



CAL SOAP Finds New Fiscal Agent

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California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) re-establishes its services on November 7th in Southern Santa Barbara County after finding a new fiscal agent at the Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara (CAC). Cal-Soap, was formed in 1984, and is one of sixteen consortia in the State of California each serving a specific geographical area of the State, and all working toward a common goal: providing access and advisement about post secondary education and providing much needed tutoring services, higher education information, and financial aid guidance to students, parents, and schools in Santa Barbara (geographically serving Goleta to Carpinteria). Fiscal uncertainty of recent years forced the programs financial agent to cut Cal-SOAP services in August of 2010. The program looked for a new financial agent, and found a partner in the Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County (CAC).

"CAC is pleased to be the financial agent for Cal-SOAP, a well-established and proven program that we can grow and strengthen. These programs encourage greater attendance at California's post secondary institutions on the part of those who historically have been underrepresented in California's post secondary education population. These groups considered underrepresented include: low income, first generation college-bound, and more recently, all students within a district having a lower than average college going rate. In the 2009-2010 school year, close to 75% of the youth that received services were low income and first generation college-bound. These programs give youth who want to have a higher education the opportunity and resources to make those dreams a reality." stated, Fran Forman, CAC Executive Director.

Long time board member, Lisa Przekop and Associate Director of Admissions at UCSB commented, "CAC are the heroes in saving the Cal-SOAP program. CAC jumped at the opportunity to make sure these services were available to families in our community. It is a natural expansion of service offerings for CAC. They have experience working with local families from Head Start programs at pre-school age into high school and now into higher education. CAC also has extensive experience working with state and federally funded programs so Cal-SOAP gains the valuable knowledge and the financial stability about funding agencies that we didn't

necessarily have in the past. It is a perfect pairing."

The program stands to thrive with the basis of the school network already established, the support and experience of CAC and three new Cal-SOAP staff members to drive initiatives. Ismael Ulloa, Cal-SOAP Program Director for Santa Barbara stated, "This is Cal-Soap 2.0. We are breathing new life into the staple services we have offered in the past but our goals for the future are to make higher education much more assessable to any student who has the will. We intend to be the information hub of higher education in Santa Barbara, from the educational preparation, to providing the financial pathway to career services and opportunity assessment. As a first generation college-educated Santa Barbarian, I am excited to share my first hand knowledge and passion for the value of an education."

The Cal-SOAP program will hold a tutoring orientation on Friday, November 4th at the Santa Barbara Jr. High from 3:00 to 5:30pm where the new Program Director for Cal-SOAP, the Tutoring Coordinator and the Santa Barbara District Outreach Coordinator will work with college students from UCSB, SBCC, and Westmont College. The Cal-SOAP services will officially re-launch services to south county public schools on Monday, November 7th.

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