



FOUNDATION *for* CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES



Network of California
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Walter S. Johnson Foundation Receives 2018 Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year Award

The Network of California Community College Foundations recognizes the organization's decade-long support of programs that benefit marginalized students

SACRAMENTO, CA, November 16, 2018 - The Walter S. Johnson Foundation (WSJF) has been named the 2018 Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year, recognizing more than \$5.5 million in support to project and programs benefiting the California Community Colleges. Over the last decade, WSJF has supported 10 California community colleges or districts, the Foundation for California Community Colleges (Foundation), and the Career Ladders Project, a fiscally-sponsored program of the Foundation.

The Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year award recognizes distinguished philanthropic contributions to California Community Colleges and is selected by the Network of California Community College Foundations (Network), an association of professionals dedicated to philanthropy. The award is presented to an individual, corporation, or nonprofit organization who demonstrates a commitment to philanthropy and serves as a role model to encourage philanthropy for California Community Colleges. WSJF was chosen as this year's recipient due to its deep understanding of the transformative effect of access to higher education and its role in the development of two Foundation programs, the Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) and Fresh Success, an employment and training program.

“The Walter S. Johnson Foundation has played a tremendous role in helping to serve students who face additional barriers to completing a certificate or degree,” said Dr. George Boodrookas, president of the Network and dean of advancement at Modesto Junior College Foundation. “Through the organization’s philanthropic funding, programs that directly impact some of Community Colleges’ most vulnerable student populations have been able to expand their presence across all 114 campuses, providing individualized support based on the barriers faced within each region.”

The Foster Youth Success Initiative guides foster youth with accessing and navigating support services within the community college system, ultimately seeking to increase the number of students who achieve and complete their educational goals. WSJF has helped FYSI to grow its presence across California and to secure state funding for a Statewide FYSI Liaison position, which provides technical support and streamlines communications between the campuses and its partners. This has resulted in better integration of members in the K-12 systems, county offices of education, and UC and CSU systems in local communities of foster youth students, all of which are needed to work together in order to support this group of students in their path towards education.

“Support from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation has been critical to accelerate and scale programs designed to close equity gaps and prepare students for careers,” said Keetha Mills, president and CEO of the Foundation for California Community Colleges. “We are grateful for their partnership and support.”

Additionally, WSJF’s initial grant for Fresh Success funded program design and planning from the initial concept stage to a successful model that now partners with five community colleges (Gavilan College, Cosumnes River College, Opportunity Junction, Rubicon Programs, and Southwestern College) and has brought in over \$1.3 million in federal funding to help low-income individuals receive training and additional support to prepare to more lucrative careers. Colleges use those dollars to start and manage CalFresh Employment and Training programs that help participants gain education and training that will lead to better employment and a path to economic self-sufficiency.

“The need is so great and so crucial for our disadvantaged students in California. By partnering with the California Community Colleges—both at the state and local level—our Foundation has had tremendous success in leveraging our investment towards long term solutions,” said Yali Lincroft, program director of the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and vice president of philanthropic services at Whittier Trust.

The Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year Award is named after Mr. Bernard Osher for his history-making commitment to community college students in 2008. The Bernard Osher Foundation pledged an unprecedented lead gift of \$25 million and committed additional match dollars which ultimately resulted in the establishment a \$76 million statewide scholarship endowment.

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The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official nonprofit foundation to the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and Chancellor's Office. The Foundation's mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community Colleges system, the largest higher education system in the nation. Incorporated in 1998, the Foundation works to benefit all California Community College students, colleges, college foundations, and the system as a whole by accelerating paths to economic and social mobility, strengthening communities, and reducing barriers to opportunities for all Californians. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit corporation and receives no direct state or public support. For more information, visit www.foundationccc.org.

The Network of California Community College Foundations is a professional association dedicated to expanding impact of philanthropy within California Community Colleges. Through training and networking, the Network serves over 80% of advancement professionals working to advance the missions of the California Community Colleges. To learn more, please visit ncccfweb.org

The mission of **the Walter S. Johnson Foundation (WSJF)** is to assist transition-aged foster and other vulnerable youth in Northern California and Nevada to become successful adults. The foundation accelerates change by partnering with county and state leaders, nonprofits, and other foundations in support of improving educational and employment outcomes for vulnerable youth ages 14 -24. One of the most successful partnerships WSJF participates in is the [California College Pathways](#), a public-private partnership with 14 other foundations focused on creating a seamless system of support for foster youth as they transition from high school to post-secondary education.