A Bright Future for Placer County

There comes a moment in a region’s history when a community has a chance to do something extraordinary.

For Placer County, another extraordinary moment has arrived.

To seize an opportunity.
To transform lives.
To build a bright future.

Now is that moment for the new Sacramento State Placer Center.

Sacramento State Placer Center

The Sacramento State Placer Center is the future site of a 300-acre academic center linked to Sacramento State—a leading teaching university in Northern California and the sixth largest of the 23 campuses in the California State University (CSU) system. The Placer Center will not only expand access to a four-year degree; it will deliver a new model in higher education.

The Placer Center is coming to fruition through unprecedented partnerships between the University, Sierra College, Placer County, forward-thinking government and business leaders, philanthropists, and Placer County citizens. It is an initiative that will ensure
Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community

Known for its beautiful scenery and year-round recreation, Placer County has experienced tremendous growth during the past decades. According to U.S. Census data, the population of Placer County has increased an average of 40 percent every decade since the 1950s.

The population explosion has dramatically increased Placer County’s education needs, with the prospects of 84,000 school-aged (K-12) children who live there. Every day 5,000 residents travel out of the county to pursue their higher education aspirations and face the burden of increasingly longer commutes.

A New Higher Education Model

The Placer Center will allow Sacramento State to address Placer County’s higher education needs, while offering an attractive way for students in Placer County and the surrounding area to access a public four-year college degree.

Sacramento State is collaborating with Sierra College, one of its largest feeder schools, on a new model in higher education. Sierra College will build a transfer center on-site as part of the Placer Center.

With plans for a dual-enrollment venture and a system of seamless support, students will complete their community college studies and transfer to Sacramento State—without having to change campuses. “All of which will reduce costs for students, shorten time to degree, and improve student success,” says William “Willy” Duncan, Superintendent and President of Sierra College.

“As the State of California looks for ways to leverage its education assets to ensure that every member of our community has the opportunity to meet their education goals, the exploration of new models like this is crucial,” adds Duncan, a CSU alumnus and the father of a Sacramento State alumna.

Another leveraged resource and foundational element to the Placer Center will be the construction of a Placer County crime lab built on the campus. This lab will fill a longstanding need in Placer County, as well as serve as a venue for real-world instruction for students who will have access to internships and innovative learning opportunities.

“Creation of the Crime Lab in Placer County will not only be a beacon of collaboration between the Sacramento State Placer Center and Placer County, but will provide the Placer community with an important and much needed component to our criminal justice infrastructure. Critical forensic services will be provided to the community in an efficient and timely manner while providing educational and training opportunities to students in this field of study. Through this partnership, resolution of criminal cases will be streamlined in an innovative and academic setting that will promote research and internships to prepare future generations to work in the fields of criminal justice and forensic science,” said Morgan Gire, Placer County District Attorney.

Building a Strong Workforce

A college degree can be transformative in building a strong workforce—as graduates gain problem-solving and critical-thinking skills that are valuable, and also provide specialized skills and degrees that are essential.

From initial conversations with Sierra College, industry, as well as Placer County government and business leaders, some of the academic areas of focus include the high-demand professions the region specifically needs:

- Teacher Education
- Environmental Sciences
- Forest Health
- Criminal Justice
- Health Care and Social Services
- Policy and Government
- Business
- Hospitality and Tourism

A Collaborative, Community-Centric Academic Center

Since its founding in 1947, Sacramento State has been transforming lives through education. We recently honored our mission to include our commitment as an anchor university, to support and improve the quality of life in our community.

The Placer Center is an excellent example of this anchor university mission in action, even before the first brick is laid. Dozens of leaders from the community, government, business, and the University have been working together, each bringing their own perspective and ideas so that the Placer Center will serve the needs of all, and especially those of the next generation.

As a result, the Placer Center will be a vibrant academic center filled with interdisciplinary work.

Just as we do at our Sacramento Campus, the Placer Center will provide hands-on learning opportunities and community-engaged scholarship. Students will work for and with the Placer community to obtain knowledge, pursue research, and advance their learning.

It’s an educational method that deepens the learning experience for the student and benefits the surrounding community.

Sacramento State is pursuing this transformative venture for the community. A resource that’s most reflective of this commitment is the library Sacramento State will build as a hub for learning, collaborating, and exploring.

