



UC DAVIS
Wheelhouse

The Center for Community College
Leadership and Research



IMPACT REPORT • FEBRUARY 2023

Picking Up Steam

Since our founding at UC Davis in 2016, Wheelhouse has worked to strengthen leadership and practice in the California Community Colleges, the nation’s largest system of higher education. We accomplish that mission in two ways:

Leadership and Network Development

Our CEO Institute on Leadership delivers professional peer learning for annual, select cohorts of Wheelhouse Fellows – district chancellors, superintendent/presidents and college presidents. We focus on leading for equity, purposeful disruption, individual performance analytics, individual and organizational agility, and research and policy know-how. Throughout, we foster lasting peer networks.

Actionable Research

We support and cultivate a statewide scholar network, bringing research to practice by producing timely, digestible, independent publications tailored for decision-maker audiences at the state, regional and local levels.

This report captures the Wheelhouse story since 2016, with special emphasis on accomplishments in 2022.

Supporting Leaders, Building Statewide Networks

The Wheelhouse CEO Institute on Leadership annually supports 15–20 Community College leaders to build know-how and resilience, to take stock of their leadership strengths and challenges, and to develop valuable, lasting peer networks.

Led by Wheelhouse Chancellor-in-Residence Francisco C. Rodriguez, the Institute brings CEO Fellows into active dialogue with expert faculty and seasoned leaders to examine and refine their own approach to the teams, institutions and students they serve. We tap real-time experiences in dynamic learning sessions that challenge assumptions and promote purposeful disruption with the ultimate goal of equitable student success.

This diverse cohort of peers offers both safe ground and a space to stretch professionally. Fellows include district chancellors, superintendents/presidents and campus presidents who gather at UC Davis, at UCLA, and remotely for 10 days over the course of the year.



Expanding Leadership Development in 2023

Our initiatives will expand to include the new Advancing Leaders Institute (ALI) to support a diverse and prepared new generation of presidents, superintendent/presidents and chancellors. The inaugural cohort of 30–40 aspiring CEOs will convene at UCLA and UC Davis starting in July 2023.



JULIUS SOKENU
PRESIDENT, MOORPARK COLLEGE
WHEELHOUSE FELLOW, 2022



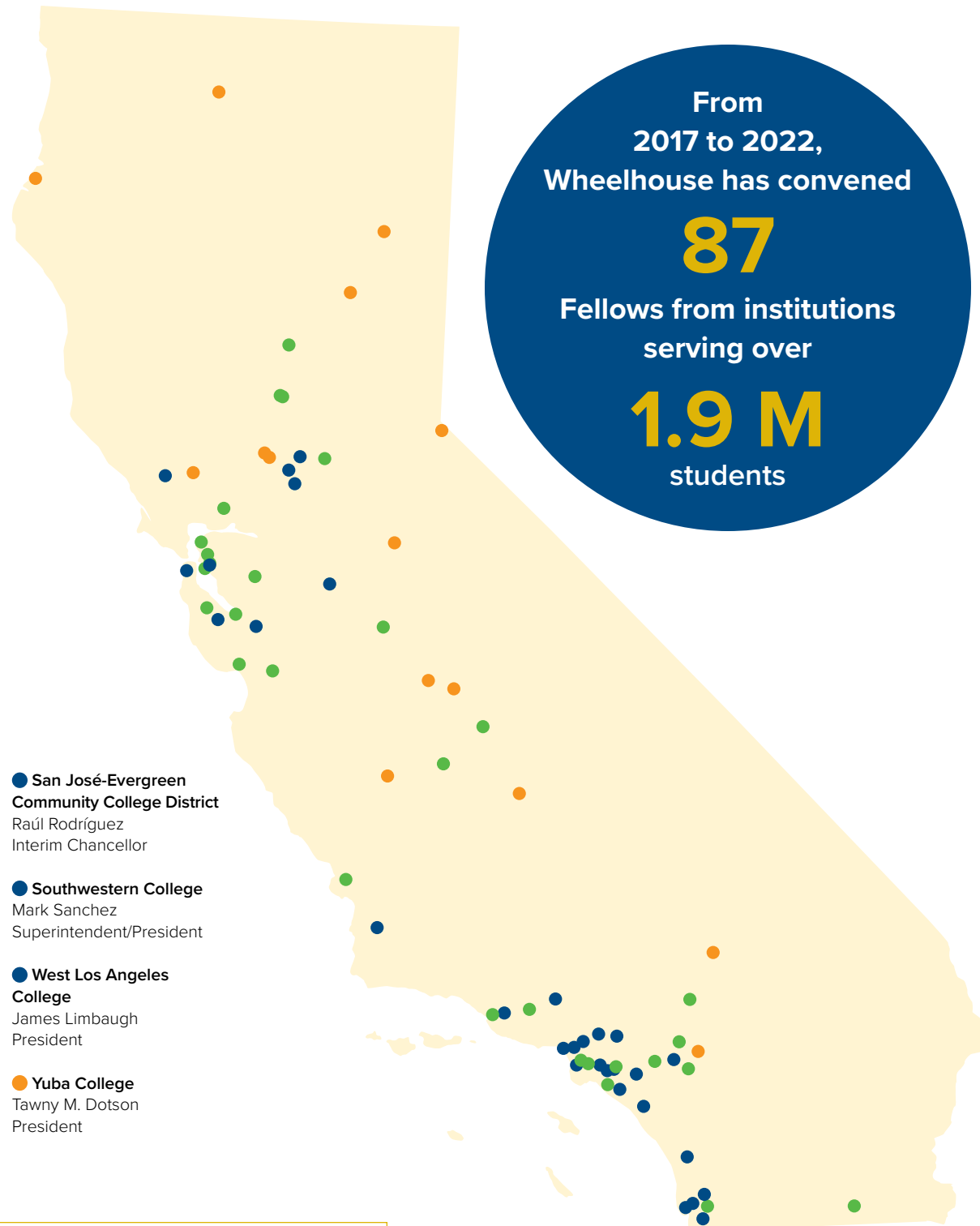
“The Wheelhouse team created a safe space to explore, articulate, challenge, develop and model high-impact leadership. Thank you for curating a professional development experience that has been a gift in many ways. The readings provided critical frameworks for understanding leadership and the changing demands and expectations of the CEO role. The visits from elders were instructive. The words of wisdom, the experience of leaders of color and women inspired and motivated.”

