

**Catholic Charities Panel Presentation**  
**“Policy issues related to Education and Poverty”**

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**Foothill-De Anza Community College District**  
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The Campaign for College Opportunity and the Community College Initiative are two statewide efforts focused on creating a stable, predictable funding base for community colleges that serve more than 3 million California residents statewide. Also included are the large numbers of undocumented students who graduate from high school and seek higher education. It's important for you to know about these statewide initiatives that you will likely be invited to participate in during the coming months.

Financial aid is one of the most important resources we have for students from poor families. All colleges and universities in Silicon Valley offer a combination of loans, grants, fee waivers, work-study, internships, employment and scholarships for students who qualify for financial aid. One of our biggest challenges is helping families understand what's involved and overcoming the stigma of receiving money from the federal or state government or from local charities.

For example, many people don't know that if a student qualifies for a Federal Pell Grant, he or she is not required to repay that money. Pell grants range from about \$400 to \$4000 per student for this 06-07 academic year. The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) is also a program that does not need to be repaid. This federal program is designed for students showing exceptional need and Pell Grant eligibility.

The State of California sponsors several grant programs for undergraduate students. These include Cal Grants, Bilingual Teacher Grants, and a program to assist the dependents of law enforcement officers who have been killed or disabled in the line of duty. The problem here - as with the federal grants - is that students who are undocumented do not qualify.

## **Here are a few 2005-06 Financial Aid Statistics from Foothill-De Anza**

More students received Financial Aid in 05-06 than any year in our history.

Nearly 20% of all students at Foothill and De Anza Colleges received Financial Aid. At De Anza College, \$13,724,331 was distributed to students by 14 staff (almost \$1M per staff).

California Community Colleges Board of Governors Fee Waiver recipients were 18% more likely to persist at 73% compared to 55% for non-BOG recipients.

We know that students who are financial aid recipients are 20% more likely than the general population to be working on their first college degree/certificate (88% vs. 68%) and that student recipients of financial aid are 13% more likely to be pursuing the goal of a baccalaureate or associate degree than the general population (63% vs. 50%).

Over half of the Financial Aid recipients live in targeted areas which is 17% more than the general population (51% vs. 34%). For Foothill-De Anza and our sister community colleges, the targeted areas we serve as East San Jose, Alviso, Milpitas, Fremont, Union City, Newark, Hayward, and East Palo Alto.

Students on financial aid are students of color with our largest recipients being Hispanic, African American and Vietnamese.

At our colleges, helping students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds is everyone's business. The Financial Aid Office doesn't do it alone. We have a number of programs including EOPS, Counseling, Health Services, CARE, the Child Development Center and Disabled Student Services, all of whom work together to support the access and success of these students.

Several of our biggest challenges at the policy level are:

- Funding for outreach and retention programs to attract and keep these students moving toward their educational dream of completing higher education. We need to do a lot more outreach – in multiple languages - to families who live and work in our poorest communities.

- We also need to do much more to help families plan for college - to let them know about the costs of college and the availability of financial aid. Financial aid is used to offset part or all of the annual cost of \$9,000 for students who live at home. Of that figure, \$837 covers college registration and fees, another \$1314 goes to books and supplies, \$3,321 is for room and board, \$1,062 for transportation and \$2,466 for personal expenses. These figures may seem out of reach for many families; however, with federal and state financial aid, Foothill and De Anza also have scholarship funds through our foundation. This year, through donations, we are able to provide over a million dollars directly to our students and we are aggressively seeking to build our scholarship funds. For example, due to the generosity of the Sobrato Family Foundation, we have a special program and funding available for foster youth who have turned 18 and desire a college education.

- We also have a program called CompTech that was developed with support from the High Tech Community, the Computer Recycling Center, Hewlett-Packard, Apple, and many other companies. With the help of the community we are able to take donations of older computers, refurbish them and give them to our poorest students.

1. Computers are donated to Foothill and De Anza College's Computer Donation & Scholarship Program.
2. Disadvantaged students apply for a computer scholarship through their college's Financial Aid Office.
3. Our Occupational Training Institute oversees the refurbishing operation that collects donated computers, refurbishes each unit and installs software and operating systems.
4. Qualified students are selected by Financial Aid to receive a refurbished computer.
5. When the computers are ready for distribution, students come to OTI and pick-up their machines.

I am proud to say that for the first time this fall, every student who met the above criteria and applied received a computer.

- Finally, we also have work-study and internship programs on campus and at NASA where students can work and be paid for their work while they attend college. The Federal Work-Study Program provides jobs for students, usually on campus. We also offer a student employment programs to help students gain work experience and to help them cover their educational costs. Students needing help to locate work on or off campus can check in at one of our Career Centers.

As I said before, getting the word out is a major local challenge and, at the state level, supporting programs to allow all students who qualify to receive financial aid is critical for our future.