



CALIFORNIA COLLEGE PATHWAYS



California College Pathways is dedicated to increasing the number of former foster youth in California who enter higher education and achieve an academic outcome.

Celebrating Stories of Success SUMMER 2010 Newsletter

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Congratulations Class of 2010!

In this edition, we are delighted to highlight the achievements of more than 50 students from foster care attending the California State University, University of California, California Community Colleges and private universities from across the state. These students have overcome both personal and academic challenges to fulfill their dream of a college education. You are invited to read how the journey of a college education has transformed their lives and the accomplishments and insights they have attained along the way. We encourage our community leaders to help ensure that foster youth have access and support into and through higher education. Most importantly, we hope these stories will inspire current and former foster youth who want to embark on this journey.

“**Education** is our passport to the *future*, for *tomorrow* belongs to the people who *prepare* for it *today*.”

Malcolm X

Celebrating Stories of SUCCESS



Elizabeth Alegria

San Francisco State, Child and Adolescent Development

Elizabeth has participated in the SFSU Guardian Scholars Program since its inception in 2005. She has been a leader among her fellow GSP peers and extremely involved in the program, volunteering and fundraising

events, participating in site visits, and speaking to youth about college. Elizabeth graduated with a degree in child and adolescent development and hopes to continue her education to pursue a teaching credential to help students with disabilities.



Cassandra Anderson

Butte College, AA Social Science & AS Administration of Justice

Cassandra graduated with dual associate's degrees in social science and administration of justice. She plans to transfer to Humboldt State and major in social work and sociology. Cassandra is a Horatio Alger Association

scholarship award winner for overcoming adversity. During college, she was involved in the Gay Straight Alliance and was a state-certified rape and crisis advocate/peer counselor for several community organizations. Her goal is to use her social work degree to open an affirming lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and allies (LGBTQA) shelter for at-risk youth.



Nayely Araiza

Cal Poly Pomona, BA Sociology

Nayely graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology and plans to earn a graduate degree in social work in the U.S. or abroad. Her most cherished memories of college included living in the dorms, Renaissance Scholars events and her semester in Paris in the study abroad

program. Nayely plans to use her degree to advocate, change and improve child protective services to youth. She believes that "anything in your life is possible if you do not let your past bring you down. We are warriors and should show the world that we are capable of succeeding in life."

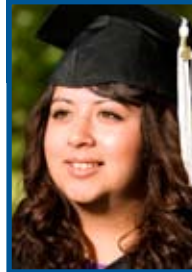


Torhon Barnes

University of Southern California, MSW PPS

Torhon graduated with a master's degree in social work and earned his pupil personnel services credential. While at USC, Torhon volunteered for Youth in Mind, a mental health advocacy organization, the Blue Ribbon Commission and Wendy's KIDS, Inc. Most

recently, Torhon co-authored a book, *Teaching Hope*, with other Freedom Writer teachers and the group's founder, Erin Gruwell. After graduation, Torhon will work as an education liaison for the Orange County Department of Education, Foster Youth Services. His long-term goal is to become an administrator at a high school and open a private practice. Torhon has lived by the motto, "Turn your tragedies into triumph, which comes from educating yourself."



Daniela Becerra

Cal Poly Pomona, BA Technical Theatre

Daniela graduated with a bachelor's degree in technical theatre with an emphasis in lighting design. Throughout college, she made close friends in the theatre department where she worked. This summer, Daniela will begin an internship with Warner Brothers and plans to

eventually get a master's degree. Her advice is to "believe in yourself...it comes down to you and no one else."



Laron Brown

CSU Fullerton, BA Communications

Laron Brown graduated with a bachelor's degree in communications. His future career goals include pursuing his interests in sports, coaching youth or being an athletic trainer. Laron has been very active on campus, serving on the CSU Fullerton track team since his

sophomore year. His highest jump thus far is 7 feet, ½ inch; and his best long jump is 24 feet, 2 inches. He also served as a Guardian Scholar peer senior mentor and is very active as a mentor for the Orangewood Children's Foundation.



