

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Early Outreach and Support Programs

Foster Youth Program (PATH Scholars)



A Division of Student Affairs
California State University, Chico

FOSTER YOUTH PROGRAM (PATH SCHOLARS)

I. Mission Statement

PATH Scholars, in conjunction with the campus Foster Youth Committee, is dedicated to the higher educational needs of former foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth. We will enhance access to the California State University, Chico community through collaborative efforts with other college network and community partners. For those identified as former foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth, we will develop stability by acting as a liaison with campus and community resources. Our goal is to cultivate successful, proficient, and self-aware citizens in pursuit of their degree.

Department Goals (Last revised June 2016)

- Inform and educate the campus community about this population. (Division goal 1; University strategic priorities 1, 2, 4, 8)
- Provide leadership and networking opportunities through campus and community collaboration. (Division goals 1, 2, 3; University strategic priorities 1, 4, 7, 8)
- Increase access, retention and graduation rates for this population. (Division goals 1, 2, 3; University strategic priorities 1, 4, 8)

II. Departmental Accomplishments

- Implemented a Summer Program of events (Summer 2015) to keep students engaged and connected, to reduce isolation as the majority of students leave Chico during the summer months.
- Offered the 2nd Annual PATH Scholars Welcome Reception in the fall semester
- Utilized the John Burton Foundation textbook voucher program, Burton Book Fund, for 33 students this academic year, which provided up to \$350 at the Chico State AS Bookstore for each student for the entire year
- Four Newsletters were sent out to campus and community partners (2 fall, 2 spring)
- Radio interview on KZFR 90.1 to promote and educate about PATH Scholars. Listen here: <https://youtu.be/ECxcqxBI7uM>
- Survey distributed mid-semester to collect data on program satisfaction and Student Learning Outcomes
- Cultural activities to cultivate positive relationships through new and meaningful experiences (Pumpkin Patch/Haunted Corn Maze, Thanksgiving Dinner, Ice Skating)
- Strengthened and expanded partnership with Butte County Office of Education (BCOE) new program, Champion Scholars; six PATH Scholar

- students were hired as College Mentors to support and encourage middle/high school students currently in foster care
- Had the opportunity to resume work with fundraising consultant, Cheryl Clarke, for fundraising plan/efforts through December 2015 due to another campus dropping out of using her services.
 - Implemented Independent Living Skills workshops, with topics such as CalFresh and housing. Also incorporated Student Life and Leadership “Adulting 101” workshops as part of PATH Scholars calendar
 - Presented at PAUSE (Student Affairs Training) in Folsom, CA with two PATH Scholar students to educate Student Affairs staff on how to better support this population from their respective programs
 - Partnership with California Youth Connection (CYC) continues to grow. This year, PATH Scholars hosted the CYC Northern Regional Conference at Chico State (Selvester’s Café), with 30+ students in attendance from Yolo, Sacramento, Sutter, Glenn and Shasta counties
 - Program Coordinator accompanied four students to the 2016 Foster Youth Education Summit in Sacramento, California.
 - Continue to coordinate “Lunch with President Zingg” for ongoing advocacy opportunities for participating students.
 - Coordinated a campus-wide event to celebrate National Foster Care Month in May

Highlights:

- Implemented a Summer Program of events (Summer 2015) to keep students engaged and connected. Often times, students feel isolated as the majority of students leave Chico during the summer months, which can increase feelings of anxiety, depression and low self-worth. To achieve this, two Student Program Assistants were hired to assist with planning and coordinating activities for the summer and upcoming fall semester. Because *Student Voice* is such a vital component of PATH Scholars, the first group consisted of brainstorming with the collective group. Out of this, activities included: movies, bowling, a candy scavenger hunt at Powell’s Sweet Candy Shoppe (downtown Chico) and Sunsplash Waterpark in Roseville, CA. Meals were included at all activities to address and reduce food insecurity with this population.
- The partnership between the John Burton Foundation (JBF) and Chico State PATH Scholars has been a significant step towards systemic collaboration. The JBF reached out to campuses to improve eligibility for the Burton Book Fund to effectively serve targeted students. This critical improvement allowed 34 students to use the book fund, totaling \$11,900, as opposed to only four in the 2014/15 year. In addition, the JBF offered