Statewide Leadership Impact

Community College CEOs come to Wheelhouse from institutions large and small, from the Bay Area and the Central Valley to the Mexican border and the rural north.

FELLOWS COHORT 2022

- American River College**
Melanie Dixon
President
- Berkeley City College**
Angélica Garcia
President
- Crafton Hills College**
Kevin Horan
President
- Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District**
Lynn Ceresino Neault
Chancellor
- Lassen Community College District**
Trevor Albertson
Superintendent/President
- Madera College**
Angel Reyna
President
- Moorpark College**
Julius Sokenu
President
- Norco College**
Monica Green
President
- North Orange Continuing Education**
Valentina Purtell
President
- Orange Coast College**
Angelica Suarez
President
- Porterville College**
Claudia Lourido-Habib
President
- San Diego City College**
Ricky Shabazz
President
- San José-Evergreen Community College District**
Raúl Rodríguez
Interim Chancellor
- Southwestern College**
Mark Sanchez
Superintendent/President
- West Los Angeles College**
James Limbaugh
President
- Yuba College**
Tawny M. Dotson
President



From
2017 to 2022,
Wheelhouse has convened
87
Fellows from institutions
serving over
1.9 M
students

STUDENTS SERVED ● < 10,000 ● 10,000 – 20,000 ● > 20,000

FELLOWS COHORT 2020–21

- Allan Hancock College**
Kevin Walthers
Superintendent/President
- Cañada College**
Jamillah Moore
President
- Citrus College**
Greg Schulz
Superintendent/President
- Feather River College**
Kevin Trutna
Superintendent/President
- Imperial Valley College**
Martha Garcia
Superintendent/President
- Las Positas College**
Dyrell Foster
President
- Los Angeles City College**
Mary Gallagher
President
- Peralta Community College District**
Regina Stanback Stroud
Chancellor
- Reedley College**
Jerry Buckley
President
- Riverside City College**
Gregory Anderson
President
- San José-Evergreen Community College District**
Byron Breland
Chancellor
- Ventura College**
Kim Hoffmans
President
- Victor Valley College**
Daniel Walden
Superintendent/President
- West Hills Community College District**
Kristin Clark
Chancellor
- Woodland Community College**
Art Pimentel
President

