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April 12, 2024

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RE: Foster Youth Funding

This report provides information on foster youth programs across the 23 California State University (CSU) campuses from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. The data in the report includes budget allocation amounts, an overview of programs and services offered, and campus-specific program highlights.

This report is required by Section 89348 of the California Education Code, which requires the CSU to submit a report on foster youth program recurring funding, and includes:

- 1) Efforts during the previous academic year to serve students who are foster youth and former foster youth, including uses of the funding allocated pursuant to subdivision (a) and uses of other internal and external resources supporting foster youth services.
- 2) Enrollment, retention, and completion rate data for students who are foster youth and former foster youth and participated in programs funded pursuant to this section on a campus-by-campus basis, and other metrics as appropriate.
- 3) As feasible, systemwide data on enrollment, retention and completion rates for students who are foster youth and former foster youth and participated in programs

CSU Campuses
Bakersfield
Channel Islands
Chico
Dominguez Hills
East Bay

Fresno
Fullerton
Humboldt
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay
Northridge
Pomona
Sacramento
San Bernardino
San Diego

San Francisco
San José
San Luis Obispo
San Marcos
Sonoma
Stanislaus

CSU Report: 2022-23 Foster Youth Funding

April 12, 2024

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funded pursuant to this section, and other metrics as appropriate, disaggregated by race, ethnicity and gender.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact Nathan Dietrich, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Advocacy and State Relations, at (916) 445-5983.

Sincerely,



Steven Relyea (Apr 12, 2024 11:40 PDT)

Steve Relyea
Executive Vice Chancellor and
Chief Financial Officer

SR:dr

Full report posted to <https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/government/Advocacy-and-State-Relations/Pages/legislative-reports.aspx>

- c: Members, California State Legislature
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- Jeanne Tran-Martin, Interim Director, Student Affairs Programs
- Ana Aguayo-Bryant, Assistant Director, Student Affairs Programs

Foster Youth Support Programs Report to the Department of Finance and the Legislature Pursuant to the Budget Act of 2022

BACKGROUND

For a quarter century, the California State University (CSU) has had a powerful and lasting impact for foster youth that has benefited thousands of students through intentional academic and personal support. Founded as the Guardian Scholars Program at Cal State Fullerton in 1998, the initiative made history as the first of its kind in the nation and laid the foundation for similar foster youth support programs at each of the CSU's 23 campuses and universities across the country. In the Budget Act of 2022, appropriations to the CSU included \$12 million in ongoing funds to create or enhance foster youth support programs at the 23 campuses. This act requires the CSU to provide a biannual report on the use of these funds. This report will focus on each campus's respective foster youth program, activities and infrastructure.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING CAPACITY

Through this budget allocation, all campuses were provided with a minimum base allocation of \$150,000 to ensure that each campus foster youth support program could have a designated staff member to support programming. A prorated amount was provided based on the campus 2021-22 resident student enrollment. This funding allowed foster youth support programs to continue or to be established at all 23 campuses. Two of the campuses transitioned to a stand-alone program directly because of this funding. One campus, Cal Maritime, is still establishing its program, with an anticipated launch in academic year 2024-25.

The funding allowed for an increase in capacity to serve more students and to implement better methods of identifying eligible students. Beginning in academic year 2022-23, the CSU extended services to eligible students over 26 years of age, including graduate students. The CSU also created a protocol for collecting systemwide data on current and former foster youth students. Campuses expanded staffing, increased training to support the unique needs of this population of students, created or enhanced physical community spaces on campus, increased cultural and social-emotional programs, increased scholarships, and basic needs support, and created postgraduate plans for students.

UTILIZATION OF STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES TO EXPAND EDUCATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Education Code Section 89348 outlines a wide range of educational and support services to provide foster youth with this funding. Below is a systemwide overview of specific programs used by our campuses to meet students' needs through local, state, and philanthropic funding support.

Each of the 23 campuses has a full-time designated staff program director or coordinator or are in the process of hiring one. Several staff members across the 23 programs have lived or direct expertise and experience in foster care or welfare agencies. All campuses have an office or meeting space, and five of the campuses have a dedicated space for foster youth programs. All programs offer grants to students for books, supplies, tutoring, childcare, housing and/or transportation needs. All programs conduct an intake, orientation, eligibility verification and service coordination to inform eligible students about the services that can be provided to them. A successful intake and orientation process creates and promotes a welcoming environment for students that encourages engagement and retention.

