



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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12th Annual Dr. John W. Rice Award Given to Three Programs that Exemplify Diversity and Equity within the California Community Colleges

A²MEND, SparkPoint at Skyline College and Transitions Program Santa Barbara City College are winners

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The 12th Annual Dr. John W. Rice Diversity and Equity Award ceremony was held today at The Sterling Hotel in Sacramento and honored three community college programs that primarily serve underrepresented constituencies.

Named after the former member of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, the 2012 Dr. John W. Rice Award was given to Skyline College's SparkPoint financial education center, Santa Barbara City College's Transitions Program for parolees and A²MEND, an organization on several community college campuses that mentors African American male students, faculty, staff and administrators.

"These programs show the wide variety of support services available to our students, faculty and administrators," said Scott Himmelstein, president of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors. "It's gratifying to know that each one was formed to help those in need, to level the playing field if you will, and that's what Dr. Rice believed in and fought for his entire life and certainly as our board member."

The award is named in honor of Dr. John W. Rice who served on the board from 1992 until his death in 2000. He was a leader, innovator and spokesperson for equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination in the California Community Colleges. While on the board, Dr. Rice also displayed a strong commitment to multicultural learning experiences for all students. The Dr. John W. Rice Diversity and Equity Award was established in 2001 to honor community college staff members, districts, colleges or programs that have made the greatest contribution towards faculty and staff diversity or student equity.

Born to a Presbyterian pastor in Baton Rouge, La. and living through years of segregation and the civil rights era, Dr. Rice was passionate about ensuring the California Community Colleges staff, faculty and student body reflected the diversity of California and that support services were available to help them succeed. He is the father of former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

About the Winners:

[SparkPoint](#) at Skyline College is part of a regional United Way of the Bay Area network of financial education

one-stop service centers. Students and other members of the San Bruno community utilize SparkPoint services and resources to become financially self-sufficient. SparkPoint features financial coaches who function like personal trainers for financial fitness. More than 1,200 people have benefitted this year from SparkPoint services that include budget development, credit repair, access to matched savings and checking accounts, scholarships and even an on-site food pantry. Thirty-four \$2,000 scholarships were awarded in 2011 through SparkPoint's Grove Scholarship Program for students who commit to a series of financial coaching sessions.

Santa Barbara City College's [Transitions Program](#) works exclusively with recently released convicted felons or those on probation or parole. The Transitions Program helps approximately 30 former inmates each summer change their lives by providing access to higher education and creating a smooth transition from prison to college. Part of the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services at Santa Barbara City College and modeled after the highly successful Summer Bridge Program, the initiative assists individuals on parole or probation to re-integrate into society by pursuing their goal of beginning or continuing their educational plans whether they seek to obtain an occupational certificate, associate degree or to transfer to a four-year university. The Transitions Program has an 82 percent persistence rate and has received national recognition from Harvard University's School of Education. Colleges in Washington and Oregon have inquired about using the Transitions Program as a model.

[A²MEND](#) supports African American men in their career development, advancement and success as community college students, faculty, staff and administrators by sharing the experience and expertise of other successful African American men across the system. The Bernardino-based program does this by hosting summits that bring together students and administrators. The 2012 summit had more than 300 participants. The program also provides mentorships, scholarships and professional development opportunities, and encourages change within the California Community Colleges by creating an affirming academic and professional environment. In 2012, A²MEND awarded more than \$3,000 in scholarships and the mentorship program had 10 mentees. One of the most significant contributions of this organization is its dedication to taking on the issue of educational success for young black males and its continued work to close the achievement gap that exists in the system.

"These programs exemplify the best of our system," California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott said. "I think Dr. Rice would be proud of these fine programs and I'm sure we'll continue to see their success stories. These programs and the fine folks who run them continue to have a profound impact on our community colleges."

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.6 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, 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. For more information about the community colleges, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/>.

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