



May 1, 2020

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 94249

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Chair
Assembly Budget Committee, Sub Committee #2
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 94249

The Honorable Holly Mitchell
Chair
Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 94249

The Honorable Dr. Richard Pan
Chair
Senate Budget Committee, Sub Committee #1
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, CA 94249

Dear Chairpersons Ting, McCarty, Mitchell, and Pan:

On behalf of the De Anza College Asian Pacific American Staff Association (APASA), we write in strong support of the \$2.5 million budget request made by Assemblyman Evan Low to fund a student success program that will assist low-income, disadvantaged, and first-generation Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) students to complete their college degrees and close the achievement gap. Our support recognizes the disproportionate effects of the current coronavirus pandemic on all lower socio-economic income students, including AAPI students. Low-income and first-generation AAPI students who set out to attend college already face marginalization and limited services on campuses and our concern is that the consequences of the current pandemic will exacerbate these conditions. Dramatic cuts to student support services by colleges and universities could drive underserved and underrepresented AAPI students into even deeper isolation.

The mission of APASA is to promote the interests of the AAPI members at De Anza College and in our broader communities. Among the goals of APASA is to assist our college in addressing the needs of our AAPI students by working to ensure their academic success. Low-income and first-generation AAPI students throughout California will continue to be significantly disadvantaged now more than ever before due to the ongoing climate of economic, social, and educational uncertainty. They are both overwhelmed by the system and lack the financial and informational resources to meet the demands and expectations of the new college culture. We want to provide these students with the most fundamental resources to assist them in striving for academic success and ultimately financial freedom to be able to contribute to the state's driven economy.



It is imperative for the State Legislature to ensure funding is made available to invest in programs that support low-income AAPI students, just as it has done for other underrepresented students of color on college campuses throughout the state. Research evidence shows that high impact practices in support of AAPI students improve academic performance and shortens time to degree completion. We believe that funding for comprehensive approaches, including culturally relevant coursework, professional counseling, peer mentoring, and leadership development that directly supports disadvantaged AAPI students is requisite for their academic achievement and success. These programs will enhance the social mobility of low-income AAPI families and provide better opportunities to strengthen the future labor force will be critical to spurring California's recovering post-pandemic economy.

We strongly support Assemblyman Low's proposal. Thank you for your review and consideration of this worthwhile proposal.

Sincerely,

K.D. Le & La Donna Yumori-Kaku
APASA Co-Chairs
De Anza College

Cc: Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2
Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee #1