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PRESS RELEASE

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Twenty-three young adults from the Coachella Valley who participate in the TRIO Educational Opportunity Center at CSUSB attend a College and Career Exploration Day at the University of Redlands in fall 2023. The day included a college fair, motivational speakers, career panels and giveaways.

Innovative pre-college programs at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus help Coachella Valley residents achieve success

PALM DESERT, Calif. – The Cal State San Bernardino Office of Pre-College Programs (OPCP) provides services to more than 10,000 students per year, across 16 school districts in both Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

These programs, which are housed in the university's Division of Student Affairs, are designed to provide participants and their families with educational and personal support services that will increase high school graduation, college enrollment and college completion.

Participants in the OPCP range from current middle school to high school students and their families, low income and foster youth, and current/former adult farm workers who are working toward their High School Equivalency Certificate (GED or HiSET).

At the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, the OPCP staff works hard to serve the residents of the Coachella Valley through various programs.

The **TRIO Educational Opportunity Center** at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus is a program that supports adults 19 years or older with earning their high school diploma or equivalent and pursuing a program of higher education, such as a certificate program, vocational or trade school, community college, or four-year college or university. It does this by offering the following free support services: academic advising and educational planning; financial aid advising and financial aid application assistance; college, career and major exploration; assistance applying for and enrolling into a program of higher education; and referrals to other community resources, including housing, mental health, child care and utility assistance. Some participants are stepping back into the classroom after 10 or more years of taking a break from their studies while many are stepping into classrooms to complete their high school diplomas or GEDs, to earn medical assistant certifications at local trade schools, beginning associate degree programs at their local community college or starting online or in-person bachelor's degree programs. For more information about the program, visit the [CSUSB TRIO Educational Opportunity Center](#) website.

#CaliforniansForAll College Corps is a state fellowship program that assists college students in giving back to their community via volunteer service in three fields: climate change, food insecurity, and K-12 education. The program's three goals are to create a generation of civic-minded leaders, help low-income students graduate on time and with less debt, and address societal challenges and help build more equitable communities across California. This is a historic program that aims to tackle statewide challenges and include AB-540 eligible dreamers as well. Additionally, participating fellows are tasked with completing 450 hours of community service, and the program provides them with a living allowance totaling up to \$7,000 and an education award of up to \$3,000 at the end of their service. At the Palm Desert Campus, participating fellows are assigned at partnered host sites in the K-12 education field where they engage with various tasks that range from tutoring and mentorship to financial aid and college application assistance. Program staff brings together the entire cohort of 75 fellows monthly for training and service workshops that engage fellows in team building skills, increase connections to guest speakers, as well as many more professional development opportunities.

"The financial support that College Corps has provided me with has alleviated much of the financial burden of being a commuter student," said Juliana Garcia, a junior at the CSUSB Palm

Desert Campus. “The cost of transportation, meals and my education were quickly adding up, but College Corps has allowed me to continue accepting new opportunities without stressing over the financial burden. I am very grateful for all the financial support I have received, and I am proud to say that due to my efforts and programs like College Corps, I will be able to graduate debt free.”

For more information about the program, visit the [CSUSB College Corps](#) website.

The **College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)** focuses on helping students who are migrant/seasonal farm workers or the children of migrant/seasonal farm workers stay in school during their first year of college and continue into their second year of higher education. The program, which is funded through the U.S. Department of Education for five years, offers support to students in three areas: academic support through college and career planning, progress tracking, advising, tutoring summer residential programs, STEM and supplemental curriculum; financial academic support through family financial aid workshops and application assistance, book loan programs, scholarship assistance, employment connections, opportunities for fellowships and internships and career preparation; and personal resources through leadership development, mental health and wellness programming, college tours, cultural experiences and connections to basic needs resources. CAMP staff continue to work with key community partners to grow the program and reach as many students as possible – even as early as middle school. They meet with regional partners and work closely with the Migrant Education Programs at the local K-12 school districts from the Coachella Valley to Los Angeles and the Antelope Valley.

“CAMP allows students to attend conferences at different universities in California, where they learn about other college students’ experiences and about different grad schools they can apply to in the future,” said Daisy Garcia, a sophomore at the CSUSB Palm Campus. “Financially, this program is helping me stay focused on my classes. My family is the reason why I decided to pursue a higher education. Coming from a low-income household, I’ve learned that education is the best way out of poverty and overcoming barriers. Having the opportunity of going to college also increases job opportunities. I grew up in the Coachella Valley and I’m the third child of four, making me a role model for my younger sibling, and I want to make my family proud.”

For more information about the program, visit the [CSUSB CAMP](#) website.

The **CSUSB High School Equivalency Program (HEP)** is a Spanish/English GED program for the farmworker community whose goal is to recruit, retain and help people from the local agricultural community obtain their GED (officially called the High School Equivalency Certificate). Once they obtain their certificate, the programs help them advance in their place of work, enroll in a trade tech school or community college, and to advance academically and economically. The program offers classes in person or online so that students are not limited by geography or time restraints. While the HEP and CAMP programs are closely related and funded by the U.S. Department of Education, their mission is similar to not only help young adults and parents obtain their GED but to create a narrative shift within the family to expose

parents to the types of rigor that are needed to succeed academically for themselves, while making them aware of the many challenges that young campesino children face at elementary, middle and high school on a daily basis as they move toward high school graduation. A family with a HEP parent may pay closer attention to their children’s progress and be more familiar with the many resources CSUSB can offer the entire family. For more information about the program, visit the [CSUSB High School Equivalency Program](#) website.

“We are thrilled to offer these innovative pre-college programs at CSUSB,” said Summer Steele, executive director of the Office of Pre-College Programs. “These programs reflect CSUSB’s commitment to fostering a culture of academic excellence and community engagement, and by offering these transformative experiences, the university aims to nurture a new generation of leaders, thinkers and innovators. Our goal is to create a dynamic learning environment where students can discover new interests, develop valuable skills and prepare for successful futures in higher education and beyond.”

For more information about the pre-college programs at CSUSB, visit the [CSUSB Office of Pre-College Programs](#) website.

About PDC: The CSUSB Palm Desert Campus offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees, teaching credentials and certificates, and plays a vital role in educating the region’s growing population.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Strategic Communication at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the PDC website at www.csusb.edu/pdc.