WEDD 2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

Workforce and Economic Development Division



California Community Colleges

www.cccco.edu

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Introduction

WELCOME TEAM MEMBERS, COLLEAGUES, AND STAKEHOLDERS TO THE SECOND WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT.

As the vice chancellor of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Workforce and Economic Development Division (WEDD), I am filled with immense pride in what our system has accomplished and an unwavering optimism for where we are headed. This past year has served as a powerful testament to the resilience, innovation, and sheer impact of our workforce programs.

Our collective efforts across the state's 116 community colleges have yielded remarkable milestones. From advanced manufacturing and clean energy initiatives to cutting-edge healthcare pathways and digital infrastructure training, WEDD-supported programs continue to serve as the primary engine for social and economic mobility in California.

This year's report provides a glimpse into the incredible work being done across the system and in unison, from strengthening regional employer partnerships, to expanding registered apprenticeships to accelerating short-term, high-value credentialing and so much more. The Workforce and Economic Development Division continues to be anchored by a singular, undeniable truth: all roads lead to workforce.

Whether a student enters our system to earn an Associate Degree for Transfer, obtain a specialized technical certificate, upskill mid-career, or learn English as a second language, the ultimate destination remains economic empowerment and career fulfillment. As we look ahead to next year, the division will continue to break down institutional silos and focus on building a future-forward ecosystem where every educational milestone directly maps to a high-demand industry need.



California's economic vitality depends on a skilled, inclusive, and adaptable workforce. As you read through the achievements and data within this second annual report, you will see the blueprint of a system fully committed to that mission: paving accessible, prosperous roads for every learner we serve.

With gratitude,

Anthony Cordova

Anthony Cordova

Vice Chancellor, Workforce and Economic Development

Leadership Corner

ALL ROADS LEAD TO WORKFORCE



Anthony Cordova
Vice Chancellor



Ioanna Iatridis
Assistant Vice Chancellor



Gary Adams
Dean



Linda Bermudez
Dean



Chèri Fortin
Dean



Paige Mustain
Dean



Program Highlights

NEARLY $1.6 BILLION AT WORK

across a portfolio of legislatively mandated programs connecting California's 116 community college campuses to the workforce needs of their regions.

The Workforce and Economic Development Division (WEDD) administers nearly $1.6 billion in state and federal funding across a portfolio of legislatively mandated programs designed to connect California's 116 community college campuses to the workforce needs of their regions. Each program reflects WEDD's core mission: ensuring students gain the skills to succeed in California's innovative economy, closing equity gaps in career access, and building the infrastructure for long-term economic mobility. The highlights below capture key milestones, investments, and partnerships from fiscal year 2025–26.



California Adult Education Program

The California Adult Education Program (CAEP) prepares students for in-demand careers through strategic partnerships and statewide convenings. More than a million students who enroll in noncredit community college and K12 adult education programs funded by the program have an opportunity to move on to transfer-level coursework and/or the workforce.

Grounded in Vision 2030, Mt. San Antonio College (host), San Diego College of Continuing Education (co-host), and the Association of Community and Continuing Education (ACCE) collaborated together with the Chancellor's Office to support the 2025 Noncredit Summit, a statewide convening focused on advancing high-impact noncredit education through implementation, innovation, and alignment across institutions. This two-day Summit was grounded in Vision 2030 and highlighted the vital role of noncredit education in meeting the needs of today's adult learners. Through a focus on implementation, innovation, and alignment across institutions, the event offered strategies and fresh insights to help colleges develop and expand noncredit programs that drive student success and strengthen communities across the state. To learn more watch the video of the event footage.

Moreover, the CAEP consortia participating in Round 2 of the English Language Learner Healthcare Pathways (ELL HP) initiative received a 12-month extension to expend funds extending the program funding activity period from 24 to 36 months. The program provides adult English learners with targeted, non-credit vocational training to enter high-demand healthcare careers. It pairs ESL and career-technical instructors to teach language and medical skills concurrently, removing barriers to employment in the care economy.

And as part of its commitment to supporting English as a Second Language Californians, WEDD has commissioned an English Language Learner Journey Report that will be released later this year. The report will provide the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office) with clear, actionable insights into statewide noncredit offerings, sector demand, and pathway alignment to guide professional development and technical assistance priorities and statewide strategy.

Learn more about CAEP.





California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI)

Launched in 2015, CAI provides grants to community colleges and their partners to develop new or innovative apprenticeship programs that go beyond traditional trades, extending into fields like healthcare, IT, education, and advanced manufacturing.

During National Apprenticeship Week 2026, CAI released a research study comparing student experience in apprenticeship programs with comparable academic programs. The study focused on three areas: earnings while enrolled, earnings post-exit, and educational outcomes. In almost all cases, apprentices out-earn their peers while enrolled and after they complete their studies for a period of at least two years (the maximum length of time studied). Further, success rates in apprenticeship coursework performed significantly higher for almost all programs studied. To learn more, read the full report.



