



## **Los Angeles Community College District Establishes California Center for Climate Change Education at West Los Angeles College**

*The Center will help train today's workforce for the growing climate industry*

LOS ANGELES (April 22, 2023) — The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) today announced the establishment of the California Center for Climate Change Education, a first-of-its-kind, forward-looking resource that will help prepare students for good-paying, fulfilling careers in the clean energy and climate technology industries. The establishment of LACCD California Center for Climate Change Education, which launched this week, will be located at West Los Angeles College and be accessible to all Los Angeles Community College District students from all nine campuses.

The Los Angeles Community College District serves a student population that is predominantly low-income and from communities of color—many of whom have directly been impacted by climate change. The District's leadership understands that climate change is a social justice issue. By bolstering climate justice education and developing a skilled workforce to build more resilient and cleaner infrastructure, the Center will serve the [District's equity, sustainability, and clean energy goals](#).

The California Center for Climate Change Education was funded with a state allocation of \$5 million as part of AB 1913, sponsored by Asm. Isaac G. Bryan and \$1.3 million from the federal government was sponsored by then-Rep. Karen Bass (and now City of Los Angeles Mayor) and Sen. Alex Padilla. The federal funding was approved in the Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023.

"Climate justice is social justice. The financial and environmental impacts of climate change are felt most profoundly in Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income communities," said Assemblymember Bryan. "I was proud to advocate for the California Center for Climate Change Education, which will ensure California continues to lead the way in green energy innovation and climate justice."

The California Center for Climate Change Education is built around serving six main goals: 1) exploring and expanding internships and work-based learning opportunities in equity, environmental justice, and green jobs; 2) partnering with local and regional entities and experts to support the right kind of workforce development needed to modernize the energy grid and help with other climate resiliency efforts; 3) serve as a resource for community colleges on climate change education, focusing on its roots of equity and social justice; 4) build a clear pathway and roadmap for students interested in climate justice that provides the right degrees, certificates, and education opportunities to build a career; 5) foster partnerships with nonprofit organizations that provide opportunities for student internships and career-building opportunities; and 6) developing an annual urban climate change and sustainability conference.

"I could not be more proud to be here today to celebrate the California Center for Climate Change Education, which will change lives and help our planet," said LACCD Board President David Vela. "I have always believed that climate change is a social justice issue, and investing in a clean energy workforce will help create a better city, state, and world for all of us."

Establishing the Climate Center also helps provide a solid foundation for LACCD students pursuing higher education in this field. The University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) have established climate-focused initiatives in the past two years, with the UC Center for Climate Justice launching in 2022. However, West Los Angeles College is currently the only community college in the state that offers an associate's degree in climate change and environmental studies, which needs to be improved given the growth in jobs and the importance of these careers.

"California is poised to be the leader in creating jobs in the clean energy sector," said LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D. "The California Center for Climate Change Education will provide state-of-the-art education and training to position students for successful careers in one of the state's fastest-growing industries. These jobs of the future pay well, while protecting our most precious and valuable resource—the earth.."

Recent legislation that made up the [California Climate Commitment](#) is expected to result in 4 million new jobs in clean energy, on top of those created by the Inflation Reduction Act. Community college students are well-positioned to meet this need and fill these critical positions.

"Communities of color tend to face disproportionate negative impacts from the impact of climate change," said James Limbaugh, the president of West Los Angeles College. "The California Center for Climate Change Education will help educate community college students to be advocates for their communities, to engage in learning experiences related to climate change mitigation, and to benefit from a comprehensive workforce development initiative."

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#### **About Assemblymember Isaac Bryan**

Assemblymember Isaac Bryan represents California's 55th Assembly District. He is Chair of the Assembly's Select Committee on Poverty and Economic Inclusion and Treasurer of the California Legislative Black Caucus. Isaac's legislative accomplishments include phasing out the Inglewood Oil Field and other oil drilling near homes and communities in California. In 2022, he secured over \$36 million in funding for green infrastructure projects, climate

change education, and clean tech development including \$5 million to establish California's first Community College Climate Change Education Center at West Los Angeles College. Prior to election to the Assembly, Isaac held Director positions at the Black Policy Project at UCLA and the Ralph J. Bunche Center.

#### **About West Los Angeles College**

West Los Angeles College is an ACCJC accredited California Community College that offers career certificates and Associate degrees as well as paths to transfer to competitive universities as a Junior. Students can enroll full-time or part-time, in-person or in the college's award-winning online program. Recently, West was awarded the prestigious Aspen Prize for being one of the top 150 community colleges in the nation. For more information, visit [www.WLAC.edu](http://www.WLAC.edu).

#### **About the Los Angeles Community College District**

LACCD ([www.laccd.edu](http://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, on Twitter, <https://twitter.com/laccd>, @laccd, and Instagram, [https://www.instagram.com/laccd\\_edu/](https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/), @laccd\_edu.

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