The personal, academic, and postgraduate success of students is the core goal of the foster youth services provided. All campuses make referrals for students to health services, mental health services, housing assistance and other related services. The following list shows the number of campuses that provide each type of service:

- Academic advising: 19
- Career guidance: 19
- Counseling services: 15
- Direct financial support to offset educational expenses: 19
- Graduate school support: 17
- Independent living and financial literacy support: 17
- Peer-mentoring opportunities: 8
- Priority for on-campus housing: 23 (California law requires all campuses to prioritize current and former foster youth when assigning on-campus housing.)
- Referrals for students ineligible for foster youth–specific programs: 18

In addition to the support areas listed above, all programs have formed partnerships with high schools, county offices, local nonprofits and/or philanthropic organizations to support students' academic and personal success in numerous ways.

WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?: PROFILE OF 2022-23 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The CSU acknowledges that the Budget Act requests information on students' enrollment, retention and completion rates for foster youth and former foster youth. Enrollment numbers are based on the number of foster youth students verified and receiving support with this recurring state funding.

In academic year 2022-23, the CSU began to collect and track information for current and former foster youth students. This was a critical step, made possible with the budget allocation, in ensuring that campuses informed eligible students of the support services available. For purposes of data collection, the CSU uses the following definition for the term foster youth— "A student should be considered foster youth if at any time since birth, the student was under a foster care placement as a dependent of the court or ward of the court." Students are requested to provide documentation to show that they meet that criteria and are eligible to receive services. As this is the first academic year that the CSU has received funding to collect data, current rates of enrollment, retention and graduation are not yet readily available. Subsequent legislative reports will illustrate the impacts of this funding on enrollment, retention and graduation rates for students participating in foster youth support programs with this funding.

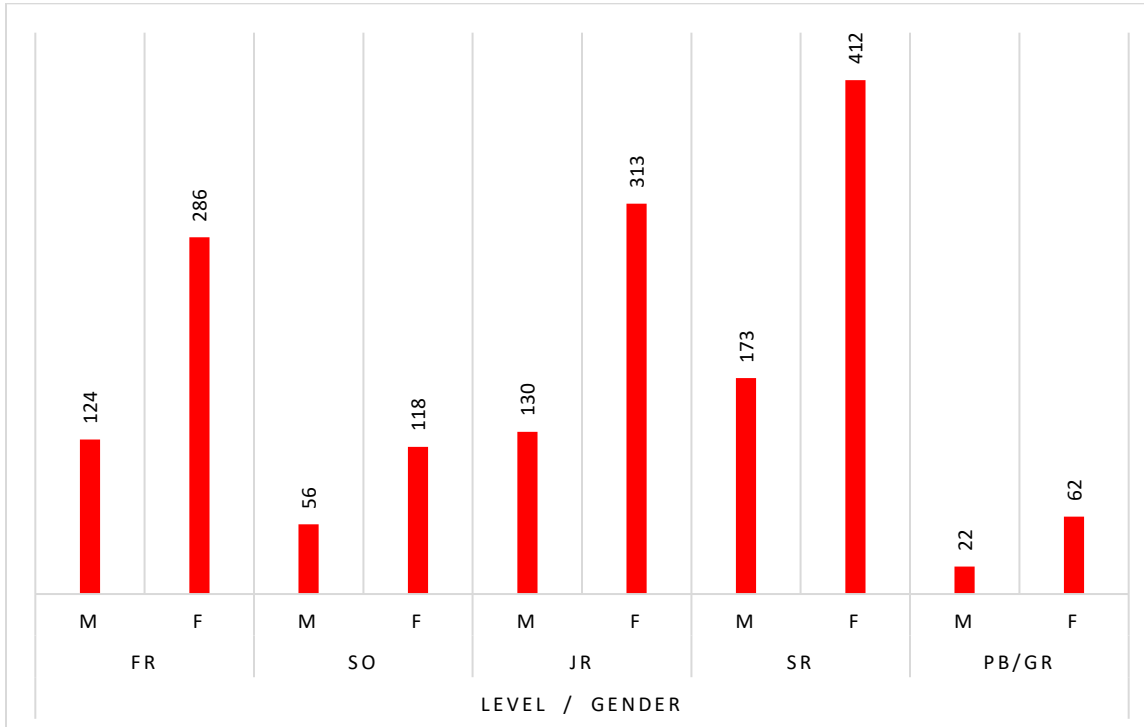


Figure 1: Systemwide Enrollment of Verified Foster Youth by Gender and Class Level (1,696 Students)