FELLOWS COHORT 2019

- Barstow Community College**
Eva Bagg
Superintendent/President
- College of Alameda**
Timothy Karas
President
- College of the Canyons**
Barry Gribbons
Deputy Chancellor
- Columbia College**
Santanu Bandyopadhyay
President
- Folsom Lake College**
Whitney Yamamura
President
- Golden West College**
Tim McGrath
President
- Lake Tahoe Community College**
Jeff DeFranco
Superintendent/President
- Lassen Community College District**
Marlon Hall
Superintendent/President
- Los Angeles Southwest College**
Seher Awan
President
- Napa Valley College**
Ronald Kraft
Superintendent/President
- North Orange County Community College District**
W. Cherry Li-Bugg
Vice Chancellor
- Pasadena City College**
Erika Endrijonas
Superintendent/President
- San Diego Community College District**
Stephanie Bulger
Vice Chancellor
- San Luis Obispo County Community College District/ Cuesta College**
Jill Stearns
Superintendent/President

- South Orange County Community College District**
Kathleen F. Burke
Chancellor
- Ventura County Community College District**
Greg Gillespie
Chancellor
- Yuba Community College District**
Sandra Mayo
Vice Chancellor

FELLOWS COHORT 2018

- Cabrillo College**
Matthew Wetstein
President/Superintendent
- College of Siskiyou**
Stephen Schoonmaker
Superintendent/President
- College of the Redwoods**
Keith Snow-Flamer
Superintendent/President
- Compton College**
Keith Curry
President/CEO
- Cypress College**
JoAnna Schilling
President
- Laney College**
Tammeil Gilkerson
President
- Merced College**
Chris Vitelli
Superintendent/President
- Mission College**
Daniel Peck
President
- Moorpark College**
Luis Sanchez
President
- Moreno Valley College**
Robin Steinback
President
- Sacramento City College**
Michael Gutierrez
President
- San Bernardino Valley College**
Diana Rodriguez
President

- Santa Rosa Junior College**
Frank Chong
Superintendent/President
- Santiago Canyon College**
John Hernandez
President
- Southwestern College**
Kindred Murillo
Superintendent/President
- West Hills College Coalinga**
Brenda Thames
President
- Woodland Community College**
Michael White
President
- Yosemite Community College District**
Henry Yong
Chancellor

FELLOWS COHORT 2017

- Berkeley City College**
Rowena Tomaneng
President
- Butte-Glenn Community College District**
Samia Yaqub
Superintendent/President
- Cerritos College**
Jose Fierro
President/Superintendent
- City College of San Francisco**
Anna Davies
Vice Chancellor
- Clovis Community College**
Lori Bennett
President
- Contra Costa College**
Mojdeh Mehdizadeh
President
- Cosumnes River College**
Edward Bush
President
- Crafton Hills College**
Wei Zhou
President

- Cuyamaca College**
Julianna Barnes
President
- El Camino College District**
Dena Maloney
Superintendent/President
- Foothill College**
Thuy Thi Nguyen
President
- Gavilan College**
Kathleen Rose
Superintendent/President
- Golden West College**
Omid Pourzanjani
Vice President
- North Orange County Community College District/ Fullerton**
Cheryl Marshall
Chancellor
- Palomar Community College District**
Joi Lin Blake
Superintendent/President
- Pasadena City College**
Rajen Vurdien
Superintendent/President
- San Diego City College**
Denise Whisenhunt
Interim President
- Santa Ana College**
Linda Rose
President
- Santa Monica College**
Kathryn Jeffery
Superintendent/President
- Solano Community College**
Celia Esposito-Noy
Superintendent/President
- Yuba College**
G.H. Javaheripour
President

Notes: Some CEOs have moved to lead new institutions after participating in the Institute on Leadership; they are listed here in the positions they held at the time of their fellowship. Wheelhouse will convene new cohorts of CEOs and aspiring CEOs in 2023. Many have led or now lead significant statewide policy conversations and innovation efforts.

Picking Up Steam Since 2016

Our story is one of partnership, persistence and collaboration – people joining forces to support one of the nation’s most important engines of opportunity, equity and innovation: the California Community Colleges and the students they serve.