Tanya Buchanan

CSU East Bay, BA Art

Tanya graduated with a bachelor's degree in art. Her fondest memories of college are going on trips with the Renaissance Scholars and volunteering time at the deaf community center. Tanya plans to start her own portrait

photography mobile studio business after graduation and utilize her creative skills to photograph children in day care centers and schools. She believes that “education is one of the most valuable possessions. That is the one thing no one could take from you. Knowledge will allow you to have control of your own destiny.”



Patrisha Busch

CSU Fullerton, BA International Business

Patrisha graduated with a bachelor’s degree in international business. As a Guardian Scholar, Patrisha studied abroad in Spain where she had the opportunity to work in the fashion industry and sharpen her Spanish language skills. She plans to return to Spain to complete a master’s degree in business administration.



Jessica Chandler

El Camino College, AA Psychology

Jessica spent six years in the foster care and probation systems and is the mother of two young children. One of her fondest memories is when she was invited to an EOPS recognition ceremony for having a 3.5 grade point average. Jessica has been a member of the

Alliance for Children’s Rights Youth Council for over four years and through the group has learned to advocate for former foster youth by using her experiences to uplift other youth. She plans to continue her education at CSU Northridge, pursuing a psychology major. She would like to become a clinical therapist and motivational speaker. She wants others to know that “higher education will allow you to access opportunities to learn about yourself and make positive changes in your family. There are resources available to you to help you achieve higher education if you want it and you are willing to work hard to obtain it.”



Krystal Chase

Mission College, EMT-B Certificate, Fire Science

Krystal earned her EMT-B certificate and is planning to enroll in paramedic school to fulfill her dream of becoming a firefighter paramedic. She wants other youth to know that “higher education is a must in today’s

society, and achieving a degree is not as much work as you may think. All it takes is reading the book, taking the tests and turning in things on time.”



Cynthia Chavez

CSU Pomona, BA Sociology

Cynthia graduated with a bachelor’s degree in sociology and plans to work in the social services field while pursuing a master’s degree in social work to help at-risk youth or victims of violence. Her fondest memory from college is making lifelong friends in the EOP Summer

Bridge program. Cynthia was active on campus and was the past president of the RISE club, founder and president of the National Latino Psychology Association, and an intern at the Violence Prevention and Women’s Resources Center on campus. She wants to share that “the opportunities are out here. It is up to you to make the most out of them.”



Justin Chuang

UC Davis, BS Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior

Justin graduated with a bachelor’s degree in neurobiology. Two of his greatest accomplishments are receiving a research position and getting a medical internship. Justin will be traveling to Nepal this summer for a medi-

cal internship and plans to become a physician who specializes in helping communities in urban areas and third-world countries. He shares that “if your situation seems very bad, just tell yourself never to give up. Hard work will always be rewarded.”



Martha Cornejo

CSU Fresno, BA Public Health

Martha graduated with a bachelor’s degree in public health with an emphasis in occupational safety. She has been active with the Renaissance Scholars and the Children’s Defense Fund whose mission is to stop the flow of youth between the foster care and the juvenile

justice systems. She plans to attend law school to help improve the working conditions for minority workers in the Central Valley.



Maribel Coronel

San Francisco State, BA Child and Adolescent Development

Maribel was among the first cohort of students with the San Francisco State University Guardian Scholars Program (GSP) and a key contributor to the creation and success of GSP. Emigrating from Peru at the

age of 14, Maribel learned English while in high school and was

accepted to San Francisco State as a first-time freshman. She was a role model to fellow Guardian Scholars, volunteering for events and seeking out as many possibilities as possible. After graduating with her bachelor's degree, Maribel is pursuing her master's degree in social work to work with other children and youth in the foster care system.



