

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

Early Outreach and Support Programs

Foster Youth Program (PATH Scholars)

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 reviewed June 2017)

- 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

- Coordinated a Summer Program of events (Summer 2016) in collaboration with county partners (Butte County Office of Education, Champion Scholars, Butte County Independent Living Program, California Youth Connection – Butte Chapter, and Butte College Inspiring Scholars) to keep students engaged and connected, to reduce isolation as the majority of students leave Chico during the summer months.
- Program focus shifted to Tier II, or *active*, students, meaning students complete an application and student agreement, participate in 3 individual meetings with Program Coordinator or Peer Coach, and attend workshops and social gatherings.
- Offered the 3rd Annual PATH Scholars Welcome Reception in the fall semester.
- Implemented a “Peer Coach” model, wherein two PATH Scholar Peer Coaches meet with students to support program growth.
- Launched a Student Orientation for new students to aid in their transition to Chico State. PATH Scholars provided participants with school supplies to kick-start their college career.
- Partnered with John Burton Advocates for Youth to provide the textbook voucher program, *Burton Book Fund*, for 27 students this academic year, which provided up to \$250 at the Chico State AS Bookstore for each student for the entire year (totaling \$6,750).
- Received a \$14,000 Special Endowment Award from the University Foundation Board of Governors for the 16/17 Academic Year. This was utilized towards Critical Needs and Social/Cultural Activities for PATH Scholar students to support academic success.
- Standardized semester visits at Butte College in order to enhance the transfer pipeline.
- Co-sponsored a candlelight vigil, in partnership with Butte County Office of Education and 6th Street Center for Youth, to commemorate National Homeless and Runaway Youth month (November). See article here: [NewsReview: Light in the Dark](#)
- Cultural activities continue to be a significant element to program efficacy. Activities cultivate positive relationships through new and meaningful experiences (Haunted Paintball Hayride, Thanksgiving Dinner, Holiday Party, iFly Indoor Sky Diving).
- Provided Christmas gifts to over 30 PATH Scholar students, in collaboration with The Salvation Army Angel Tree, the Chico State Wildcat Food Pantry and Chico State’s Regional and Continuing Education.
- The program was allocated a designated space for a PATH Scholars Center on campus.
- Cultivated empowerment opportunities and leadership development for students by continuing “Lunch with President Hutchinson” each semester.
- Co-presented at the 2017 Foster Youth Education Summit, held in Sacramento, CA, to highlight Butte County collaboration between County partners.
- Honored National Foster Care Month (May) by facilitating a student panel presentation to the University community during a “*Conversations on Diversity and Inclusion*” (CODI) on May 3rd. View the entire presentation here: [Chico State Media](#)

- Partnered with University Housing to launch the PATH Scholars House, as part of their new Living Learning Communities (LLC).
- Finalized the PATH Scholars Program brochure. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion covered printing costs.
- Secured University Foundation account and procedure to receive donations to PATH Scholars. Donate here: [Donation Link](#)

Highlights

- **PATH Scholars Center:** After three years of operation, PATH Scholars was given a dedicated space for foster care alumni and former unaccompanied homeless youth students to connect, build meaningful relationships with peers and feel safe in their campus community. We had our Student Opening on May 5, in celebration of National Foster Care Month, and we have had nearly 75 student visits as of June 30th.
- **County collaboration with pre-college Foster Youth:** For the past two years, PATH Scholars has partnered with Butte County Office of Education and their newest program, Champion Scholars. Through this program, college students who have experienced the foster care system serve as paid mentors to current foster youth students in junior high and high school. Many of the mentors are PATH Scholar students and meetings and activities are held on the Chico State campus. Additionally, we partner with California Youth Connection (CYC), a state-wide youth driven (ages 14-21) advocacy organization that aims to improve the foster care system through legislation. The Butte County chapter meets weekly on campus. This helps younger students feel more comfortable on a college campus, and higher education becomes more realistic, attainable and accessible to them.
- **University Housing partnership:** PATH Scholars House: This coming fall, UHFS will be implementing themed housing and one of them will be designated to PATH Scholars. This north campus residence hall will provide a cost effective, on-campus living experience for students with a foster care or unaccompanied homeless background. The PATH Scholars House will provide additional workshops to support residents, such as tutoring, healthy cooking, budgeting, and other skill-building opportunities that will ultimately have a positive academic impact.