Picking Up Steam Since 2016

- A series of conversations between Harold Levine, then-dean of the UC Davis School of Education, and Brice Harris, then-chancellor of the California Community Colleges, hatches a new initiative to support CCCs through leadership development and independent research for decision making
- UC Davis and the Hearst Foundations provide seed funding for what becomes Wheelhouse: The Center for Community College Leadership and Research

2016



- Susanna Cooper joins as executive director, Michal Kurlaender as lead researcher, and Deborah Travis as director of the new CEO Institute on Leadership
- First research brief, *Tough Job if You Can Keep It*, explores CEO tenure and challenges to institutional leadership stability across the CCCs

KEY

- General Information
- Investments in Wheelhouse
- Research publications and developments
- Research convenings
- Leadership development items



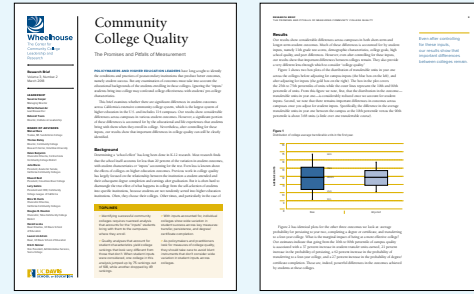
- Inaugural cohort of CCC presidents and chancellors – self-named the “Wheelhouse Warriors” – convene at UC Davis for the first annual CEO Institute on Leadership
- Associate Degrees for Transfer: Early Effects on Degree Completion in CA Community Colleges*
- James Irvine and College Futures foundations invest in Wheelhouse

2017

- Wheelhouse Scholars Network is born as 15 CCC-focused research affiliates convene in Berkeley for first annual collaboration retreat
- CA Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative) invests in Wheelhouse
- Talk to Me: What Community College Trustees Want From Their CEOs*



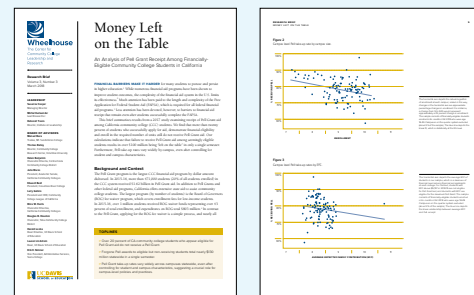
CEO Cohort 2 convenes at UC Davis



Community College Quality: The Promises and Pitfalls of Measurement

2018

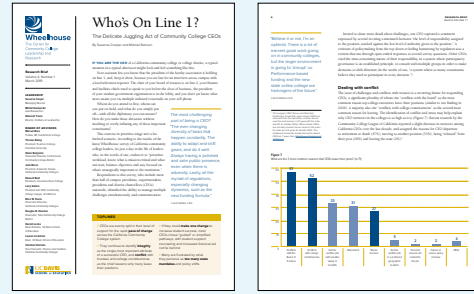
- Influential analysis of wide variability in financial aid take-up statewide: *Money Left on the Table: An Analysis of Pell Grant Receipt Among Financially-Eligible Community College Students in California*



- Scholars Network expands (now 23) and convenes at UCLA to share research and explore collaboration on transfer, financial aid and other topics



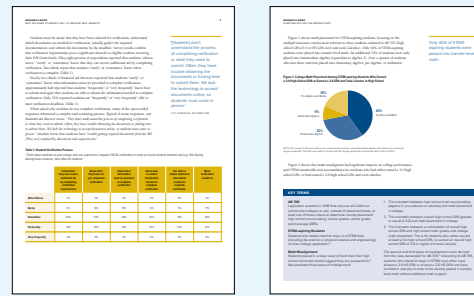
CEO Cohort 3 convenes at UC Davis



Who's on Line? The Delicate Juggling Act of Community College CEOs

2019

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation invests in Wheelhouse
- Why do Some Students Fail to Receive Pell Grants? Survey Evidence from California Community College Financial Aid Directors* (left)
- Starting off on the Wrong Foot: Math Misalignment and STEM Outcomes in California Community Colleges*



- 26 scholars gather in Berkeley to share research featuring on topics including guided pathways implementation, barriers to financial aid and transfer and the efficacy of co-requisite courses



- Los Angeles Community College District Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez joins Wheelhouse to direct CEO Institute as Chancellor-in-Residence (left); Cosumnes River College President Edward Bush joins Wheelhouse as senior fellow



