

The Campaign for

# College Opportunity

February 2007

## COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY LETTER TO STATE LEADERS

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger, Senate President Pro Tem Perata, Assembly Speaker Nuñez, Senate Minority Leader Ackerman, and Assembly Minority Leader Villines,

Last year you worked in a bipartisan manner to help meet California's critical need for physical infrastructure. This is the year to develop our *human* infrastructure, by renewing for the next generation of young Californians the promise of the Master Plan for Higher Education – to provide a place in college for every student who seeks the opportunity.

We believe now is the time to act. In the coming session of the Legislature, we urge you to set a firm goal of increasing the number of graduates from our community colleges and universities over the next 10 years. As one important step, we must make a commitment to students beginning in middle school that if they do their part to prepare for college, we will do ours by saving them their spot in college and making sure they can afford to go.

By 2020, California's workforce will face a shortage of college graduates – nurses, teachers, engineers, technicians and other highly skilled employees in every industry. If we fail to prepare this workforce, we will lose our competitive edge to other states and nations in the global economy.

There are troubling warning signs. Over the last ten years, the college-going rate has declined for high school graduates of every ethnic group. For the first time, the next generation of Californians may be less well-educated than the current generation. If we do nothing, then the average income of Californians will drop by 13% relative to the U.S. average, the largest projected decline of any state.

In 1960, California leaders made a bold promise through the Master Plan. The next two years are a critical time for thoughtful and determined action for California's future. Now is your chance to move boldly into the future, with a prepared and skilled workforce ready to take California forward.

Yours sincerely,

List of signatories

**(To confirm your participation complete enclosed form)**

Campaign for College Opportunity - [www.collegecampaign.org](http://www.collegecampaign.org)