



Creating college bound communities

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NEWS RELEASE

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WATSONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AWARDED \$100,000 FROM THE WATSONVILLE COLLEGE SUCCESS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center, MAIA Foundation Award 30 Scholarships to Support Graduating, College-Bound Students

(SANTA CRUZ, CA) – As part of its work to increase college access and opportunities for students in the Watsonville/Pajaro Valley area, the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center (EPC), in collaboration with the Migration and Adaptation in the Americas (MAIA) Foundation, has announced the recipients of the Watsonville College Success Scholarship Fund. The scholarship fund was established to support college-bound, financially disadvantaged seniors at Watsonville High School, one of many EPC partner schools across Santa Cruz, Monterey, and Santa Clara Counties. The Educational Partnership Center’s ongoing GEAR UP partnership with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District supports students and families with academic preparation, counseling, and college awareness, but many students face significant financial roadblocks on the college-going pathway. With generous funding from the College Access Foundation of California, the additional scholarships allow students to pursue their higher education goals without the financial barriers that make it difficult for so many young people to attend and succeed in college.

“Our experience working with students, many of whom are first generation college-going and from low-income families, suggests that a significant barrier to pursuing postsecondary education is a lack of knowledge about education costs and available financial aid. We are delighted that through the Watsonville College Success Scholarship Fund we helped to meet the financial needs of our students and motivated them to make their college dreams a reality,” said Carrol Moran, executive director of the Educational Partnership Center.

“MAIA has long supported Watsonville High School students going to college, and this partnership with Educational Partnership Center has increased our capacity to provide crucial scholarship aid,” said Hal Hyde,

member of the Scholarship Review Committee and longtime MAIA Foundation advisory director. “I am most impressed with the outstanding scholarship applicants.”

The Watsonville College Success Scholarship Fund received 81 total applications. Selection criteria included academic performance, participation in extracurricular activities, demonstrated financial need, letters of recommendation, and personal essays. The following 30 students were awarded scholarships for the 2007-08 academic year:

Maira Acevedo, San Jose State University
Bethsy Bobadilla, San Francisco State University
Olga Corona, University of California, Los Angeles
Mariela De La Torre, University of California, Davis
Noemi Duran, San Jose State University
Alejandra Eguiza, University of California, Berkeley
Azucena Espindola, California State University, San Luis Obispo
Faviola Fernandez, California State University, Fresno
Monica Fernandez, Dominican University
Cesar Froylan, Neumont University
Jose Garcia, Cabrillo College
Katiana Gonzalez, University of California, Berkeley
Mayra Gonzalez, Cabrillo College
Alicia Gracida, Cabrillo College
Aleide Hernandez, Cabrillo College
Ana Hurtado Aldana, University of California, Berkeley
Alejandro Lobato, Santa Clara University
David Martinez, California State University, San Luis Obispo
Mayra Martinez, Sacramento State University
Arlette Maya, Cabrillo College
Jose Michel, University of California, Davis
Juana Perez, Cabrillo College
Maria Ramirez, San Jose State University
Octavio Rivas, University of California, Riverside
Ruben Rivas, San Jose State University
Berenice Rocha, San Jose State University
Monica Santana, University of California, Santa Cruz
Marissa Santos, University of California, Santa Cruz
Jose Villanueva, University of California, Riverside
Gilberto Villicana, University of California, Berkeley

“These students have consistently demonstrated talent, hard work, and dedication to their educational goals,” said Caroline O. Boitano, president, College Access Foundation of California. “College Access Foundation is proud to support the Educational Partnership Center’s work to help them overcome the financial obstacles they face and achieve those goals.”

Skyrocketing academic costs are among the barriers that make it increasingly difficult for many students to pursue higher education, particularly low-income and educationally disadvantaged students. The Watsonville College Success Scholarship Fund is an important part of the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center's comprehensive, early college outreach efforts to support students, families, and schools, and the EPC is committed to building college-bound communities by improving student academic achievement and increasing college-going rates. Scholarship recipients and their families will celebrate their awards at a special dinner and ceremony on Wednesday, May 30, 2007, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Watsonville High School cafeteria. For more information about the Watsonville College Success Scholarship Fund, the scholarship award ceremony, or other media inquiries, please contact JAIMIE VARGAS, Director of Development & Communication at (831) 459-1747 or jevargas@ucsc.edu.

About UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center

Established in 1999, the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center (EPC) coordinates new and ongoing outreach efforts of the University of California, Santa Cruz with the goal of increasing access and opportunity to higher education for students across the Monterey Bay and San Jose/Silicon Valley regions. EPC is a research- and data-driven, umbrella organization for an array of complimentary, integrated academic preparation programs, serving students, teachers, and families from kindergarten through college. The mission of the Educational Partnership Center is to create 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.

About MAIA Foundation

The MAIA Foundation works collaboratively with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District to identify, prepare, and guide students who demonstrate the potential to become college graduates and are from families, which have not had the experience with institutions of higher learning. To support these students, the MAIA Foundation provides students with college counseling, scholarship aid, and grants to cover college visits, test preparation and test fees, and college application fees.

About College Access Foundation of California

College Access Foundation of California, the largest grantmaking organization of its kind in the state, helps California students who have financial need attend college. The Foundation provides millions of dollars in grants to community-based organizations that are helping students prepare for and enter institutions of higher learning.

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