



**For Immediate Release**

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## **California Volunteers Announces New Civic Action Fellowship with Public and Private Universities**

SACRAMENTO – To meet Governor Gavin Newsom's vision of reaching 10,000 service members in the state, California Chief Service Officer Josh Fryday along with a coalition of public and private universities announced today the launch of a first-in-the-nation pilot initiative designed to help students pay for college through public service while using a combination of federal and state funding. California Volunteers unveiled the Civic Action Fellowship in partnership with Dominican University of California, University of the Pacific, Stanislaus State, Cal Lutheran, Cal State LA, UC Berkeley, UC Merced and San Jose State University.

As part of the Civic Action Fellowship, current undergraduate and graduate students will sign up as AmeriCorps Fellows and commit to serve their communities as they tackle local and regional community challenges. The service will be tailored toward students' academic curriculum while encouraging four-year completion, graduate school, job placement and an engrained commitment to civic engagement.

"Governor Newsom has laid out a bold vision to unite Californians around service and provide opportunities for every Californian to help tackle our greatest challenges. We hope this new partnership with universities will become a model for calling on young people to serve, while helping them pay for college," said Chief Service Officer Fryday.

The universities will welcome the inaugural cohort of nearly 250 AmeriCorps Fellows fall 2020. Approximately \$3.2 million in state and federal funds will support this initiative with an additional \$677,000 in scholarship funds to be awarded directly to students upon completion of their fellowship. Furthermore, this year, California became the first state to use general funds to supplement education award dollars offered to AmeriCorps members, allowing full-time members to earn up to \$10,000 towards the cost of college. This program will be leveraging these funds, and substantial private scholarship money raised by the universities, to grant to students. This represents a fundamentally new model of supporting the cost of college attendance by providing living allowances and scholarship awards to students in exchange for performing service to address critical community needs.

The following partners had this to say about Monday's announcement:

- “As part of our commitment to public service, we collaborate with communities across Los Angeles to leverage opportunities and address challenges. We are proud to work with AmeriCorps to deepen our impact in historically underserved communities.” - **Cal State LA President William A. Covino**
- “This innovative fellowship enhances and expands **Dominican University of California's** Reimagining Citizenship model throughout the state to give students the intellectual capacity, the financial support, and the practical experience to change our world for the better. This first-in-the-nation program design helps students pay for college while they develop skills for career readiness, serve the state, and stay on a four-year track for graduation.” - **Dominican University of California President Mary B. Marcy**
- “This grant will enable **Cal Lutheran** to build on its commitments to service learning and improving our community. The students selected as AmeriCorps Fellows will serve as mentors, tutors and advisers for low-income and immigrant youths throughout Ventura County, partnering with existing organizations for the important work of improving educational outcomes for at-risk populations.” – **Cal Lutheran President Chris Kimball**
- “**UC Berkeley** is very pleased to join with the State of California and the Governor to expand service opportunities for students and recent graduates. Our new program, with funding from the state -- BearCorps-- focuses on major areas of need in California: climate and resilience in forest and farm communities. We look forward to growing the effort together.” – **UC Berkeley Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Paul Alivisatos**
- “I’m both pleased and proud that **Stanislaus State** is a partner in this civic action fellowship. Many of our students already are involved in public service and community engagement, and this program not only supports those efforts but will create additional higher educational opportunities for Stan State students.” – **California State University, Stanislaus President Ellen Junn**
- **San José State University** is excited to answer the call for the Civic Action Fellowship because this program ensures students have the computing and digital skills that will propel them in their education and future careers. The ACE Fellows @ SJSU program is a partnership led out of the Center for Community Learning and Leadership and provides SJSU students the ability to give back to the community and serve as mentors for younger students in a crucial subject area.” - **Vincent Del Casino, San Jose State University Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs**

- “Engagement with K-12 schools in our region has been a part of **UC Merced**'s mission since its inception, and our students have always been at the core of that engagement. This exciting new program will improve literacy among Valley children, while also giving UC Merced students invaluable experience and lessening their student loan debt. We are proud to be a part of this effort.” - **UC Merced interim Chancellor Nathan Brostrom**
- “This exciting partnership with California Volunteers and AmeriCorps will expand **University of the Pacific**'s longstanding commitment to serving the Stockton community while leveraging our reputation for preparing health care professionals who lead their communities toward positive change. Our AmeriCorps student fellows will help improve access to primary and preventive care by advocating for our city's vulnerable populations.” — **University of the Pacific Interim President Maria Pallavicini.**

[California Volunteers](#). Office of the Governor is tasked with empowering Californians to take action to improve their communities.

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