The Chancellor's Office has hosted multiple convenings and events to scale apprenticeship programs through professional development, networking, and technical assistance. In December 2025, the Chancellor's Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FoundationCCC) convened college apprenticeship practitioners from across the state for the Data Drives Apprenticeship Learning Lab. The event underscored the Chancellor's Office commitment to supporting colleges in strengthening their data and reporting processes to ensure program compliance, demonstrate outcomes, and inform future investments.

In March, the Chancellor's Office, FoundationCCC, Rancho Santiago Community College District, and LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network convened 223 college apprenticeship practitioners representing 60 colleges, nine districts, and five Regional Consortia for a statewide convening on Apprenticeship Pathways. Participants engaged with leading experts, including Santiago Canyon College, Mapping Articulated Pathways (MAP), the Centers of Excellence, the Department of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL),who shared practical strategies for developing and expanding Registered Apprenticeship Programs. Sessions explored effective program models, campus-level planning around capacity and curriculum, the use of labor market information to guide decision-making, and approaches to deepening employer partnerships.

Learn more about the California Apprenticeship Initiative.



Economic and Workforce Development

Economic and workforce development (EWD) strengthens California's economy by aligning community college training programs with the demands of key industry sectors. This year, Industry-Driven Regional Collaboratives (IDRC) expanded outreach to underserved communities deepening regional coordination through shared planning frameworks tied to Vision 2030.

In March 2026, WEDD developed and submitted the Regional Collaboration and Coordination (RC&C) grant proposal to the Board of Governors. This initiative focuses on breaking down traditional silos by holistically aligning career education programs with local labor needs and economic mobility and incorporates four distinct funding streams: Strong Workforce Program Regional Share, Economic and Workforce Development Employer Engagement, Perkins V, and the K-12 Strong Workforce Program.

Centers of Excellence (COE) also worked with EWD to produce sector reports and workforce demand analyses supporting regional decision-making. Including this Inland Empire/Desert Region (IED COE) report on apprenticeships in the Inland Empire. The IED COE engaged an advisory committee on the project, with representation from K-12 partners, employers like SoCal Edison, the LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network, community leaders like Inland Empire Growth and Opportunity (IEGO), the Youth Action Project, and the Inland Empire Labor Institute, as well as the Inland Empire / Desert Regional Consortium and member colleges.

Learn more about EWD and regional sector investments.

K-12 Strong Workforce Program

The K–12 Strong Workforce Program (K12 SWP) strengthens career education pathways for students grades 7–12 by supporting regional partnerships, expanding access to high-quality programs, and aligning education with workforce needs.

During the 2025–26 academic year, the Chancellor's Office supported the development and rollout of the DataVista reporting tool in partnership with WestEd. This tool provides an overview of outcomes of students who participate in a CTE program compared to the total number of K-12 students across California. The data provides intelligence on the value of K-12 programming for local education agencies, community colleges, and the public.



Round 8(A) K-12 SWP awards totaling nearly $137 million were announced in January 2026, with Round 8(B) awards following on May 1. A total of 314 applicants were received requesting more than $257 million against $150 million in available funds. Investments included 72 pathway coordinators and eight technical assistance providers to support hands-on support to K-12 schools looking to begin or expand programs.

View full list of Round 8 recipients. | Learn more about K-12 SWP.

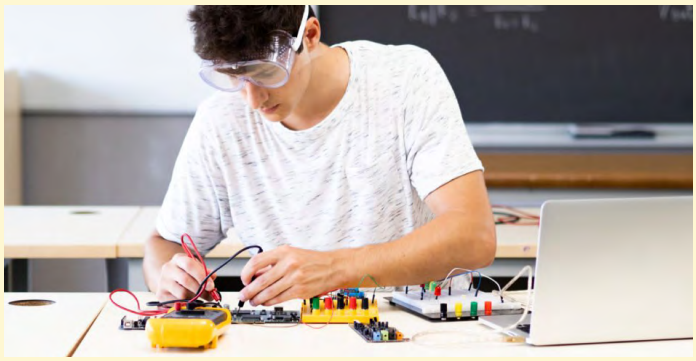


Nursing and Allied Health

California community colleges Nursing and Allied Health programs provide instruction leading to a certificate, associate degrees, and transfers to four-year institutions. They aim to meet the state's demand for new culturally competent healthcare workers by improving graduate employability, expanding the pipeline of baccalaureate-prepared nursing and allied health professionals.

