California Community Colleges | California Virtual Campus

Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant Program

Impact Report

- Innovative Online Learning Opportunities
- Improved Access and Equity
- Increased Employability and Upward Mobility

DEAR READER,

Online education is not new for the California Community Colleges. For over 20 years, our colleges have been driving advancements in online learning and leading in areas of online course quality and effective online teaching practices. Increasingly, being where our students expect us to be—online—is paramount for ensuring Californians continue to turn to their community colleges to sustain and grow our workforce.

Our workforce needed the California Community Colleges when demand for retraining and upskilling soared during the Great Recession of the early 2000s. Unfortunately, at that time, our system lacked the infrastructure to fully leverage course capacity that was locked in various regions of the state and students went unserved. Coming out of that economic downturn, state leaders recognized that a robust online education network that helped students find and enroll in available courses and programs online, regardless of where they live, could be an important backstop and strategic opportunity to better serve students in all corners of California.

In 2013, the Online Education Initiative (OEI) was born with 24 pilot colleges and a mission to create a common technology infrastructure, course quality standards that cross college boundaries, and a single point of entry for students to find online courses or programs and easily cross-enroll. The OEI ushered in an era of collaboration that has born an integrated technology, learning and support environment that is common across colleges, creating a foundation for a larger mission.

Since that time, the OEI has incorporated and transformed the legacy California Virtual Campus (CVC) and @ONE professional development programs into a reimagined and modernized CVC. Our mission was expanded beyond transfer education in 2018 to include increasing opportunities for students to gain access to short-term, online program pathways leading to wage gains or advancement in career-technical fields.

In collaboration with the state Chancellor's Office and the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges, the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant was established. In partnership with 70 California community colleges, hundreds of new short-term, online CTE programs have been created and hundreds more enhanced. Opportunities created through the CVC *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant are now available to students *statewide*.

This year, supporting our students through a historic pandemic, the importance of well-designed online learning opportunities has been catapulted into view and illustrates an ongoing, central role for online learning across all sectors of education. Our world has changed in unprecedented ways, but through it all, we still recognize that the future is ours to create.

Inside this magazine you'll find stories that highlight a sampling of the amazing online pathways that colleges have created as part of the CVC *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant, and I hope their creativity will inspire you. The outcomes achieved through this program demonstrate how much can be accomplished on behalf of Californians with the kind of focused collaboration and partnership CVC has fostered across colleges, as we go forward and create the future of online learning together.

Jory Hadsell, Ed.D.
Executive Director of the California Virtual Campus

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ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA VIRTUAL CAMPUS

The mission of the California Community Colleges is simple - put students first. Through the California Virtual Campus (CVC), significant steps have been taken to transform the way Californians prepare to fuel the state's workforce. It is estimated that by 2025 there will be a shortage of 1.5 million workers who have some post secondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. The CVC is a collaboration among California's community colleges aiming to address this shortage by reducing time-to-completion and helping students reach their educational goals by increasing availability of high-quality, online learning opportunities.

The CVC is a statewide program managed by the Foothill-De Anza Community College District as the recipient of a grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Composed of high-quality online courses, resources for students and technology infrastructure, the CVC is a comprehensive and collaborative program leveraging effective practices and technology to significantly increase opportunities for higher education degree attainment in California.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all who contributed to this inaugural Impact Report

For Your Reference
Data and statistics for this publication are provided by reports from CVC, individual California community colleges and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

BIG GAINS FOR THE GOLDEN STATE

CVC GRANT DELIVERS SHINING RESULTS

It's common knowledge that California's community colleges have provided millions of Californians a pathway to better pay and better job opportunities. What is less known is the tremendous impact the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant has had in the college system and for students. Over the past 18 months, the grant has set 70 colleges into motion to further improve online education, reach more students, change the way community college online programs are developed, and grow career-technical pathways - all of which has served to drive the California economy forward and improve job prospects for students.

Chabot College Pathways Grant Project Lead Christy Davis Roza and the team at Chabot College were excited for the opportunity to participate in the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant.

"If we were going to go online, if we were going to present courses in a hybrid or online fashion, we wanted them to meet certain quality standards that we had as a faculty and as a campus," she said. "This work (through the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant) is something that we wanted to do, and this is something that's important to do. We've been very fortunate here at Chabot to be a recipient of this grant that's going to help us make that happen."