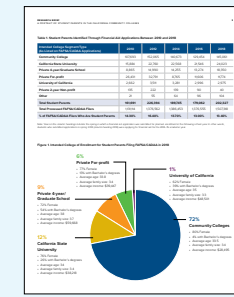
- CEO Cohort 4 convenes both remotely and at UC Davis
- COVID-19 pandemic begins in March

2020

- Wheelhouse adapts leadership development and research in response to the pandemic and national racial reckoning
- Wheelhouse Wednesdays convene CEOs during crisis leadership period – Constance Carroll, Eddie Cole, Michael Crow, Monica Lozano, Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Eduardo Padron lead sessions
- Turning on a Dime: California Community College Transformation in Response to COVID-19* (left)
- Toward a More Perfect Institution: Reflections from California Community College Leaders on Racism, Anti-Blackness and Implicit Bias*



- 45 scholars and funders gather remotely in multi-day research retreat featuring new inquiry on Associate Degrees for Transfer, Student Equity Plans, incarcerated students and student parents



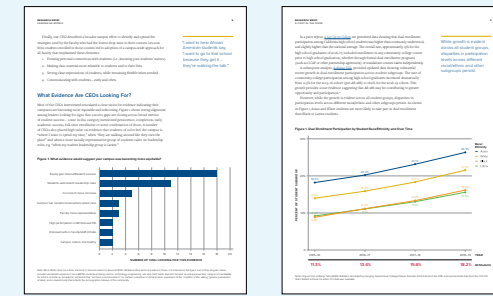
A Portrait of Student Parents in the California Community Colleges: A New Analysis of Financial Aid Seekers with Dependent Children



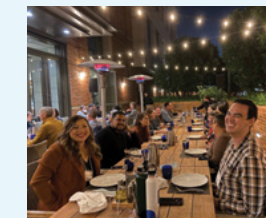
- During the pandemic, Wheelhouse supports CEO Cohort 4 across a two-year period

2021

- Lumina Foundation invests in Wheelhouse
- Leading as Myself: California Community College CEO Reflections on Personal and Institutional Growth Across a Year of Racial Reckoning* (left)
- Third of three equity-focused analyses of dual enrollment in CCCs: *A Foot in the Door: Growth in Participation and Equity in Dual Enrollment in California*



- 38 researchers, funders and CEOs gather at UCLA for 5th annual Scholars Retreat with focus on transfer, financial aid and other topics

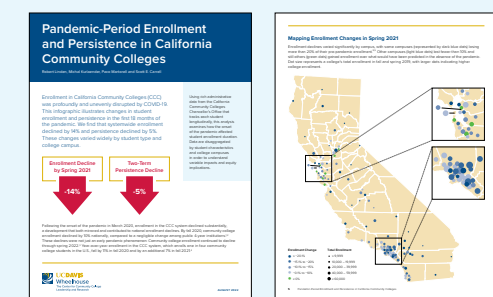
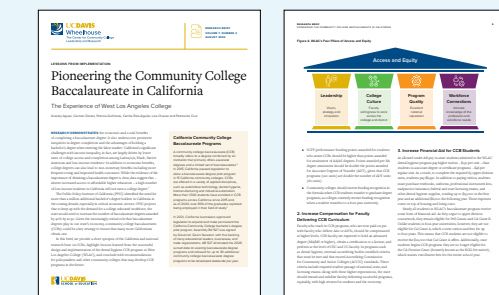


CEO Cohort 5 convenes at UC Davis and UCLA

- Funder base expands through individual donations and contracted research/evaluation
- First annual Wheelhouse Summer Scholar awards made to support CCC-related research by 12 doctoral students; symposia convened to feature their scholarship
- Wheelhouse launches Advancing Leaders Institute to support diverse pipeline of future CCC CEOs

2022

- Pioneering the Community College Baccalaureate in California: The Experience of West Los Angeles College*
- Research Collaboration Council of 12 California Community College CEOs established to inform recovery research and dissemination strategy



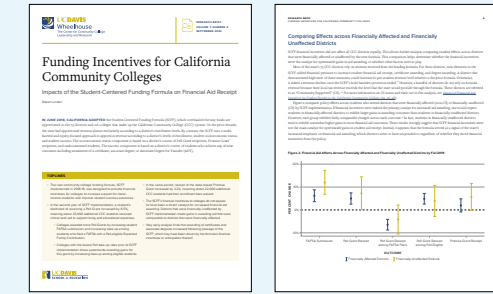
Pandemic-Period Enrollment and Persistence in California Community Colleges