This year, the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) program established seven partnerships with healthcare systems, educational institutions, and community organizations while hosting nine statewide webinars on topics of interest to Nursing Programs and convened three in-person workshops on the topics of immersive technology and digital literacy of faculty and students.

To learn more about Nursing and Allied Health, visit - https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/Nursing-and-Allied-Health



Perkins

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) was signed into law on July 31, 2018. In 2019, The California Workforce Pathways Joint Advisory Committee developed the Federal Perkins V State Plan which identified a wide-ranging effort to create a world-class CTE system that can strengthen education and workforce preparation available to all Californians.

Executing the plan, WEDD strengthened statewide coordination, developed and shared equity-focused strategies, and oversaw program administration across the system.

During the fiscal year, The Chancellor's Office launched several key tools and resources, including a technical assistance calendar, a risk monitoring system, TOP-to-CIP course mapping, and an updated Program Directors Handbook.

Efforts also included the delivery of the Perkins V annual Data Institute, which helps states develop and implement data systems that yield valid, reliable, and complete data on students who enroll in career and technical education programs, as well as the establishment of peer learning structures, and a statewide Perkins listserv.

Additionally, WEDD Dean Paige Mustain and a program specialist were selected to present at the 2026 National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) Summit, with a pre-conference session focusing on "Leveraging Perkins V to Build Inclusive Workforce Pathways..

To learn more about Perkins, visit - https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/Career-Education-Practices



Strong Workforce Program

The Strong Workforce Program (SWP) is a key initiative of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office focused on expanding and enhancing career education programs to meet California's workforce demands. The program continues to support regional collaboration, data-informed planning, and systemwide coordination to drive student success and economic mobility.

In FY2025–26, the Chancellor's Office advanced SWP implementation through the approval of new four-year regional plans and ongoing engagement with regional partners through monthly monitor meetings. The Chancellor's Office assigns Regional Monitors across 11 key macro-economic regions to support and oversee program goals, reporting, and regional grant expenditures. These monitors, alongside the respective Regional Consortium Chairs, facilitate monthly regional planning, monitoring, and engagement meetings. The Strong Workforce Monthly Regional Meetings are hosted by each regional consortium (e.g., LARC for Los Angeles, OCRC for Orange County, and SCCRC for South Central Coast) to coordinate regional funding, review labor market data, and approve program recommendations.

Additional efforts included the completion of the SWP Legislative Report and updates to the program compendium to reflect current priorities and outcomes.

To learn more, visit - https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/Strong-Workforce-Program

Chancellor's Office & Division Conferences

July 2025 through June 2026

57+

Events Participated

15+

Speaking/Presenting Participation

8

Regions Visited

8

Campus Tours



LA Port Tour, El Camino College, Oct 2025



Futures Summit, Sept 2025



Board of Governors Retreat, March 2026

California Community Colleges Charting New Career Paths... with AI in Mind

AI IN EDUCATION

Across California's 116 colleges, the Chancellor's Office supports human-centered AI grounded in equity, accountability, and student success. Aligned with Vision 2030, this work focuses on ensuring students, college faculty and administration, and communities are prepared for a rapidly evolving digital future.

Building AI literacy across the system is essential. Faculty, staff, and administrators have access to a growing ecosystem of learning opportunities, including webinars, courses, communities of practice, and conferences. Professional learning supports:

- **Instructional and Student Support Use Cases**
- **Ethical and Equity-Centered AI Adoption**
- **Practical, Applied Experimentation**
- **Shared Learning Across Regions and Roles**





Dr. Rebecca Johnson, PhD | AI Ambassador
Southwestern College



Jared Kubicka-Miller | AI Ambassador
Santiago Canyon College



Dr. Monica Demcho | AI Ambassador
Miramar College

AI AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

AI Ambassadors are existing college faculty and staff who take a one-year sabbatical to serve as resident representatives of AI initiatives at the Digital Center for Innovation, Transformation and Equity - https://cccdigitalcenter.org/.

During their residency, AI Ambassadors leverage disciplinary expertise and professional networks to advance ethical AI adoption, facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration, support knowledge development, and build institutional partnerships. Following the residency, Ambassadors return to their college campuses bringing system-level insight and experience back to colleagues and students, alike.

To learn more about the programs and initiatives WEDD is embracing with AI visit https://ai.cccco.edu/

PLAYLAB PILOT

The Playlab Pilot is a systemwide professional learning initiative led by the Chancellor's Office and housed within the Digital Center for Innovation, Transformation, and Equity. Building on early work launched in fall 2024 in partnership with Playlab AI and Berkeley Changemaker, the pilot supports faculty and staff in developing practical, educator-led approaches to AI literacy through hands-on design and implementation.

This work is intentionally designed for durability and long-term impact, ensuring that tools built in Playlab remain available to their creators and institutions for as long as the platform exists. The skills developed extend beyond any single product, which strengthen both local and systemwide AI literacy and leadership.