Through this grant, colleges including Chabot addressed student success barriers by creating online student services and support tools to develop programs in which students can thrive online. Colleges also focused on faculty training and specialized projects around conversion and equity assessment, all of which are aimed at generating improvements in online student persistence and completion. Moreover, the grant led to significant increases in the availability and offerings of online program options, which have given California students more options for career development, leading to greater employability.

"The *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant demonstrated the ability of the California Community Colleges to generate real results in a short time," said Justin Schultz, Director of Planning and Grants Administration for the California Virtual Campus. "The pathways created and/or quality-improved by the grant better position our colleges to meet the needs of students and employers throughout the state."

The work done as part of the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant was the collaborative focus of hundreds of faculty and staff at community colleges across the state, whose commitment and focus to this project was incredible.

"The grant rallied faculty behind a systemwide cause and showcased how dedicated and interested faculty could be incredibly innovative in a small amount of time," said Donna Miranda, Senior Program Coordinator for the CVC. "Even small institutions were able to achieve substantial gains through the grant, and a foundation for future collaboration, growth and student support has been established through this powerful project."

COLLABORATION STUDENT SUPPORT ACCESS QUALITY REWARDING CAREERS EARNING POTENTIAL INNOVATION OPPORTUNITY

MAKING AN IMPACT... BY THE NUMBERS

STUDENTS SERVED

174,216

More Students Served

COURSE OPTIONS

921

New Courses and 1275 Improved Courses

STUDENT ACCESS

421

New Fully Online Pathways

ENHANCED PROGRAMS

228

New Hybrid/Online Enhanced Programs

About the CVC Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant

The California Community Colleges is positioned to support our diverse population to increase wages and improve social mobility in a rapidly changing economy. The California Legislature and governor provided funding to support existing California Community Colleges in accelerating innovative online learning opportunities leading to increased employability and upward mobility for working Californians.

The Budget Act of 2018 (SB 840) and trailer bill (SB 843) appropriated one-time funds of $35 million to the CVC to develop online programs and courses that accomplished the following:

(1) Lead to short-term, industry-valued certificates or credentials, or programs.

(2) Enable a student in a pathway developed by the California Online Community College to continue his or her education in a career pathway offered by an existing community college.

The CVC *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grants were sub-awarded to community colleges and ranged in size from $100,000 to $500,000. Projects were placed on a rapid timeline, with implementation expected within an 18-month funding timeframe.

IMPROVING ACCESS AND QUALITY OF EXISTING ONLINE PROGRAMS

Many CVC *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grantees focused their grant project on enhancing existing programs. Twenty-one colleges aimed to improve the quality of course content, bring broader awareness to programs and expand online access. This included increasing capacity within classes, offering sections of classes more frequently, and evaluating courses using system wide rubrics. Two of these colleges—Las Positas College College and Laney College—used this grant to address local industry and student needs.

LAS POSITAS COLLEGE

Addressing regional workforce needs is fundamental to Las Positas College. A Business Entrepreneurship occupational report prepared by the San Francisco Bay Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research in December of 2018 projected a significant undersupply of supervisory workers compared to the demand for this cluster of occupations in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. The college used the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant award to expand its Business Studies Program to meet the regional demand for qualified supervisory level workers.

Las Positas College's aptly named "Business Access N Quality (BANQ)" project enabled the college to offer its certificate of achievement in Supervisory Management fully online. Providing students access to online business classes removed barriers including a lack of transportation and lack of schedule flexibility, and allowed students the ability to maintain commitments to work and family.

The support for and impact of this grant project was widespread. Local employers - including LAM Research, Innovation TriValley and the TriValley Career Center - wrote letters of support for the grant.

Lynn Wallace Naylor, CEO of Innovation Tri-Valley Leadership Group, supported the grant project, saying, "Management and supervisory courses offer resources for both new and seasoned leaders to become more adept at developing employees, inspiring and guiding teams, managing change

and effectively influencing stakeholders across an organization. By having the certificate fully online, students will have increased accessibility and flexibility to complete the certificate."

> **" Online can be a lifeline to a better career and a better life for our students. "**
>
> **Las Positas College's Work-based Learning Coordinator, Mary Lauffer**

The college also leveraged the work done through the grant to advance several other programs. In fact, Business Entrepreneurship, Business Workforce Proficiency and Retail Management certificates of achievement are well on their way to being available fully online. By increasing access to higher education, Las Positas College's project is directly meeting the local occupational demand for skilled workers.

"Thanks to this grant, we're able to help shape today's leaders and provide them with opportunities they might not otherwise have," said Las Positas College's Work-based Learning Coordinator, Mary Lauffer.

