

MAY 2023

News...

from the desk of
California State Treasurer Fiona Ma, CPA



WELCOME LETTER

Dear Friends,

The rain finally seems to be behind us! It's the month of May and spring is here. May brings new beginnings, but also endings, to many families – college seniors are wrapping up their final spring semester and looking forward to job opportunities, while high school seniors are excited to be graduating in the days ahead and embarking on their college path. This month, we celebrate National 529 College Savings Day. Recognized each year on May 29th, National 529 College Savings Day celebrates 529 college savings plans and the importance of saving for higher education. I'm pleased to announce that my office is offering a 529 Day promotion again this year to help families kick-start their college savings. To learn more about this promotion, please turn to page 3.

This month, I'm also excited to feature a new and upcoming program housed in my office – the California Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment (HOPE) for Children Trust Account Program. This program will provide a trust account to eligible children who lost a parent or guardian to COVID-19, as well as children who have been in the foster system for over 18 months. Please turn to page 4 to learn more about the HOPE program.

Lastly, on page 5, I'd like to share some resources to help clean up trash pollution. I recently spoke at the 3rd Annual Statewide Conference on Illegal Dumping and was pleased to learn of a number of resources available, statewide, to help address litter and illegal dumping.

In Peace and Friendship,

A stylized, handwritten signature of Fiona Ma in black ink.

Fiona Ma, CPA
California State Treasurer

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The State Treasurer's Office and its Boards, Commissions and Authorities are hiring!

[Check out our career opportunities.](#)

This newsletter is not intended to be and should not be used for making investment decisions about State of California bonds or notes. Potential investors should always obtain and read the Official Statement published by the State for each issue.

Past performance does not guarantee future results. Investment return and principal value may fluctuate, so account value in State Treasurer's Office savings programs at the time of the withdrawal may be higher or lower than the amount invested.

This material is not intended to provide, and should not be relied on, for tax, legal or financial advice.



WE'VE MOVED

The State Treasurer's Office is now at the Bonderson Building located at:
901 P Street Sacramento, CA 95814.

ASK FIONA

Dear Fiona,

I'm looking to purchase my first home and was interested in applying for the California Dream for All Loan program, but I just learned that the program has been paused. Will it reopen? Are there any other loan programs that help first time homebuyers?

Sincerely,

Evelyn

.....

Dear Evelyn,

The California Dream for All Shared Appreciation Loan program was launched in March by the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) to provide loans to first-time homebuyers for up to 20 percent of the home purchase price to help cover the cost of down payments. Due to unprecedented demand, the funding for the program has already been fully committed and the program has been paused. It's important to note that this is a revolving program, and it will be reopened as more funding becomes available, either through recycled loan funds or from a State budget appropriation. You can [sign up for CalHFA's eNews](#) to receive future California Dream for All Shared Appreciation Loan program updates.

The good news is that the funding source for the California Dream for All Shared Appreciation Loan program is separate from other CalHFA programs. That means CalHFA's other down payment assistance program is still available. Under the [MyHome Assistance Program](#), first time homebuyers can receive loans of up to 3 percent of the purchase price to assist with a down payment. For more information about CalHFA and its programs, please visit <https://www.calhfa.ca.gov/index.htm>.

Due to the success of this program, approximately 2,500 loans were enrolled, enabling first time homebuyers to achieve their dreams of owning a home and building generational wealth. I look forward to seeing how the program continues to develop and change the lives of Californians.

Sincerely,

Fiona



Have a Question for the Treasurer?

Address letters to:

California State Treasurer Fiona Ma
Post Office Box 942809
Sacramento, CA 94209-0001

Send emails to:

AskFiona@treasurer.ca.gov, with
the subject line: "Ask Fiona"

May 29th is National College Savings Day

National 529 College Savings Day happens each year on May 29th. This is a day to raise awareness about the importance of planning and saving for higher education. What better time to open a new 529 college savings account and earn up to a \$100 bonus to boot!



In recognition of National 529 College Savings Day, ScholarShare 529 is offering a match of up to \$100 for families who open a new account from May 22 through May 31, 2023. To qualify for the match, families just need to open a new ScholarShare 529 account with a minimum of \$50 and set up monthly recurring contributions of \$50 or more for at least six consecutive months.

