



PRESS RELEASE

March 9, 2017

Contact: Paige Marlatt Dorr

Office: 916.327.5356

Cell: 916.601.8005

Office E-mail: pdorr@cccco.edu

California Community Colleges Hosts Annual Veterans Summit in Sacramento

California Community Colleges serves approximately 70,000 veterans and active duty military members annually

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Hundreds of California Community Colleges faculty, staff and administrators, along with other professionals who work with veterans, will attend the California Community Colleges Veterans Summit today and tomorrow in Sacramento. The purpose of the summit is to share information, resources and best practices to better help veterans transition from military service to higher education.

“Improving the education experience for the thousands of veterans attending a California community college is a top priority for our system,” said California Community Colleges Chancellor [Eloy Ortiz Oakley](#), who served four years in the U.S. Army. “Transitioning to life after service can be difficult, and we want to ensure our veterans have every opportunity to succeed. This annual event is a tremendous opportunity for higher education professionals from across the state and system to work together to serve those who served our country.”

This year’s summit features a wide variety of panel discussions, including featured model programs effective in addressing common challenges student veterans face after the military; enhancing the health and well-being of student veterans; serving student veterans with disabilities; and understanding challenges unique to female student veterans.

Dr. Mike Haynie, vice chancellor for Strategic Initiatives & Innovation at Syracuse University, will deliver the keynote address this afternoon. Dr. Haynie currently serves as an appointed member of the U.S. Secretary of Labor’s Advisory Committee on Veterans’ Employment, Training and Employer Outreach, and as a member of the advisory committee for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting’s Veterans Coming Home project. Brent Theobald, senior director of Development at Vanguard University and a former member of the elite Marine Force Reconnaissance Company, will deliver the keynote address on Friday.

The [Eyes of Freedom: Lima Company Memorial](#), a traveling exhibit featuring mural paintings honoring fallen members of the Lima Company 3/25, one of the hardest hit units in Operation Iraqi Freedom, will be on display at the Veterans Summit.

On Thursday evening, attendees will have the chance to screen the film, *Almost Sunrise*, a movie that follows two Iraq veterans who are struggling with depression and the moral wounds of war after returning from deployment.

-more-

Pushed to the edge of suicide, the two friends embarked on an extraordinary journey - a 2,700 mile walk across the country from Wisconsin to California - in order to reflect on their haunting experiences of war and ultimately, to save themselves. Filmmakers Michael Collins and Marty Syjuco will lead a post-film discussion following the screening.

The summit is jointly sponsored by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges and the Foundation for California Community Colleges. It is also supported by donations from the Land of the Free Foundation.

A full Veterans Summit agenda and schedule is located at <http://veteranssummit.org/agenda.html>

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/>.

###