



## WHAT LEADERS ARE SAYING ABOUT:

### STATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR BLACK CALIFORNIANS

*FEBRUARY 2019*

#### COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LEADERS

---

"If we truly believe in and celebrate the diversity of our state, then equity has to be at the center of the proposals we make and the outcomes we seek. Until recently, many accepted the notion that incremental changes were the preferred path. The effects of this notion have had a disproportionate impact on the state's Black population. We need to implement strategic reforms that will have the best chance to change the trajectory of Black Californians. I support the findings and the recommendations laid out in this Report. They need to be at the center of the dialogue happening within our State House, Legislature and within the walls of Higher Education."

Pamela Haynes  
Board Member  
Los Rios Community College District

"The best part of my job has been meeting students who made it happen, who reached their goals. Many students come to Compton College underprepared academically and have other obligations with work and family, particularly students of color. Yet they triumph, despite initial doubts that they could afford college or handle the high expectations of college work. Our students' success can be seen in the increasing numbers of students graduating with associate degrees and transferring to four-year universities; it is amazing to hear their stories of victory as they pursue a dream job or an opportunity in their preferred industry, and how they earn living-wages or higher. Reports such as this one provide the data and correlations that help us focus our efforts to close the equity gaps and assist our students from the point of entry to the completion of their academic and career goals."

Dr. Keith Curry, Ed.D  
President & CEO  
Compton College

“While many years have passed since the emancipation proclamation was signed into law, Blacks are still feeling the sting of systematic oppression that has held back so many from achieving their true potential. This report is an opportunity for us to support Black men and women in their educational journey. We need to take a holistic approach by addressing failing schools in low-income communities, provide mentors to help students stay on track to completion, increase opportunities for students to see life outside of their neighborhood, and provide the financial and academic support to keep Black students from dropping out or being discouraged from attending college.”

**Alexander Walker-Griffin**  
**Student Board Member**  
**California Community College Board of Governors**

“Nelson Mandela said "Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world". We all need to be change-agents, so that we can improve our individual lives and the "life" of the community. This report outlines action items that will directly improve the lives of Black/African-American students in California.”

**Valerie Lynn Shaw.**  
**Member, Board of Governors**  
**California Community Colleges**

“This report highlights the continued struggles faced by Black students who are pursuing a higher education in California. I encourage policy makers and higher education administrators to implement these recommendations in order to ensure that we are equitably serving all Californians.”

**Devon Graves**  
**Student Regent**  
**University of California, Board of Regents**

“The *State of Higher Education in California* report provides us with insightful and granular data around Black students and access to higher education. While notable progress has been made, more work is desperately needed to reach and sustain the equitable outcomes that Black students deserve. This report is an important resource on where the problems exists, and how Californians must collectively respond.”

**Dr. Tyrone Howard**  
**Director and Founder, Black Male Institute**  
**Professor of Education, University of California, Los Angeles**

“This report shows us how important community colleges are for African American students in California as a pathway to transfer to four-year universities and sustainable careers. It also provides data on areas where we as stewards of this educational resource can improve to better serve our students. Cultural competency and diversity among the trustees, faculty, staff and administrators who interact with our students remain as key components to student success and these are areas where we must to better in policy and in practice.”

Meredith E. Brown, J.D.  
Peralta Community College District Board Member  
Co-Chair of the African American California Community College Trustees Caucus

Eric Payne  
State Center Community College District Board Member  
Co-Chair of the African American California Community College Trustees Caucus

## CALIFORNIA LEADERS

---

“For the past 50 years, the Greater Sacramento Urban League has been fighting for economic prosperity and economic justice, yet we still see how California’s higher education institutions continue to perpetuate racial inequities. The *State of Higher Education for Black Californians* report highlights that many Black students are enrolling in college in record numbers, but we lose them to bad policies and campus climates that make them feel like they don’t belong. Leaving Black students behind is not acceptable, especially in a state with the most diverse population in the nation. No more excuses. Now is the time to close racial equity gaps in higher education.”