Diversity Efforts

- Added *unaccompanied homeless youth* to website and brochure.
- Presented to several foster youth (from foster care agencies and schools throughout the state) in collaboration with Campus Special Tours.
- Continued regular events with campus partners (Butte College and Shasta College) to strengthen transfer pipeline.

III. CHANGES IN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

N/A

IV. RESOURCES SUMMARY

Resource Allocation

Johnson Foundation Implementation Grant allocation for 2016-2017	\$0
Rollforward from Johnson Foundation Implementation Grant allocation for 2015-2016	\$45,662
One-time Special Endowment Award	\$14,000
Total Allocation	\$59,662
2016-2017 Annual Expenses	(\$47,908)
Projected Rollforward Balance	\$11,754

Note: Fiscal year is based on an October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017 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 a continued steady increase in student participation and demand for services, the program has moved to a Peer Coach model. Two part-time Peer Coaches were hired specifically to meet individually with students to support, problem solve and set goals with students to promote academic success. A third student, hired as a Program Assistant, assists with new student applications and verification of foster youth, guardianship, kinship or homeless/unaccompanied youth status during the University Admissions process. Additionally, all three student staff assist with programming.

Facilities/Equipment

- The PATH Scholars Program was allocated a designated space this year. The *PATH Scholars Center* is located in Siskiyou Hall 115A. The Center will be operated and staffed by students (peer coaches and receptionist/program assistant). The Program Coordinator will continue to work in a vacant office within the EOP office, since there is not a private office in the Siskiyou location, and will have limited drop-in hours at the Center. This is a temporary solution until a more permanent one can be found.

V. PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OF PAST YEAR

Program Objectives for 2016-2017:

1. Secure a designated space on campus for the program.
Met – A designated program space has been secured for PATH Scholars. The location in Siskiyou Hall is temporary, as plans move forward towards reconstruction of said building. After coordinating a focus group of students to voice their need for a designated space to administrators and submitting a proposal to the Campus Space Allocation Committee, the process gained momentum. Approval was given early in the fall semester and it took several months of planning and coordinating start-up details and budgets. Minor renovations were completed, such as painting, and the California Faculty Association (CFA) donated the majority of the furniture. The Student Learning Center (SLC) and ITSS donated computers for a student lab. The PATH Scholars Center Student Opening was held on May 5th, in celebration of National Foster Care Month.

A campus “home” for this population is paramount. The PATH Scholars Center has already begun to promote relationship building, connectedness and stability to students, while cultivating a meaningful sense of community. Since the opening, the Center has had nearly 75 student visits.

2. Begin a mentorship program for Tier II participants.
In Progress – An MSW intern was secured for the academic year and was tasked with this project. Before the fall semester began, the Program Coordinator and MSW intern coordinated a Mentor Orientation/Training for interested staff and faculty. Seven mentors attended. As the school year started and progressed, we were met with multiple challenges. First, students were adjusting to the high demands of college life and even though they had indicated interest in having a mentor during their first year at Chico State, students were unresponsive to being matched with a mentor. Second, the MSW intern found that meeting with students on her caseload took up the majority of her 16 hours per week.

Towards the end of the fall semester, a second year student requested additional support by means of a mentor and was matched with a staff suitable and complementary to her needs. This was the only mentor/mentee pair matched this academic year.

3. Provide financial literacy education to students.
Met – This program component has proven to be extremely successful for students. The first step included assisting new students during the summer months while they begin their transition to Chico State. Most students do not understand the basics of their financial aid package, and how it relates to the cost of attendance. PATH Scholars staff worked with students individually, oftentimes over the phone, educating students of those fundamental elements. This dialogue included the most cost effective residence hall or off-campus living if possible, essential resources, such as Cal-Fresh, and the need for additional funding (outside scholarships and/or additional loans). Once students started the semester and acclimated to their new environment, staff provided monthly budgeting with students as part of this ongoing financial literacy education. One major strategy utilized was to pay 5-6 months of rent using financial aid, so that housing for the semester is stable and secured. Another crucial tactic included determining a monthly budget to avoid frivolous overspending. This financial literacy component has become a standard practice for the program.
4. Implement an end of the year survey for students.