Learn more about the pilot, Playlab AI, and Berkeley Changemaker.





NECTIR AI PILOT

In July 2024, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office launched a pilot of an AI-powered course assistant developed by Nectir AI. The pilot is designed to explore how artificial intelligence can support learning by helping students better understand course expectations and assignments in a supportive, inquiry-based manner.

The AI course assistant uses a Socratic approach that encourages critical thinking and learning without generating direct answers or completing coursework for students. Participating faculty can control attributes of the assistant and upload course materials, such as syllabi and assignments, allowing the assistant to provide contextualized support aligned with faculty requirements. The pilot is offered at no cost to participating students or faculty and was extended to include fall 2025 and spring 2026.

Learn more about Nectir AI.

COMMON CLOUD DEMONSTRATION PROJECT



The Common Cloud demonstration project began in late 2023 as a way for the Chancellor's Office to support a field-driven concept to explore the feasibility and benefits of a shared data infrastructure across community college districts.

The project addresses a long-standing systemwide challenge: the inability to efficiently share, integrate, and analyze data across institutions using different enterprise systems in a timely manner. The demonstration project was funded by the Chancellor's Office and reached 24 colleges. Based on the success of the demonstration project, the state provided a second tranche of funds intended to scale the Common Cloud across the system, beginning with a third cohort of colleges in spring 2026. The Common Cloud is demonstrating the potential and value of a common data architecture and shared governance principles for improving reporting, analytics, and decision-making while respecting local control and system diversity.

Learn more about Common Cloud.


Dr. Suha Aljuboori, PhD


Alicia Cardenas


Gary Graves


Dr. Jacqueline Hester, PhD


Scott James


Donnell Layne


Dr. Par Mohammadian, PhD


Trudi Radtke


Dr. Rachel Tatro-Duarte, PhD


Dr. John "JT" Tarantino


Fabiola Torres

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Chancellor's AI Fellows Program is a leadership opportunity designed to advance thoughtful and equitable integration of artificial intelligence across California's 116 community colleges. There are currently 13 fellows, eight of which are regional and fully funded by WEDD, and they are a combination of faculty, administrators, and classified professionals.

AI Fellows work collaboratively with the Digital Center for Innovation, Transformation and Equity, faculty, staff, administrators, and system partners to develop frameworks, guidelines, and resources that support responsible AI adoption while maintaining a strong focus on equity and student success.

Fellows contribute to systemwide learning and innovation by exploring emerging AI applications, supporting faculty and staff capacity-building, and informing institutional and system-level planning.


Dr. Hongling Yang, PhD


Dominique Wu



AltaSea, Port of Los Angeles



MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING

This year WEDD, on behalf of the California community colleges, secured extensive new agreements with partners committed to creating career pathways for new and incumbent workers.

MAY 2025 — **GovOps**
MORE DETAILS...

JULY 2025 — **IBM SkillsBuild**
MORE DETAILS...

AUGUST 2025 — **Microsoft AI Workforce Education**
MORE DETAILS...

AUGUST 2025 — **Google Generative AI Essentials**
MORE DETAILS...

AUGUST 2025 — **Adobe AI**
MORE DETAILS...

SEPTEMBER 2025 — **ATI**
MORE DETAILS...

JANUARY 2026 — **Port of Los Angeles / AltaSea**
MORE DETAILS...

Vision 2030 Project Highlights

OUR WORK IS GUIDED

by the California Community College's Vision 2030 which aims to ensure students from all backgrounds succeed in reaching their goals and improving their families and communities, eliminating achievement gaps once and for all.

Bachelor's Degree in Applied Sciences

The California Community Colleges Baccalaureate Degree Program (BDP) makes it easier and more affordable for community college students to earn a bachelor's degree and qualify for a broader array of careers. Launched as a 15-college pilot under Senate Bill 850 (Block, 2014) and made permanent by Assembly Bill 927 (Medina, 2021), the program offers applied, workforce-focused degrees that do not duplicate UC or CSU offerings. In regions without a nearby UC or CSU campus, such as Redding and Quincy, these degrees give students a path to a four-year credential close to home.

Students can earn a four-year degree for a total of $10,560 in tuition, and 72% reported taking on no student loan debt. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, graduates reported an average annual income increase of $28,000, nearly 98% were employed in their field of study, and 95% remained in California. In the pilot cohort, 63% of students were students of color, and 51% said they would not have pursued a bachelor's degree if their local community college had not offered one.