Haydeé Cuza

UC Los Angeles, EdD Education

Haydee graduates this fall with a doctorate in education. Prior to entering UCLA, Haydee graduated summa cum laude from West L.A. Community College and magna cum laude from Loyola Marymount University. She majored in urban studies with an African

American studies minor in undergraduate school while raising her daughter and working full time. After graduating, Haydee pursued a career focused on program development in organizations that work with urban youth and youth who have lived in the foster care system. She was the Southern Region Policy Coordinator for California Youth Connection prior to being accepted into the UCLA EdD program. Haydee's research focuses on how the experience of race and racism has impacted young adults who have been unable to complete their high school education but have enrolled in an education/workforce development program in South Central Los Angeles. She plans to continue to work with youth to advocate for improved conditions.



Shantell Davis

CSU East Bay, BA Sociology

Shantell graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology and was a Renaissance Scholar. She plans to take a year break and then enter a graduate program in social work to become a youth advocate and social worker. Her advice for current foster youth is "if you have a goal

or a dream, set out to achieve it. If you do not know where to start, ask someone. We have so many people out there willing to help and give us the resources to get started and achieve."



Adam Rajah Gainey

CSU San Marcos, BS Human Development

Adam graduated with a bachelor's degree in human development and was an active member of ACE Scholars Services. During college, he was president of the Black Student Union and led a Social Justice Summit that collaborated with campus departments like the

Women's Center, LGBTQA Center and Cross-Cultural Center. After

graduation, Adam plans to work as a case manager in child welfare and human services to improve the lives of children living in foster care. He wants other youth to "follow their heart in choosing what direction to go."



Linda Garrett

Cal Poly Pomona, BA Sociology

Linda graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology with an emphasis in criminology. She recalls the moment she realized that college was totally up to her: She would no longer have to go to court or see a social worker—her life was in her hands. After graduation, Linda

plans to work as a child care counselor at an adolescent care facility. Her long-term goal is to become an FBI agent or probation officer. She says, "College is an amazing experience; you will meet people that most likely you will keep for the rest of your life. Without college, I don't know where I would be."



Selenda Gomez

CSU Fullerton, BS Human Services

Selenda graduated with a bachelor's degree in human services and a minor in anthropology. She was a transfer student and the first Guardian Scholar to complete the Student Leadership Career Track Certificate program. After graduation, Selenda plans to travel and

make a positive difference in the lives of at-risk youth and the homeless population.



Tafari Gonzalez-Aird

Los Angeles Valley College, AA Liberal Studies

Tafari graduated with an associate's degree in liberal studies and plans to major in radio, television and film and minor in business management at CSU Fullerton. He plans to develop a career as a screenplay writer and

film director and focus his writing on individuals who have overcome insurmountable challenges. His ultimate goal is to establish his own production company. Tafari shares, "Bravely prepare for a long and challenging road: set goals, take initiative, believe in yourself, and don't let anyone or anything stop you. Do all you can do, and in areas where you have no control, have faith that the universe will figure itself out."



Christina Howard

UC Davis, BA Psychology

Christina graduated with honors in psychology with a minor in religious studies. Recently, Christina found her biological family and has since reunited with her brother. Starting at the community colleges helped Christina find her direction, thanks in part to the vast amount of resources available to her. She wants every foster youth to know they can do anything they dream of, and they are not alone. The financial hurdle of paying for college should be the least of anyone's concern. There are hundreds of thousands of dollars out there waiting for a worthy cause to support through college, one only need to apply, Christina remarks. She plans to do graduate work in clinical psychology, volunteer at community mental health clinics and work as a research lab coordinator at the University of Texas Southwestern.



Michael Ibardolaza

Los Angeles Trade Tech, Certificate of Culinary Arts

Michael never thought he would ever attend college after high school, let alone earn a certificate in culinary arts. He plans to utilize his passion for food and healthy eating by continuing his education and eventually becoming a nutritionist. He attributes the help he received from the Early Start to Emancipation (E-Step) Program for teaching him life skills that have helped him succeed. He has served as a YESS Peer Mentor for the last three years at Los Angeles Trade Technical College. Michael believes that "there is no better advocate for you than yourself. Ask many questions and be persistent, and it will pay off."



