



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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El Camino College to Receive Nearly \$500,000 in Unprecedented Private Statewide Gift

El Camino College will receive nearly \$500,000 from a private gift dedicated to help California community college students reach their goals. The half-million dollar figure is among the highest awarded among the state's 109 community colleges, and is part of a \$70 million private gift from the Bernard Osher Foundation to support student scholarships.

The commitment is made as part of the Osher Initiative for California Community Colleges (CCC) students and represents the single largest gift to a community college system in the nation and one of the largest gifts ever made to higher education.

"As a graduate of El Camino College, I know firsthand the value of a community college education," said Thomas M. Fallo, president of El Camino College. "The community college system is an incredible resource that helps thousands of students succeed each year. We are ready to do our part to participate in this groundbreaking program."

The Osher Initiative includes \$25 million to be used to fund scholarships statewide beginning in 2009 – these will be equally divided between all California Community Colleges. Another \$20 million is to be used for community college students transferring to the University of California or California State University systems.

The remaining \$25 million will be contributed to the endowment on a two-to-one match. The FCCC will lead a joint effort with the CCC System Office and state's community colleges to raise a matching \$50 million over a three-year period. El Camino College is committed to raising \$973,717 in matching funds.

This gift is significant not only because it provides scholarships for El Camino College students, but it also raises public awareness about the need and ability to support community colleges.

El Camino College is among the most affordable higher education institutions in the state. At \$20 per unit, student fees are the lowest in the nation—just 24 percent of the national average. And with recent tuition increases at the UC and CSU level, El Camino College is a better value than ever.

Community colleges are a gateway to California's four-year universities. Sixty percent of CSU and 30 percent of UC graduates are community college transfers. They are also a leading provider of job training and career tech education. Eighty percent of firefighters, law enforcement officers and emergency medical technicians are credentialed at community colleges, and seventy percent of the nurses in California received their education from community colleges.