During the 2025-26 reporting year, 50 California community colleges have approved baccalaureate programs, with 47 degrees currently offered; 20 more programs are slated for the coming months. Programs are concentrated in high-demand fields, led by Respiratory Care (seven colleges), Dental Hygiene (six colleges), and Biomanufacturing (five colleges), alongside emerging areas such as Drone and Autonomous Systems, Cloud Computing, and Cyber Defense and Analysis. Feather River College's Ecosystem Restoration and Applied Fire degree prepares students in rural Plumas County for the front lines of wildfire prevention. The program supports Vision 2030 and the state's goal of 70% of adults holding a college degree or certificate by 2030.

Learn more about the Baccalaureate Degree Program.

50
Number of Colleges

47
Programs Offered



Credit for Prior Learning

The Credit for Prior Learning, Mapping Articulated Pathways (CPL-MAP) Demonstration Project, expands a technology infrastructure that enables colleges to equitably and consistently award college credit for prior learning experiences, including military service, workforce training, and industry credentials. Reaching all 116 California community colleges and four noncredit campuses, the initiative has grown into one of the system's most far-reaching demonstration projects, serving 42,620 students this year. Given its scale and demonstrated outcomes, CPL-MAP is now transitioning from the demonstration phase toward sustained systemwide implementation. In FY 2025-26, the initiative made significant strides in expanding access for veterans, working adults, apprentices, and justice-impacted learners. Faculty-led discipline workgroups produced 281 new statewide credit recommendations this year (576 cumulative), while new CPL pathways launched in high-demand sectors including Wildland Firefighting and construction trades. A new partnership with Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Base and Copper Mountain College further extended CPL access across 42 military training areas.

The numbers tell a compelling story. CPL-MAP engaged more than 43,000 students through the MAP platform, including 21,173 military-connected students and 21,518 working adults, and identified 192,000 CPL-eligible units with 97,000 successfully transcripted. An AI enabled CPL Student Portal launched in April 2026, supported by $1.4 million in AI assisted tool investments. Altogether, the initiative generated an estimated $270 million in student savings, reflecting the program's core promise: that Californians should not have to pay to learn what they already know.

116	47,598	13
Number of Colleges	Students Served	Partnerships Formed



AGTEC Workforce Initiative

AgTEC is a Competency Based Education (CBE) program developed in collaboration with nine Central San Joaquin Valley community colleges, designed to upskill adult learners and socially disadvantaged farmworkers through a noncredit Ag Systems Certificate program. The program features online modules, in-person assessments, and bilingual coursework offered in Spanish, removing language barriers and expanding access for English language learners. Aligned with MAP and O*NET frameworks, AgTEC supports stackable credentials and workforce integration through a coached learning model that moves away from punitive grading and meets many first-generation college students where they are. At its core, the initiative works to shift the college-going culture within farm-working communities, a population historically underserved by higher education.

In FY 2025-26, AgTEC advanced implementation of the Ag Systems Certificate across partner colleges, deepening program reach and regional alignment. Merced College piloted a CBE transcript model that documents student mastery levels, offering a more meaningful and accurate picture of what students know and can do. The program strengthened its regional infrastructure through the hiring of a Regional Pathway Navigator and the onboarding of faculty at Fresno City College, Clovis Community College, and additional partner sites. Curriculum and student supports were also enhanced through in-person convenings that integrated peer-led tutoring, culturally responsive outreach, and career pathway guidance. A centralized AgTEC website launched this year to connect students and employers, with Spanish-language access expanding in April 2026.

This year, AgTEC served 650 students across nine participating colleges and established 41 employer and community partners. The program secured media placements across three major outlets, including Telemundo, CBS, and Marketplace Tech, elevating the visibility of farmworker education and student success on a regional and national stage.



112
Number of Colleges

950
Students Served

44
Partnerships Formed

Behavioral and Mental Health

The Behavioral and Mental Health (BMH) Demonstration Project addresses California's growing shortage of mental health workers by building workforce pipelines through community college apprenticeship programs, new curriculum development, and cross-sector partnerships. Anchored at Chabot College in collaboration with a K-16 Collaborative, the project is developing a scalable Behavioral Health Wellness Coach Apprenticeship pathway with connections to dual enrollment and transfer opportunities. A major milestone this year was U.S. Department of Labor approval of apprenticeship standards for a three-year Behavioral Health Wellness Coach program, establishing the formal infrastructure needed for statewide expansion.

In FY 2025-26, the project deepened its regional partnerships among community colleges, K-12 systems, employers, and workforce agencies while expanding its footprint across the state. Lemoore College joined as a new demonstration site, and West Los Angeles College began planning its own apprenticeship program. New employer partners, counties, and community-based organizations were recruited to grow the behavioral health workforce pipeline, supported by targeted outreach and technical assistance to colleges and public agencies. Equity-centered supports, including living stipends funded through Kaiser Foundation, were provided to reduce financial barriers and improve apprentice retention. The project also supported three California Apprenticeship Initiative grant applications to help additional colleges and a county office of education launch aligned programs.



