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Los Angeles Community College District Welcomes \$5 Million in New Funding to Support Umoja Programs and Black Student Success

Umoja provides services specially designed for the success of African-American students

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) welcomes the State Legislature’s approval of \$5 million in additional ongoing funding for Umoja programs at California’s community colleges.

Umoja (a Kiswahili word meaning unity) Programs provide community and critical resources to state community colleges dedicated to enhancing the cultural and educational experiences of students, particularly those from African-American backgrounds. These Umoja programs actively serve and promote academic success for underserved students through a curriculum and pedagogy responsive to the legacy of the African and African American diasporas. Umoja seeks to educate the whole student—body, mind and spirit and provides robust wrap-around student services.

“Equity is at the heart of everything we do at LACCD, and there is no better way to ensure that than by making sure valuable programs like Umoja are adequately funded,” said LACCD Board President Steve Veres. “This additional funding from the legislature allows us to invest in long-term planning that will make sure Umoja programs are here as a student resource for many years to come.”

“LACCD serves an extremely diverse student body, which makes it important to ensure every student is heard and represented,” said LACCD Board Trustee Nichelle Henderson. “Securing this additional funding provides stability for valuable Umoja programs that exemplifies the holistic approach we take to each student’s education.”

The LACCD colleges with excellent Umoja programs include:

- [Los Angeles City College](#)
- [Los Angeles Harbor College](#)
- [Los Angeles Pierce College](#)
- [Los Angeles Southwest College](#)
- [Los Angeles Trade Tech](#)

“One of the Board of Trustees major legislative priorities was increased ongoing support for targeted student support services,” said LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D. “Increased funding for Umoja Programs along with other excellent programs such as Puente, and MESA were at the top of our advocacy agenda this year. We are pleased that the Legislature agreed and funded these and other exceptional programs.”

This additional \$5 million in state funding will help shore up resources and ensure the Umoja programs are sustainable at each of these colleges, providing students with an onramp of support services as they navigate the community college system. Many of these students are first in their families to attend college and programs like Umoja help them to navigate a system that can be unfamiliar.

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“The Umoja community is not only a great resource that helps students thrive academically but also gives students the opportunity to connect with one another,” said Los Angeles Pierce College Umoja student, Sierra Bledsoe. “Through Umoja I have had the chance to meet amazing professors, counselors, and life-long friends. Umoja has opened the door to new experiences like webinars, porch talks, and other events that have helped aid my occupational goals. Increased funding from the legislature for Umoja programs, LGBTQ+ centers and other important student support systems is vital to establishing them as a core part of every LACCD campus.”

LACCD provides equity-minded, culturally competent resources to all members of its diverse student body, helping students succeed both in their academics and career development. Increased funding from the legislature for Umoja programs, LGBTQ+ centers and other important student support systems is instrumental to establishing them as a core part of each LACCD campus.

The LACCD “[Colleges of Los Angeles](#)” include: [Los Angeles City College](#); [East Los Angeles College](#); [Los Angeles Harbor College](#); [Los Angeles Mission College](#); [Los Angeles Pierce College](#); [Los Angeles Southwest College](#); [Los Angeles Trade-Technical College](#); [Los Angeles Valley College](#) and [West Los Angeles College](#).

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About the Los Angeles Community College District

We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD (www.laccd.edu) is the nation's largest community college district, educating about 250,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California's diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions. Follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/LACCD>, @LACCD, and on Twitter, <https://twitter.com/laccd> @laccd and Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/ @laccd_edu.

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