Critical Needs funds this year. Four students received financial assistance for an emergency need, totaling \$1,150. Furthermore, the program coordinator accompanied four students to an annual John Burton Foundation Winter Celebration in San Francisco. The students had the extraordinary opportunity to meet John Burton and share how his organization and efforts have supported their educational journey. Chico State has been such a strong partner that the program coordinator is being featured in the JBF Annual Report this year.

- PATH Scholars organized a campus-wide campaign to celebrate National Foster Care Month on Wednesday, May 4th. A schedule of events was offered to raise awareness about current and former foster youth in our community, as well as those currently attending college. A training, entitled “*Here’s My Shoes, Walk With Me!*”, provided participants a perceptual experience that aimed to give insight into the struggles and obstacles that foster youth endure as children and young adults. While the training was taking place, a “*Drum-Up*” event in Trinity Commons was simultaneously occurring. This offered tabling by various campus and community organizations that provide relevant resources and services, in addition to speakers, music, and food. After that, supporters embarked on a powerful *Silent March* through downtown Chico, where participants held signs and used a piece of fabric to cover their mouths, symbolizing that foster youth often do not have a voice while in the system. The group concluded the march in front of Kendall Hall for a group photo. **National Foster Care Month** has been observed in the United States during the month of May every year since 1988. In 2015, *May 27th* was officially designated as *National Foster Care Awareness Day*.

Diversity Efforts:

- Eliminated priority registration age cap for re-entry students participating in PATH Scholars.
- Expanded program eligibility to include unaccompanied homeless youth, covered under the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Continued to develop and strengthen partnership with California Youth Connection (CYC) in order to increase outreach to service area foster youth. This past year, PATH Scholars hosted the CYC Northern Regional Conference at Chico State with 30+ students in attendance from Butte, Yolo, Sacramento, Sutter, Glenn, and Shasta counties.

III. Changes in Policies and Procedures

- **Removing the Age Cap of 24 for Priority Registration** – Current legislation (AB 194) requires the California Community Colleges and California State Universities to grant priority registration to foster youth

and former foster youth. A foster youth is defined as a person under the age of 24 who is currently in foster care or emancipated from foster care. Research indicates that many former foster youth experience poor outcomes, such as homelessness, incarceration, substance abuse and early pregnancies. If young adults are able to overcome those outcomes, they often times will decide to pursue higher education later in life. This has been the case for a number of students at Chico State who unfortunately are not able to benefit from this policy. As of June 2016, re-entry students active in PATH Scholars will be able to utilize priority registration in order to maximize their academic plan and graduate in a timely manner.

- **Summer Housing** – Summer accommodations, in partnership with University Housing, will be made available on a case-by-case basis with various funding resources to PATH Scholar students. This summer, three current students lived on campus during the summer and one new incoming freshman moved to campus early to accommodate his situation.

IV. Resources Summary

Resource Allocation:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| • Johnson Foundation Implementation Grant allocation for 2015-2016 | \$32,304 |
| • Rollforward from Johnson Foundation Implementation Grant allocation for 2014-2015 | 52,759 |
| • Total Allocation | 85,063 |
| • 2015-2016 Annual Expenses | 38,846 |
| • Projected Rollforward Balance | \$46,217 |

Note: Fiscal year is based on an October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016 timeline. The Foster Youth Program is partially funded by the Walter S. Johnson Foundation (WSJF). Salary for the Foster Youth Program Coordinator is included within the EOP General Fund allocation.

Human Resources:

- Due to the steady increase in student participation and demand for services, two part-time student program assistants were hired in July 2015 to assist with programming and new student applications/verification of foster youth, guardianship, kinship or homeless/unaccompanied youth status. One of these students will move into an MSW intern role, so another student will be hired to take over those responsibilities.

