



Creating college bound communities

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PRESS RELEASE

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MAKING THE UNIVERSITY DREAM A REALITY

UC Santa Cruz Hosts 300 Students and Families from South Monterey County at Annual College Family Conference, Saturday, April 12, 2008

(SANTA CRUZ, CA) – College systems, financial aid, and high school requirements are some of the important college-going topics that will be covered at the 2008 College Family Conference at UC Santa Cruz on Saturday, April 12, 2008. About 300 middle school students and families from Chualar Elementary, Fairview Middle School, and Vista Verde Middle School in south Monterey County will gather for the special all-day event to explore college and career options and learn about academic preparation and other steps to take for success on the college-going pathway. The Opening Ceremony is from 10:00 – 10:45 a.m. at the Porter College dining hall followed by workshops at locations through Porter College and College Eight. The Closing Ceremony is from 3:15 – 4:00 p.m. at the Porter College dining hall, featuring a parent panel for a question-and-answer session.

“We know that involving families is key to support students’ higher education goals and include college in their future,” said Dr. Carrol Moran, executive director of UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center (EPC). “Whether it is parents, grandparents, or older siblings, having the family engaged and knowledgeable about college is a major factor in student success.”

The annual College Family Conference is part of EPC’s ongoing efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase college-going rates, especially for students from low-income and underserved communities. Students face significant roadblocks on the pathway to college, including lack of academic preparation, college awareness, and understanding of college and career options and financial aid resources. These roadblocks loom larger for students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, and the achievement gap highlights the need for increased college awareness and student academic preparation and the importance of family support for students’ postsecondary education aspirations.

“The goal of the conference is not for parents to be able to recite the A-G high school requirements. Rather, we want to empower parents to know what questions to ask, where to go for help, and feel motivated to seek out the support that is available to them through our programs and other resources at the school, district, and county office of education,” said Maria Leyva, EPC South Zone Assistant Director for South Monterey County.

To help students and families navigate the college-going pathway, the 2008 College Family Conference will provide workshops on a variety of important topics, such as: college preparation and eligibility, A-G high school requirements for college eligibility, financial aid and scholarships, college systems and pathways, and UC/CSU admissions. Participants will also take a guided tour the UC Santa Cruz campus.

Dr. Eduardo Mosqueda, UCSC Assistant Professor of Education, is the keynote speaker at Opening Ceremony, joining Moran and Elise Herrera-Mahoney, Associate Vice Chancellor, UCSC Student Affairs. Lunchtime entertainment at Porter College dining hall will feature a performance by Ballet Folklorico Teocali, and during the Closing Ceremony a parent panel will answer questions and tell stories about their planning for college and supporting their child’s dreams. Other key partners involved in the College Family Conference include EPC’s GEAR UP program, Greenfield Union School District, Chualar Union Elementary, Gonzales Unified School District, Migrant Education Region XVI, Hartnell College, UCSC Bay Tree Bookstore, and Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

For more information about the 2008 College Family Conference on April 12 or other media inquiries, please contact JAIMIE VARGAS, Director of Development & Communication at (831) 459-1747 or jevargas@ucsc.edu. The event is free; registration is limited to middle school students at EPC’s three partnership schools in south Monterey County. The conference will be held rain or shine. Log on to <http://epc.ucsc.edu>.

About UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center

Established in 1999, the Educational Partnership Center (EPC) coordinates new and long-standing student academic preparation efforts of UC Santa Cruz with the goal of increasing access and opportunity to higher education for students across the Monterey Bay and Silicon Valley/San Jose regions. EPC is a research- and data-driven umbrella organization for a variety of complimentary, integrated academic preparation and educational partnership programs serving students, teachers, and families from kindergarten through college. The mission of the Educational Partnership Center is to build college-bound communities that improve student learning and increase college-going rates among students from low-income and traditionally non-college-going families in collaboration with school, college, business, and community partners. An array of direct services and programs support students on the college-going pathway through tutoring, mentoring, academic planning and counseling, leadership training, test preparation, college awareness and enrichment, family involvement initiatives, transfer student support, and teacher professional development.

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