Ciara Jasiewicz

Springfield College, BS Human Services

Ciara graduated with a bachelor's degree in human services. She shared that, thanks to the staff and the students at the college, she had rewarding experiences that gave her the necessary tools to pursue her career goals. She plans to work with foster youth at Los Angeles Trade Technical College where she was a transfer student and eventually earn her master's degree in human services. Ciara wants to be an example for other youth who "come from brokenness, a dysfunctional home, poverty, abuse, abandonment, disappointments, and still push through it all and achieve their dream."



Chantel Johnson

University of Southern California, MPA

Chantel graduated with a master's degree in public administration. While in graduate school, she studied abroad in Nicaragua, Hong Kong and southern China, where she focused on the topic of immigration and the Fenjiang River Revitalization Project. Chantel would like to continue her education and earn a doctorate degree in public health. Chantel says, "It was inconceivable at first for me to think about the opportunities that were going to come my way because of my college education, but now it's finally coming true."



Chelsea Jones

City College of San Francisco, AA Women Studies

Chelsea graduated with an associate's degree in women's studies and will transfer this fall to UC Davis. She is most proud of her accomplishment as a peer educator with Project Survive and Expect Respect San Francisco—both are anti-rape school organizations that promote healthy relationship development for high school and college-age youth. She plans to become a schoolteacher and eventually a women's studies professor. Chelsea shares that "it doesn't matter if you know what you want to do or not, continue on with school. You will find help along the way."



Alex Ligon

CSU East Bay, BS Biology

Alex graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology. He feels the EOP Summer Bridge program, the Renaissance Scholars program, McNair Scholars, and his fraternity, Alpha Kappa Omega, gave him a terrific start in college. After college, Alex plans to attain a position in a laboratory to gain experience in research and hopes to be accepted into a graduate program focusing on cell and molecular biology. He is determined to earn a PhD in biology and conduct research in cancer and Alzheimer's. He advises, "Always know that your goals are attainable, but you have to make an effort to reach for them. You are your own worst critic, but ultimately you are your own biggest fan. Think positive about yourself, and positive things will present themselves. Choosing higher education gave me the needed knowledge to achieve my goal of someday finding a cure for many debilitating diseases while becoming a true man."



Desire Logan

Cal Poly Pomona, BA Sociology

Desire graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology and was a Renaissance Scholar. During her time in the program, she was the vice president for the RISE program, an intern for the Renaissance Scholars and a member of the Black Student Union. After college, Desire

plans to continue working at a group home for foster youth and to enter a graduate program that will open career opportunities to work with troubled youth. She hopes her story will inspire other youth in similar circumstances to turn toward success.



Amanda Madrid

Mission College, AS Biological Science

Amanda graduated with an associate's degree in biological science and is also a graduate of the Career Pathways program for former foster youth. During her time at Mission College, she became a Certified Nursing Assistant. Amanda plans to transfer to CSU East Bay in the fall to

pursue a bachelor's degree in science and nursing to reach her goal of working in the nursing profession. Amanda shares, "When you get into college, take advantage of every opportunity given to you and never let one slip past. There are so many programs that are there to help; we just have to be brave and ask."

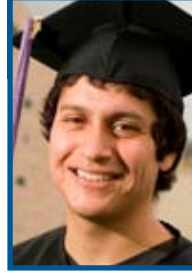


Sokhom Mao

San Francisco State, BS Criminal Justice

Sokhom Mao is a founding member of the SFSU Guardian Scholars Program (GSP). Sokhom's input and advocacy has been instrumental in the development of the program. During his time at San Francisco State, Sokhom has been a leader in both the GSP

community as well as the campus at large. He served as a student representative before he was nominated to serve on the Board of Directors for the SFSU Cesar Chavez Student Center. In addition to his involvement on campus, Sokhom has been active with the California Youth Connection since 2003 in advocating for current and former foster youth. Sokhom graduated with his bachelor's degree in criminal justice and is working on pursuing his goal of becoming an elected public official.