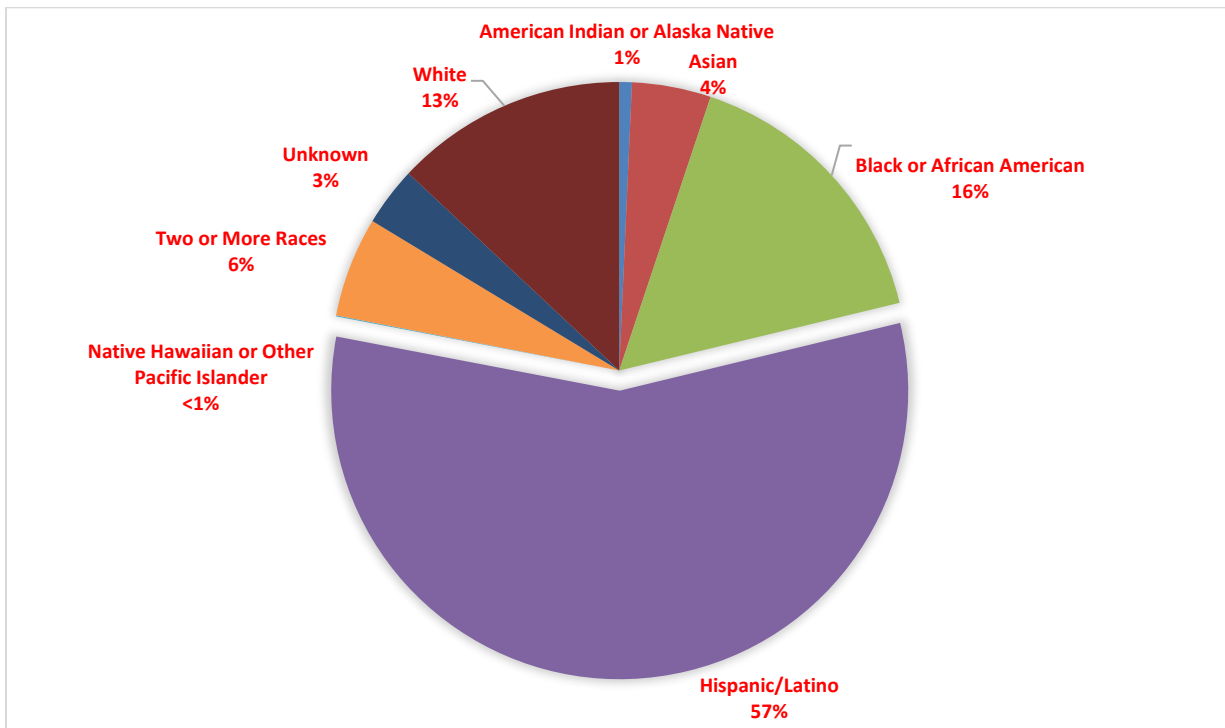


Figure 2: Systemwide Enrollment of Verified Foster Youth by Race and Ethnicity (American Indian or Alaska Native 12; Asian 75; Black or African American 273; Hispanic/Latino 963; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 1; Two or More Races 95; Unknown 56; White 221 =1,696 students)

UNIVERSITY FOSTER YOUTH SUPPORT PROGRAM BUDGET ALLOCATION AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The sections below provide budget allocations and program information for each of the 23 universities. Individual programs are designed to meet the unique needs of the students of that campus and region. These outcomes should not be used to compare campuses because each university has developed unique goals specific to its program. In addition, some campuses have longstanding foster youth support programs, while others have been recently established.

California State University, Bakersfield: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$338,000

www.csub.edu/gsp

CSU Bakersfield's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, including hiring a full-time dedicated staff member to coordinate day-to-day activities. The program offered grants to offset housing costs for students living on- and off-campus and provided resources to assist students experiencing food insecurity. To help students from foster care placement, the program provided a summer transitional experience that acclimated participants with campus and program support staff, academic advisors, faculty members and counseling staff. The program also emphasized financial literacy by providing workshops on financial literacy, maximizing financial aid and CalFresh/EBT budgeting.

California State University Channel Islands: Dolphin Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$268,000

www.csuci.edu/basicneeds/path

The CSU Channel Islands Dolphin Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, including hiring a full-time dedicated staff member to support day-to-day activities. The program launched a summer experience program focused on career preparation and housing, as well as offering workshops on financial literacy, academic development, and graduate school preparation.

