



A Pathway to Economic Recovery for Every Californian

Advancing the skills needed to rebuild our state's economy



California leaders face an urgent need to address the COVID-19 pandemic and build a resilient and inclusive state economy. Policymakers must prioritize equitable postsecondary and workforce opportunities and outcomes to ensure our state's regional economies and communities can weather this crisis, recover quickly, and withstand future threats. California Competes Higher Education for a Strong Economy recommends immediate action to achieve three critical goals:



Drive inclusive economic recovery and future resiliency

by strengthening the education-to-employment pipeline. California should:

- » Increase postsecondary institutions' responsiveness to local and regional workforce and economic needs.
- » Improve the alignment and delivery of postsecondary programs and workforce development services.



Learn more in [An Untapped Opportunity: Californians without a College Degree](#)



Leverage employment disruption to make college a reality for adults

by offering clear pathways to and through higher education. California should:

- » Promote statewide adoption of practices that accelerate postsecondary credential completion for adults.
- » Expand financial aid to encourage completion by low-income adults.



Learn more in our [Back to College series](#)



Advance programs and services that deliver equitable results through the swift design and launch of the Cradle-to-Career Data System. The system should:

- » Illuminate challenges faced by marginalized and underserved populations.
- » Identify strategies that raise the quality of life for struggling Californians.
- » Align early childhood through workforce data at the individual level.



Learn more in [Out of the Dark: Bringing California's Education Data into the 21st Century](#)

Beyond these three specific policy priorities,

California Competes enables strategic decisionmaking for our leaders.

The scope of our work extends beyond our policy priorities to ensure leaders have access to the information needed to support a robust higher education and workforce ecosystem where more people of color and underrepresented students earn meaningful credentials and whose talents match the demands of the 21st century. In 2020, we will release the following:

- » California Postsecondary to Prosperity Index — a dynamic, user-friendly data visualization tool for regional and state analyses of the education-to-employment pipeline.
- » California Higher Education Frequently Asked Questions — a reliable source of information on common questions about California higher education and the economy.

About California Competes

California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy is a nonprofit, nonpartisan project funded through support from philanthropic foundations and is led by Executive Director Dr. Su Jin Gatlin Jez.



Mission and Vision

California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy aims to solve the state's thorny social and economic problems by conducting rigorous higher education and workforce policy research. Through our research, we guide decision makers in developing and implementing policies that bolster vibrant communities where every Californian can engage, contribute, and succeed.

We envision a California where our state and regional economies and communities thrive, fueled by equitable postsecondary and workforce opportunities and outcomes for all Californians.



Strategy

California Competes executes its mission through four main strategies: research, governmental affairs, advocacy, and collaboration with key partners.



California Competes **focuses our research efforts at the intersection of higher education, equity, and the economy**. We identify the state's unfulfilled potential in these areas to set an agenda responsive to Californians' most pressing needs.



As a trusted advisor to the governor's administration, legislators, institutions, employer groups, student groups, and other interest groups, we **engage leaders in Sacramento and statewide** to share our policy research and help solve some of California's toughest challenges.



We **convene experts in higher education policy** and involve decision makers in important discourse to drive systems change for the benefit of all Californians instead of a select few. These gatherings provide opportunities to learn, educate, advocate, connect, and inspire so we can promote innovation and embrace bold ideas.



We **partner with philanthropies, peer organizations, institutions, local governments, employers, and student groups** to use our collective voice to affect a double bottom line: achieving equity for students and growing our regional economies.



Leadership Council

California Competes benefits from our highly respected, bipartisan Leadership Council that provides breadth and depth of expertise and leadership.

- » (Chair) Elizabeth Hill, former California legislative analyst
- » Aída Álvarez, former administrator, US Small Business Administration
- » Bill Bogaard, former mayor, City of Pasadena
- » Steven Koblik, former president, Huntington Library
- » Carol Liu, former state senator
- » Julia Lopez, former president and CEO, College Futures Foundation
- » Roger Niello, co-owner, The Niello Company
- » Mike Roos, founder and chief consultant, Mike Roos & Company
- » Libby Schaaf, mayor, City of Oakland
- » Jack Scott, former chancellor, California Community Colleges
- » Peter Weber, founder, Fresno Bridge Academy, and former Fortune 500 executive



California's postsecondary system has the opportunity to drive the state's response to and recovery from this health and economic crisis. Moreover, higher education's ability to rapidly adapt to the state's needs could ensure that California is more resilient in the face of future crises.



–Elizabeth Hill
Chair, California Competes Leadership Council and Former Legislative Analyst for the State of California

To learn more about California Competes and our priorities for California's future, we invite you to visit our website and follow us on social media.