LANEY COLLEGE

With more than half of the total student population at Laney College being of Hispanic and Asian origin, the college dedicated part of its grant project to engaging English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

To support learners, Laney College college faculty developed two levels of credit and non-credit courses to provide language skills development to students as they pursue their career goals. The courses focus on basic oral communication skills and the reading and writing skills necessary for success for students wishing to enroll in a targeted career education certificate course. Language skills are being taught in the context of career-technical industries and can be taken prior to enrolling in or concurrent with career education classes.

"These online classes are providing students the opportunity to improve their communication skills, while also enhancing their technical or computer skills," said Kim Glosson, Department Chair and Business Instructor. "Skills that are needed or required in their particular industry are skills that they are able to also develop or enhance online."

In addition, Laney College embedded counseling and tutoring services into four online certificate programs: Legal Community Interpreting, Sustainable Building, Business Management and Supervision, and English for Speakers of Other Languages.

The impact of these efforts have been noticeable. Student success rates in Career Education online and hybrid courses have increased from 72% to 81% and retention rates have improved from 81% to 87% from 2018-19 to 2019-20.

GROWING ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES

Thirty-nine colleges embarked on projects to increase the number of online programs that meet workforce needs. These colleges leveraged industry partnerships to add programs using industry-approved curriculum; filled in gaps within existing on-ground certificates, credentials or programs; built new online certificates; and worked collaboratively with other colleges to offer joint programs. Two colleges, College of the Desert and Saddleback College, collectively converted nearly 50 programs to online format with their grant projects.

COLLEGE OF THE DESERT

Commutes to College of the Desert campus locations can average an hour by bus. It is easy to imagine the increased opportunity that online courses and programs would offer to students. College of the Desert directed its grant efforts toward developing or improving 17 programs to meet the needs of employers while providing students more online class options to meet their professional or academic goals. These efforts centered around non-credit programs, which give students the opportunity to develop skills in a short period of time, tuition-free. College of the Desert also offered a pathway for students to continue their education by allowing non-credit students to earn college credit by exam, which opened doors to college credit programs.

It was truly a college-wide effort to develop these offerings. And it paid off. From 2018-19 to 2019-20, College of the Desert's online career education enrollment increased by 18.5%. Moreover, these program enhancements created frameworks and momentum for improving online courses and programs that will extend beyond the limits of this grant project.

126	17	18.5%
new or enhanced courses	new online programs	career education enrollment increase

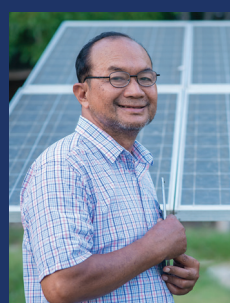### New Programs for Growing Industries

Applied Construction

Automotive

Culinary

Energy Systems

Film

SADDLEBACK COLLEGE

More than 18,000 students at Saddleback College take career education courses each year, and giving these students quality online learning opportunities was the college's focus. The college used the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant to expand career programs that were only one-to-three courses away from being completely available online.

Saddleback College took quality seriously through the online course conversion process. It deployed a Peer Online Course Review (POCR) process, which the grant team reports was the most successful and most impactful part of their project. Faculty were trained in the areas of curriculum accessibility, course quality and student engagement, and the result was college-wide support for online course quality review.

"The process has allowed faculty to get a very deep review of their course, and we found they wanted the feedback, even if it was a lot of work," said POCR Lead and online economics faculty member Jennifer Pakula. "Providing concrete examples of what faculty could do for alignment (to the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric) was really helpful."

Saddleback College faculty improved 116 courses through this grant, either through peer online course review or moving curriculum fully online. They also developed an online peer mentoring program to support students with an array of high-quality services, such as online counseling and tutoring.

116
new or enhanced courses

30
new pathways

What is Peer Online Course Review (POCR)?

POCR provides a framework for sustaining course standards across disciplines and faculty. By implementing POCR, community college faculty are able to upscale quality assessment efforts quickly and ensure a more consistent, high-quality online experience for students. Items evaluated by peer faculty include online course design, content presentation, communication methods, accessibility standards, student engagement and assessment plans. Classes that are evaluated using POCR provide students the reassurance that faculty are supporting their success and completion.