Pedro Martinez

Cal Poly Pomona, BA Fine Arts

Pedro graduated with a bachelor's degree in fine arts. He plans to earn a master's degree in fine arts and eventually teach in a university setting. His advice is "do not let anyone distract you from getting your education. You are an important person,

and you don't need negative people in your life. Be independent."

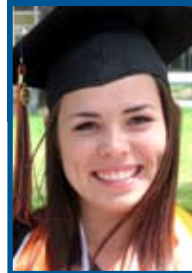


Matthew Morgan

San José State, BA Communication Studies

Matthew graduated with a bachelor's degree in communication studies. While at San Jose State, he was an active member of the CME Society and a recipient of the Silicon Valley Children's Fund YES Scholarship and served on the YES board. After graduation,

he plans to enter the master's program in film at the University of Southern California and to become a successful entertainer, host and director. Matthew wants other youth to know that "a high school diploma is not enough in this day and age. You haven't fully experienced life until you seek higher education."



Nicole Muth

CSU Fullerton, BS Psychology & BA Women's Studies

Nicole graduated with bachelor degree's in psychology and women's studies and a minor in sociology. She is an active member in numerous volunteer activities on campus and around the community. Her latest community

activity was the planning and organizing of the Social Justice Summit, with over 500 attendees. During her five years at CSU Fullerton, she has volunteered over a thousand hours while still maintaining high academic standards, consistently making the dean's list, and being named an "Outstanding Graduating Senior" by the Women's Studies Department. She plans to seek work dealing with community and environmental issues. Her long-term goal is to own an organic farm.



Lalin Nhek

CSU East Bay, BA Sociology

Lalin graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in criminal justice. She plans to enter a graduate program after college and become a social worker or deputy sheriff. Lalin says to "always have hope and believe in

yourself. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do it."



Jaquelynn Nola

CSU Fresno, BA Liberal Studies

Jaquelynn graduated with a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and plans to enter a teaching credential program this fall. She is grateful for the two years she attended CSU Fresno and the support she received from the campus. She shares, "Keep on it! It is worth it when you accomplish your goals."



Elizabeth Ojeda

CSU San Bernardino, BS Psychology

Elizabeth graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology. She is a single parent of three children, but is determined to achieve her goal of a graduate degree in rehabilitation counseling. She is currently counseling mothers who have been released from prison

on parenting skills and assisting them with their transition back into the community. Elizabeth has been accepted into the graduate program at CSU San Bernardino in rehabilitation counseling and plans to give back to her community by working with individuals with disabilities and mothers in prison. She says, "There will be times where it seems like things aren't looking up, but those are the times that you need to keep striving forward and keep your goal in mind."



Odessa Powers

San Francisco State, BA International Relations

Odessa was one of the first students in the SFSU Guardian Scholars Program and has been very involved with the GSP for the last five years during her time at San Francisco State. Odessa is always eager to participate

in new experiences and lead her fellow students by example. Her passion for social justice led to her receiving her bachelor's degree in international relations. She will continue her work focusing on land reform, the implementation and development of sustainable farming practices, and the protection of human rights. Odessa was awarded a place on the dean's list for a total of seven semesters and graduated cum laude.



Jennica Rebelez

UC Santa Barbara, BA Psychology

Jennica graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology with an emphasis in applied psychology and education. She was an active member of the Polynesian dance club where she held several leadership positions and taught Polynesian dance to elementary school-children, serving as a positive role model. She has been accepted to the prestigious Clinical, Counseling and School Psychology doctorate program at UC Santa Barbara and plans to one day work with low-income and multiethnic youth. Her advice is "to take your time to find what truly interests and inspires you. If you can find something you are genuinely passionate about, then you will have the motivation and tenacity to strive for your best."