- Institute for Education Sciences (US Department of Education) awards Wheelhouse \$3 million for pandemic recovery research (partnership with California Education Lab, CCCCO and PPIC)
- 45 academic and CC institutional researchers convene at UC Davis for professional development and research collaboration focused on AB 705 implementation

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER



- Wheelhouse partners with Community College Research Center and National Student Clearinghouse Research Center to convene national Accelerating Recovery in Community Colleges network

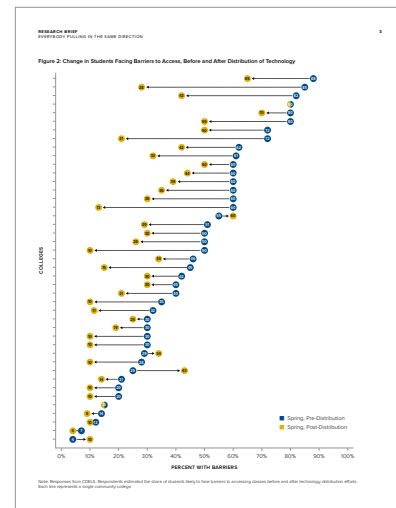
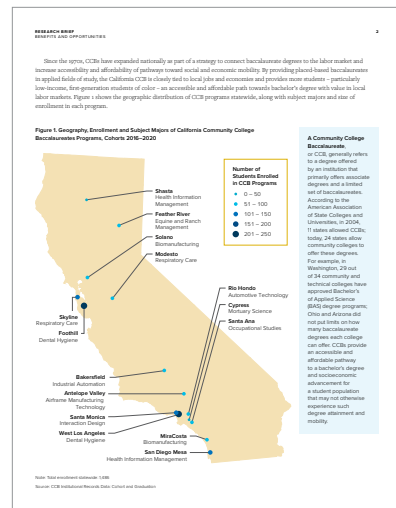
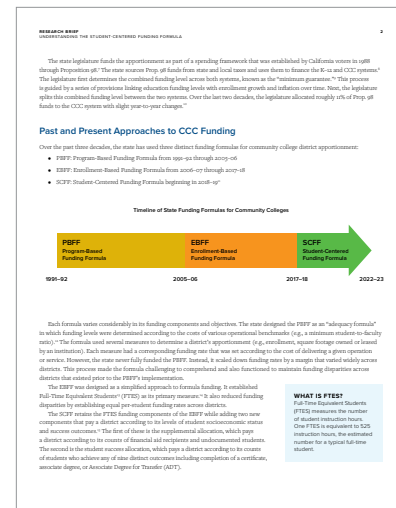


Funding Incentives for California Community Colleges: Impacts of the SCFF on Financial Aid Receipt

A Growing Body of Research

Wheelhouse publishes digestible and actionable briefs and infographics for statewide decision-maker audiences at all levels of the system, from the State Capitol to local college campuses. In addition to our ongoing bodies of research on financial aid, dual enrollment, leadership practice and COVID-19 impacts on enrollment, recent work published in 2021 and 2022 includes:

- Timely analysis of the Student Centered Funding Formula's impact on community colleges
- A deep dive into the role of CCC counselors in implementing AB 705
- A comprehensive count of student-parents in CCCs with recommendations to meet their needs
- A stock-taking of CCC baccalaureate degree programs
- A close examination of the pandemic-era shift to online instruction and student services



NANCY ACEVEDO
PROFESSOR, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
WHEELHOUSE SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE, 2020-22

“My engagement with Wheelhouse gave me access to resources, supportive colleagues, and time to make progress on my investigation of the critical role of community college counselors in implementing the groundbreaking reforms of Assembly Bill 705. I was especially grateful for the support to publish research in real time to support knowledge-building in the field.”



JEFF DEFRANCO
SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT, LAKE TAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WHEELHOUSE FELLOW, 2019

“When we needed an external partner to help us evaluate the efficacy of our College Promise Program, we thought of Wheelhouse first. We had worked successfully with Wheelhouse on financial aid and other topics in the past, and it made sense to bring them in as an external partner to help us evaluate the efficacy of this program. Wheelhouse’s thorough and rigorous work has already resulted in positive changes to Promise. We look forward to continued partnership on this project and other areas for improving student success.”

