



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) and its colleges take great pride in offering Umoja programs, student outreach, events and other programs for the success of its Black and African American students, who are valued members of the LACCD student community—past, present and future. The cultural diversity and institutional fabric of LACCD would not be complete without their successful enrollment, participation and graduation—as is evident by the elevated importance of their shared experiences and voices through the Chancellor's Advisory Committee for Black/African American Student Affairs. Seven of the nine LACCD "Colleges of Los Angeles" currently provide Umoja programs. The original news release issued on October 26 omitted Umoja programs at East Los Angeles College and Los Angeles Valley College.

Los Angeles Community College District Welcomes \$5 Million in New Statewide Funding to Support Umoja Programs and Black Student Success

Umoja provides services specially designed for the success of African-American students

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Community College District welcomes the State Legislature's recent approval of \$5 million in additional ongoing funding for Umoja programs at California's community colleges.

Umoja (a Kiswahili word meaning unity) programs seek to educate the whole student—body, mind and spirit—and to provide robust wrap-around support services. For example, the programs can provide community and critical resources to enhance the cultural and educational experiences of students with positive learning and social environments, counseling, tutoring, cultural workshops, special events, leadership development, mentoring and connections to the network of Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU). Umoja programs also actively serve and promote academic success for students through curriculum and pedagogy responsive to the legacy of the African and African American diasporas.

"Equity is at the heart of everything we do at LACCD, and there is no better way to ensure that than by making sure valuable programs like Umoja are adequately funded," said LACCD Board President Steve Veres. "This additional funding from the legislature allows us to invest in long-term planning that will make sure Umoja programs are here as a student resource for many years to come."

"LACCD serves an extremely diverse student body, which makes it important to ensure every student is heard and represented," said LACCD Board Trustee Nichelle Henderson. "Securing this additional funding provides stability for valuable Umoja programs that exemplifies the holistic approach we take to each student's education."

The additional \$5 million in state funding will help shore up resources and ensure the Umoja programs are sustainable at the District's nine colleges and other community colleges throughout the state. Many Umoja students are the first in their families to attend college and their participation in Umoja helps them successfully navigate a higher education system that can be unfamiliar.

"One of the Board of Trustees major legislative priorities was increased ongoing support for targeted student support services," said LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D. "Increased funding for Umoja Programs along with other excellent programs such as Puente, and

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MESA were at the top of our advocacy agenda this year. We are pleased that the Legislature agreed and funded these and other exceptional programs.”

“The Umoja community is not only a great resource that helps students thrive academically but also gives students the opportunity to connect with one another,” said Los Angeles Pierce College Umoja student, Sierra Bledsoe. “Through Umoja I have had the chance to meet amazing professors, counselors, and life-long friends. Umoja has opened the door to new experiences like webinars, porch talks, and other events that have helped aid my occupational goals. Increased funding from the legislature for Umoja programs, LGBTQ+ centers and other important student support systems is vital to establishing them as a core part of every LACCD campus.”

LACCD provides equity-minded, culturally competent resources to all members of its diverse student body, helping students succeed both in their academics and career development. Increased funding from the legislature for Umoja programs, LGBTQ+ centers and other important student support systems is instrumental to establishing them as a core part of each LACCD campus.

Seven of the nine LACCD colleges have active Umoja programs, including Los Angeles City College, East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles Harbor College, Los Angeles Pierce College, Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College and Los Angeles Valley College. Los Angeles Mission College and West Los Angeles College are currently revising their Umoja programs.

Enrollment, Umoja and other student success program information can be found on the colleges’ websites. The LACCD “[Colleges of Los Angeles](#)” include: [Los Angeles City College](#); [East Los Angeles College](#); [Los Angeles Harbor College](#); [Los Angeles Mission College](#); [Los Angeles Pierce College](#); [Los Angeles Southwest College](#); [Los Angeles Trade-Technical College](#); [Los Angeles Valley College](#) and [West Los Angeles College](#).

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

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Umoja Program Photos from Los Angeles Valley College



Caption & Photo Credit Information

Above, recent cohort of Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) Umoja Scholars learning about the history of Africans in America with Dr. Keidra Morris, left. (Photo by Solomon Smith/Los Angeles Valley College) Below, Umoja Scholars and Black Student Union members, visible, from left, Curtis Harris, Zion Choi, and Nasir Marshall are all smiles at recent LAVC Black History Month painting event in collaboration with the college's Art Department. (Photo by Solomon Smith/Los Angeles Valley College)

