



# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

## CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

### PRESS RELEASE

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### **California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris Honors Pasadena City and Santa Barbara City Colleges for Efforts to Improve Student Success**

*Annual award spotlights significant progress made in improving student equity and academic achievement*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris Friday announced that Pasadena City College's First Year Pathways and Santa Barbara City College's Express to Success programs were given the 2012 Chancellor's Student Success Award. The awards, sponsored by the Foundation for California Community Colleges, were presented during a lunchtime reception at the Community College League of California Annual Convention and Partner Conferences at the Los Angeles Millennium Biltmore Hotel.

"Despite the serious fiscal crisis and challenges facing our colleges, Pasadena and Santa Barbara found a way to make these two outstanding programs work," said Chancellor Harris. "These are the types of initiatives our Student Success Task Force determined were extremely important in achieving equity and helping a greater number of students reach their educational goals. Both colleges are to be commended for their efforts."

The Pasadena City College First Year Pathways program helps new students identify and complete their academic goals in a timely manner by guaranteeing schedules - including the difficult-to-get English and math courses - in the fall and spring semesters of their first year. The program also provides students with critical support services outside of the classroom. In 2012, more than 800 students enrolled in First Year Pathways.

The First Year Pathways program has counselors trained to handle the special needs of first-year students. The counselors closely monitor students' academic progress and communicate with them face-to-face, by phone, email, texting and Internet as necessary. Data shows that First Year Pathways students are progressing through the math sequence at a faster rate than the comparison group during their first year. Also, a greater number of students in the program attempted English 1A (freshman composition) and beginning and intermediate algebra, during their first year relative to the comparison group. The program has proven to be so successful that Pasadena City College is expanding it to accommodate more students.

The Express to Success program at Santa Barbara City College offers learning communities in developmental math and English for underprepared students who test up to two levels below college-level work. The goal of

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the program is to get students through their developmental classes faster and better prepared so that they can begin taking the courses required to earn a degree, certificate or to transfer. The program differs from the standard learning community model where various teachers instruct the same cohort of students. Instead, students have the same teacher for their classes in math and English.

Express to Success students take two or more classes together, working collaboratively both inside and outside of the classroom. Students sign an agreement that specifies the commitment necessary to succeed in the program and then they hold each other accountable. One requirement of the agreement is that students take at least 12 units each semester. Express to Success students completed two levels of accelerated math or English at a 30 to 40 percent higher rate than students taking traditional courses over a two-semester period. In fall 2011, 95 percent of all students in the program stayed until the end of the semester, and 90 percent of all students in the program continued their studies in the spring 2012 semester.

“It is wonderful to see these innovative student success approaches work,” Chancellor Harris said. “The students have clear educational goals and pathways to reach them, and the data shows they are succeeding. I applaud these colleges for the work they have done setting up the programs and for blazing the trail with models that can be used by the entire community college system.”

*The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.4 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor’s Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.*

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