ScholarShare 529, administered by the ScholarShare Investment Board and chaired by State Treasurer Fiona Ma, is California's official college savings plan. ScholarShare 529 offers a tax-advantaged way to save. Families have a diverse set of low-cost investment options to choose from and withdrawals are free from state and federal taxes when funds are used for qualified higher education expenses, such as tuition and fees, computer equipment, books or certain room and board costs.

529 ★ DAY

**Get
up to
\$100**

to start saving
for college.*



TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC, Member FINRA,
distributor and underwriter for California's ScholarShare 529.
See Terms and Conditions. FAD-2810627PR-Y0424W



In addition to opening a new ScholarShare 529 account, you can also celebrate 529 Day in other ways:

- Are you already saving in a 529 account? Consider adding money to your account this month as a one-time contribution or by increasing your monthly contributions.
- Make a gift of an account contribution to a family member's or friend's account through ScholarShare's [Ugift platform](#).

National 529 College Savings Day is all about the future of our families.

Visit www.ScholarShare529.com/529offer to learn more about ScholarShare 529 and this special promotion to start saving for your loved ones' college education!

State Treasurer's Office Offers HOPE for Our Children

May is National Foster Care Month, a time to raise awareness on foster care issues, celebrate foster youth, and to show appreciation and gratitude to those who are dedicated to serving our youth. Approximately 60,000 vulnerable children are in California's foster care system, almost half of whom have been in the foster system for 18 months or longer. In addition to the current foster care numbers, over 30,000 children in California have lost a parent or primary caregiver to COVID-19.

The future financial success of children relies heavily on the wealth of their parents. Children who lost a parent to COVID-19 will not only be deprived of monthly income from that parent or guardian, but also of the long-term benefit of wealth transfer. Foster youth who remain in the child protective services system for long periods of time are similarly deprived of the financial support and long-term benefit of wealth transfer from parents as they reach adulthood.



The Hope for Children Act (Act), championed by Senator Skinner and supported by Treasurer Fiona Ma, provides a solution to this problem. The Act aims to narrow the wealth gap and advance social and economic well-being by creating trust accounts for vulnerable children as specified. The Act establishes the [California Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment \(HOPE\) for Children Trust Account Program](#), which is housed under the State Treasurer's Office and chaired by Treasurer Ma. The HOPE Program has been allocated \$100M in one-time funds to establish HOPE trust fund accounts that will grow over time and \$15M in ongoing funds to administer HOPE Accounts.

The first tranche of children and youth who will receive these important savings tools will be low-income children orphaned by the COVID-19 pandemic and those in foster care for at least 18 months. The HOPE Program will deliver a comprehensive report on the program to the legislature this September, outlining its plan to start seeding the first accounts shortly after the release of the report. For more information, please visit the HOPE Program [webpage](#) to learn more and to sign up to receive [updates](#).

FOSTER YOUTH, CHECK THIS OUT! FOSTER YOUTH TAX CREDIT

(up to \$1,083 cash back)



New for current and former foster youth!

- Must have been age 18 through 25 at the end of the tax year
- Must have been in California foster care at age 13 or older
- Must be eligible for California Earned Income Tax Credit (up to \$3,417 cash back)

Visit ftb.ca.gov/caleitc to estimate potential credits!



FOSTER YOUTH TAX CREDIT

California individuals and businesses impacted by 2022-23 winter storms qualify for an extension to file and pay taxes until October 16, 2023. If you are a current or former foster youth aged 18 to 25, you may be eligible for the Foster Youth Tax Credit (FYTC), earned income tax credit, young child tax credit, education credits, renter's credit, and more!

Check out Treasurer Ma's [video message](#) to learn more about the FYTC!



SCAN TO SEE
IF YOU QUALIFY.

IT'S YOUR MONEY
GET IT!
EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT



Cleaning Up Trash Pollution

Last month, Treasurer Fiona Ma gave the closing keynote at the 3rd Annual Statewide Conference on Illegal Dumping, hosted by Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley and the Statewide Illegal Dumping Task Force. The conference seeks to raise awareness of illegal dumping and its impacts, and to discuss best-practices and solutions for addressing it. The theme of this year's conference was "Partnerships" and it showcased how cross-sector collaboration can be used to advance best-practices for addressing illegal dumping.



