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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Education Award Won by Success Network and California Acceleration Project

The Association of California Community College Administrators has awarded the 2015 Mertes Award for Excellence in College Research to the California Community Colleges' Success Network (3CSN) and the California Acceleration Project in recognition of their work in support of colleges that offer redesigned, accelerated curricula for under-prepared students.

Receiving the award was Deborah Harrington, Executive Director and Project Administrator for 3CSN, and Dean of Student Success for the Los Angeles Community College District.

"With this award," said Harrington, "ACCCA recognizes the colleges in our CAP network who, by substantially redesigning their developmental education pathways, are closing persistent student achievement gaps and significantly increasing student equity and completion. We proudly receive this honor on their behalf."

"This wonderful recognition is testament to our district's leadership and unabashed commitment to student success and to bridging the student equity and performance gaps that currently exist," said Dr. Francisco Rodriguez, LACCD's chancellor. "Simply put, the more we know, the more we can do to eradicate disparate student outcomes."

In announcing the award, ACCCA Executive Director Susan Bray wrote, "The Board based its decision on the recent multi-college evaluation done by Craig Hayward and Terrence Willett of the Research and Planning Group that

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demonstrates the success of the project and the conclusion that this effort has significantly contributed to growing innovation and movement toward addressing the larger challenge of completion.”

The evaluation of 16 CAP colleges used statistical methods to control a wide range of variables that might influence completion (e.g., race, GPA, prior success in discipline), and found that, in effective accelerated English pathways, students’ odds of completing a college-level course were 2.3 times higher than in traditional remediation. In accelerated statistics pathways, their odds of completing a transferable course were 4.5 times higher. The researchers determined that all students benefitted from effective accelerated pathways, including all racial/ethnic groups, all placement levels, low-income students, ESL (English as a Second Language) students, students with disabilities, students with low GPAs, and students who hadn’t graduated from high school.

The ACCCA award honors Dr. David Mertes, a former state chancellor who recently passed away. Bray wrote, “On a personal note, in recognition of the fact that we lost our good friend and colleague, Dr. Mertes, this past year, the 2015 award is all the more significant to us and it ensures that his memory and the work he hoped would continue is, in fact, more vibrant and relevant today than ever before. I believe that 3CSN and the CAP project certainly embody that vision.”

Recipients of this honor also receive a \$500 award from the ACCCA Mertes Award Fund, and will have an abstract of their project or research publicized to ACCCA members around the state.

About the Los Angeles Community College District

The Los Angeles Community College District, the nation's largest community college district, serves one-quarter million students a year in more than 36 cities in Los Angeles County at its nine colleges. The District covers nearly 900 square miles and has educated and trained the region's diverse workforce since 1969.

