

# California is Failing Adult Learners; Harming Today's and Future Workforce



**Affordable and Flexible 100% Online College Programs Are Key to Opening the Door to Higher Education for Veterans  
One of Every Two California Veterans Plan to Pursue Higher Education in the Near Future**

## California is last in the nation for adults in need of adult education... We Can Do Better

- California ranks last in the nation with over half of adults (57%) needing more adult education according to a 2018-2019 Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey of adults 18-65 with less than an associate degree and who were not currently enrolled in college courses.
- California faces a shortfall of over two million degrees and certificates to meet employers' needs and promote economic mobility for its residents. [Source](#)
- 64% of California adult learners and 72% of veterans have some college, but no degree – while over a third of California adult learners wanted to pursue adult education, but never got the chance.

## California veterans are seeking higher educational opportunities.

- In just one year, nearly 250,000 active-duty military accessed online college through military tuition benefits – a number that has spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Source](#)
- Most veteran college students are adult learners – with only 15% of all veteran students attending college between the traditional years of 18-23.
- One of every two (51%) California veterans who do not have a college degree are likely to pursue adult education in the near future (much higher compared to other adult learners, 35%).\*
- 73% of veterans surveyed said they are interested in pursuing higher education because it will lead to a better job and higher income.\*
- 65% of veterans surveyed who were negatively impacted by the pandemic are considering going back to college or some kind of adult career education.\*

## Increased access to financial aid for online learning will help more veterans return or enroll in a college program.

- The large majority (58%) of veterans surveyed would be interested in some kind of college or adult career education if barriers such as affordability and flexibility were removed.\*
- 71% of veterans surveyed stated that financial aid or scholarships would help with the costs of education and 68% needs an affordable college program due to tight budgets.\*

## Increased access to flexible online courses is key to helping more veterans return or enroll in a college program.

- 77% of veterans surveyed said that a flexible course schedule to fit into their own schedules is a priority making it easier to attend a college program.\*
- Furthermore, two of every three (66%) veterans surveyed said that it would be easier to attend a college program that was online rather than having to travel to a class and 65% of veterans would likely enroll into a 100% online college program now.\*

## Join CAL Network: Support Creating New Higher Educational Opportunities for Veterans & California Adult Learners

CAL Network (California Adult Learners Network) is a coalition advocating for a new state grant program for California adult learners who need financial support and the flexibility of online courses to attain higher education for more lucrative and rewarding careers while strengthening California's skilled workforce. For more information, go to [www.CAL-Network.com](http://www.CAL-Network.com).

\* Heart+Mind Strategies completed n=1065 interviews with a representative sample of Californians with some or no college matching age, gender, and ethnicity of the US Census for California. Additional oversample interviews were conducted with key groups, including: veterans, single mothers/fathers, foster children, rural residents, low-income rural residents, Asians, 1st and 2nd generation immigrants. Respondents participated via an online survey conducted June 15 to July 20, 2021.