This year, the BMH project served 418 students across 29 established partnerships. Total apprentice enrollment grew to 92, with 14 apprentices completing at least 18 units toward an Associate Degree for Transfer in Social Work and Human Services. An additional 21 students participated in a summer intensive traineeship to build entry-level behavioral health skills. Together, these outcomes reflect a replicable model for how community colleges can play a central role in solving California's behavioral health workforce crisis.

1	448	46
Number of Colleges	**Students Served**	**Partnerships Formed**

United Domestic Workers Demonstration Project

The United Domestic Workers (UDW) Adult Learner Demonstration Project partners with 20 community colleges across five counties to strengthen pathways for low-wage adult learners seeking career advancement. The project builds college capacity to develop programs that recognize existing learner credentials and certifications while moving students from non-resilient occupations into high-value career pathways with real opportunities for wage growth. Launched in June 2024, the initiative emphasizes cross-sector collaboration between community colleges, labor organizations, and workforce partners to create sustainable, equity-centered systems for adult learner success.



In FY 2025-26, the project delivered targeted coaching to administrators to strengthen implementation strategies and long-term sustainability. A major milestone this year was the launch of the Adult Learner Toolkit, built around a "People, Programs, and Jobs" framework to guide colleges in pathway design, noncredit-to-credit transitions, credit for prior learning, industry alignment, and holistic student supports. A centralized UDW Project Hub website also launched, providing colleges and partners with streamlined access to resources and technical assistance materials. In one example, Mt. SAC piloted an online noncredit Digital Literacy course for non-native English speakers, with an Introduction to Healthcare course in development. Looking ahead, Bakersfield College and Merced College have been identified as future implementation sites, pending funding.

This year, the UDW Demonstration Project served 1,069 students across 20 participating colleges and engaged 20 established partners. The UDW Pathways and Workforce Partnership Summit convened more than 80 cross-sector partners, deepening collaboration among colleges, workforce organizations, and community-based organizations. Together, these efforts reflect a model for how community colleges can meet low-wage adult learners where they are and build the infrastructure to move them forward.