Facilities/Equipment:

- The Program Coordinator is currently working in a vacant office within the EOP office. This is a temporary solution until a more permanent one can be found. The WSJF grant requires that a permanent location be secured as a “Student Lounge” but campus space is limited.

V. Program Assessment of Past Year

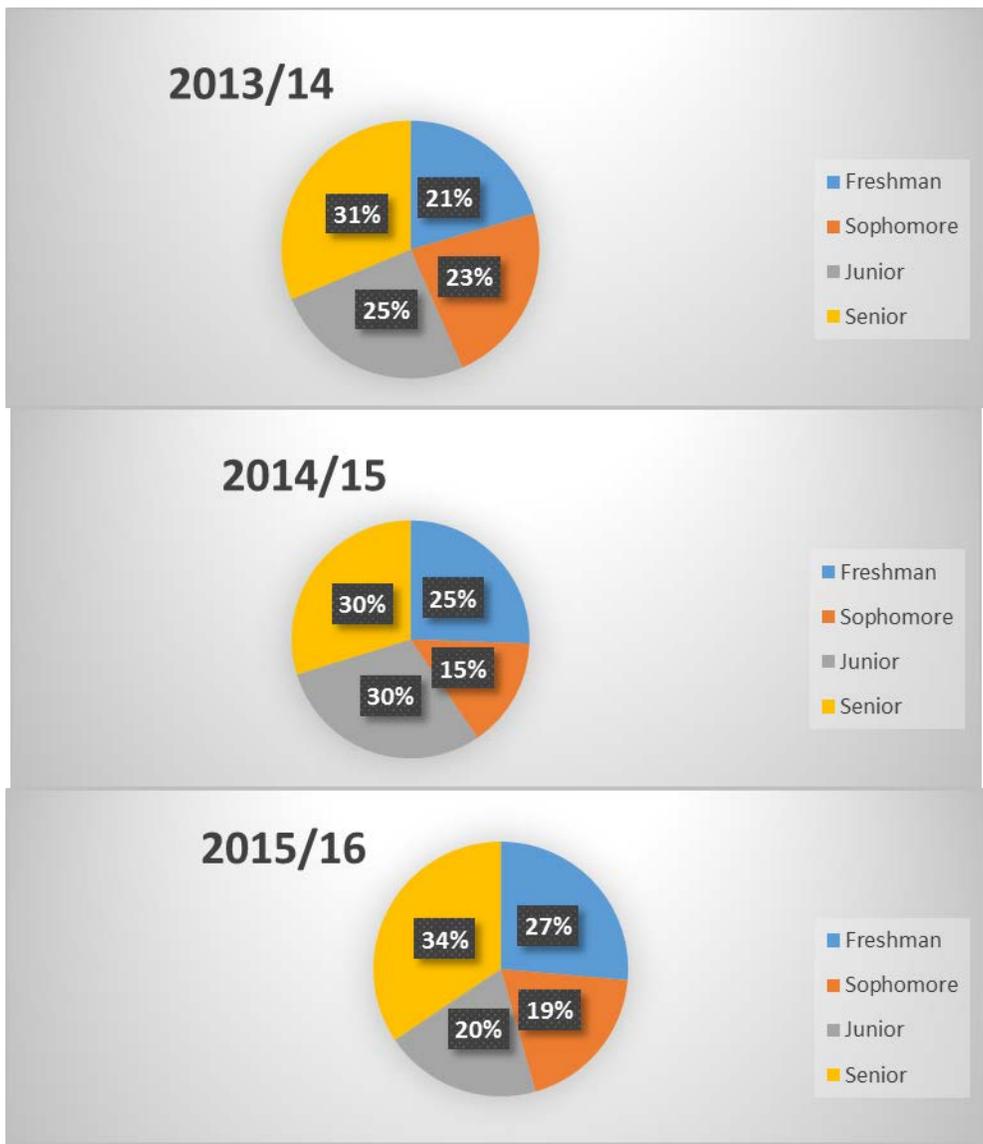
Program Objectives for 2015-2016:

