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Students and Leaders Representing Over 80 Independent California Colleges and Universities Gathered in Sacramento to Advocate for Affordable Education and the Cal Grant Program

AICCU's annual Day in the Capitol focused on the importance of Cal Grants awards, AICCU's new Cal Grant Formula Bill – AB 1307

March 5, 2019 (SACRAMENTO) – More than 100 undergraduate students and administrators from the Independent California College and University sector gathered at the Capitol to share why the Cal Grant award is integral to their higher education aspirations. Students also rallied in support of AICCU's sponsored Cal Grant formula bill, AB 1307, to ensure equity and access in Cal Grant reform discussion. These students, administrators, and AICCU officials representing over 359,000 students who attend independent, nonprofit colleges and universities in California joined state lawmakers to review and discuss pressing policy issues affecting the future of higher education in California, including the importance of the Cal Grant financial aid program.

AICCU representatives were on hand to speak with legislators as part of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities' (AICCU) annual Day in the Capitol, which focuses on protecting educational opportunities for students and preserving funding for Cal Grant awards, which provide grant dollars to more than 27,000 low-income students in California.

Among the speakers at the event was Assembly Member Blanca Rubio (D-48), who has authored AICCU's sponsored bill (AB 1307) to reinstate the Cal Grant funding formula for students that will attend independent colleges and universities. The formula will bring stability to the award, which has been subjected to cuts and disinvestments since 2000, and will see increases over time.

"Student recipients of the Cal Grant award often must overcome significant odds to apply, qualify, and attend the college or university that best suits their needs," said AICCU President Kristen Soares. "This award can be the difference between whether or not a student is able to attend the institution that best fits their personal and academic needs."

AICCU, which represents 83 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities throughout California, continues to advocate for the necessity of the Cal Grant program supporting the state's neediest students, ensuring access and equity in higher education for these students, and educating policy makers about the important role of nonprofit colleges and universities in California's communities.

AICCU institutions include comprehensive research institutions, specialized professional schools, liberal arts institutions, faith-based schools, as well as campuses that focus on the arts and those that offer non-traditional study programs. They are at the forefront of new and expanding initiatives, including online courses, hybrid programs, and expedited degree programs for adult learners.

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About AICCU

The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of 83 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, which make up the Independent California Colleges and Universities (ICCU) sector. The ICCU sector plays a pivotal role in the development of the state's model higher education offerings and in making California a symbol of innovation across the globe. Within California, ICCU institutions award over 20 percent of all undergraduate degrees and over 50 percent of graduate degrees, providing significant contributions to California's advanced workforce.