



## It's Time to Submit Your Entries for the "30 Seconds to College" Contest!

The "I **Can** Afford College" campaign is now accepting entries for our "30 Seconds to College" sweepstakes, sponsored by iHeart Media. The lucky grand-prize winner of this year's sweepstakes will receive a car! Three additional winners will receive scholarships that can be used for community college costs, such as fees, books, supplies and other education-related expenses. The scholarships will be cash prizes in the amounts of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250.

To enter, you'll create your own version of our popular "Make It Now" video/advertisement. On our website, you can access the full lyrics of the "Make It Now" rap song, listen to the song and view the video, and read a few rules you'll need to follow when creating your video. From there, you can get creative!

The "30 Seconds to College" sweepstakes will run from March 1, 2015 to April 24, 2015 – video entries can be submitted between March 1st and the 31st, and voting on the entries will take place from April 1st through the 24th. The winners will be announced in early May.

For more information on the contest, and to submit your video entry, visit [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com).



## The California Community Colleges Makes a Historic Leap Forward with Bachelor's Degree Pilot Program

Governor Jerry Brown made history in September 2014 by signing a bill that created a pilot program for up to 15 community colleges across California to offer four-year bachelor's degrees.

The bachelor's degree programs that received final approval are:

- Airframe Manufacturing Technology - Antelope Valley College
- Industrial Automation - Bakersfield College
- Mortuary Science - Cypress College
- Equine Industry - Feather River College

- Dental Hygiene - Foothill College and West Los Angeles College
- Bio-manufacturing - MiraCosta College
- Respiratory Care - Modesto Junior College and Skyline College
- Health Information Management - San Diego Mesa College
- Occupational Studies - Santa Ana College
- Health Information Management - Shasta College

Out of 34 applications, the approved college districts were selected based on their geographic distribution, and their ability to establish diverse and rigorous

programs in their proposed fields to meet an unaddressed local or statewide workforce need.

Under the pilot program, earning these bachelor's degrees has an estimated total cost of about \$10,000, with lower-division coursework costs at roughly \$46 per unit and upper-division coursework costs at roughly \$130 per unit.

The pilot program is set to be functional by the 2017-2018 academic year, but some districts may start their programs by the fall 2015 semester. To read more about the announcement, [click here](#).

## Attend a Free Workshop During Financial Aid Awareness Month

Do you need help applying for financial aid? The 112 California community colleges across the state host numerous free financial aid workshops each year during April's Financial Aid Awareness Month (FAAM).

To find an upcoming workshop near you, visit [icanaffordcollege.com/events](http://icanaffordcollege.com/events). By simply entering your zip code, you can find local assistance that will provide you with information on the various types of aid available year-round, and one-on-one help completing applications.

Events are posted daily, so be sure to bookmark our site and check back regularly for the latest information. Remember, it's never too late to apply for financial aid at a California community college.

## "I Can Afford College" Campaign is Now on Instagram!

The "I Can Afford College" campaign is excited to announce that we have joined the more than 200 million people capturing and sharing photos on Instagram! You'll be able to keep up-to-date on our events and activities as well as what's happening on our 112 community college campuses across the state.



Follow us at [www.instagram.com/icanaffordcollege](http://www.instagram.com/icanaffordcollege) and join us on this new visual journey!

## College *Can* Be Affordable

*By Assemblymember Jose Medina, Chair, Assembly Committee on Higher Education*

I've always been a strong supporter of – and an advocate for – California community colleges. I know first-hand how they have helped millions of Californians reach their higher education goals and I've supported additional funding for this critical system. But affordability is still one of the biggest barriers to those seeking a college education.

Attending a California community college is the most affordable system of higher education in the nation – at \$46 per unit. Unfortunately, for some, that's simply not affordable.

But there is very good news for all those looking to enroll in a community college. Financial help is available, right now, for many students.

Resources like the California Community Colleges' "I *Can* Afford College" website ([icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com)) – available in English and Spanish – provides a one-stop shop for all financial aid needs and can connect students year-round with local professionals to help them get the maximum amount of aid for which they are eligible.

And, there's more good news. Financial aid doesn't just cover enrollment fees. In many instances it can also be used for books, supplies and help with the rent. Everyone who needs help should apply for the wide variety of financial aid opportunities that are available. The application itself is free, so students should apply whether they think they will qualify or not.

The facts speak for themselves. Right now, more than 1.7 million students, at the 112 community college campuses

throughout the state, are getting more than \$2.7 billion annually in financial aid to help cover the costs of their education.

During the past 10 years, the number of community college students receiving some type of financial aid has increased by nearly 70 percent. Not only does that mean there is a great need for financial aid, but it also means that more and more students are learning about the assistance available and completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.



*Assemblymember Jose Medina*

Community colleges not only offer an affordable way to complete an associate degree or career training certificate, but they also provide students with general education courses that allow them to transfer to a four-year university. And, short-term job training

programs are available that give Californians the skills needed for in-demand career paths.