California State University, Chico: PATH Scholars

Fund Distributions: \$448,000

www.csuchico.edu/fosteryouth

Chico State's PATH Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. Offerings included a new student orientation to help students acclimate to the university, as well as ongoing case management to support financial literacy, career exploration, basic needs, housing, mental health and emergency needs. The program offered numerous opportunities to engage and connect the students with the campus and the greater Chico community. The campus is in the process of creating a dedicated physical space for the PATH Scholars Program to further build a sense of community on campus.

California State University, Dominguez Hills: Toro Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$428,000

www.csudh.edu/tgs

CSU Dominguez Hills's Toro Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program and hired two new positions— an associate director and a psychologist—for increased staffing support. The psychologist provides eligible students with on-site mental health services. CSUDH remodeled the program's office space to make the environment more student-friendly, which included adding computer stations with free printing and a pantry of food and hygiene supplies. The program hosted its first-ever Toro Guardian Welcome Day event, inviting both new and continuing students. In addition to its existing partnerships that support students who live on campus, the program also developed community-based partnerships to support students who want to live off-campus.

California State University, East Bay: Renaissance Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$391,000

www.csueastbay.edu/renaissance

Cal State East Bay's Renaissance Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring a new manager and an administrative assistant to support the day-to-day operations of the program. During this reporting period, the program's primary focus was the development of a dashboard to track annual enrollment, retention and graduation data. This data collection was instrumental in establishing a process for developing future programming needs to serve students better. The program conducted graduation and exit interviews to ensure students had a plan before departing the university and coordinated activities with the Peer Advocates for Wellness group to support mental health, raise awareness of campus services and encourage students to seek help.

California State University, Fresno: Renaissance Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$604,000

<https://studentaffairs.fresnostate.edu/rsp/>

Fresno State's Renaissance Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring a full-time counselor/case manager and a new program specialist to assist with outreach and recruitment of eligible students. The program offered a wide range of services, from onboarding to the creation of a dashboard to track usage of services, students' academic progress, and retention and graduation rates. With this new funding allocation, the program plans to increase the number of peer mentors to support new students in their transition to Fresno State.

California State University, Fullerton: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$839,000

www.fullerton.edu/scholars

Cal State Fullerton's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring an assistant director, a coordinator and an administrative assistant to support the expansion of services to students. In addition, the program increased the number of its peer mentors. The program offered onboarding through a summer experiential program for all new students, provided academic planning and coaching to assist students in developing academic and career-readiness plans, and

increased the number of cultural enrichment opportunities offered. The program created a dashboard to monitor students' academic performance. and collaborated with campus programs such as the Career Center and Graduate Studies to support graduating seniors by providing graduate school workshops and career-success preparation regarding interviewing techniques and résumé writing. In addition, the program partnered with the campus Counseling Center and Basic Needs Office to raise awareness of mental health assistance and to promote healthy living.

California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt: Elite Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$257,000

<https://elite.humboldt.edu/>

Cal Poly Humboldt's Elite Scholars utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring two new staff members and identifying a new dedicated space to house the program. A network of critical campus support programs, which include faculty, administrators and staff, provide wrap-around services to students. The program actively monitors student progress through regular meetings with students to discuss course selection, academic success and progress to degree. The program also has partnerships with Humboldt County and with local agencies, nonprofits and community-based organizations to provide students with cultural enrichment activities.

California State University, Long Beach: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$838,000

<https://www.csulb.edu/student-affairs/guardian-scholars-program>

Cal State Long Beach's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring a new associate director and a case manager to manage and support daily operations. The program held an orientation to ensure students understood how to maximize the services offered to them, as well as utilizing EAB Content Management to track student utilization of those services. The program conducted several workshops to ensure that graduating seniors had appropriate support before leaving the university, as well as hosting a combined leadership retreat with several local CSU campuses and community colleges.

California State University, Los Angeles Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$628,000

<https://www.calstatela.edu/guardianscholars>

Cal State LA's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program and transition to a stand-alone program with its own designated space on campus. Four new positions were created to better support students, including a director, a coordinator, a counselor and a retention specialist. The program established a comprehensive recruitment plan by partnering with local high schools and community colleges. In an effort to support enrollment and remove barriers to college matriculation, the program allowed eligible incoming foster youth to submit a fee waiver for the Enrollment Confirmation Deposit. In addition, the program partnered with Make Good Inc. and Ready to Succeed to cover the students' move-in expenses, parking permits and meal options, and provided additional incentives to support student retention. The program also offered off-campus housing support by providing grants for housing deposits, rent, utilities and other basic living expenses.

