



July 15, 2015

HONORARY CHAIRS

George Shultz

Stanford University

Leon Panetta

The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

CO-CHAIRS

Gavin Newsom

Lieutenant Governor of California

Laura Tyson

University of California, Berkeley

Michael Rossi

Sr. Advisor to the Governor on Jobs

Ashley Swearengin

Mayor of Fresno

Jessie Knight

Sempra Energy

Ashley Boren

Sustainable Conservation

Jim Earp

California Alliance for Jobs

Dave Regan

SEIU – United Healthcare Workers West

Antonia Hernandez

California Community Foundation

Sunne Wright McPeak

California Emerging Technology Fund

John Gioia

California State Association of Counties

José Cisneros

League of California Cities

Maria S. Salinas

ProAmerica Bank

STEERING COMMITTEE

Bill Allen

Los Angeles County EDC

Lucy Dunn

Orange County Business Council

Steve Frisch

Sierra Business Council

Paul Granillo (Co-Chair)

Inland Empire Economic Partnership

Carl Guardino

Silicon Valley Leadership Group

Glenda Humiston

USDA Rural Development

Joanne Kozberg

California Strategies

Laurie Madigan

San Diego Business Leadership Alliance

Lenny Mendonca

McKinsey & Co.

Bill Mueller

Valley Vision, Sacramento

Eloy Oakley (Co-Chair)

Long Beach City College

Sean Randolph

Bay Area Council, Economic Institute

Sunita Cooke (Chair)
President/Superintendent
MiraCosta Community
College District

Tim Rainey (Co-Chair)
Executive Director
California Workforce
Investment Board

Lynn Shaw (Co-Chair)
President
Long Beach City
College Faculty Union

Dear Chair and Co-Chairs of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy:

First, please extend our gratitude and congratulations to the Board of Governors, the Chancellor and his staff, and to the members of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy for their extraordinary effort to bolster the capacity of community colleges to prepare one million more Californians for middle-skilled careers.

As members of the Workforce and Advancing Manufacturing Action Teams of the California Economic Summit, we support the draft recommendations and urge the Task Force to swiftly complete its charge and submit its conclusions to the board. We believe the recommendations are an essential next step to improving California's competitive advantage in the global marketplace and to enabling more Californians to secure employment above the minimum wage.

We also offer the following recommendations to refine, clarify and strengthen the overall report and some of the specific recommendations.

1. **Employers need a larger role in the solution at the level of design, execution and funding.** Employers are critical in making sure that curricula will prepare the students for success. Successful employers also are skilled at continuous improvement, and can be partners in streamlining the curriculum development process itself. Employers can work collaboratively to identify and develop partnerships that strengthen the quality of instructors and help motivate students. And they are critical in developing and supplying information for an efficient and precise feedback loop so colleges know how to continuously improve programs over time. Employers organized into clusters can help leverage private and public training dollars to supplement public funds to support highly qualified instructors. Employers are an essential part of the "community" in community colleges.
2. **Student motivation is critical to program and student success.** The experience from the field shows that improving motivation is essential for more young people to pursue a future in middle-skilled jobs. All of the mechanics can be improved – spot-on curriculum, great instructors, proper funding – but students only benefit if they actively take advantage of the opportunities.

This is another way that employers can play a larger role. As partners in career pathway strategies, employers can help students see the tangible opportunities that can result from hard work and persistence. Equally important, employees can play the critical role of mentor, role model and

caring adult – providing students with relationships that build confidence and perseverance. The community colleges also need to partner with K-12 schools to begin working with students as early as middle school. And career pathways need to be closely coordinated with student support activities so students efficiently determine where they want to go and what they must do to get there.

3. **Bolstering the skills of instructors will require multiple approaches.** Credential procedures and professional development resources need to be sharply focused on refreshing knowledge, skills and abilities. Partnerships – those with K-12 districts and those with employers – are mechanisms to recruit instructors, develop their skills as teachers, and continuously update their knowledge of what is required in the workplace. These partnerships also are a mechanism for identifying and periodically incorporating experts into the classrooms. Similarly, internships for students can be expanded to include internships for instructors.
4. **While more funds are needed for CTE programs, colleges must make sure that existing resources are deployed to the most valuable programs.** In public and private sector organizations, discontinuing low-value activities can be as difficult as initiating high-value activities. The same is true in the portfolio of community college offerings, and those within the CTE domain in particular. The recommendations should include incentives – for innovative approaches to instruction, regulatory procedures, as well as funding – that lower the risks and barriers, and explicitly encourage the evolution of program offerings to maximize the career-related benefits for students.
5. **Industry-generated assessments should be used to improve the entire value chain.** Industry-based standards and assessments can be an efficient and effective mechanism for assessing curricula and programs, measuring student progress and preparation, and supporting a culture of continuous improvement. Developing this platform – around industry clusters, for example – can be an efficient and effective way for industries to engage with the institutions, and the platform can be a basis for standardizing program requirements, class offerings, certifications and even job titles. This level of reliable standardization will make it easier for students to tap the resources of different colleges to complete, and make it easier for employers to connect to programs to recruit new employees.

Overall, the recommendations with some refinements would provide a good foundation to the important initiative. But the recommendations and the work of the Task Force are only a start. The Board of Governors must make a strong commitment to the leadership necessary to implement the recommendations, and working with district trustees and executives to establish the capacity and the culture of continuous improvement that will be essential to achieving the overall objective.

The members of California Economic Summit recognize these proposals will require a fundamental shift in the way sectors work together and current systems function. Achieving cultural change is a full community responsibility and ultimately must occur at the local level. Working within California's economic regions and local communities, we are prepared to provide support for these ideas – and assist with their implementation.

Sincerely,



Alma Salazar
Co-Lead, Workforce Action Team
Vice President of Education and Workforce Economic
Development, Los Angeles Area Chamber of
Commerce



Chris Harrington
Co-Lead, Advancing Manufacturing Action Team
Executive Director, Center for a New California

Summit contact: *Susan Lovenburg*
susan@cafed.org; 916-244-2525