“On the Rise

“The Placer Center will enable us to educate students closer to home, allowing them to further develop their network in Placer and enrich the region upon graduation.”

—President Robert S. Nelsen

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Educational and economic prosperity for generations to come.

The Placer Center will accommodate up to 1,500 students initially and, over time, will grow through the vision of a master plan to accommodate up to 25,000 Sacramento State students, and an additional 5,000 Sierra College students.

The Placer Center is the centerpiece of a 2,200-acre master-planned Placer Ranch development situated within Placer County’s Sunset Plan Area, which is designated for high job growth for the next several decades.

“The impact this Center will have on the Placer region, and most importantly Sacramento State students is unprecedented. This effort is a testimony to the power of partnership among education, government, and private industry,” said Holly Tiche, Sacramento State alumnus and president of Placer Ranch, Inc.

Placer County’s commitment to the Placer Center has been a driving force in the future campus. “The Placer County Board of Supervisors is very excited about and committed to the Sacramento State Placer Center. Located in our Sunset Area Plan, the center will not only be a beacon of collaboration between the Sacramento State Placer Center and Placer County, but will provide the Placer community with an important and much needed component to our criminal justice infrastructure. Critical forensic services will be provided to the community in an efficient and timely manner while providing educational and training opportunities to students in this field of study,” said Morgan Gire, Placer County District Attorney.

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Sacramento State Placer Center: Case for Support

Sacramento State Placer Center by the Numbers

5,000
Estimated number of Placer County residents who commute outside the community every day for higher education needs

Placer is the 2nd Fastest Growing County in California

454K+
Expected Population in Placer County by 2030

40%
Average Population Growth in Placer County Each Decade
From 1950-2020

84,000
K-12 Students in Placer County

300 acres
Size of Placer Center

$27.4 million
Value of Land Donated by Eli Broad

$17.8 million
Infrastructure Investment by Placer County
Community members will have access to research collections, services, and expertise of a university library. The library could also devote space for entrepreneurship, innovation, and prototype-patent activities. The ability to bring together experts in a variety of disciplines to mentor and collaborate is something that libraries are uniquely positioned to do within their communities.

**Unprecedented Partnerships**

What makes the Placer Center initiative so unique in the CSU system—the largest producer of bachelor’s degree graduates in the state of California—and in public higher education are the partnerships forged through this project:

- The visionary donation of land, valued at $27.4 million, from the late entrepreneur and philanthropist Eli Broad and his company, Placer Ranch, Inc.
- Placer County’s $17.8 million investment in the Center’s infrastructure, allowing capacity to expand to meet the needs of tens of thousands of students.
- **Placer County’s intention to build a regional crime lab.**
- Sierra College transfer center to support dual-enrollment and collaborative curriculums and degrees with Sacramento State.

“The partnerships will elevate the CSU educational experience to a new level in a very underserved region,” says John Volek, former head football coach for Sacramento State and retired dean at Sierra College.

“Our chance is now!” says Volek.

**Partnership Opportunities**

Partnerships have not only given the Placer Center a solid start; they are also what makes the prospect of this project so promising.

Sacramento State invites you to become a partner of the Placer Center, which will positively impact the region for generations to come.

**Partnership investments include:**

- Capital support and naming opportunities for Phase I buildings including the first instructional building and library
- Naming opportunities for key staff, including a crime lab director and endowed professors
- Funding for educational programs and equipment

“We are focused on developing a strong, educated workforce, and we believe that this new campus will serve as just that—a key educational innovation center for the area,” says Bonnie Gore, member of the Placer County board of supervisors.

Sacramento State has strong academic programs to match Placer County’s high-demand workforce needs. A rich cadre of nearly 150 faculty are already living in the area who can fill faculty positions at the Placer Center.

**Now is the Time**

Sacramento State, and the Placer Center, are on the rise.

The Placer region has been experiencing tremendous growth that is unlikely to slow down anytime soon. It is home to world-class recreational facilities, fantastic retail centers, beautiful scenery, and a stellar educational system.

Placer County, Sierra College, and Sacramento State have the historic opportunity to work collectively and collaboratively to move this bold and visionary initiative forward. We invite you to partner with us as we make the dream a reality.