Building and Supporting an Impact Network of CCC-devoted Scholars

Wheelhouse convenes a statewide network of researchers whose work connects to our mission. Our annual Scholars Retreat brings together research faculty from multiple UCs, CSUs, Stanford, USC and select non-California universities for collaboration, peer feedback and learning. In 2022, we added community college institutional research professionals to the mix.

To cultivate the next generation of CCC scholars, we established the Wheelhouse Summer Scholars Fellowship, a summer stipend to recognize and support doctoral students whose research furthers equitable CCC opportunities and outcomes.



New Research Partnerships Expand Our Reach

In fall 2022, the Institute for Education Sciences (U.S. Department of Education) awarded Wheelhouse and key partners, the California Education Lab, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office and the Public Policy Institute of California, a \$3 million grant to assess pandemic recovery efforts in the CCCs.

An important aspect of this project is the formation of a new Research Collaboration Council, comprised of 12 accomplished CCC CEOs who will closely shape our research questions, inform our analysis, and advise on dissemination.

As part of an additional federal award, Wheelhouse will join the Community College Research Center and the National Student Clearinghouse to convene the national Accelerating Recovery in Community Colleges (ARCC) Network so that researchers focused on pandemic recovery can learn from and amplify each other’s work.

Meeting New Demands and Opportunities

We are excited about what the future holds for Wheelhouse.

Recognizing the opportunities that lie at the intersection of leadership and equity-focused development and research, we will deepen our work with CEOs in 2023 by engaging them more closely as shapers of our research and practice.

We'll grow our leadership development offerings to include the new Advancing Leaders Institute, supporting a new generation of equity-minded, student-centered CEOs who reflect the rich diversity of the students they serve.

As California community college leaders focus on post-pandemic recovery and reinvention, we will continue to document, analyze, elevate and inform their work.



CLAUDIA LOURIDO-HABIB
PRESIDENT, PORTERVILLE COLLEGE
WHEELHOUSE FELLOW, 2022



“In addition to the relevant and timely content, the honest conversations with my fellow CEOs, who were so diverse in professional and life experiences, made this an unforgettable institute. The thought-provoking discussions contributed to a new level of understanding of issues and a deep appreciation for our role in the context of the DEI work we do.”



LYNN NEAULT
CHANCELLOR, GROSSMONT-CUYAMACA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
WHEELHOUSE FELLOW, 2022



“I learned so much, not only about the community college landscape at this critical time but about myself as a leader. The care the Wheelhouse leadership team put into the planning of the sessions, accommodations, meals and wellness opportunities demonstrated their commitment to the program and the participants. It was truly a special opportunity to engage with other leaders in a ‘safe space’ and to gain strength from others.”



ROWENA TOMANENG
PRESIDENT, SAN JOSE CITY COLLEGE
WHEELHOUSE FELLOW, 2017



“I was proud to be part of the original 2017 cohort of Wheelhouse Fellows—an important experience for me in my early years as a CEO. We named ourselves ‘Warriors,’ because as a group we recognized in each other our collective willingness to fight for student equity and opportunity. Since then, our professional lives have been fortified because we continue to lean on each other. I’m also pleased to have contributed to Wheelhouse research these past years, and look forward to deepening that relationship as part of its new Research Collaboration Council.”



ANGÉLICA GARCIA
PRESIDENT, BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE
WHEELHOUSE FELLOW, 2022



“The CEO institute impacted my leadership in ways that were tangible, relevant, and grounded in community college students in California. I believe that this institute helped me to understand what is possible in my leadership of Berkeley City College. I feel like I had the opportunity to build community with phenomenal colleagues who inspired and motivated me to keep grounding my authentic voice as a CEO to do good, hard, student-centered, and equity-minded work.”



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Leadership and Research

University of California, Davis
School of Education
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616

education.ucdavis.edu/wheelhouse

WHEELHOUSE TEAM

Edward Bush
Senior Fellow and Advisor

Susanna Cooper
Executive Director

Claudia Escobar
Associate Director for Learning
and Research

Elizabeth Friedmann
Research Fellow

Michal Kurlaender
Lead Researcher and Professor

Robbie Linden
Research Fellow

Francisco C. Rodriguez
Chancellor in Residence

Hilary Strain
Business Operations and
Communications Coordinator

Kairo Weber
Administrative Assistant

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UC Davis School of Education

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