1. Evaluate data results for 2014-2015 and 2013-2014 to determine what modifications to made to the program.
In Progress – This is the second full year of program implementation and there are two full years of data to review. After evaluation of demographic data and mid-year survey results, a couple of trends have emerged. Financial literacy and transition to college life are major areas that need additional development. It is clear that this is most crucial during their first year at Chico State, as evidenced by the data pointing to an increase over the last two years of first time freshmen receiving below a 2.0 after completion of their first year.
2. Secure a designated space on campus for the program.
Unmet - A designated program space has not yet been secured for PATH Scholars. The FYP Coordinator and students have met with CSU, Chico President Paul Zingg to advocate for a “student lounge.” President Zingg is in full support of PATH Scholars having their own space and understands the importance of a campus “home” for this population. Furthermore, a designated Student Lounge will promote relationship building, connectedness and stability to students, while cultivating a meaningful sense of community. At this time, the program utilizes the Program Coordinator’s office (in the EOP office) for individual meetings, and reserves rooms on campus to accommodate more students. A request for space was submitted to the Campus Space Committee. We will continue to advocate for a designated space and hope to secure one prior to the end of year three.
3. Begin a mentorship program for Tier II participants.
In Progress – Because the FYP Coordinator has been responsible for program development and meeting with students, time has not permitted for the launch of the mentor program. An MSW intern has been secured for the fall semester and will be tasked with this project.

Ongoing Assessment Efforts:

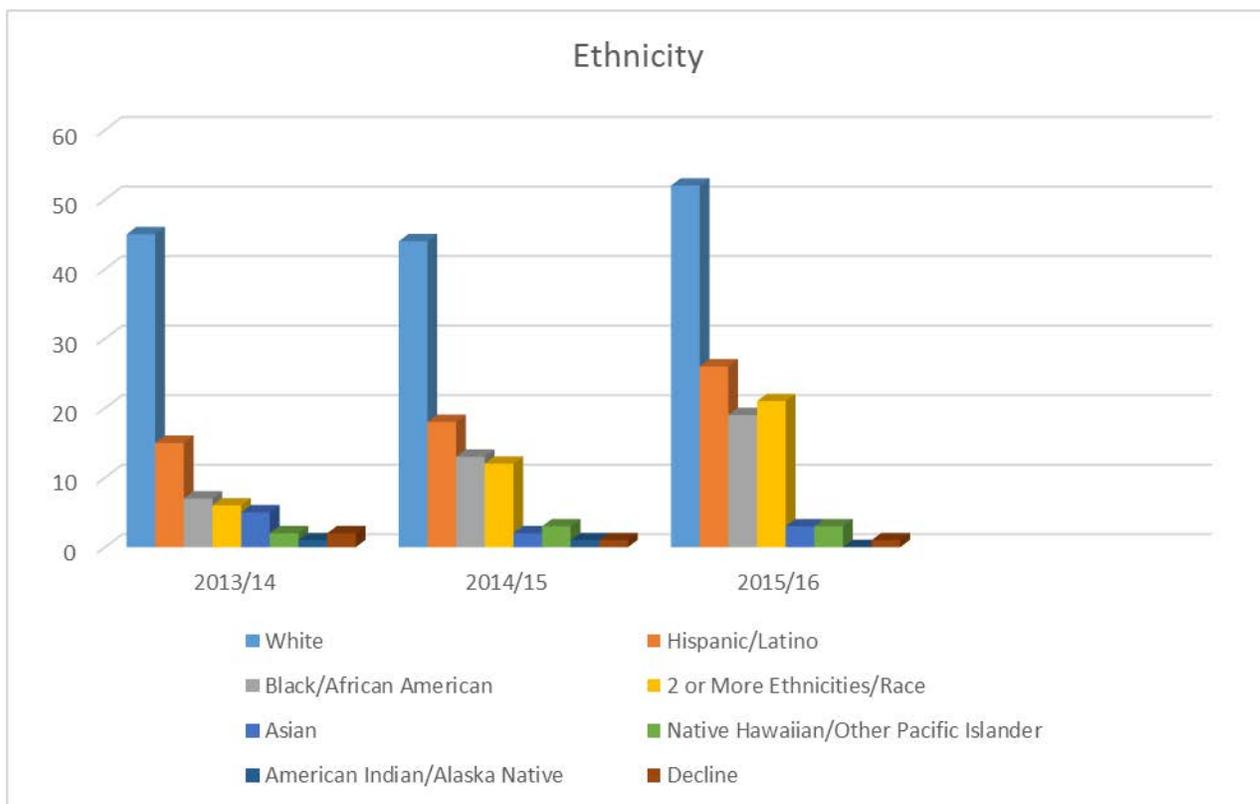
Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Grade Levels