Met – An End of the Year Survey was sent out to all Tier II/active students, approximately 55 students. The response rate was 56%. The data collected in this survey demonstrated what is working effectively, needs and improvements for the program, as well as more detailed narrative responses from students. This survey will be sent out to students at the end of each academic year.

Ongoing Assessment Efforts

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Grade Levels

Grade Level	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Freshman	24 (25%)	33 (27%)	49 (35%)
Sophomore	14 (15%)	24 (19%)	29 (21%)
Junior	28 (30%)	25 (20%)	30 (22%)
Senior	28 (30%)	43 (34%)	31 (22%)
Total	94	125	139

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Ethnicity

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
White	44	52	55
Hispanic/Latino	18	26	31
Black/African American	13	19	19
Two or More Ethnicities/Race	12	21	24
Asian	2	3	5
Native Hawaiian/Other Pac Islander	3	3	3
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	0	1
Not Specified/Decline	1	1	1
Total	94	125	139

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and GPA

Term GPA	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Spring 2017
Below 2.0	26 (28%)	37 (30%)	32 (24%)
2.0 – 2.99	34 (36%)	41 (33%)	48 (36%)
Above 3.0	34 (36%)	47 (37%)	53 (40%)
Total	94	125	133

Cum GPA	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Spring 2017
Below 2.0	20 (21%)	20 (16%)	14 (11%)
2.0 – 2.99	46 (49%)	66 (53%)	79 (59%)
Above 3.0	28 (30%)	39 (31%)	40 (30%)
Total	94	125	133

Note: There were 6 fewer students in Spring 2017 due to fall graduations or Planned Educational Leaves.

Cumulative GPA for First Time Freshman

Cum GPA for Freshman	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Below 2.0	10 (42%) 9 (37%)	15 (45%) 14 (42%)	11 (35%)
2.0 – 2.99	7 (29%) 11 (46%)	14 (42%) 19 (58%)	15 (48%)
Above 3.0	7 (29%) 4 (17%)	4 (12%) 0	5 (16%)
Total	24	33	31

PATH Scholar Events/Activities and Participation

Date	Monthly Group	Number of PATH Scholar Attendees
Fall 2016		
8/19/2016	New Student Orientation	12
9/9/2016	Welcome Reception Celebration at Selvester's Café	22 (+ 32 Staff, Faculty, & Administrators)
9/23/2016	Lunch with President Hutchinson	11
10/13/2016	"Holiday Open Door" program planning	5
10/14/2016	Academic Advising Workshop	14

Date	Monthly Group	Number of PATH Scholar Attendees
10/20/2016	"Holiday Open Door" program planning 2nd meeting	5 (+ 4 Non PATH Scholar students)
10/21/2016	Dinner & Haunted Paintball Hayride	10
10/28/2016	FAFSA Renewal Session	5
11/18/2016	PATH Scholars Pizza and Pottery Event	12 (+ 12 Outreach)
11/22/2016	Thanksgiving Movie & Lunch	6
11/24/2016	Thanksgiving Dinner	5 (+ 2 Non PATH Scholar students)
12/2/2016	Network Partners End of the Semester Event at Woodstock's	5 (+ 6 Outreach)
12/8/2016	PATH Scholars Holiday Party at Broadway Heights restaurant	12
12/20/2016	Lunch & Movie	5
Winter Break		
1/11/2017	Morning Thunder Breakfast	7
1/17/2017	Indoor Skydiving in Roseville	5
1/18/2017	Transfer Student Orientation	5
Spring 2017		
3/23/2017	PATH Scholars (PS) Career Center Workshop	12
3/24/2017	Campus Network Event (Butte College/Shasta College)	4 (+ 11 Outreach)
4/7/2017	Academic Advising Success Workshop	20
4/12/2017	Career Center Professional Etiquette Dinner	5
4/21/2017	Lunch with President Hutchinson	9
4/21/2017	PATH Scholars/Dream Center "Soft" Opening for Staff/Faculty/Administrators	80
4/26/2017	Heart Attack Racing and dinner at Sierra Nevada Restaurant	14
5/3/2017	CODI Panel Discussion: Another PATH We Walk	4
5/5/2017	PATH Scholars Center Student Opening	17