20	1,118	20
Number of Colleges	**Students Served**	**Partnerships Formed**

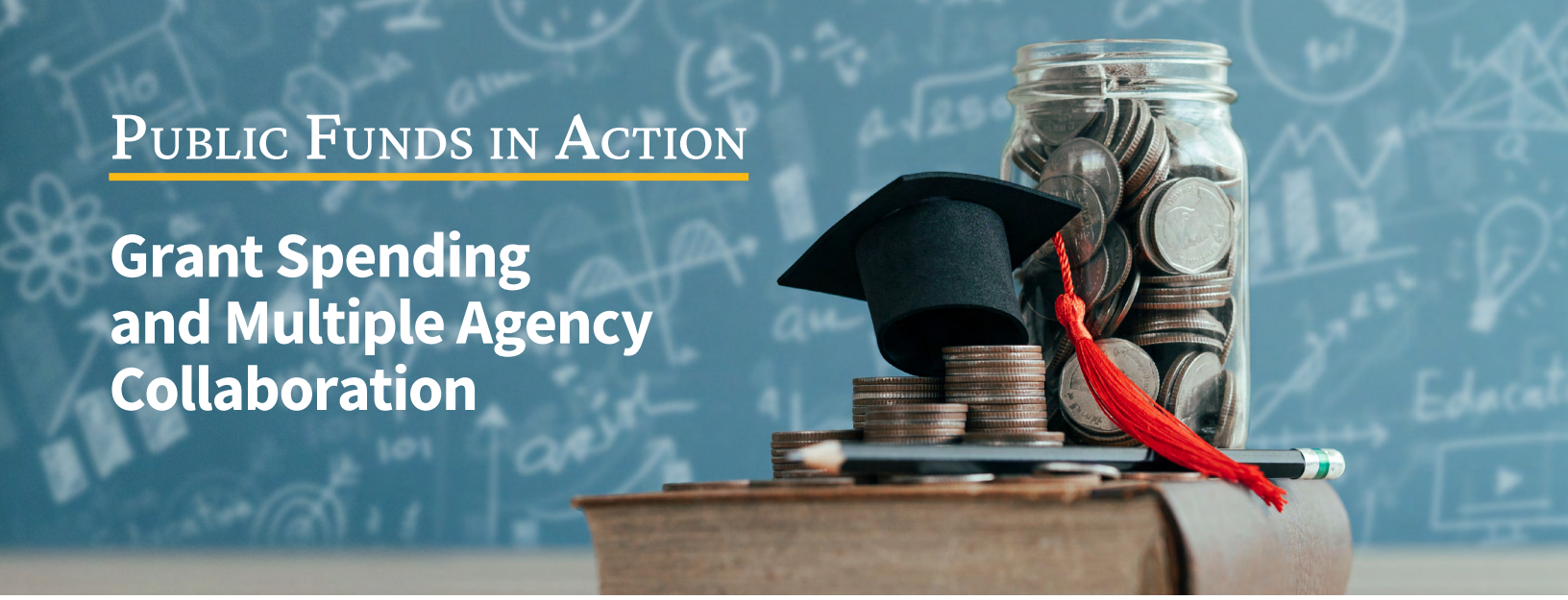
Vision 2030 in Action

Workforce and Economic Development Demonstration Projects are pilot initiatives that foster significant change in California's community colleges by seeding innovation, scaling implementation of promising practices, and integrating new education models to advance Vision 2030 goals.

Every California community college has engaged in one or more demonstration project. Many of these demonstration projects conclude in spring and summer 2026, as reflected in the tables below.

Find additional information and progress reports for these projects.

PROJECTS CONCLUDING IN SPRING 2026	PROJECTS CONCLUDING IN SUMMER 2026	ONGOING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS	EMERGING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS
Credit for Prior Learning	Apprenticeship Pathways	Behavioral and Mental Health	AI for Operations
Rising Scholars	Common Cloud Data Platform	Beyond Barriers | Integrating Services and Support to Empower Learner Economic Mobility	Agentic AI
Associate Degree for Nursing	AgTEC	Foster Youth College Access	Credit for Prior Learning (Copper Mountain College)
		Inland Empire Equitable Healthcare Access	Blue Economy and Climate Action Pathways
		Open Education Resources	Internships
		Rural College Transfer Collaborative	Study Abroad at Home Program
		Veterans Mental Health	Teacher Preparation Pipeline
		United Domestic Workers	



Public Funds in Action

Grant Spending and Multiple Agency Collaboration

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Regional Collaboration and Coordination (RCC) Grant

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office offers the Regional Collaboration and Coordination (RCC) grant to strengthen regional workforce development, Career Education (CTE), and economic mobility.

The grant provides funding for a host college or district in each of the state's regional consortia to coordinate education programs, reduce employment equity gaps, and improve employer engagement. The funding years run from FY2026 through FY2029 with option for renewal for FY2030 and 2031 based on performance.

Learn more about the program and view the RFA.

HIGH ROAD INITIATIVES

High Road Construction Careers (HRCC) Partnership Grants

The High Road Construction Careers (HRCC) partnership grants for California community colleges is a $10 million workforce initiative funded by the state. The HRCC program supports construction career pathways that connect community college students to state-certified apprenticeships through local building trades councils. The program emphasizes credit for prior learning, supportive services, and direct entry into careers with strong wages and benefits. Administered in tandem with the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), these grants fund localized pre-apprenticeship training and build streamlined pathways to state-certified building and construction trades.

Nine grants have been allocated to support collaboration with High Roads Construction Careers (HRCC) partner members, including local building trades councils, to build credit for prior (CPL) learning infrastructure for the North America's Building Trades Unions' (NABTU) Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) or a state-approved building trades' joint labor management apprenticeship program.

- **In February 2026, it was announced that Round 1 (four grants) received a no-cost extension for their grants to end September 2026 (the same end date as the Round 2 grants)**
- **Round 2 (five grants) of this program ends on September 30, 2026.**

HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD PATHWAY

Chef Ann Foundation – Healthy School Food Pathway (HSFP)

The Chef Ann Foundation Healthy School Food Pathway (HSFP) program is a work-based learning experience that aims to prepare individuals for job opportunities in healthy, scratch-cook school food programs. The program aims to help aspiring, beginner, and experienced school food professionals gain the skills they need to create and manage successful K–12 scratch-cook meal operations.

The program consists of pre-apprenticeship programs for aspiring and beginner school food professionals, Apprenticeship programs for individuals who complete the Pre-Apprenticeship and want to deepen their knowledge and skills, and Fellowship for mid- and upper-level school food professionals who want to become leaders in school food change. The Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship are currently available in California,



Colorado, New York, and Virginia (more states to come!); the Fellowship is available nationwide. Healthy School Food Pathway is administered by the Chef Ann Foundation in partnership with more than 80 school districts. Its program components are vetted by and registered with the U.S. Department of Labor and state government workforce agencies.

In FY2025-26, HSFP successfully established a coalition of nine Community Colleges and onboarded 24 coalition members including faculty, administrators, and workforce leaders.

Learn more about the Chef Ann HSFP pathway.