California State University Maritime Academy: Resilient Scholars Program

Recurring Funding: \$173,000

Cal Maritime did not have an existing foster youth support program. This funding allowed the campus to begin the process of establishing such a program with an anticipated program launch in academic year 2024-25.

California State University, Monterey Bay: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$284,000

<https://csumb.edu/guardianscholars/>

CSUMB's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring a new staff member to coordinate the day-to-day planning and coordination of the program, including targeted outreach and retention efforts for foster youth, wards of the court, unaccompanied homeless youth and youth under legal guardianship. In academic year 2022-23, retention advisors met with all verified foster-youth students for holistic advising to support academic success, ensure basic needs were met and refer students for additional support services as needed. The program partners with on-campus Personal Growth and Counseling counselors to provide a weekly "Let's Talk" series. Each week, a counselor spends 90 minutes in the Guardian Scholars space to provide drop-in counseling for students without the formality of an appointment. This informal connection builds trust and provides the student with a known staff member in the Counseling Office, should the student desire to follow up.

California State University, Northridge: EOP Milt & Debbie Valera Resilient Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$796,000

<https://www.csun.edu/csun-eop/eop-milt-and-debbie-valera-resilient-scholars-program>

CSUN's EOP Milt and Debbie Valera Resilient Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. Recurring state funding allowed for increased capacity for the program to support a data analyst position, which facilitated data collection regarding the enrollment, retention and completion rates of foster youth students. Staff are proactive in reaching out to students and verifying self-identified foster youth. Peer mentors in the program contacted all incoming and continuing foster youth students through email, phone calls and texts to notify them of available services. All foster youth are regularly invited to community-building events and career workshops and are encouraged to participate in the larger foster youth community.

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona: Renaissance Scholars

Fund Distributions: \$668,000

<https://www.cpp.edu/ssep/renaissance-scholars/index.shtml>

The Cal Poly Pomona's Renaissance Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, creating a Renaissance Scholars Success Drop-In Services program to support students who may not want to participate in a holistic support program. Students must still verify their eligibility to receive the following drop-in services: priority registration, holistic academic advising and tutoring, as well as limited educational enrichment and student engagement opportunities. The program also utilizes the funding to offer retreats, cultural enrichment opportunities and study-abroad support for students.

California State University, Sacramento: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$714,000

<https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/guardian-scholars/>

Sacramento State's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. All eligible students are proactively contacted to receive an overview of the services available. The program has partnered with the College of Education Counseling and Diagnostic Service Center to host group sessions with participants and interns in the master's degree program in social work, who act as facilitators to assess student support and service needs. The program also actively engages with community partners to reach out to local high schools and hosted a higher education conference. This all-day event brought together more than 120 foster youth from local school districts to learn more about higher education opportunities and the support services available to them.

California State University, San Bernardino: Renaissance Scholars

Fund Distributions: \$486,000

<https://www.csusb.edu/eop/renaissance-scholars-program>

Cal State San Bernardino's Renaissance Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring two permanent full-time staff members to support current and former foster youth. Three graduate-level interns from the Master of Social Work (MSW) Title-IV-E Program provided direct services to foster youth scholars. The MSW Title IV-E interns gain experience in working with foster youth to supplement their classroom learning. The program recruits graduate-level interns to act as Transitional Coaches to provide informational workshops, as well as one-on-one coaching for junior and senior Renaissance Scholars in creating postgraduate plans.

San Diego State University: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$792,000

<https://sacd.sdsu.edu/eop/programs/guardian-scholars>

San Diego State's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, hiring an additional full-time staff member and increasing the number of student assistants, graduate assistants, Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work interns, and peer mentors to support programming. The program increased the number of wellness coaching hours available specifically for Guardian Scholar students. All students in the program participated in fall and spring semester kick-off events, and more than 576 academic advising and tutoring appointments were provided to students in academic year 2022-23.

San Francisco State University: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$637,000

<https://gsp.sfsu.edu/>

San Francisco State's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. The program provided a summer transitional experience for new students to introduce them to program support staff, academic advisors, faculty members and counseling staff. The program offered mental health therapy specifically for participants. Funding was also used to provide housing and food insecurity interventions such as issuing grants for security deposits, furnishing meal swipes on

dining cards, educating students about CalFresh eligibility and maintaining a food pantry and a home supply store to help students furnish their apartments.

