

Key Facts & Information

Campaign Overview

The “I **Can** Afford College” campaign is a statewide, financial aid awareness initiative sponsored by the California Community Colleges and the state of California. The campaign educates current and prospective students about the year-round availability of financial aid at California’s community colleges to pay for fees, books, supplies and sometimes even help with the rent.

The heart of the campaign is our multilingual, English, Spanish and Chinese website, **icanaffordcollege.com**, which has garnered more than 5 million unique visitors since the campaign’s inception in the 2003-2004 academic year. The website provides current and prospective students with detailed financial aid information and connects them with professionals at their local college to receive free one-on-one assistance with the application process. Detailed information and applications on the website enable students to apply online for federal, state and community college specific financial aid. Students can also search **icanaffordcollege.com** for financial aid events in their area where they can receive one-on-one help completing the applications. Those who do not have Internet access can call **1-800-987-ICAN (4226)** to get connected with a community college financial aid office in their area.

California Community Colleges

California community colleges provide basic skills education, career training through certificate courses and two-year degrees, skill building courses and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities.

- ❖ The number of students receiving some type of financial aid since the inception of the “I **Can** Afford College” campaign in 2003-04 has increased by nearly 75 percent.¹
- ❖ More than 2.4 million students are served each year at 115 community colleges statewide, representing the largest system of higher education in the world.
- ❖ As the state’s largest provider of career training, community colleges play an integral role in California’s economic recovery by re-training the unemployed to work in growing industries, such as health care, information technology, renewable energy and police and fire science.
- ❖ Nationwide, 20 percent of all community college students are enrolled in a California community college.
- ❖ Fifty-one percent of California State University (CSU) baccalaureates awarded and 29 percent of University of California (UC) baccalaureates awarded started as community college students.
- ❖ Students who earn a degree or certificate from a California community college nearly double their earnings within three years.

¹ Source:

DataMart (datamart.cccco.edu)

Financial Aid

California community colleges provide students with financial aid each year totaling nearly \$2.8 billion (2016-2017 academic year).

- ❖ Research shows many students don't believe they qualify for financial aid and therefore do not apply. All students who need financial assistance for college are encouraged through the "**I Can Afford College**" campaign to apply for federal, state and local aid.
- ❖ Students who enroll in college full-time may receive more financial aid and are more likely to complete their education.
- ❖ Financial aid experts are located on all 115 California community college campuses, and are available to provide free one-on-one assistance filling out the applications.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, composed of 72 districts and 115 colleges serving 2.4 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.