblymembers [Marty Block](#) (D-San Diego) and [Ira Ruskin](#) (D-Redwood City) with the award.

“Assemblymember Marty Block is passionate about education issues,” said Chancellor Scott. “He has served in numerous educational leadership posts throughout his professional career and has been an enthusiastic supporter of the community colleges. This year he is the author of a major bill for our system that establishes a statewide online common assessment method. This important measure takes a major first step in bringing a common assessment system to the California Community Colleges and is critical to increasing student success.

“Assemblymember Ira Ruskin has been a long time friend and supporter of the California Community Colleges. He has authored many bills that have been beneficial to our colleges over the past several years, including legislation that ensures deaf and hearing impaired students in California’s public colleges and universities are given access to audiovisual course materials through captioning and other devices (AB 386). He also authored the Open Education Resources bill (AB 2261), which aims to save students money and make college more affordable by increasing the availability of free online college course materials like copyright-expired textbooks, video materials and software,” concluded Scott.

The Board of Governors Legislator of the Year award is given to one outstanding legislator who has gone to extreme measures to author numerous pieces of key community college legislation, consistently advocates on behalf of the system's budget needs and assists in addressing major issues concerning the community colleges. Board of Governors President Debbie Malumed presented the high honor to Assemblymember [Warren Furutani](#) (D-South Los Angeles County)

"Assemblymember Warren Furutani definitely understands the value of the community colleges," said Board of Governors President Malumed. "He created and is chair of the Community College Legislative Caucus that highlights community college issues and develops a strong base of support for the community colleges within the legislature.

"In 2008, he negotiated a delicate agreement on key legislation (SB 588) to permit greater flexibility for the colleges on the facilities plan check process. This agreement led to eventual legislative approval and final enactment of the law. He is also chairman of the Assembly Select Committee on Workforce Development Issues and has held numerous hearings focusing on strengthening and expanding community college career technical education programs. Assemblymember Furutani has authored bills to help develop a strategic plan for workforce preparation and career technical education, and to study community college fees and funding so that our colleges are adequately funded.

"Lastly, Assemblymember Furutani authored [AB 37](#) which created the Nisei Honorary Degree for community college students of Japanese descent who had their education disrupted during WWII when they were forced into internment camps," stated Malumed.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation. The 112 colleges serve 2.9 million students and represent the full diversity of the state. "Our enrollments are surging because Californians are looking for new training and educational opportunities to seek stable employment and succeed in the workplace," said Chancellor Scott. "I deeply appreciate these state leaders for their enthusiastic support of our system and for their tireless efforts on behalf of our students."

*The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.9 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training and basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.*

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