San José State University: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$712,000

<https://www.sjsu.edu/eop/guardian-scholars/>

San José State's Guardian Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program, transitioning to a stand-alone service. The program hired a new resource coordinator and additional student assistants to better provide program support to all Guardian Scholars. The program revamped an existing lounge space to create a more accessible, safe, and supportive environment which provides access to grab-and-go snacks, hygiene items, school supplies and computer stations that offer free printing.

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo: Guardian Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$524,000

<https://deanofstudents.calpoly.edu/gsp>

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's Guardian Scholars Program utilized recurring funds to establish a new program in academic year 2022-23. The program is actively building partnerships across the campus to support students' academic and postgraduate success. These partnerships have allowed the program to provide eligible students with a robust intake and orientation process through which they are immediately connected to campus resources. To support students' basic needs, eligible students receive a meal voucher of \$250, renewable each quarter, upon completion of program requirements.

California State University San Marcos: ACE Scholars Services

Fund Distributions: \$406,000

<https://www.csusm.edu/ace/>

CSU San Marcos's ACE Scholars Services Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. ACE Scholars receive individualized support including check-in meetings, funds for books and course materials funds, and access to financial aid opportunities, as well as the opportunity to participate in community-building events and workshops at the ACE Center. The program has partnered with several campus departments to provide working-scholarship opportunities that support personal and professional development. The program provides residential summer bridge programs to all first-year students to support their transition to college and is also expanding outreach services through regular campus visits to local high schools and community colleges.

Sonoma State University: Seawolf Scholars

Fund Distributions: \$288,000

<https://seawolfsscholars.sonoma.edu/>

Sonoma State's Seawolf Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. Seawolf Scholars receive individualized assessments that examine student interests, skill levels and educational objectives to support their academic and professional goals. Students participate in a variety of cultural enrichment field trips, community-building events and other programming. The

program intentionally partners with the Career Center so that students may explore majors and career options through Focus2Career, an online platform that guides participants through a reliable, intuitive career interest and education decision-making model. Students can better understand their educational and career opportunities by combining the online assessment with consultation with advisors at the Career Center.

California State University, Stanislaus: Promise Scholars Program

Fund Distributions: \$331,000

<https://www.csustan.edu/promise-scholars>

Stanislaus State's Promise Scholars Program utilized the new funding to expand an existing program. Program staff engaged in a comprehensive outreach process to identify eligible students and conducted one-on-one meetings to assist participants in creating academic and personal development plans. The program hosted a Winter Summit to share feedback from the previous term that they used to inform initiatives in the spring term. The program is partnering with Modesto Junior College in a housing collaboration in which a foster youth student on the path to a four-year degree are eligible to live in Stanislaus State's residence halls as non-matriculated students. This partnership not only addresses student housing insecurity, but also serves as an opportunity for outreach.

California State University, Office of the Chancellor

Fund Distributions: \$150,000

<https://www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/foster-youth>

The Chancellor's Office is providing ongoing technical and policy support to foster youth programs on all 23 campuses. The system office coordinated and planned three trauma-informed trainings that covered topics such as child trauma and its impact on development, traumatic events of students and responses to them, advocacy, grounding and supportive interventions, peer support for students, engagement and building rapport with students, and crisis-intervention support. A statewide presentation that attracted more than 250 participants was coordinated for K-12, county, state, nonprofit and higher education colleagues to review the foster youth program services provided in the CSU. The system office coordinates an annual convening of all foster youth program staff for professional development and sharing of best practices. The Chancellor's Office is also exploring enhanced systemwide marketing materials to support campus-based outreach efforts.

CONCLUSION

As this report shows, the addition of these recurring funds for foster youth programs has already greatly impacted students within the CSU system. When projects with lengthy implementation timelines—such as hiring staff, creating programs, and building broad-based partnerships—are complete, it is anticipated that the positive effects of this program support will only increase as the campuses continue to develop and improve these innovative and critical student support initiatives. Leadership and staff on all 23 CSU campuses look forward to the continued development of foster youth support programs and services. As the CSU strives to meet the goals outlined in the robust Graduation 2025 Initiative, there is a keen awareness of the impact that foster youth services have in supporting students in their academic success, their path toward graduation and, ultimately, with CSU graduates representing one in 10 employees in California, their contribution to the success of their communities and the state.