CALIFORNIA YOUTH

California Youth Behavioral Health Initiative

The California Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) is a five-year, more than $4 billion effort to transform how the state supports the mental health and substance use needs of children, youth, and families. Grounded in equity and accessibility, CYBHI is building a more integrated, youth-centered system that reaches young people where they already are; including schools, college campuses, and other community settings rather than requiring them to navigate care on their own.

CYBHI's work spans several coordinated strategies: expanding school-linked behavioral health services and provider networks, growing and diversifying the behavioral health workforce through training and certification pathways, scaling virtual and digital support platforms for youth and families, and running statewide public awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and connect people to care. The initiative serves as the cornerstone of California's Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health. CYBHI is administered by the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) in partnership with the Department of Health Care Services, the Department of Health Care Access and Information, the Department of Managed Health Care, the California Department of Public Health, and the Office of the California Surgeon General - working alongside schools, health plans, providers, and youth and family voices across the state.

As of May 2026, CYBHI has helped direct more than $2.2 billion to over 1,600 California organizations, supported over 500,000 children, youth, and families through digital platforms, delivered 230,000+ school-linked services across 190+ school districts and colleges, and trained more than 70,000 individuals (including 4,000+ certified wellness coaches and 10,000+ peer support specialists), to support youth along their behavioral health journey.

Learn more about CYBHI.

FIRE RECOVERY

Los Angeles Rebuild

The Palisades and Eaton fires burned nearly 40,000 acres, leading to the destruction of approximately 17,000 structures, including homes, schools, businesses, and places of worship. Property damage is estimated to be between $28 billion and $53.8 billion, and additional business interruption losses are projected at $5 billion to $9.7 billion over the next five years.

Five community colleges received seed funding in October 2025 to begin to address the region's rebuilding workforce needs: Glendale Community College, Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Trade Technical College, Pasadena City College, and Santa Monica College. Emerging strategies across the colleges include mobile learning units, expanded construction readiness programs, pre-apprenticeship partnerships with building trades organizations, and targeted



outreach to high school students and impacted communities. The purpose of the initiative is to accelerate regional rebuilding efforts through targeted, equity-centered workforce investments. Funding supports the delivery and expansion of construction and recovery-related career pathways; retraining and upskilling for underemployed, unemployed, and displaced workers; and wraparound services that reduce financial barriers to completion.

California-North Carolina Community Colleges Exchange

In March, leaders and partners from California and North Carolina, met at Pasadena City College for the California-North Carolina Community Colleges Exchange. This cross-state convening focused on how community colleges serve as community hubs for disaster response, recovery, and climate



resilience. Learning from the challenges both states have faced, from the Eaton and Palisades fires in California to Hurricane Helene recovery in North Carolina, the exchange created space for shared learning, stronger partnerships, and ideas for future collaboration. These cross-state convenings bring to light that throughout the nation we face similar challenges and obstacles but working together we become stronger and better equipped to identify solutions. The Foundation for California Community Colleges helped make this exchange possible by facilitating Lumina Foundation support, contributing matching Innovation Fund dollars, and by partnering with Pasadena City College to bring the California / North Carolina summit together, and coordinating the exchange's core group across both states.



Future Ahead

ALL ROADS LEAD TO WORKFORCE

This year's work confirms what we have long believed: the path to economic mobility runs directly through California's community colleges. As we look to FY 2026–27, WEDD is building on a solid foundation, not starting from one. The systems, partnerships, and infrastructure established this year, from CPL-MAP's statewide platform to the AI Ambassadors Program to our growing network of regional employer partnerships, position colleges to move with greater speed and impact in the year ahead.

The WEDD roadmap forward is clear. We will continue scaling demonstration projects that have proven their value, like Rising Scholars and Credit for Prior Learning, into sustained, systemwide implementation. We will deepen our investment in emerging priorities, including responsible AI adoption, regional collaboration through the RC&C initiative, and expanding apprenticeship into new industry sectors. And we will keep strengthening the data infrastructure, like Common Cloud and DataVista, that allows colleges and the Chancellor's Office to make faster, smarter decisions on behalf of students.

None of this work happens in isolation. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the WEDD team, our college presidents, chief instruction officers, deans of workforce development, and the faculty and staff across all 116 colleges who do this work every day. I am equally grateful to our cross division partners, regional consortia, employer partners, and the state agencies and community organizations who share our commitment to California's working adults and students.

As we move into the year ahead, WEDD remains rooted in the values that have guided this work from the start: equity, innovation, and resilience. We are ready to take on new challenges with clarity and purpose, deepening collaboration across sectors, improving access to opportunity, and using smarter tools to drive better outcomes for students. Every road in this report leads to the same destination: a California where every learner, regardless of background or circumstance, has a clear path to economic mobility and career fulfillment.

We look forward to continuing this work together.

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California Community Colleges

WEDD

Workforce and Economic Development Division

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This report was prepared by the Workforce and Economic Development Division.