Faculty, students help secure additional state funding for the CSU; more investment needed for the ‘People’s University’

Months of advocacy work by faculty, students, and community allies paid off this week as Gov. Jerry Brown signed a state budget bill that includes $204.2 million in additional funding for the California State University system.

Since the beginning of the year, CFA members have dedicated countless hours to helping educate lawmakers about the need to reinvest in the CSU system. We sent thousands of email messages to legislators, wrote hundreds of handwritten letters to Gov. Brown, and even sang in the Capitol Rotunda when Gov. Brown issued his May revise of the state budget.

Underscoring the chorus of advocacy was our report, “Equity, Interrupted: How California Is Cheating Its Future,” which chronicles the systemic underfunding of the CSU as the student body grew increasingly diverse over the past 30 years.

“This was a heavy lift on the part of our faculty and student activists, and the legislature responding to our collective voice made it worth the effort,” said CFA President Jennifer Eagan.

“We are appreciative that the Legislature understands the value of the CSU and our students, who are the future of our state,” she said in a written CFA statement. “The investment in ongoing funding rather than merely one-time infusions is meaningful; it
provides classes for students and allows for more faculty hiring—the real graduation initiative—allocates funds for new enrollments, and maintains programs. It lays the groundwork for the future.”

Here’s a look at the state funding for the CSU by the numbers:

- The CSU received an additional $204.2 million for the 2017-18 fiscal year. That includes:
  - $162.2 million in ongoing funding
  - $20 million aimed at enrollment growth
  - $20 million in one-time funding for various programs, including $2.5 million for a new Hunger Free Campus initiative
  - $2 million in special funding for transportation research and education, from funds raised by the new gas tax

More investment is needed, however. As our report shows, the state is spending less per student today than it did in 1985, yet students and their families are paying much more in fees and tuition.

We will continue to fight for a more substantial investment in the coming budget year on behalf of our students, colleagues, and the future of our university system.

- Contact your local CFA chapter to get involved in our legislative and political action efforts.
- To read more about the CSU budget, click here to read our FAQ.
- Click here to read CFA’s statement on the state budget.

Links of the Week

Let’s not be as shortsighted on pensions as on drought
Sacramento Bee
It wasn’t long ago that some armchair experts, basing their opinions on data from the previous 10 years, were predicting California’s drought would extend indefinitely… But another group of self-styled experts has grabbed the media megaphone with doomsday predictions about California’s public worker pension funds. They are repeating the same mistake, taking a short snapshot and concluding that it will extend forever.

Remove your shoes…and your books
Inside Higher Ed
The Transportation Security Administration is testing and plans to expand a program in which airline passengers will be asked to remove books from carry-on luggage.

Single-payer health care put on hold in California as leader calls bill ‘woefully incomplete’
Mercury News
A proposal to bring universal health care to California — replacing the private insurance market with a government-run single-payer plan — was abruptly put on hold Friday by Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, all but ensuring the nationally touted measure will not pass the Legislature this year.
Old criticisms, new threats
Inside Higher Ed
Professors have long been political targets. But a spate of recent threats against scholars — including two that have led to campus closures — is raising fresh concerns about safety and academic freedom.

State attorney general: leader of the California resistance
San Francisco Chronicle
California Attorney General Xavier Becerra’s aggressive legal counterattack to Trump administration policies has been compared to the efforts by Texas to undercut President Barack Obama’s orders on everything from the environment to immigration to transgender rights. In the midst of that flurry of lawsuits, the Texas attorney general at the time, now Gov. Greg Abbott, famously described his typical workday to a Tea Party gathering in 2013: “I go into the office, I sue the federal government, and I go home.”

The Bottom Line
Capital & Main
Hosted by the Drucker Institute’s Rick Wartzman, author of four books and a Fortune contributor, The Bottom Line puts a spotlight on companies that are advancing social progress—and those that aren’t.

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