

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 2PM EASTERN,  
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2017**

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**ASPEN INSTITUTE RECOGNIZES  
PASADENA CITY COLLEGE IN PASADENA, CALIFORNIA AS ONE OF TOP TEN  
FINALISTS IN NATIONAL PRIZE COMPETITION**

Today, Pasadena City College (PCC) was recognized in an award ceremony in Washington, DC, as one of the top ten community colleges nationally in the bi-annual Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. During the ceremony at the Newseum, Pasadena was recognized for achieving:

- A graduation/transfer rate of 49%, well above the national average of 39%
- A 52% bachelor's degree attainment rate among Pasadena graduates who transfer to a four-year university, compared to 42% nationally

As noted in the Aspen Institute's extensive review, Pasadena City College serves a large and incredibly diverse suburban district of the Los Angeles metro region, and is a destination for students who want to transfer to a four-year institution. A leader among California's community colleges, PCC awards more associate's degrees and provides more four-year transfer opportunities than any other college in the state. The college has a strong, demonstrated commitment to making sure all students succeed both while in college and in promising careers after they graduate. PCC has made incredible strides in closing the achievement gap for students of color, who make up more than 76% of its student body. Nearly half of PCC's 27,000 students are Hispanic and 43% are the first in their families to attend college. This commitment to equity, exceptional faculty engagement, as well as smart investments in classroom innovations have improved learning and retention for all students and maintained Pasadena City College's strong reputation for student success.

We thank Pasadena City College for participating in this year's Aspen Prize process, and for helping define excellence for community colleges nationwide.

**For more information on Pasadena City College, and the national press release, go to:**

<http://as.pn/1kr>.

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**The Aspen Prize** is funded by the Joyce Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, the Siemens Foundation, and Pearson.

**The Aspen College Excellence Program** aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership that significantly improve student outcomes. Through the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the Siemens Technical Scholars Program, and other initiatives, the College Excellence Program works to improve colleges' understanding and capacity to teach and graduate students, especially the growing population of low-income and minority students on American campuses. For more information, visit <http://highered.aspeninstitute.org/>.

**The Aspen Institute** is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit [www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.org).