| Grade Level | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Freshman | 17 (21%) | 24 (25%) | 33 (27%) |
| Sophomore | 19 (23%) | 14 (15%) | 24 (19%) |
| Junior | 21 (25%) | 28 (30%) | 25 (20%) |
| Senior | 26 (31%) | 28 (30%) | 43 (34%) |
| Total | 83 | 94 | 125 |



Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Ethnicity

| Ethnicity | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| White | 45 | 44 | 52 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 15 | 18 | 26 |
| Black/African American | 7 | 13 | 19 |
| Two or More Ethnicities/Race | 6 | 12 | 21 |
| Asian | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Native Hawaiian/Other Pac Islander | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Not Specified/Decline | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 83 | 94 | 125 |



Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and GPA

| Term GPA | Spring 2014 | Spring 2015 | Spring 2016 |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Below 2.0 | 21 (25%) | 26 (28%) | 37 (30%) |
| 2.0 – 2.99 | 37 (45%) | 34 (36%) | 41 (33%) |
| Above 3.0 | 25 (30%) | 34 (36%) | 47 (37%) |
| Total | 83 | 94 | 125 |

| Cum GPA | Spring 2014 | Spring 2015 | Spring 2016 |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Below 2.0 | 12 (14%) | 20 (21%) | 20 (16%) |
| 2.0 – 2.99 | 43 (52%) | 46 (49%) | 66 (53%) |
| Above 3.0 | 28 (34%) | 28 (30%) | 39 (31%) |
| Total | 83 | 94 | 125 |

| Cum GPA for Freshman | 2013/2014 | 2014/2015 | 2015/2016 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Below 2.0 | 6 (35%) | 9 (37%) | 14 (42%) |
| 2.0 – 2.99 | 9 (53%) | 11 (46%) | 19 (58%) |
| Above 3.0 | 2 (12%) | 4 (17%) | 0 |
| Total | 17 | 24 | 33 |

PATH Scholar Events/Activities and Participation

| Monthly Group | Number of PATH Scholar Attendees |
|--|---|
| 7/15/2015 Summer Planning Brainstorm | 11 |
| 7/28/2015 Lunch/Movie | 5 |
| 8/11/2015 Lunch/Candy Scavenger Hunt | 8 |
| 8/13/2015 Roseville Sunsplash | 5 |
| 9/16/2015 Welcome Reception | 23 |
| 9/29/2015 Calfresh Workshop | 10 |
| 10/6 & 10/9/2015 Academic Advising Workshops | 14 |
| 10/16/2015 Pumpkin Patch/Haunted Corn Maze | 11 |
| 11/18/2015 Ice Skating in Paradise | 11 |
| 12/4/2015 Campus Network Group & Tree Lighting | 10 (+12 Outreach) |
| 1/12/2016 Winter Break Lunch & Movie | 8 |
| 2/9 & 2/10/2016 FAFSA Workshops | 7 |
| 2/26/2016 Game Night | 12 |
| 3/15/2016 Pottery Painting | 15 |
| 4/11 & 4/12/2016 Foster Youth Educational Summit | 4 |

| | |
|---|------------------|
| 4/22/2016 Final "Lunch with President Zingg | 5 |
| 5/4/2016 National Foster Care Month Celebration | 16 |
| 6/17/2016 ILP BBQ at Bidwell Park | 8 (+30 Outreach) |
| 6/22/2016 PATH Scholars/CYC Recruiting Event | 6 (+9 Outreach) |
| 6/28/2016 Lunch & Movie | 9 |

