



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CONTACT:

Brenda Ortiz, UC Merced University Communications

Office: 209-228-4203 | Cell: 209-628-8263 | Email: [bortiz@ucmerced.edu](mailto:bortiz@ucmerced.edu)

## High School Visit to Inspire Local Students to 'Achieve UC'

*UC Merced Chancellor Dorothy Leland and campus staff members to visit Merced High School to tell students there's a place for them at UC*

MERCED, Calif. — University of California, Merced, Chancellor Dorothy Leland will visit Merced High School Oct. 18 as part of Achieve UC, a systemwide initiative to show high school students how they can attain a University of California education.

The idea behind the event is to inspire students to aim for college, then provide them with the information they need to get there.

"Our core message is 'there is a place for you here,'" Leland said. "We want to inspire students, but also make them a pledge – if they do their part and study hard, apply themselves, take the tests and courses they need to qualify – we'll make sure there's a place for them here at UC, and provide financial assistance to help them get here."

The outreach event will showcase what the university is doing to enable students to achieve their college goals, whether that is going to a UC or another university. Leland's talk will be followed by hands-on workshops at the high school with UC Merced admissions advisers.

The event is the first coordinated systemwide effort to connect high school students with leaders across the University of California, and is expected to reach some 10,000 freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors.

### Quick Facts

- As part of a systemwide initiative, UC Merced Chancellor Dorothy Leland will visit Merced High School on Oct. 18.
- Achieve UC will give students a clear picture of what they need to meet core college-going requirements.
- UC Merced to announce the Gateway Scholarship Program. The new scholarship is supported by an anonymous donor to help Merced High School students who attend UC Merced.

Senior leaders from each UC campus, including UC President Mark Yudof, will visit high schools across the state beginning Oct. 18 as part of Achieve UC.

“I’ve visited high schools up and down the state, and it’s always exciting to see students learn about the financial support that exists and discover that a University of California education is attainable,” Yudof said. “If they push themselves, work hard and dream big, we’ll make sure the doors of opportunity are open to them. We want their talents, their passion and their perspectives.”

Beyond hearing from UC leadership, students will receive personalized assessments that highlight the specific courses they need to be eligible for admission to California’s public four-year colleges or, alternately, transfer into these schools through a community college. These personalized roadmaps are designed to reach students at a critical juncture in their high school career, so they have time to take the courses necessary to be well-prepared for postsecondary education.

Students will also learn about financial aid programs designed to make college affordable to all Californians — such as the Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan, which covers the full cost of fees for students whose families earn \$80,000 a year or less.

During her talk, Leland will reinforce the message that financial assistance shouldn't be an obstacle to pursuing higher education by announcing the Gateway Scholarship Program. The program, which is supported by an anonymous donor, began this fall and provides scholarships to incoming freshmen from Merced High School who attend UC Merced.

Achieve UC builds on programs the University of California has in high schools across the state — like UC Merced's Center for Educational Partnerships — which help put students on a path to college.

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*UC Merced opened Sept. 5, 2005, as the 10th campus in the University of California system and the first American research university of the 21st century. The campus significantly expands access to the UC system for students throughout the state, with a special mission to increase college-going rates among students in the San Joaquin Valley. It also serves as a major base of advanced research and as a stimulus to economic growth and diversification throughout the region. Situated near Yosemite National Park, the university is expected to grow rapidly, topping out at about 25,000 students within 30 years.*