



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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California Community College Students to Get Leg Up on Way to Top Law Schools under First of its Kind Pathway Program

Twenty-four community colleges and six law schools sign agreement to smooth way to law degree

SACRAMENTO – The California Community Colleges and The State Bar of California today announced a new initiative that will provide students at 24 community colleges a smoother pathway to six of California's top law schools.

The Community Colleges Pathway to Law School initiative is an unprecedented effort within public higher education to enhance opportunities and advancement in the legal profession for diverse populations, particularly those who have been underrepresented.

"This project will put talented and promising community college students on a trajectory to enter some of the finest law schools in the nation and receive the support they need to succeed and make the legal profession more diverse and the justice system more reflective of our state," said Brice W. Harris, chancellor of the California Community Colleges, before signing a memorandum of understanding with the participating institutions of higher learning at Law Day Celebration activities at Chabot College in Hayward.

The project, sponsored by the State Bar's Council on Access and Fairness, will establish agreements with two dozen community colleges and six law schools and their respective undergraduate institutions. Students in the program will receive assurances that credits in prescribed courses will transfer, early exposure to the law school experience, individual advisement and mentoring from law school advisors, financial aid counseling, LSAT preparation and waived application fees for admission to the participating law schools.

"We know that our community colleges have the diversity and talent that the State Bar seeks to enhance the diversity pipeline into the legal profession, as evidenced by many prominent judges and lawyers who attended community colleges," said State Bar CEO Joseph Dunn. "I am particularly grateful to the six law school deans for partnering in this important initiative to increase the diversity and overall quality of the legal profession."

Participating law schools are University of Southern California Gould School of Law, University of San Francisco School of Law, UC Davis School of Law, UC Irvine School of Law, Santa Clara University School of Law and Loyola Law School.

“UC Irvine School of Law is delighted to participate in this program to create a pipeline from the community colleges to law school,” said Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean of UC Irvine School of Law. “We are confident that this pilot program will enhance the diversity of law schools and the legal profession.”

The Community Colleges Pathway to Law School Initiative requires students to complete courses based on a defined set of “success factors” that help make effective lawyers. The transfer initiative will align criteria from these success factors with community college courses already approved in corresponding Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) to prepare students for law school.

“With an undergraduate core curriculum that stresses civic engagement, diversity, and justice, and a law school that has long had one of the most-diverse student bodies in the country, Santa Clara University fully supports the goals of the Community Colleges Pathway to Law School,” said Provost Dennis Jacobs. “We are honored to be one of the founding institutions helping create a pathway from community college to four-year undergraduate institutions, to law school.”

Community colleges selected for the program are Antelope Valley College, Bakersfield College, Chabot College, Chaffey College, College of Alameda, College of the Canyons, College of the Sequoias, Contra Costa College, Fresno City College, Gavilan College, Hartnell College, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles Mission College, Merritt College, Oxnard College, Rio Hondo Community College, Riverside City College, Sacramento City College, San Joaquin Delta College, San Jose City College, Santa Ana College, Solano Community College, Southwestern College, and Ventura College.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 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/>.

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