



Statement Regarding Governor Newsom's 2020-21 Signed State Budget

Kristen Soares, President, Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities

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On behalf of the nearly 380,000 students attending California's independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) commends Governor Gavin Newsom and the Legislature for keeping the state's commitment to low-income students by maintaining their Cal Grant award amount. The Cal Grant is critically important during these economically difficult times, when many students and their families are experiencing greater financial instability due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability that those without a college degree face during an economic downturn. Those with a high school diploma are twice as likely to be unemployed during the pandemic as those with a bachelor's degree. For the more than 28,000 Cal Grant students attending independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, access to affordable, regional options for higher education is needed more than ever. By protecting the Cal Grant award, the state's budget ensures that low-income California students at independent institutions are supported on the path toward their career ambitions. These students are our future leaders and a critical part of the workforce that will help us recover from this crisis.

AICCU thanks Governor Newsom and the Legislature for their commitment to these students and for ensuring continued access to affordable higher education at a nonprofit college or university.

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About AICCU

The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of 85 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 of 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, making them the largest preparers of California's advanced workforce.