



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

January 20, 2021

Dear LACCD Colleagues:

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones safe, happy and in good health.

Today, we witnessed the historic inauguration of President Joseph Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris. While the country faces unprecedented challenges, I have the utmost confidence that President Biden and Vice-President Harris have the vision, leadership and character to bring our nation together.

National Poet Laureate Amanda Gordon's Inauguration Poem, "The Hill We Climb," is worth remembering today:

"We will rebuild, reconcile and recover in every known nook of our nation, in every corner called our country our people diverse and beautiful will emerge battered and beautiful. When day comes, we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid. The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light. If only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it."

As indicated in the excerpt of this powerful poem, the coming weeks will bring much anticipated promise, hope and opportunity to our country.

I am writing to highlight some of the actions and legislation in Washington D.C. that gives us optimism for a new day in Los Angeles County and at our Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD).

Coronavirus Relief

In December, Congress passed the \$900 billion Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021, which provides \$20.4 billion to public and private non-profit higher education institutions—\$1.7 billion will go to HBCUs and Minority Serving Institutions. The Department of Education has announced the LACCD's colleges will receive approximately \$113.2 million in one-time funding, which will provide critical financial assistance to our students and continue to help our organization maintain high quality and consistent educational services as the pandemic continues.

President Biden has stated that the December package was a "down payment" and that additional funding would be needed to help our community recover from the economic carnage

wrought by the pandemic. Last week, he released his \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan (ARP), which would provide an additional \$35 billion for higher education institutions. In addition, his plan would provide additional nutrition and emergency rental assistance. Today, the President issued executive orders to continue the moratorium on student loan payments and extend the eviction moratorium until September 2021.

President Biden's plan also calls for investment in a public health jobs program to hire individuals to perform vital tasks like vaccine outreach and contact tracing in the near term, and to transition into community health roles to build our long-term public health capacity that will help improve quality of care and reduce hospitalization for low-income and underserved communities. Given our reach and capacity in health care related fields, LACCD is well-positioned to help launch this important initiative. In the coming weeks, we will work closely with our California congressional delegation to ensure that this legislation is enacted into law.

Immigration

As part of his first actions in office, President Biden has restored the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and presented legislation to Congress that would create a roadmap to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in our country. Under the President's bill, people living in the U.S. without documentation as of January 1, 2021, would have a five-year path to permanent legal status (green card) if they pass background checks, pay taxes and meet other conditions. They could then apply for citizenship after another three years. President Biden also issued an executive order instituting an extension of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that brings much awaited relief and promise for our hundreds of thousands of DACA students in this country and for our LACCD students.

President Biden also issued an executive order reversing the previous Administration's plan to exclude undocumented immigrants from the census count and to ensure the Census Bureau has time to complete an accurate count. As this pandemic has demonstrated, once again, immigrants are the backbone of our community and have been at the frontlines of this pandemic. President Biden's transformative steps to undo the previous Administration's cruel and divisive immigration policies lay the groundwork to restoring humanity, civility and compassion in our country. We will advocate tirelessly to ensure that Congress passes a comprehensive immigration reform package.

Equity and Workforce Investment

While the nation's economic recovery is much better than the early projections, it has been uneven and lopsided, favoring the wealthy, educated and insured, and worsening the environment for those least capable of navigating it. California's Community Colleges are uniquely positioned to assist the nation and our State in transitioning towards an equitable

economic recovery model where greater equity is achieved through access, educational opportunity and workforce development.

President Biden and Vice-President Harris have committed to creating a stronger, resilient and inclusive economy. The proposed investments for education and workforce make a firm and responsible attempt to address the gross inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic by identifying specific resources to aid the most vulnerable student populations, who make up the lion share community college enrollments, through direct aid for emergency aid, food and housing insecurity, and technology access.

President Biden will order a whole-of-government “racial equity” review led by his Domestic Policy Council that will require each department and agency to conduct a “baseline review” of whether its policies disadvantage any demographic group. We will closely monitor the Biden workplan and process that may impart some lessons and action steps to inform the work of LACCD’s Framework for Racial Equity and Social Justice.

In the coming weeks, we anticipate that the new Administration will lay out their infrastructure investment plan, which calls for significant workforce investment to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to contribute to our nation’s economy. Whether its training our next generation of entrepreneurs, helping to advance green tech, or rebuilding our nation’s crumbling infrastructure, LACCD will be ready to partner with the federal government. President Biden and Vice-President have also said that they will work to ensure infrastructure investment benefits our most underserved communities, working to right the harms and inequities that have been perpetrated for generations and exacerbated during this pandemic.

Thank you for your tensile strength and amazing resolve this past year. Brighter days are ahead.

With respect and admiration,



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Los Angeles Community College District