Statement on the selection of Michael V. Drake
as the 21st president of the University of California

Today, the University of California (UC) Board of Regents selected Michael V. Drake as the 21st president of the UC system. President-elect Drake follows outgoing President Janet Napolitano, who has served since 2013.

“The Board of Regents embarked upon a presidential search to find the most qualified leader for the UC and California in 2020 and that leader is Michael V. Drake. Drake is the first Black president of the UC system in its 152-year history and comes with a remarkable record of being unabashed in supporting access, completion, and racial equity,” stated Michele Siqueiros, president of the Campaign for College Opportunity.

Michael V. Drake is a seasoned higher education administrator and has served as a former president of The Ohio State University (OSU) and a former chancellor of UC Irvine. “We applaud the UC Regents for their diligent work to identify and select a president who understands the urgency to improve access, transfer, and graduation rates at UC and who we expect will close persistent racial and ethnic gaps in student outcomes,” added Siqueiros.

President-elect Drake will lead the 10-campus UC system that forms the backbone of California’s workforce and economy, is a worldwide driver of research and innovation, but is also facing some significant challenges. Black and Latinx students continue to be underrepresented at UC despite the system being more racially and ethnically diverse than ever before. He also joins the UC as higher education institutions across the world are navigating the delivery of education during an unprecedented pandemic and making difficult budget decisions during this devastating economic recession.

Drake also takes the helm of the UC during a time of tremendous opportunity. In the last few months, the UC Board of Regents voted to phase out the use of the SAT/ACT in admissions to promote a more equitable admissions process. The Regents have also stated their unequivocal public support for the reinstatement of affirmative action so that race can be one of many factors considered in admissions, faculty hiring and contracting.

“We also express our deep gratitude and admiration for President Janet Napolitano. She leaves behind a strong legacy of defending the rights of undocumented students to access higher
education, a commitment to racial/ethnic and gender diversity, and improving the transfer pathway between community colleges and the UC,” added Siqueiros.

“We welcome President-elect Michael V. Drake back to California and back to the UC. We have a long way to go in California to ensure that college opportunity is realized for all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, income or zip code. We stand ready to work with President-elect Drake and his team to ensure the UC system is an equitable engine of opportunity and prosperity for all Californians,” concluded Siqueiros.

To read the official UC statement, click here.

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**About Campaign for College Opportunity:**

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit bipartisan policy and research organization focused on a single mission: to ensure all Californians have an equal opportunity to attend and succeed in college in order to build a vibrant workforce, economy and democracy. For more information, visit [www.CollegeCampaign.org](http://www.CollegeCampaign.org) / Facebook.com/CollegeCampaign or follow [@CollegeOpp](https://twitter.com/CollegeOpp)