Anthony Rispoli

CSU Fresno, BS Social Work

Anthony graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work and also earned a certificate in cross-cultural competency. He is a member of Theta Chi fraternity and looks back fondly on the 24-hour study-in at the library. He helped open a chapter of the ACLU on campus and shared his insight at several independent living program events. After college, Anthony will enter a graduate program in social work and plans to become a licensed clinical social worker. Anthony shares that "mood, positive thinking and ambition are the driving forces in life. With them, you can accomplish anything."



Micah Rivera

City College of San Francisco, AA Arts and Humanities

Micah graduated with an associate's degree in arts and humanities, was in the Guardian Scholars program and was the commencement speaker for City College of San Francisco (CCSF). Micah will be transferring to the California College of the Arts (CCA) in graphic design, thanks to the support of staff and faculty at CCSF. Micah is a recipient of the CCA Diversity Scholarship as well as the Fostering Foundation Scholarship and the Change a Life Foundation Scholarship. Micah plans to earn a master's degree in graphic design and open a design firm in San Francisco. Micah shares this sentiment, "So many of us experience feelings of powerlessness in our lives; it becomes really easy to forget that we have the ability to create the life that we've always dreamt of having. Education makes anything possible. Education gives you a chance to prove once and for all that you are strong, capable and powerful."



Jeannette Robinson

CSU Sacramento, BS Social Work

Jeannette graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work and was an active member of the Bachelor's of Social Work Association and the Guardian Scholars program. She also volunteers her time with the Sacramento Food Bank's Mother-Baby Program.

Jeannette has been accepted into the graduate program in social work at CSU Sacramento where she plans to work for the Independent Living Program to assist other emancipating youth or youth in child protective services. Jeannette says, "Having an education gives you more opportunities to become successful, independent and self-sufficient. Having strong social support is very helpful while in school. My advice is to join a club, group or sport at your school where you are able to connect with other students."



Flora Seawood

CSU San Marcos, BA Sociology

Flora graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology. She was a member of the CSU San Marcos ACE Scholars Service, an outreach and retention program for students from foster care. Her experiences as a volunteer at San Pasqual Academy inspired her to attend

graduate school to become a social worker. Flora would like youth to know that "education is your key to success. Don't pass the door to your dreams; use that key and many doors will open for you."

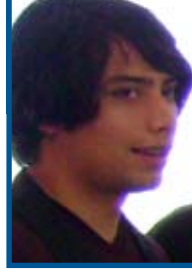


Stephanie Serrano

Cal Poly Pomona, BA Sociology

Stephanie graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology with an emphasis in social work and minors in ethnic and women studies. While in college, she was active in several progressive student clubs and used her leadership skills to advocate for social justice issues.

Her goal is to earn a graduate degree and become a social worker helping at-risk youth. Stephanie eventually would like to open a group home. She recommends, "Go to college to stop the cycle; you can do it. No matter how difficult it may be, never give up. It will be worth it for you and your future family."



Chester Selva

City College of San Francisco,
AA Philosophy

Chester completed his transfer plan in two years and has been accepted to several prestigious universities. His best college memories are receiving several generous scholarships and being accepted into his top transfer school that

was out of state. After graduation, Chester plans to earn a degree in law enforcement and eventually apply to become a U.S. marshall. His advice is "the more education you have, the more opportunities you will have in your life to accomplish your dreams."



Brandon Silveira

CSU Sacramento, BA Social Science and History

Brandon graduated with a bachelor's degree in social science and history. While at Sierra College, Brandon found his biological family, created a club for former foster youth and ultimately found several mentors to support

him in his transition to CSU Sacramento. Brandon plans to earn a master's degree in career counseling and help foster youth navigate the college financial aid process.

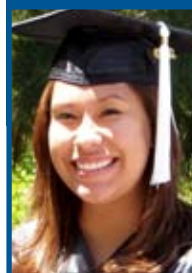


Corie Slali

CSU San Marcos, BA Human Development

Corie graduated with a bachelor's degree in human development and was a student in ACE Scholars Services. While in college, she had the opportunity to start her own company that serves the Oceanside school district under a federal grant program. She plans to open a

center for enrichment activities in the Oceanside area that will provide tutoring and art programs for area children. Corie says, "Don't live in the past, but let your past guide you into the future. We all experience hardships in life. Success comes to those who choose to let their hardships creatively craft the person of good character. When you overcome, and when you succeed, you are strong. And with that strength we can achieve so much!"