Pictured from left to right: Nate Miley, Alameda County Supervisor, District 4; Treasurer Ma; Noel Gallo, Oakland City Council Member; and Erin Armstrong, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley, District 4. (Photo Credit: External Affairs Division, State Treasurer's Office)

During the Treasurer's keynote, she highlighted how the State Treasurer's Office helps solid waste facilities secure financing to expand, so they can provide more public benefits to the communities they serve and the state. As a conduit issuer of tax-exempt bonds, the California Pollution Control Financing Authority, which is chaired by Treasurer Ma, provides California businesses with financing options for projects that help California maintain state-of-the-art waste collection and disposal systems.

“To effectively address illegal dumping, we need partnerships and collaboration between local governments, law enforcement, and community organizations. By working together and implementing best-practices, we can make a real difference in our neighborhoods and protect the health and safety of our communities.”

- Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley

Education, eradication, and enforcement are the three pillars of addressing illegal dumping. CalRecycle offers a number of resources to eradicate illegal dumping in California, including grants, loans, and direct support services to local governments and Local Enforcement Agencies to clean up trash pollution. Below is a list of resources available statewide, courtesy of CalRecycle.

RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUALS

If you see illegal dumping, report it! CalRecycle offers a [Report Illegal Dumping \(GIS/Geo\) Map](#) to find local resources for reporting illegal dumping.



RESOURCES FOR LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Enforcement Agency Grants

- [Local Enforcement Agency Grant Program](#): Provides grant funds, based on population and solid waste facilities, to LEAs to assist in their solid waste facilities permit and inspection programs.
- [Waste Tire Enforcement Grant Program](#): Provides funding to solid waste LEAs and city and county agencies in California for waste tire enforcement activities.

Cleanup Grants and Loans

- [Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup Abatement and Grant Program](#): Allows cities, counties, Resource Conservation Districts and Native American tribes to seek financial assistance for the cleanup of illegal solid waste sites on farm or ranch property.
- [Solid Waste Disposal and Codisposal Site Cleanup Program](#): This program allows CalRecycle to expend funds directly for cleanup or emergency actions, provide loans to responsible parties who demonstrate the ability to repay state funds, or provide matching grants to local governments to assist in remediation of environmental problems at landfills.
- [Local Government Waste Tire Cleanup and Amnesty Event Grants](#): Provides funding to local governments for the cost of clean-up, abatement, or other remedial actions related to the disposal of waste tires collected at cleanup projects and amnesty events.

Additional resources are available on CalRecycle's [website](#).

In the Community

April 11 - In celebration of Ramadan, the State Treasurer's Office had the honor of joining Pacifica Institute, Bay Area Cultural Connections (BAYCC), and others for an Iftar. An Iftar is an evening meal that begins at the end of the day's fast for Ramadan. The Pacifica Institute and BAYCC host numerous Iftars throughout California and invite people from all cultures, religions, and backgrounds to join together in a communal meal.



Michael Tamony (right), External Affairs Officer, State Treasurer's Office presents a Certificate to Atilla Kahveci (left), Executive Director, Pacifica Institute in recognition of Pacifica Institute's efforts to create a peaceful gathering in observance of the holy month of Ramadan.

(Photo Credit: External Affairs Division, State Treasurer's Office)

April 13 - Treasurer Fiona Ma participated in the one-day summit, *Accelerating Clean Energy Infrastructure: Southern California*, organized by the Inland Empire Regional Chamber of Commerce and event partners, the Milken Institute, Accelerator for America, the California Air Resources Board, and the University of California. The event brought together thought leaders working to deploy innovative technologies, finance clean infrastructure, create promising career pathways, and support community resilience. Treasurer Ma and Jigar Shaw, Director of the Loan Programs Office at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), discussed how California can best position itself to access the \$350 billion in loan authority available through the DOE.



Pictured from left to right: Jigar Shaw, Director, Loan Programs Office, U.S. Department of Energy; and Treasurer Ma.

(Photo Credit: Treasurer Fiona Ma)

April 18 - State Treasurer Fiona Ma joined with San Francisco Mayor London Breed, San Francisco City Attorney David Chiu, and former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown at a press conference and signing ceremony for the new partnership between San Francisco's Chinese Hospital and University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Health. This partnership will deepen access to specialty healthcare in San Francisco for the patients of the 124-year-old Chinese Hospital. Treasurer Ma shared her personal story of how both UCSF Health and Chinese Hospital have provided a greater quality of healthcare for both her and her family.



(Photo credit: External Affairs Division, State Treasurer's Office)