



News Release

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March 16, 2009

Cuesta Students Rally to Protest Budget Cuts

A group of 52 Cuesta College students joined thousands of their counterparts in a rally Monday in Sacramento to protest budget cuts and proposed fee increases at California's community colleges.

"They've heard a lot about the current budget issues, and they knew that the state budget was already passed," said Anthony Gutierrez, Associated Students of Cuesta College adviser, who accompanied the group. "But they wanted to make sure to be able to come out and support the Student Senate (for California Community Colleges) and let the legislators know not to reduce any further funding to community college students and to make sure their voice is heard."

The daylong event was titled the California Community Colleges Capitol Rally Day. Cuesta students boarded a chartered bus that left San Luis Obispo about 3 a.m. and arrived about 9 a.m. at a staging ground at Raley Field in West Sacramento, Gutierrez said.

They joined students from community colleges in Rocklin, Folsom, Sacramento, Fresno, San Francisco, Eureka, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles and Butte and Siskiyou counties who also arrived wearing T-shirts representing their schools and, according to some reports, carried signs that said, "We are the future." Cuesta students wore white T-shirts that said Cuesta College on the back "and on the front they made their own design and wrote a message on the shirt," he said.

The mile-long march up Capitol Avenue began at the park and ended at the Capitol's north steps with a rally featuring student speakers and legislators.

At 2 p.m., smaller groups of Cuesta students fanned out across the Capitol building to take their message to area lawmakers Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee, R-San Luis Obispo, and state Sen. Abel Maldonado, R-Santa Maria.

"They're meeting with seven different people," Gutierrez said. "The students wanted to meet with their local reps as well as people who sit on the education and budget committees."

Cuesta students left Sacramento about 5 p.m., Gutierrez said.

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<http://academic.cuesta.edu/pim/pr/index.htm>

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