Daniela Solano

San Diego Mesa College, AA Political Science

Daniela graduated from San Diego Mesa College and will be transferring to San Diego State University as a political science major this fall. She has been involved with the FAST

Scholars Program and will become a part of the SDSU Guardian Scholars. Her long-term goal includes attending law school and specializing in immigration law. Daniela describes the assistance she received at Mesa as a “hand up and not a handout.”



Tony Thompson

CSU Los Angeles, Child Maltreatment and Family Violence Certificate

Tony earned a Child Maltreatment and Family Violence Certificate, which demonstrates his knowledge, training and formalized education in understanding child abuse and all forms of family violence through practical applica-

tion and field experience in the Los Angeles County Juvenile Court system. Currently a graduate student in the Master of Social Work program, Tony plans to pursue licensure in clinical social work and eventually help change the foster care system as an advocate. Tony’s advice is that “no matter what your experience in foster care, reach high for your dreams and don’t lose focus. Although the pain and baggage is present, you can overcome it through a college education. College is not just academics, but healing for our souls.”



Victoria Velasquez

UC San Diego, BS Political Science

Victoria graduated with a bachelor’s degree in political science with an emphasis in public law. Her fondest memories are living in the on-campus apartments and making new friends. Her goal is to apply for law school and become an entertainment lawyer. She shares,

“Don’t ever let anyone tell you that you can’t do something; everything in your future is up to you. I’m proof that you are the author of your fate.”



Hilda Ann Venegas

University of La Verne, BS Psychology

Hilda graduated with a bachelor’s degree in psychology. During her college years, Hilda was a staff reporter for the school’s newspaper, the *Campus Times*. She is an active member of the United Friends of the Children College Sponsorship program and often serves on

student panels to inspire current and former foster youth. In addition, she also served as a student recruiter for the University of La Verne. This fall, Hilda will be attending the University of Southern California to pursue a master’s degree in social work and hopes to use her education to become a social worker for foster youth.



Kenyon Whitman

CSU Fresno, BS Kinesiology

Kenyon graduated with a bachelor’s degree in kinesiology and has been accepted to the graduate program in higher education administration at CSU Fresno. Among the countless leadership positions he held during college, Kenyon also co-founded a student organiza-

tion that mentors current foster youth in the Fresno area called Project ASAP. His long-term goal is to become an administrator at a university and start a nonprofit organization to support foster youth who have a desire to pursue higher education. Kenyon wants his peers to “never give up!”



Patrick Williams

Cal Poly Pomona, BS Computer Science

Patrick graduated with a bachelor’s degree in computer science. As a transfer student, he strived for excellence in academics and was accepted into the Renaissance Scholars and McNair Scholars program. Most recently, he presented his research in Berkeley for the

McNair Scholars program. He plans to attend CSU Long Beach to earn a master’s degree and doctorate in computer science. Patrick plans to give back to the foster care community by eventually supporting foster youth in college through scholarships. He advises, “Put your mind to it, and it becomes achievable. There are no limits, so constantly expand your bubble because you never know what can happen.”



Simone Williams

CSU Los Angeles, BA Child Development

Simone graduated with a bachelor’s degree in child development. She points out the importance of having stable housing for foster youth and says, “When you don’t have anywhere stable, nothing else will be stable.” During college, Simone was an active member

in California Youth Connection for over three years and attributes the leadership skills she learned to her success in school. After college, she plans to enter the Master’s in Public Administration program at CSU Northridge and one day open transitional housing programs for foster and probation youth. She wants to let current foster youth know to “never let others tell you what you cannot do. If you think it, say it, and work for it, it will come true.”