Programs Leading to Upward Career Opportunities

American Sign Language

Gerontology

Global Business

Medical Coding

Sustainable Horticulture

ELEVATING ONLINE RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT TOOLS

Ten college focused their projects on creating joint programs with other colleges or districts, developing pilot tools to chart student progress, or embarking on initiatives to help students stay on track in their academic journey. These projects are providing a foundation and resources for other colleges and districts throughout the state. Chaffey College and Foothill College used the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant to elevate the student online experience to better match the on-campus experience, recognizing that the tools students use on-campus are equally important for online students.

FOOTHILL COLLEGE

Foothill College has long been recognized as a leader in online learning and the college used the grant opportunity to stay at the forefront of online education. Foothill College's existing subscription-based onboarding course was delivering low engagement; campus leaders, students and faculty wanted more. So, the college used its grant award to develop an in-house onboarding course, called Foothill Orientation, tailored specifically to Foothill College students in order to better engage all online students with college services.

The newly developed course is part of Foothill College's Student Support Portal, where students receive access to tools designed to enhance the student experience and ensure that online students learn and connect as equally as students taking on-campus courses. Online platform orientation, tutoring, essential needs (like food insecurity), and technology support are some online services provided by Foothill College. In the short time that the onboarding course has been available to students, participation has already doubled.

Foothill College's project now is helping other colleges improve their online services. College representatives have presented the Student Support Portal at several conferences and made the source code available to campuses within the California Community Colleges, including Cabrillo College, City College of San Francisco, and Saddleback College.

> " We love when our students are on campus, and we want to be just as welcoming online as we are face-to-face. This project is a benefit to every student and faculty member. "
>
> **Lené Whitley-Putz,**
> **Dean of Online Learning, Foothill College**

CHAFFEY COLLEGE

Chaffey College focused its grant efforts on making online college feel more like an "on-campus" experience.

"The idea was to build a campus virtually that matches the physical campus that we have, so when students are in their online classroom, they actually feel like they're part of a campus community that has all of the services they would encounter if they were walking through our campus in person," Matthew Morin, Director of Intersegmental Partnerships, Chaffey College.

Students are praising the college's Canvas Student Hub, which was developed as part of the college's *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant work. The hub, also known as the Chaffey Virtual Center for Career Pathways, has added dimension, value and innovation to the college's existing online support tools. The Chaffey Virtual Center for Career Pathways provides tools for career exploration, interview preparation, and other services that students need. While the grant funds were used to develop the tool for career education students, the benefit has been more widespread, with all students being able to access the virtual, easy-to-use and cloud-based system in one simple place.

Students appreciate that Chaffey's Canvas Student Hub is located on the same platform as their online courses and that videos and real people are available to guide them through questions they have.

> " **This was so easy and convenient! I liked that we were able to share screens and download documents. The counselor was so nice and answered all my questions. I feel really good about our meeting and my future at Chaffey.** "
>
> **Chaffey student**

RIGHT ON TIME

The timing of the *Improving Online CTE Pathways grant* project couldn't have been better. At Chaffey College, usage of the Canvas Student Hub reached as high as 80,000 page views a week at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the grant project was a pilot initiative, it became Chaffey's advantage as it garnered an understanding that a centralized, collaborative approach with accommodations for service area nuances in resources and processes was necessary. In response, the college was able to scale up with all services areas fully online within a two-week window and be fully operational by the end of March 2020.

IGNITING OPPORTUNITY

CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT: SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS WITH LONG-TERM GAINS

As the largest provider of workforce training in the world, the California Community Colleges continues to be on the forefront of fueling the state's economy. Through the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grants, Californians now have access to a vast selection of short-term online programs designed to help them enter a new career or enhance their current job skills. The grant has led to the launch of 232 fully online certificates of achievement and 121 certificates of achievement with hybrid remote learning options.

Certificate of achievement programs are intended to be short-term and are appealing to individuals who often shy away from the two- or four-year commitment that comes with a college degree. They also help individuals become more marketable during the hiring process and enable workers to achieve upward mobility in their current fields. Working individuals can advance their training while maintaining a job, and some employers provide tuition assistance or other benefits for workers who advance their education.

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PATHWAYS BY DISCIPLINE

Certificates of achievement span multiple disciplines. Of the 649 pathways developed, 232 fully-online certificate of achievement programs were created for **16 separate career education pathways and disciplines**.