2014/15 Tier II Student Data (27 Total Students)

| Circumstance | Number of Students |
|--|--------------------|
| Graduated in the 2014/15 Academic Year | 2 |
| Earned above a 2.0 | 25 |
| Secured Student Employment with Referral/Recommendation from PATH Scholars | 6 |

Tier II Student Data

| Circumstance | 2014/15 Tier II Students (27 Total) | 2015/16 Tier II Students (36 Total) |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Graduated at the end of the Academic Year | 2 | 10 |
| Earned above a 2.0 | 25 | 24 |
| Secured Student Employment with Referral/Recommendation from PATH Scholars | 6 | 11 |
| | | |

Student Learning Outcomes:

Note: This is the first full academic year that we are able to measure our progress in these areas. At the end of the fall semester, a student survey was administered to collect and evaluate student participation and program impact.

SLO #1 – As a result of participating in the PATH Scholars Program, students will increase in their academic self-confidence and networking skills.

- As a result of attending a PATH Scholars Academic Advising Success Workshop (20 students), 60% of respondents reported that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As result of attending PATH Scholars Networking Opportunities (19 students), 68% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.

SLO #2 – As a result of participating in the PATH Scholars Program, students will develop and improve independent living skills, reducing their emotional stress and giving them more time to focus on academic goals.

- As a result of attending PATH Scholars Independent Living Skills Workshops (17 students), 59% of respondents reported that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As result of working on Independent Living Skills during individual meetings with the Program Coordinator (24 students), 96% of respondents stated that it made a *Significant Impact* or *Moderate Impact* on their overall success.
- As a result of learning and practicing healthy coping skills to manage stress during individual meetings with the Program Coordinator (20 students), 80% of respondents reported that it made a *Significant Impact* or *Moderate Impact* on their overall success.
- As a result of participating in PATH Scholars (25 students), 20% stated that it *Completely* assisted in overcoming challenges, 48% stated that it *Considerably* assisted in overcoming challenges and 28% stated that it *Moderately* assisted in overcoming challenges.

VI. Analysis

- According to the mid-semester survey distributed after the end of fall 2015, 52% were *Very Satisfied* and 32% were *Moderately Satisfied* with their PATH Scholars experience. Since this survey was disseminated to all verified students, the rest of the respondents stated that they had not participated. Furthermore, the majority of respondents have been actively participating in individual meetings with the Program Coordinator and at program social gatherings at a high rate. For example, 48% of respondents said that they have participated in monthly get-togethers (events and social gatherings) more than three times in that semester, and 36% said they have participated one or two times in that semester. While it's apparent that students are getting a percentage of their emotional and social needs met as a result of participating in the program, more focus needs to be given on goal setting, financial literacy, and study skills. Equally, a survey needs to be distributed at the end of the spring semester to collect data and measure impact after a complete year.

- Based on individual meetings with Program Coordinator and responses from mid-year survey, it would be beneficial for students to receive more financial literacy education and planning during the summer and prior to students moving to Chico and starting the fall semester.
- In order to reduce the consistent number of students below a 2.0 GPA, we need to provide more intentional focus on transition to college life, study habits, time management for academic success.

VII. Program Objectives for 2016-2017

1. Secure a designated space on campus for the program.
2. Implement the mentorship program for Tier II participants, with a focus on college transition and success.
3. Provide financial literacy education to students.
4. Implement an end of the year survey for students.