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**AP18:073**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MAY 17, 2018**

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## **CA Secretary of State Alex Padilla, AICCU Announce Historic Partnership to Register Students to Vote**

**SANTA CLARA** – At a signing ceremony at Santa Clara University, California Secretary of State Alex Padilla announced today a historic partnership between the Secretary of State's office and the [Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities \(AICCU\)](#) as part of the Secretary of State's [California Student Vote Project](#). With AICCU's participation, all major institutions of higher education in California have solidified commitments to partner with the Secretary of State's office and encourage student voter registration efforts.

**[View the signed memorandum of understanding \(MOU\) with The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities \(AICCU\).](#)**

"Higher education institutions play a pivotal role in preparing students to be well-informed and engaged citizens. And the first step in participating in our democratic process is registering to vote," said Secretary of State Alex Padilla. "Through this partnership with the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, we will work with their 78 member campuses to close the youth voting gap by providing ongoing voter registration and voting information for new and continuing students. I am excited to work with campus leaders to increase youth voter registration and participation."

The MOU is part of the Secretary of State's [California Student Vote Project](#) which is a partnership with the California Lieutenant Governor's office, CalPIRG, California Common Cause, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus. The MOU encourages campuses to offer voter registration opportunities through their student portals as well as send all-campus emails and notifications about the importance of voting before voter registration deadlines and elections. Campuses are also urged to implement best practices for on-the-ground voter education and registration efforts at campus housing and other high-traffic areas on campus. AICCU will join the University of California, the California State University and the California Community Colleges as members of the California Student Vote Project.

"Our institutions recognize that voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and the means of a representative government," said AICCU President Kristen Soares. "I am certain that, together, we can make a true impact on voter engagement at nonprofit colleges and universities, and throughout the state."

“At Santa Clara University, we are committed to developing leaders who are dedicated to improving the lives of others,” said Santa Clara University President Michael Engh, S.J.. “We must continue to encourage the next generation of leaders and global thinkers to take action and embrace their civic responsibilities.”

“We do not yet have a California electorate that reflects the full age or racial diversity of our state,” said Jonathan Stein, head of the voting rights program at Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus. “We are proud to be working in collaboration with the Secretary and California’s colleges and universities to change that.”

"Many independent colleges and universities have a large percentage of students who moved to attend school," said Emily Rusch, executive director of CalPIRG. "It's so important to remind those students to register or update their voter registration to ensure they can receive a ballot wherever they are at the time of the election. We're thrilled the AICCU is joining other California institutions in this partnership with the Secretary of State."

AICCU colleges and universities include comprehensive research institutions, specialized professional schools, liberal arts institutions, faith-based schools, as well as campuses that focus on the arts and those that offer non-traditional study programs. They are at the forefront of new and expanding initiatives, including online courses, hybrid programs, and expedited degree programs for adult learners. In total, AICCU represents 78 campuses and about 330,000 students across the state.

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