32 Agriculture & Natural Resources	**67** Arts, Media, & Entertainment	**4** Biotechnology	**10** Building Trades & Construction
57 Education, Child Development, & Family Services	**19** Energy & Utilities	**21** Engineering & Design	**2** Fashion & Interior Design
132 Finance & Business	**33** Health Science & Medical Technology	**42** Hospitality, Tourism, & Recreation	**91** Information Technology
12 Manufacturing & Product Development	**31** Marketing, Sales, & Service	**76** Public Services	**20** Transportation

EQUITY MATTERS

PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT DEVELOPS A RUBRIC TO DIVERSIFY CURRICULUM

Faculty at the Peralta Community College District used the *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant to improve its Online Equity Rubric by adding in a component to assess courses with a critical lens for equity. The rubric provides faculty a systematic approach to ensure curriculum reaches students across different cultures, abilities, and backgrounds. Faculty review course content and consider eight elements to improve the diversity of their curriculum. This provides a baseline for online course conversation and faculty are excited about the possibilities.

"I'm excited that other faculty will be charged with the same charge," said Laney College English faculty member and equity advocate Adrienne Oliver. "The rubric will ignite a conversation among faculty, and we can start working on curriculum together with equity in mind."

Laney College counselor Douglass Cobb added, "If you use the rubric right, it allows for a lot of student input, and engages students, putting them at the forefront of the class."

Collaboration and commitment to continue these efforts post-grant is an important goal for the CVC. This is already occurring for the Peralta Community College District, as its Online Equity Rubric is gaining recognition and being emulated at other community college districts. In fact, 15 community colleges already report having used the rubric to elevate their own online programs.

> " **If you feel like you can relate to what you are learning, you are more likely to actually learn it, stay involved and pass a class.** "
>
> **Obi Noel,**
> **Berkeley City College Student**

Learn more about the Peralta Equity Rubric at: **web.peralta.edu/de/equity-initiative/equity/**

REACHING CALIFORNIA STUDENTS THROUGH AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING STRATEGY

There is no question of the substantial impact the CVC *Improving Online CTE Pathways* grant is having on expanding equitable access to online CTE programs. Participating colleges developed services, programs, classes, and pathways that will link California students to learning opportunities that, once completed, will result in job opportunities and career growth. The next step is how to ensure that California students are aware of the opportunities available to them and are confident that these opportunities will fit within their lives and schedules.

During spring of 2021, the CVC worked on developing a marketing and communications plan participating colleges can use to spread the word about online CTE pathways within each of their workforce regions. This strategy included full toolkits for 21 CTE disciplines that can be customized by colleges and/or used immediately on a regional basis. Toolkits included a news release focusing on the comprehensive work done by all colleges in the region and then a full suite of marketing collateral designed to persuade regional residents of the power and impact of online CTE programs. Toolkits have been created in both English and Spanish. To request a toolkit or learn more, email **support@cvc.edu.**

Colleges Participating in the CVC Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant

The California Virtual Campus recognizes and commends all of the Improving Online CTE Pathways grantees. Thank you for your vision and dedication.

Bay Area
Cabrillo College
Cañada College
Chabot College
College of Marin
Contra Costa College
Diablo Valley College
Evergreen Valley College
Foothill College
Gavilan College
Hartnell College
Las Positas College
Los Medanos College
Monterey Peninsula College
Peralta Community College District
    Berkeley City College
    College of Alameda
    Laney College
    Merritt College
Santa Rosa Junior College
Skyline College
West Valley College

Central California
Bakersfield College
Clovis Community College
College of the Sequoias
Merced College
Modesto Junior College
Porterville College
Reedley College
San Joaquin Delta College
Taft College

Inland Empire and Desert Region
Chaffey College
College of the Desert
Mt. San Jacinto College
Norco College
San Bernardino Valley College
Victor Valley College

Los Angeles and Orange County
Coast Community College District
    Coastline College
    Golden West College
    Orange Coast College
Long Beach City College
Los Angeles City College
Los Angeles Pierce College
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
Los Angeles Valley College
Mt. San Antonio College
Rio Hondo College
Saddleback College
Santa Monica College
Santiago Canyon College

Northern California
College of the Siskiyous
Lake Tahoe Community College
Lassen College
Los Rios Community College District
    American River College
    Cosumnes River College
    Folsom Lake College
    Sacramento City College
Shasta College
Woodland Community College
Yuba College

San Diego and Imperial Counties
Cuyamaca College
Grossmont College
Imperial Valley College
MiraCosta College
Palomar College
San Diego Continuing Education
San Diego Miramar College
Southwestern College

South Central Coast
College of the Canyons
Moorpark College
Ventura College