



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

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California Community Colleges launch new statewide center to increase student success

SACRAMENTO, California— March 10, 2014—The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges (Foundation) are proud to announce the launch of the California Student Success Center, which will act as a hub of support for projects around the state that improve college completion rates and promote student success.

The Student Success Center's launch is funded through a two-year, \$500,000 grant provided by The Kresge Foundation, a private foundation that works to create opportunities for low-income individuals and improve communities nationwide, and in partnership with Jobs for the Future (JFF), a nonprofit group that seeks to help Americans succeed in today's economy.

The California Community Colleges (CCC) are in the midst of a major reform effort aimed at significantly increasing the number of students successfully completing their educational and career goals. The Center will be a key part of this Student Success Initiative, which was launched in 2012 by the Board of Governors and state Chancellor's Office, and is based on a set of 22 recommendations which now serve as a guiding policy for the system.

"We are implementing an ambitious plan to improve the way our colleges serve students from initial orientation and assessment, through education planning, to basic skills instruction, and all the way through completion," says Chancellor Brice W. Harris. **"This transformation is being accomplished through numerous program and policy changes—all coordinated under the Student Success Initiative. The launch of a California Student Success Center is a natural next step to continue this momentum."**

Housed at the Foundation for California Community Colleges, the Center will function as a hub, strengthening, coordinating, and amplifying the work already being done system-wide. The Center will play a pivotal role in promoting a common thread through the student success activities being carried out statewide.

“Our ability to continue advancing the Student Success Initiative in California hinges on our ability to lead a decentralized 112-college system toward a collective vision of improved student success and completion,” said Keetha Mills, Foundation President and CEO. **“We are proud to launch the Student Success Center, and are committed to ensuring that it grows into a genuine and well-organized hub for coordinating student success efforts throughout California.”**

The Center activities will be spearheaded by a collaboration of statewide Community College organizations. In addition to the Chancellor’s Office and the Foundation, Center partners include the Community College League of California, the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges, and the Research and Planning Group. The Center is also supported by dedicated group of core programmatic partners, Community College leaders, and a broad-base of additional stakeholders. By providing a common venue for student success efforts, the Center will help to coordinate across these entities and create a collective vision of student success.

California’s Student Success Center joins a nationwide network of Student Success Centers funded by The Kresge Foundation in recent years, with locations in Arkansas, Michigan, Ohio, and Texas. California was one of three new states selected nationally this year through a highly competitive proposal process. Also selected were Connecticut and New Jersey. **“Each demonstrated a clear vision of a statewide policy agenda to increase community college persistence and completion, as well as the capacity for meaningful data analysis and strong commitment from a broad group of stakeholders,”** says Gretchen Schmidt, JFF’s program director for postsecondary state policy.

“These centers build a cohesive approach to engagement, learning and policy advocacy across each state’s two-year institutions,” says Caroline Altman Smith, senior program officer in Kresge’s Education Program. **“The institutions then can spend their resources more effectively and create reforms that help the most students possible earn postsecondary credentials.”**

In its recent publication *Joining Forces*, [<http://www.jff.org/publications/joining-forces-how-students-success-centers-are-accelerating-statewide-community>] JFF documents Student Success Center goals and structure, their most important roles, and what they have accomplished so far.

About the California Community Colleges

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. Community Colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, 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 Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.
www.cccco.edu | Twitter: @CalCommColleges

About the Foundation for California Community Colleges

The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official nonprofit 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 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 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 or public support.
www.foundationccc.org | Twitter: @FoundationCCC

About The Kresge Foundation

The Kresge Foundation is a \$3 billion private, national foundation that works to expand opportunities in America's cities through grantmaking and investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services, community development and our place-based efforts in Detroit. In 2013, the Board of Trustees approved 316 awards totaling \$122 million; \$144 million was paid out to grantees over the course of the year. In addition, Kresge's Social Investment Practice made commitments totaling \$16 million in 2013. Kresge's Education Program works to post-secondary access and success for low-income, first generation and underrepresented students.

www.kresge.org | Twitter: @kresgefdn and @kresgedu

About Jobs for the Future

Jobs for the Future works with our partners to design and drive adoption of innovative and scalable education and career pathways leading from college readiness to career advancement for those struggling to succeed in today's economy. The organization strives to fulfill the promise that education and economic mobility in America is achieved for everyone. Jobs for the Future works to ensure that all lower-income young people and workers have the skills and credentials needed to succeed in our economy, by creating solutions that catalyze change in our education and workforce delivery systems.

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