



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Santa Ana College Granted \$5 Million in Awards for Innovation in Higher Education Funds

** OC college celebrates being only Orange County community college selected **

(Santa Ana, CA) - On Friday, March 20, the California Department of Finance gave approval to 14 institutions of higher education for funding through the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education. Santa Ana College (SAC) was selected to receive \$5 million to help fund the Santa Ana Partnership. The awardees include six California community colleges, six CSU campuses, and one UC campus. One CSU campus received two awards. SAC is the only community college in Orange County selected for this award. Long Beach City College's proposal was also funded. SAC's award will help fund the work of the Santa Ana Partnership.

"The Santa Ana Partnership has been working to support student achievement and close equity gaps since 1983. SAC is proud to be the backbone organization for the Partnership as the open access institution between the K-12 education system and the universities. Our partner organizations, the Santa Ana Unified School District; the City of Santa Ana; California State University, Fullerton; the University of California, Irvine; the Hispanic Education Endowment Fund; Padres Promotores de la Educación; and numerous community based organizations are working together to achieve our goal of having a college degree in every home in Santa Ana by 2025. This award brings honor to the students we serve and the leaders who support them every step of the way," said Erlinda J. Martinez, Ed.D., president of Santa Ana College.

The State Budget Act of 2014 appropriated \$50 million in one-time resources from the General Fund for the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education. The program recognizes California community colleges, California State University (CSU) campuses, and University of California (UC) campuses that change existing policies, practices, or systems to achieve the following priorities:

- Significantly increase the number of bachelor's degrees awarded.
- Allow students to complete bachelor's degrees within four years after beginning higher education.
- Ease transfer through the state's education system by better recognizing learning that occurs across the state's education segments and elsewhere.

For over 30 years, the Partnership has been dedicated to postsecondary education access and completion for all youth in Santa Ana. The collaborative efforts of all partner institutions have resulted in the majority of SAUSD graduates

starting college ready for college-level work in English, despite being one of the nation's most Spanish-speaking communities. Not only are more Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) graduates ready for college, 26 percent have also accomplished some college coursework before high school graduation. Priority admission to Santa Ana College with financial aid/scholarship support is guaranteed for SAUSD students, as is transfer to both University of California, Irvine (UCI) and California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). A total of 20,000 secondary and college students benefit from Partnership initiatives annually.

Some of the changes that the Santa Ana Partnership has achieved include:

- Establishment of formal and comprehensive data-sharing agreements across the Partnership;
- K-12 adoption of a district policy mandating enrollment in pre-algebra for all seventh grade students, coupled with rigorous high school graduation requirements that parallel admission requirements for the CSU and UC systems;
- Establishment of Higher Education Centers at all SAUSD comprehensive high schools and at the Santa Ana Public Library with dedicated staffing to serve parents and students;
- Formal involvement of parents in the Partnership through Padres Promotores de la Educación (Parent Advocates) to engage parents in the process of early college preparation;
- Founding of the Santa Ana FUTURES fund through which City of Santa Ana and SAC employees donate to a local college scholarship fund through payroll deductions resulting in \$100,000 of scholarships distributed annually;
- Elimination of tuition fees at Santa Ana College for high school students;
- Launched a guaranteed transfer pathway to CSUF and UCI for SAUSD graduates through the Santa Ana ¡Adelante! program;
- Engagement of Comunidad Latina Credit Union (with an office on the SAC campus) to provide micro-loans for needy students for books and tuition;
- Established 1:1 matching support for low-income students at SAC;
- Created Educational Partnership Centers at UCI and CSUF with full-time directors;
- Created a headquarters for the Padres Promotores de la Educación at SAC; and
- Established Dream Centers at UCI and CSUF to serve and retain students.

The Department of Finance received 58 applications eligible for awards. The selection committee, comprised of the Director of Finance, a member of the State Board of Education, a member of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, a CSU Trustee, a UC Regent, an appointee of the Senate Committee of Rules, and an appointee of the Senate Committee on Rules, and an appointee of the Assembly Speaker heard presentations from the top-tier applicants in Sacramento on Friday, March 20, prior to making their final selection.

The awards were made based on the extent to which the changes described in the applications address the following criteria:

- *Alignment:* The extent to which the changes credibly achieve the state's priorities at a lower cost than existing policies, practices, and systems, without requiring that students pay increased tuition or fees.

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- *Scale:* The extent to which the changes involve broad participation by UC campuses, CSU campuses, community colleges, and local education agencies, including school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools, and can be replicated by other campuses.
- *Commitment:* The extent to which the campuses show commitment to achieving the state's priorities, as evidenced by changes made on or after January 10, 2014; the likelihood that any planned changes would be implemented; the support of faculty, students, and other individuals and groups involved in or impacted by these changes; and the ability to sustain changes over the long-term.

For a complete list of Awards for Innovation in Higher Education honorees, visit

<http://www.dof.ca.gov/innovationawards/> The complete proposal submitted by Santa Ana College may be viewed through this [link](#).

For information about Santa Ana College's centennial celebration, visit <http://www.sac.edu/100>.

About Santa Ana College

Santa Ana College (SAC), which is turning 100 years old in 2015, serves about 18,000 students each semester at its main campus in Santa Ana. The college prepares students for transfer to four-year institutions, provides invaluable workforce training, and customized training for business and industry. In addition, another 11,000 students are served through the college's School of Continuing Education located at Centennial Education Center. Ranked as one of the nation's top two-year colleges awarding associate degrees to Latino and Asian students, the college is also recognized throughout the state for its comprehensive workforce training programs for nurses, firefighters, law enforcement and other medical personnel. SAC is one of two comprehensive colleges under the auspices of the Rancho Santiago Community College District. Visit www.sac.edu to learn more. For information about Santa Ana College's Centennial, please visit www.sac.edu/100.

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