In fact, community colleges train 80 percent of the state's firefighters, law enforcement personnel and emergency medical technicians. They also train 70 percent of the state's nurses – making the California Community Colleges system the nation's largest provider of workforce training.

You *can* afford college.

Visit the "I *Can* Afford College" website today. See if you qualify. Let our public higher-education system prepare you for the jobs of today – and tomorrow – with financial aid to get there. You'll never be sorry you took that first step.

*Assemblymember Jose Medina represents California's 61st Assembly District, which consists of Riverside, Moreno Valley and Perris.*

## Keep on the Fast Track with Step:Forward

There are a variety of resources and tools available to help you get on and stay on the fast track to reaching your educational goals. One of the newest resources is the [Step:Forward website](#). Through a combined effort of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges, Step:Forward was launched to encourage students to adopt successful behaviors to increase the likelihood of achieving their educational and career goals. Specifically, the program aims to help you understand the new requirements around and benefits of priority registration.

Priority registration allows you to register early, so you can get into courses before they fill up. To be eligible, you must complete three easy steps as you start your journey at a California community college:

- 1. Orientation:** Orientation is a great way for you to explore the community college you are interested in attending, and a great way to set you up for success. Orientation sessions are offered online or in-person. You should check with your prospective school regarding the types of orientations available and when and how to sign up.
- 2. Assessment:** College assessment tests measure your academic knowledge and skills and take the guesswork out of choosing courses at the right level. You should consult with your counselor or advisor about upcoming dates and times to take the college assessment test.

# Step:

Achieve your priority.

- 3. Education Planning:** An education plan, created with the help of a counselor or advisor, is a step-by-step guide based on requirements for meeting your goals and how soon you would like to complete them. Consider it a road map to reaching your goals.

These steps will help you clearly define goals, stay on track, and take the most direct route from start to finish. The Step:Forward website provides more in-depth information on all three steps and how to prepare for them.

The Step:Forward website is also integrated with [CCCApply.org](#), a California community college registration website that allows you to enroll online, and provides college-specific resources such as campus maps and contacts for counselors and advisors.

To learn more about Step:Forward, visit [www.stepforward.cccco.edu](http://www.stepforward.cccco.edu).

## California Community Colleges Lead the Way for Affordable, Quality Education

Following the recent unveiling of President Obama's proposal to make two years of community college free, California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris and the "I **Can** Afford College" campaign are reminding current and prospective students about the various financial aid opportunities currently available at the 112 California community colleges.

"Improving opportunities for all California residents to attend community college is critical to the well-being of our state and is an intense focus of ours," said California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris. "In fact, fees are waived for 45 percent of our students through the Board of Governors Fee Waiver. I urge anyone

interested in attending community college to explore their options by visiting [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com)."

The California Community Colleges system has a long history of free higher education, and state residents did not pay any fees at California community colleges until 1984. While California community colleges continue to be an affordable option for those seeking a higher education, there are a variety of financial aid opportunities to help those that need financial assistance.

Financial aid at the California Community Colleges comes in a few basic types. In addition to the Board of Governors (BOG) Fee Waiver, there are grants and scholarships which don't have to be

paid back, work study programs which require work in exchange for money, and loans which students have to repay when they complete their educational goals. Financial aid can pay for college fees, books, supplies and sometimes even help with rent.

To explore the variety of financial aid opportunities today, visit [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com). The site is available in both English and Spanish and features easy-to-understand financial aid information, direct links to applications, and a zip code locator where students can get connected with their local college financial aid office for more information and assistance completing the forms.

## Student Success Story

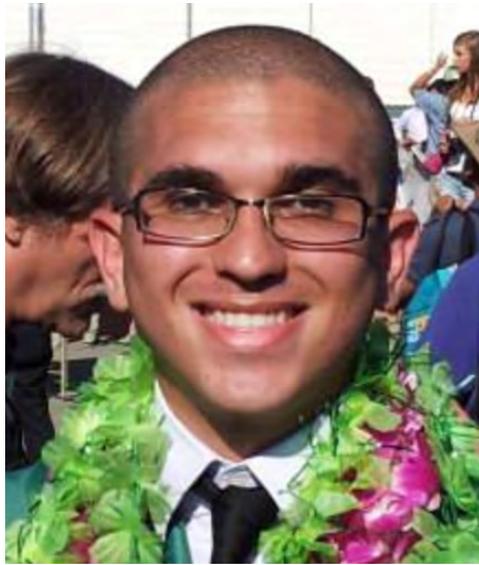
By Kareem Moussa  
De Anza College

Growing up, I always imagined that I would attend a four-year university. When it came time to begin more carefully considering my original plan, however, I began to reassess my higher education path.

Did I know exactly what I wanted to major in? Did I know how I was going to pay for a four-year university?

When I realized I didn't have the answers to those two critical questions, it dawned on me that maybe attending a four-year university right away wasn't the best plan for me. That week, I enrolled in De Anza College with the intent to transfer after two years, and I also filled out my Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Enrolling in college and applying for financial aid went hand in hand. While the community college fees were more



Kareem Moussa

affordable than other colleges, I knew I would still need financial help making it by. I was surprised when I learned of my eligibility for both Cal Grant A and B and the Pell Grant.