Tier II Student Retention Rates

Academic Year	Total Number of Students	Student Retention Rate	Graduates
2014/15 Tier II	27	85%	2
2015/16 Tier II	36	88%	10
2016/17 Tier II	55	94%	3

Note: New data being reported.

Student Learning Outcomes

Note: A Student Learning Outcomes survey was sent out at the end of the academic year to 55 students (Tier II/active). Thirty-one students completed the survey (56% completion rate). The results of that survey inform the following:

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 New Student Orientation and/or Welcome Reception (20 Students), 75% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As a result of attending a PATH Scholars Academic Advising Success Workshop (23 Students), 74% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As a result of attending PATH Scholars Networking Opportunities (17 Students), 94% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As a result of attending a Cultural Activity (16 Students) and/or a Social Activity (20 Students), 94% of respondents and 75% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success, respectively.

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 (13 Students), 69% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.

- As a result of working on Independent Living Skills during individual meetings with the Program Coordinator and/or a Peer Coach (26 Students), 88% of respondents stated that it made a *Significant Impact* or *Moderate Impact* to their overall success.
- As a result of learning and practicing healthy coping skills to manage stress during individual meetings with the Program Coordinator and/or a Peer Coach (27 Students), 88% of respondents stated that it made a *Significant Impact* or *Moderate Impact* to their overall success.
- As a result of participating in PATH Scholars (29 Students), 21% of respondents stated that it *Completely* assisted in overcoming challenges, 45% of respondents stated that it *Considerably* assisted in overcoming challenges and 17% of respondents stated that it *Moderately* assisted in overcoming challenges.

6. ANALYSIS

- Piloting a New Student Orientation this academic year, designed specifically for PATH Scholar students, proved to be a valuable component to the program. There was a strong emphasis on transition to college life, study habits, and time management for academic success. Even though there was a small improvement from 2015/16 (42%), 35% of first-time freshman earned below a 2.0 this academic year.
- The Peer Coach model has been paramount to meeting the growing needs of this population. Peer coaches meet regularly with students to help keep them on track and plan ahead to avoid potentially catastrophic situations that derail their academic success and could lead them to consider dropping out of school. The PATH Scholar student group is divided between the Program Coordinator and two peer coaches. This academic year, two peer coaches met with students assigned to them, totaling over 160 sessions. This does not include additional sessions with students assigned solely to the Program Coordinator.
- It will be extremely critical to stabilize funding for the next academic year. For example, the original funding from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation (WSJF) will be completely depleted by the end of this calendar year if funding is not secured for student staff/peer coach salaries. Currently, the WSJF funding is being utilized towards student staff salaries. A proposal was submitted for additional funding for student staff salaries for the 2017/18 academic year through the Board of Governors Special Endowment Award. However, this is not guaranteed at this time.
- Another strategy to support students academically is to intervene more intentionally during mid-semester progress reports. Peer coaches can play an important role in guiding and encouraging students to build relationships with their professors and incorporate practices early on, such as tutoring, to start strong and/or improve academically.
- According to the end of the year survey distributed after the end of this academic year, 76% are *Very Satisfied* and 8% are *Moderately Satisfied* with their PATH Scholars experience. Students are utilizing PATH Scholars and the resources available to them to reach their academic goals because this program connects with their foster care and/or unaccompanied homeless identity and experience. One survey respondent stated, "Without ...this great program I would never be able to achieve the level of success I have done so far." Another survey respondent summarized what the Program Coordinator hears very often, "They helped me a lot throughout the year and without them my first year might have been my last."

7. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR 2017-2018

1. Stabilize funding to continue providing services to students, especially to sustain the Peer Coach model.
2. Incorporate an intentional focus on mid-semester progress reports.
3. Explore options for a permanent PATH Scholars Center.