Cassandra Jennings  
President & CEO  
Greater Sacramento Urban League

“College persistence and graduation outcomes of Black students across the country and in California are not a reflection of their potential, talent and abilities. Rather, they result from the systemic inequities this group faces in opportunities, resources and support. The Campaign for College Opportunity’s latest report, the *State of Higher Education for Blacks in California* illuminates these challenges and persistent equity gaps. Whether you are a policymaker, educator, employer or philanthropist, the report’s findings and recommendations are relevant. We all have an enormous opportunity before us to move the needle, so that *all* learners, especially those from underserved communities, succeed in college and life.”

Peter J. Taylor  
President, ECMC Foundation  
Board Trustee, California State University

“We stand with the Campaign for College Opportunity in calling on state leaders to do more to support, rather than squander, Black students’ talents, and to work to address the alarming failures of higher education systems and segments in California. Now is the time to seize the opportunity inherent in a new set of state leaders, and we urge them to set and meet goals to better serve Black students. This should be done by leveraging the equity-focused components of recent initiatives on California college campuses to develop targeted supports for Black student success.”

**Dr. Elisha Smith Arrillaga**  
**Interim Co-Executive Director**  
**Ed Trust-West**

“We have both a moral and economic imperative to increase the college access and success rates for California’s Black students. The data in this critical report while sobering serve as a reminder that it is our system and not our students that need reforming. Now is the time to move from talking to action to improve outcomes for our state’s Black students.”

**Ryan Smith**  
**Chief External Officer**  
**Partnership for Los Angeles Schools**

"More can be done to make college accessible and attainable for Black students. This report is a road map for equity and shows what can be done within California's institutions of higher education to make success possible for Black students."

**Rev. Samuel Casey**  
**Executive Director**  
**Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (COPE)**

“I am encouraged by the deliberate efforts to look at dis-aggregated data to inform policy and practice in higher education. However, it is evident that we have a way to go in the K-12 system to ensure Black students are completing the A-G course sequence. This is an issue of equity that needs visionary state and local leadership, resources, and innovative partnerships to ensure Black students have the opportunity to access an “affordable” college education in California. An increase in high school graduation is still, just not enough!”

**Dina Walker**  
**President/CEO**  
**BLU Educational Foundation**

“This report should serve as a wake-up for our state leaders that our promise of college opportunity for all students is falling short. We cannot go business as usual. College completion rates for Black students are low and equity gaps are growing. We understand the implications for losing so many brilliant, talented

Black students to broken promises. Umoja stands ready to provide those students with the support and mentorship they need to reach their educational goals. We invite every college leader to do the same.”

**Dr. Teresa Aldredge**  
**President, Board of Directors**  
**Umoja Community Education Foundation**

“It is evident from the State of Higher Education for Black Californians report that while some progress has been made in the educational outcomes of African American students it is more apparent than ever that structural barriers continue to persist. Toward this end, A<sup>2</sup>MEND is heartened that this report seeks to provide a solution based systemic approach to address pervasive and persistent educational inequities.”

**Edward C. Bush**  
**Co-Founder and Board member**  
**A2MEND**

“Wealth, education, and opportunity disparities are on full display for African Americans in Silicon Valley. With growing global competition for jobs in the new economy, there has never been a more important time to address the systemic barriers to African American student success at all levels of education. As California continues to engage in sweeping educational reform efforts such as Guided Pathways, AB 705, the California Promise, and the Vision for Success, this is the ideal moment to reexamine what it really takes to close racial equity gaps. I, along with San Jose – Evergreen Community College District, stand in support of the Campaign for College Opportunity and their efforts to put forth and implement the recommendations outlined in this well-articulated and thorough report.”

**Dr. Byron D. Clift Breland**  
**Chancellor**  
**San José Evergreen Community College District**