This was my key to affording college. It covered my fees. It covered my books. It helped pay for rent. And without it,

I wouldn't have had the peace of mind to dive deep into my studies and discover my passion for – and skill in – computer science: my new major.

Now, I'm a tutor on campus in physics and math – two prerequisite subjects for computer science in which I excelled. Had I not enrolled in community college – and had I not received financial aid – I would have never taken these subjects and known I could help others succeed as well.

As a tutor, I have the opportunity to help change the lives of others – and yet, tutoring has helped improve my life, too. Tutoring has given me a lifetime of confidence. And financial aid helped me achieve that.

Financial aid is available to help students achieve their higher education goals. To learn more about the types of aid you could be eligible for – and how to apply – visit [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com) today.

### Did You Know?

## Ten Fun Facts about the California Community Colleges

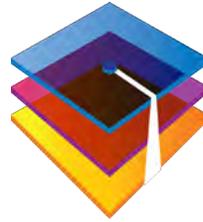
1. Twenty-nine percent of University of California and 51 percent of California State University graduates started at a California community college.
2. Academy award-winning actor Tom Hanks attended a California community college (Chabot College).
3. The College of the Canyons campus has played host to the filming of television shows such as "The Amazing Race," "Disney Channel Games," "Weeds," and "NCIS."
4. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office has both [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts – so be sure to follow us! Check out [@icanafrcollege](#) and [@CalCommColleges](#) on Twitter, and [@icanaffordcollege](#) and [@CaliforniaCommunityColleges](#) on Instagram.
5. Santa Monica College sent 783 students to UC campuses in 2012-2013, more than any of the 112 community colleges in the state.
6. The California community colleges awarded 190,314 certificates and degrees during the 2013-2014 academic year—a 40 percent increase from 2009-2010 and an all-time high for the system.
7. According to [Community College Week](#), all top five fastest growing student populations at community colleges in the nation were from California (Fullerton College, College of the Canyons, Coastline Community College, Pasadena City College, and Citrus College).
8. NASA recently funded the [California Space Grant Consortium](#) to work with 12 California community colleges to enhance Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) preparation for its students.
9. Fullerton College's women's water polo team achieved perfection in 2014, going 35-0 and winning the state championship.
10. In November 2014, the San Diego Community College District announced the successful launch of virtual parking permits with the app [MobileNOW!](#)

## More than 1,600 Degrees Available Through the Associate Degree for Transfer Program

The Associate Degree for Transfer program continues to make it easier for students to transfer from a California community college to a California State University (CSU). Students at California community colleges that complete an AA-T (Associate in Arts for Transfer) or an AS-T (Associate in Science for Transfer) are guaranteed admission to a CSU.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the many benefits of this unprecedented program, including receiving a special GPA advantage when applying to CSUs, and entering the CSU system with junior standing. Once the application is processed and students are admitted, they have the opportunity to complete two degrees with only 120 units.

There are now more than 1,600 AA-T and AS-T degrees offered in a wide variety of subject areas. Check out



## Associate Degree for Transfer

*A Degree with a Guarantee.™*

the new search tool on the program website – [www.adegreewithaguarantee.com](http://www.adegreewithaguarantee.com) – to explore all of the available majors and find out which majors are offered at the California community college or California State University campus in your area.

For more information on the Associate Degree for Transfer program, visit [www.adegreewithaguarantee.com](http://www.adegreewithaguarantee.com)

## CashCourse: A Real-Life Guide to Taking Charge of Your Money

Financial skills are vital to your success as you prepare for your future, which is exactly why the California Community Colleges system is partnering with the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) to make its financial education program, called “CashCourse,” available at no cost to our more than 2.1 million community college students.

CashCourse is designed to build money management skills through articles, videos, a financial dictionary and software to help you understand and build budgets. The online personal finance tools can help develop real-life financial skills. Students at more than 800 schools across the country use CashCourse, and here’s why:

- 1. It’s easy to use.** CashCourse offers a customizable set of tools so you can make decisions that fit your life.
- 2. It’s free from commercial ties.** You can trust that the information on CashCourse is independent and noncommercial. They will never try

### CashCourse

Your Real-Life Money Guide.

to advertise any products or services to you.

- 3. It’s 100% FREE.** They are independently funded by the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE), so CashCourse won’t cost you a penny—ever.

Getting started is easy. Simply go to [icanaffordcollege.com/en-us/financialaidinfo/financialliteracy](http://icanaffordcollege.com/en-us/financialaidinfo/financialliteracy) to register. Once registration is complete, you can browse through topics such as “Money 101,” “Paying for Education,” “Working and Earning” and “Financial Tools.”

So get on the right path to a great financial future, while making your money go further. Visit [icanaffordcollege.com/en-us/financialaidinfo/financialliteracy](http://icanaffordcollege.com/en-us/financialaidinfo/financialliteracy) to get started.



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#### About the California Community Colleges

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 colleges and universities. 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 California Community Colleges system, please visit: [californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu).



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