



California
Community
Colleges

PRESS RELEASE

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Christina Jimenez
cjimenez@cccco.edu
T 916.322.4004

California Community Colleges Establishes Wildfire Relief Fund to Support the Recovery of Affected College Students and Faculty

Sacramento, Calif. – California Community Colleges Board of Governors President Thomas Epstein and Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley today announced disaster relief funds have been set up to help students, faculty and staff recover from devastating wildfire and appealed for donations.

Working with the state Chancellor’s Office and affected colleges, the Foundation for California Community Colleges has linked to local college giving opportunities and created a statewide relief fund that can be accessed at <https://foundationccc.org/What-We-Do/System-Support-and-Services/California-Wildfire-Relief>.

“The past few days have brought incredible pain and tragedy to our state, and several of our colleges have been severely impacted,” Epstein said. “The devastation and loss of life is heart sickening and affect many students, faculty and staff. We are grateful to the first responders who are working to protect lives and property.”

In Northern California, more than 130 Butte College faculty and staff have been displaced, many of them lived in Paradise and their homes are presumed lost. Firefighters successfully defended the college from flames late last week.

Southern California fires also continue to burn, and have affected several community colleges. Pierce College continues to serve as a major evacuation center. The fires came just hours after a mass shooting in Thousand Oaks. Among the 12 people killed were Moorpark College student Noel Sparks, 21, and Ventura College student Blake Dingman, also 21. Former Moorpark College student, Telemachus Orfanos, 27, and former Santa Barbara City College student Mark Meza Jr., 20, were also slain.

“The Chancellor’s Office will support our colleges in every way possible as they recover from these tragedies,” Oakley said. “It is heartening to see Californians from all over the state pull together and help these communities. Community colleges are centers of hope and strength.”

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, composed of 73 districts and 115 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. California community colleges provide career education and workforce training; guaranteed transfer to four-year universities; degree and certificate pathways; and basic skills education in English and math. As the state’s engine for social and economic mobility, the California Community Colleges supports the [Vision for Success](#), a strategic plan designed to improve student success outcomes, increase transfer rates and eliminate achievement gaps. For more information, please visit the [California Community Colleges website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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