Community College Pathways for Former Foster Youth (CCP)

Community College Pathways for Former Foster Youth (CCP)

is a recently launched statewide initiative designed to support California community colleges in improving college and career outcomes for former foster youth. Aligned with California College Pathways, CCP is linking 12 community colleges across California in order to strengthen outcomes for former foster youth in not only achieving postsecondary educational goals, but also accessing careers with family-sustaining wages and advancement opportunities.

Participating colleges are focusing on approaches that:

- Connect student services with effective instruction and program design;
- Integrate educational and career planning using methods that clearly map pathways and next steps to enhance personal, academic and career outcomes for students from foster care;
- Employ effective program designs to support at-risk students, such as cohort-based learning communities, career pathways programs and integration of foundational academic skills and career technical training; and
- Build on strategies and approaches that will help deepen partnerships inside and outside of the college to support former foster youth with needed resources.

Career Ladders Project (CLP), as the coordinating partner, provides direct support to members of the Community of Practice in the form of technical assistance and professional development opportunities, working with the colleges individually and collectively to expand and deepen their work with former foster youth.

For more information, contact Theresa Rowland, Director of Special Projects, Career Ladders Project: TRowland@CareerLaddersProject.org.



CCP college counselors, faculty, and staff at a June work session

Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS)

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

The Foundation for California Community Colleges

is the official organization supporting the California Community Colleges (CCC) Board of Governors, Chancellor's Office, and the entire CCC system, including 112 colleges and 72 districts, serving 2.9 million students. The Foundation's mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the California Community Colleges.

In this capacity, the Foundation, in partnership with the California Department of Social Services and the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services, operates the Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS) program to help current and former foster and probation youth develop the academic and life skills essential to their successful transition into empowered adulthood. Serving youth ages 16–21 who are emancipated, or are close to emancipating from the foster care system, the YESS Program is currently offered at 25 community colleges throughout the state.

The YESS program unites caregivers, community partners, government entities, and academic leaders to help foster and probation youth successfully navigate the community college system while simultaneously teaching them basic life skills. The YESS program model implements three primary components of a successful program:

- 1) Dedicated program staff on campus to provide coaching, advising, and resource referral
- 2) Experience-based life skills training
- 3) Campus- and community-based collaboration

For additional information about services available through the community college YESS program, please contact the Foundation for California Community Colleges at (916) 325-8572.

Visit www.foundationccc.org

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITY COLLEGES:

- Alameda, College of
- American River College
- Butte College
- Citrus College
- Cuesta College
- El Camino College
- El Camino Compton Center
- Evergreen Valley College
- Fresno City College
- Grossmont College
- Hartnell College
- Long Beach City College
- Los Angeles City College
- Los Angeles Mission College
- Los Angeles Trade Tech College
- Los Angeles Valley College
- Pasadena City College
- Rio Hondo College
- San Bernardino Valley College
- San Joaquin Delta College
- Santa Ana College
- Santa Rosa Junior College
- Sequoias, College of the
- Shasta College
- Yuba College





CALIFORNIA COLLEGE PATHWAYS

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California Community Colleges System Office
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SAVE THE DATE

THE 4TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA FOSTER YOUTH EDUCATION SUMMIT

CRADLE TO COLLEGE AND CAREER:
Bridging Connections to Success

February 7-8, 2011
Sheraton Grand Sacramento Hotel
Sacramento, CA

In 2011, California College Pathways and the California Foster Youth Education Task Force will team up with early childhood and K-12 initiatives to produce a first-of-its-kind comprehensive statewide education summit. This landmark event will highlight notable practices and policies that support foster youth along the entire educational continuum—from cradle to college and career.

Join us for a two-day professional development conference that will bring together a vast network of individuals and organizations. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about best practices from experts in the fields of Child Welfare, Early Childhood Education, K-12, Higher Education and Career Technical Education.

Conference registration will begin in September 2010.

For more information, contact EduAlliance at (831) 708-8403 or www.edualliance.org.