The Campaign for
College
Opportunity

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New Statewide Campaign Focuses on Need for 1 Million Additional College Graduates in California by 2025 in Order to Keep Economy Strong, Create Jobs

Studies show state will have 1 million fewer college-educated workers than businesses will require

A new statewide campaign is trying to raise awareness about the need for 1 million additional college graduates in California by the year 2025 and persuade the state's new Governor to make higher education a priority. The campaign – called the "One Million More College Graduates by 2025 Campaign"—is being coordinated by The Campaign for College Opportunity, a nonprofit group based in Los Angeles that advocates for higher education in the state.

"Higher education is the fuel that feeds the economic machine in our state," said Michele Siqueiros, executive director for The Campaign for College Opportunity. "We need to let all Californians know about the vital role higher education plays in creating jobs and strengthening our economy as we get out from under this recession."

By 2025, the state will have 1 million fewer college-educated workers than the economy will require, according to Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) projections. Driving this shortage will be the impending retirement of the "Baby Boomer" generation, which will be leaving the workforce in large numbers. According to the PPIC, 34 percent of California workers currently have a college degree, which is slightly above the national average but well below the 41 percent figure that will be needed for the workforce of 2025.

In addition, jobs that require more than a high school education but less than a four-year degree—so-called "middle skill" jobs—will represent 43 percent of all job openings between 2006 and 2016, according to a recent California Edge Campaign report. This increase will put a greater emphasis on the need for vocational credentials, industry certification, and two-year associate degrees offered at California's community colleges.

"The exodus of the Baby Boomers out of the workforce will undoubtedly create shortages for California business," said Bill Hauck, president of the California Business Roundtable. "There is little time to lose if we are to meet the significant workforce needs in California. Failure to do so will result in jobs leaving

the state and a decline in the quality of life for all of our residents."

The “One Million More College Graduates by 2025 Campaign” will seek to raise awareness throughout the state on meeting the demand to educate more of the state’s residents, while also persuading California policymakers to establish clear goals for higher education and prioritize funding accordingly.

One component of the campaign will be a pledge signed by thousands of California leaders urging the state’s next Governor to promote policies that ensure access to higher education and improved college completion rates.

“We are urging all Californians to sign this pledge to let the next Governor know that higher education needs to be a priority because of its importance in maintaining our state’s quality of life,” Siqueiros said. “We already have a long list of distinguished Californians who have signed.”

The campaign also features a scholarship contest open to college students in the state. The contest—called “I'm One in a Million”—asks currently enrolled college students to tell California leaders why they and their peers are one in a million, and why legislators should support college opportunity to help all students reach their college dream.

“The next Governor needs to have a plan for improving the state’s economy and creating jobs,” Siqueiros said, “and that will require a plan to invest in college opportunity.”

For more information about the “One Million More College Graduates by 2025 Campaign”or to sign the “One Million More” pledge, please visit The Campaign for College Opportunity’s website at www.collegecampaign.org or contact Audrey Diaz Dow at (213) 817-6034.

About The Campaign for College Opportunity: The Campaign for College Opportunity is a broad-based, bipartisan coalition, including business, education and labor leaders, and is dedicated to ensuring the next generation of Californians has the opportunity to go to college. The Campaign works to create an environment of change and lead the state toward effective policy solutions. It is focused upon substantially increasing the number of students attending two- and four-year colleges in the state and significantly impacting the rate that students succeed and achieve their post-secondary education objectives. For more information, visit: www.collegecampaign.org.

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