

Dr. Debra Jones

Dr. Debra Jones is the Administrator of Career Education Practices in the Workforce and Economic Development Division for the California Community Colleges, the nation's largest system of higher education. Dr. Jones oversees the administration of more than \$250 million dollars of state and federal funding that supports the career education mission across California's 113 community colleges. She is a recognized leader and strategic change agent in workforce development and career education.

Dr. Jones coauthored the report *The Return on Investment from Adult Education and Training: Measuring the Economic Impact of a Better Educated and Trained U.S. Workforce*. The report addresses the current budget pressure at both state and federal levels, and argues that cutting education now, in particular adult education and training, will result in increased costs to society later in areas such as health care, welfare, and corrections.

Dr. Jones served five years as state director of adult education prior to her tenure at the Chancellor's Office. Under her leadership the State developed the strategic plan *Linking Adults to Opportunity: Transformation of the California Adult Education Program*. The plan sets the stage for developing the statewide collaborations and a regional approach needed to maximize the state's return on its investment in adult education. Debra's current work with the California community Colleges Chancellor's Office to collaboratively design a framework to serve adults is inspired by her belief that education and training builds strong communities and provides a solution to today's economic and educational crisis.

Dr. Jones is a frequent public speaker and has represented the California Community College System to state, national, and international delegations. She has testified before the California Assembly Committees on Finance and Higher Education. Additionally, Dr. Jones serves on Boards and Advisory Committees related to economic development, pathways, and educational success. Dr. Jones received her Doctorate of Education in organizational leadership from University of La Verne.