



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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California Community Colleges Board of Governors Honor Four State Lawmakers for Support of Community College System *Sen. Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach) Receives Lifetime Achievement Award*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott and members of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors today honored four lawmakers for their leadership in improving the state's 112 community colleges.

Sen. Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach) received the board's highest honor, the Lifetime Achievement Award, for his work on a variety of bills, including his leadership in authoring a measure that would implement several recommendations made by the Student Success Task Force. Senator Carol Liu (D – Pasadena), and Assemblymembers Susan Bonilla (D – Concord) and Gil Cedillo (D – Los Angeles) also were honored for their consistent support of community colleges and higher education.

"Because of the hard work of lawmakers such as senators Lowenthal and Liu and assemblymembers Bonilla and Cedillo, our students have a better chance of reaching their educational goals, and we all benefit when that happens," Board of Governors President Scott Himelstein said.

On April 18, Lowenthal's SB 1456, the California Community Colleges Student Success Act of 2012, passed unanimously out of the Senate Education Committee, of which he is the chairman, and is scheduled to be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill will focus funding on support services to increase student success as measured by degree attainment, transfer to a four-year institution, earning a certificate or reaching career advancement goals. Lowenthal, who also served in the Assembly, is a retired professor of community psychology from California State University, Long Beach.

"Sen. Lowenthal has always been a staunch supporter of higher education in California and the students, faculty and staffs at our community colleges, as well as the board of governors, are indebted to him for his work to make sure our system continues to lead the country," Himelstein said.

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Liu was given the Board of Governors Senator of the Year Award for her work on SB 1143, the law that created the California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force in late 2010. Like Lowenthal, Liu is a former educator and has been a tireless supporter of higher education. She is chair of the Budget Subcommittee on Education and Human Services and sits on the Senate Education Committee. Liu also is the author of SB 1062, which would implement a task force recommendation that would strengthen leadership in the Chancellor's Office.

Bonilla was awarded the Board of Governors Assemblymember of the Year Award. Bonilla also is a former educator and, although she is relatively new to the Legislature, she has already begun to make her mark, especially in education. Her support for California's community colleges on a variety of issues is appreciated. Bonilla is the chair of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance.

Cedillo, who also has been a state Senator, was given the Chancellor's Distinguished Service Award for his more than a decade's worth of advocacy for community college students. That advocacy has been aimed at improving the lives of the working class and immigrant communities. Most recently he authored and championed the passage of Assembly Bill 130 and Assembly Bill 131, the California DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act package, which allows some non-resident college students – including some undocumented students – to receive public and private financial aid. Cedillo's legislation was a key policy change in making college affordable for all California students, especially those who attend community colleges.

"I've known Gil a long time and he always has our community college students on his mind and continues to work hard as an advocate for them, and for all of higher education," said Chancellor Scott, who is a former Assemblymember and state Senator. "Even though he is leaving the Legislature later this year, I know he will continue to serve the students because he knows they are the future of this great state."

To view a photo gallery of the awards presentations, go to <http://bit.ly/tstohT>.

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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