



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Small Business Majority, California Hispanic and Black Chambers Announce Partnership with California Community Colleges for Small Business Month

Establishing a strong pipeline between the business community and 114 community colleges will strengthen California's economy

SACRAMENTO, Calif. –Small Business Majority, California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce (CHCC) and the Black Business Association (BBA) announced their partnership today with the California Community Colleges to kick off May as Small Business Month.

The three organizations are working with the California Community Colleges to create a pipeline between employers and students to help close a growing gap in the state's skilled workforce. Small Business Majority and CHCC have officially signed on to the Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy and its Strong Workforce Program and the Black Business Association is working closely with the California Community Colleges to collect feedback on improving education within the black community. All three business advocates will be working closely with the California Community Colleges to find solutions to increase enrollment of blacks in career education programs. Additionally, they will work collaboratively to help shape and develop curriculum and programs important to specific industries, provide work-based learning experiences to give prospective and current students exposure to the business community and professional careers, identifying co-investment opportunities and creating internship programs, among other workforce investment needs.

"We're pleased to partner with the California Community Colleges to bolster our small business workforce through industry-specific education, training and services that will in turn help promote economic growth," said Mark Hebert, Small Business Majority's California Director. "As a leading voice of small business owners throughout California, we know firsthand how critical it is to recruit, train and re-train talent to keep our business communities thriving. What's more, this partnership aligns with our [ongoing work](#) with Jobs for the Future to prepare our workforce by connecting small businesses with young Californians who are eager to learn."

Small Business Majority is a national small business advocacy organization, founded and run by small business owners to ensure America's entrepreneurs are a key part of an inclusive, equitable and diverse economy.

"We are committed to working with education leaders to create and maintain a strong connection between colleges and employers," said Julian Canete, President and CEO of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. "The Hispanic business community is growing at rapid speeds and is in need of a skilled workforce that can adapt to the even quicker evolutions of the economy. Businesses partnering with public educational institutions is a must for our state to thrive."

“The Black Business Association is pleased to see so much work being done between the California Community Colleges and leaders in the black community to improve access and affordability for education,” said Earl “Skip” Cooper II, President & CEO of the Black Business Association, the oldest active ethnic business association in the state of California. “We look forward to collaborating with the nation’s largest higher education system to create more opportunities for all.”

The Black Business Association advocates for the development and growth of African-American owned businesses with the goal of creating a firm economic base that supports the self-determination and survival of the African-American and urban community.

The California Community Colleges system seeks to fuel the state’s economy by building a strong workforce talent pool. California took a bold step in 2016 by creating one million more middle-skill workers that can help businesses expand and grow. At the recommendation of the California Community College Board of Governors, the Governor and Legislature approved the Strong Workforce Program, adding a new annual recurring investment of \$200 million to spur career education in the nation’s largest workforce development system of 114 community colleges. This is a signature initiative of the system’s Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy framework.

The California Community Colleges are a sponsor for Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti’s Small Business Summit scheduled for May 2 at the Los Angeles Trade Technical College in Los Angeles.

For more information on the Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy and Strong Workforce Program, visit doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu. To learn more about the California Community Colleges Career Education campaign and employer outreach efforts, visit CaliforniaCareerEducation.com.

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The California Community Colleges, the largest provider of workforce training in the nation, offers career education programs at 114 community colleges across the state. With more than 200 programs taught by instructors and professionals in their field of study, career education programs allow students to learn by exploring, collaborating and doing with hands-on training and skills for the jobs of today and the future. To learn more, please visit CaliforniaCareerEducation.com. Visit doingwhamatters.cccco.edu for information on the system’s Doing What MATTER for Jobs and Economy focus.