

The Campaign for

College Opportunity

FAST FACTS

Access to College Opportunity in California is at Risk

In 1960, California leaders made a commitment through the Master Plan for Higher Education to provide a place in college for every student who seeks the opportunity. That promise is now at risk. Between 2000 and 2015, the number of Californians between the ages of 18 and 24 is expected to increase by more than one million. **According to the Department of Finance, 640,000 additional California students are likely to seek college over current capacity by 2014.** At the same time, there is no commitment or plan on the part of the state to provide adequate space and funding in our community colleges and universities for this expected growth.

Problems with College Access Are Already Being Felt on Our Campuses

California's college-age population is growing faster now than at any time since 1970. Our demographics are changing, with a growing Latino population and growing numbers of students who will be the first in their family to go to college. **Students have to drive to multiple campuses to get courses they need, endure waiting lists for high-demand programs, and take courses they don't need because they can't get into courses they do need.** These problems are felt in the CSU and UC, but most acutely in the state's community colleges. In 2003, 11,000 students who were eligible for admission to UC and CSU were initially redirected to community college. The CSU system reported a 10.8 percent increase of first-time freshman applications in fall 2005 compared to the previous fall; and the UC system said that the number of applicants for the fall of 2006 freshman class has increased 8.8 percent, compared to only 2.8 percent in 2005.

College Access is Crucial to Our Students, Our State

According to a landmark study by researchers at UC Berkeley, titled "Return on Investment," obtaining a higher education not only has "quality of life" benefits for the individual, such as having a more secure career, but it benefits the state as well. One major finding of the study is that **for every new dollar California invests to get more students in and through college, it will receive a net return of three dollars.** College education will also prepare California's future workforce. Over the next two decades, according to a recent report by Dr. Robert Fountain at Sacramento State University, the growing demand for educated workers and the need to replace retiring Baby Boomers means that **we need 3.2 million new college-educated workers – nurses, teachers engineers and others – to keep our competitive edge.**

The Campaign for College Opportunity is Working Toward Solutions

In October 2006, the Campaign for College Opportunity will begin "Practices with Promise," calling on California educators to submit their working solutions to expand college opportunity in our state. These practices will then be shared with other educators and policymakers for wider implementation. In addition to "Practices with Promise," the Campaign for College Opportunity is currently conducting visits with legislators and in early 2007 plans to introduce legislation to ensure access to California's community colleges and universities. The legislation will be the result of several major research studies commissioned by the Campaign for College Opportunity and two years of grassroots outreach, including a Listening Tour with more than 1,600 Californians in 2005 and a 25-city "Invest in the Future" tour in 2006 with an additional 1,300 business and community leaders across the state.

Contact the Campaign

To learn more about the Campaign, please visit our website, www.collegecampaign.org, or www.nuestrofuturo.com (Spanish); or call one of the Campaign's offices, 510-645-1362 (Oakland), 213-817-6034 (Los Angeles) or 209-549-2441 (Modesto).