



PRESS RELEASE

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**California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley
Addresses Higher Education Needs of Chinese Community at Media Roundtable**

Los Angeles, Calif. – California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley hosted a Chinese media roundtable to address higher education needs of the Chinese community and to share key information and facts on the community college system and the availability of many different types of financial aid. Chancellor Oakley heads the largest system of higher education in the nation that is composed of a network of 113 community colleges throughout California.

The media event was aimed to ensure the Chinese community and the other diverse communities that make-up California have access to a quality and affordable higher education. The California Community Colleges system plans to launch later this year a Chinese language version of its financial aid resource website icanaffordcollege.com.

Featured local education leaders speaking on a panel with Chancellor Oakley included:

- Mike Eng, Trustee, Los Angeles Community College District
- Mike Fong, Vice Chair, Los Angeles Community College District
- Scott Svonkin, Board President, Los Angeles Community College District
- Henry Lo, Board member, Garvey Unified School District

“One of the California Community Colleges’ top priorities is to continue to provide higher education access to all communities in California,” said Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley. “With each community there are many challenges and our system hopes to provide the tools and resources that will mitigate these obstacles and make attending college affordable and feasible because a success in our higher education system will be a success for the overall prosperity of our great state of California.”

The media roundtable raised awareness among Chinese students on the affordability of college, the value of a community college education, key facts on various financial aid opportunities available to community college students, and updates on new upcoming projects and initiatives aimed at helping to inform the Chinese community.

“The Chinese and Asian Pacific Islander community put a high value on education attainment,” said Mike Eng, Los Angeles Community College District Trustee. “I am excited to be working with Chancellor Oakley in bringing to light the opportunities that are available to everyone at their local community college.”

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Initiatives targeting the Chinese community include the development of an in-language website under the “**I Can Afford College**” campaign that will be released later this spring and provides financial aid resources, tips, information on deadlines and how to connect with local counselors for free one-on-one help identifying the types of aid that are right and completing the forms. The California Community Colleges “I Can Afford College” campaign is a statewide, financial aid awareness initiative sponsored by the State of California. The purpose of the campaign is to educate current and prospective students about the year-round availability of financial aid at California’s 113 community colleges to help pay fees, books, supplies and sometimes even rent.

Key Facts

- California community colleges educate 70 percent of our state’s nurses.
- California community colleges train 80 percent of firefighters, law enforcement personnel and emergency medical technicians.
- Twenty-nine percent of University of California and 51 percent of California State University graduates started at a California community college.
- Transfer students from the California Community Colleges to the University of California system currently account for 48 percent of UC’s bachelor’s degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- California community colleges offer associate degrees and short-term job training certificates in more than 175 fields and more than 100,000 individuals are trained each year in industry-specific workforce skills.
- Nearly 42 percent of all California veterans receiving GI educational benefits attend a California community college for workforce training, to earn an associate degree or to work toward transferring to a four-year university.

High Return on College Education:

- The California Community Colleges is the largest provider of workforce training in the state and nation.
- For every \$1 California invests in students who graduate from college, it will receive a net return on investment of \$4.50.
- Californians with a college degree will earn \$400,000 more in their lifetime than their peers with only a high school diploma.
- Students who earn a degree or certificate from a California community college nearly double their earnings within three years.
- Attending or graduating from a community college doubles an individual’s chance of finding a job compared to those who failed to complete high school.
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that occupations that require an associate degree will grow by 18 percent through 2020 – faster than the new job growth for those with a bachelor’s degree.

(Source: <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/PolicyInAction/KeyFacts.aspx>)

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 113 colleges serving 2.1 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/>.