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Media Contact:

Jaspreet Johl, Chief of Staff | Jaspreet.Johl@asm.ca.gov | (916) 651-4031

Maria Luisa Veloz, Legislative & Gov't Rel. Officer | VelozML@laccd.edu | (626) 390-8432

“Tuition-Free Bachelor’s Degree” Press Conference Held by Assembly Member Santiago, LACCD, and Community Partners

(Los Angeles, CA) – Earlier today, **Assembly Assistant Majority Leader Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles)** and community partners held a press conference announcing his new legislation – the Tuition-Free Bachelor’s Degree.

Sponsored by the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), [AB 2093](#) will expand the California Promise Program, allowing all low-income students to pursue a bachelor’s degree at any community college free of cost. Additionally, this bill will encourage low-income students to pursue higher education without the fear of significant college debt.



[Press Conference Video Footage Here](#)

"In the world's fourth largest economy, you should be able to get a bachelor's degree that is tuition free," said **Assembly Member Santiago**. "While we invested in financial aid for our community college students, (including the California College Promise Program), the number of bachelor's degree earners fell by 2.4 percent, the first drop we have seen in a decade. We must ensure that all students regardless of income have the ability to receive a bachelor's degree. Additionally, as the former President of the nation's largest community college district and as someone who heavily relied on financial aid for college, it is imperative to ensure more Californians have the opportunity to access a bachelor's degree."

"The student success data are clear. The California Promise Program has been a game-changer in making higher education accessible to every Californian, irrespective of age, income, and zip code, who may not have afforded it otherwise," said **LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.** "Asm. Santiago proposed legislation to expand this program allowing qualifying students to pursue a Bachelor's Degree at any of our state's community college campuses tuition-free is the logical next step. This bill is not only a huge victory for equity for higher education, but it will uplift so many families by opening the doors to high-paying jobs in the future. LACCD is proud to wholeheartedly sponsor it."

"For several years, Assemblymember Miguel Santiago has provided unwavering support for LACCD and community college students statewide, and we are grateful for his continued contributions," said **Nichelle Henderson, President of the LACCD Board of Trustees**. "His advocacy, notably through AB 19, paved the way for significant fee waivers, impacting thousands of students and their families. AB 2093 will further empower our students, enabling quicker degree completion with reduced debt. We commend Assemblymember Santiago for his continuous leadership in transforming lives and communities."

"Assembly Member Miguel Santiago continues to be a champion of low-cost college in the state of California," said **AFT 1521 Faculty Guild President James McKeever**. "AB 2093 is another step in providing education and opportunity to our students without the burden of crushing student debt."

According to a report from the Community College League of California, students continue to cite the total cost of college as the greatest barrier to higher education. Thus, it is imperative that California continues to support students by removing financial barriers. An astonishing 95% of graduates have remained in California after receiving a community college baccalaureate degree. AB 2093 will encourage more students to enroll in higher education and help them graduate with less debt while ensuring California remains competitive in the global market.

In addition to AB 2093, Assembly Member Santiago has led on previous pieces of legislation around free community college. This includes AB 19, a law he authored and passed in 2017 that made community college free in California for the first year. In 2019, he authored and passed legislation, AB 2, which added a second year of free community college. AB 2093 will be referred to the Assembly Higher Education committee and is expected to be heard in March.

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About Assembly Member Miguel Santiago

Assembly Member Miguel Santiago is the Assistant Assembly Majority Leader. He serves on the Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism Committee, the Health Committee, and the Utilities & Energy Committee. He represents the 54th District composed of the cities of Los Angeles, Commerce, Montebello, and Vernon.

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, [@laccd](https://twitter.com/laccd), and Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/ @laccd_edu.

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