

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

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 2018)

- 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 2017) 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, connected, and to reduce isolation as the majority of students leave Chico during the summer months.
- Launched the first Donation Drive (August 2017) to collect living essentials via *Welcome Packages* for new incoming students.
- Admitted 35+ new students this year; the highest number since the program started.
- Offered the 4th Annual PATH Scholars Welcome Reception in the fall semester.
- Featured in a Chico News & Review article highlighting the remarkable accomplishment of starting college for this student population, and the challenges they face along the way. Link to article: <https://www.newsreview.com/chico/finding-their-way/content?oid=24849877>
- Newspaper article inspired a radio interview with KZFR to hear from more students. Link to interview: <http://www.kzfr.org/broadcasts/9923>
- Chico State PATH Scholars was highlighted in a report published by California College Pathways (CCP)/ John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) to establish best practice policies for four year universities. Link to report: <http://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Stepping-Up-FINAL-1.pdf>
- Received outside funding from Chico Rotary to provide a cultural activity during Halloween time (Haunted Corn Maze).
- Raised \$6,320 for PATH Scholars during Chico State Giving Day, which included one special \$5,000 gift from a private donor. This funding will support student emergency funds and social activities to build community. Link: <https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/chicopath>
- Staff Council selected the PATH Student Organization for their annual raffle fundraiser, raising \$2,212 to host regular social gatherings on campus with younger foster youth to promote higher education for this population.
- Partnered with John Burton Advocates for Youth to access the textbook voucher program, *Burton Book Fund*, for 32 students this academic year, which provided up to \$250 at the Chico State AS Bookstore for each student for the entire year (totaling \$8,000).
- Partnered with Chico State Associated Students for textbook funding (\$2,985) which assisted 26 students in the spring semester.

- Cultural activities continue to be a significant element to program efficacy. Activities cultivate positive relationships through new and meaningful experiences (Holiday Party, End of the Semester Dinner).
- 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 & Continuing Education.
- Celebrated the one year anniversary of the PATH Scholars Center.
- Cultivated empowerment opportunities and leadership development for students by continuing "Lunch with President Hutchinson" each semester.
- Completed the first year of the PATH Scholars House, one of the new Living-Learning Communities (LLC), in partnership with University Housing.
- Attended the Foster Youth Program Coordinator Meeting at the Chancellors Office which had not been held in several years.
- Honored National Foster Care Month (May) with a Silent March around campus, and another KZFR radio interview. Link to interview: <http://www.kzfr.org/broadcasts/12761>
- Received additional WSJF Network funds at the end of the fiscal year to be used towards program needs through September 2019.
- Selected for Staff Development Day service project, which included 35 Welcome Packages for incoming students, purchased by Odyssey Teams. A PATH Scholar student shared his story to increase staff awareness of this student population and the services available to support them.
- Supported instrumental policy change throughout the legislative process for Senate Bill 940 which would increase the rate of college success among California's foster youth by increasing access to the Cal Grant B program; and Senate Bill 918 which will establish a grant program for housing, services and supports for youth experiencing homelessness and task the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council to oversee them.

Highlights

- **Partnered with local media to increase awareness:** Young people with foster care and unaccompanied homeless backgrounds are often called the invisible population. PATH Scholars has given students an opportunity to use their voice to speak out and share their challenges and successes. The CN&R interviewed four students with varied backgrounds, and within the different systems. One student was just starting her college career, two were continuing students and one was completing her last year. All are major accomplishments for this student group. Following the article, KZFR Radio wanted to interview three incoming first year students and hear their experiences in more depth. The plan is to follow these three students through their college journey. Finally, to honor National Foster Care Month in May, KZFR conducted another interview at the PATH Scholars Center with a different group of students to share their stories and continue empowerment by giving them a voice. It is vital for the local community to hear their unique experiences, how they overcome obstacles, and celebrate their remarkable wisdom.
- **PATH Scholars highlighted in CCP/JBAY Report:** The goal of the report was "to help understand the conditions that foster youth face at four-year universities, track whether state-mandated policies have been implemented, and identify promising practices that can be shared and emulated". The program coordinator participated in a survey to share how Chico State has developed its program. As a result, PATH Scholars was spotlighted throughout the report, demonstrating how point of contact, priority admission/verification process, partnership with housing, and addressing food insecurity have been implemented. Following the report publication, the program coordinator co-presented on a webinar for community colleges, CSU's, UC's, community/county agencies, and K-12 personnel to further discuss report findings. (*Report link is provided in section above.*)
- **Additional fundraising and donations to further support PATH Scholars:** Aside from being guaranteed base funding for program operations, which also supports a full time program coordinator, and being assigned annual work study for the first time this year, additional funding came from outside donors. PATH Scholars was invited to participate in Chico State's first Giving Day which raised over \$6,000. This endeavor also helped raise awareness about our program goals and needs. Next, a network surplus provided a little extra funding from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation. Then the PATH Student Organization was selected by the Staff Council Organization

for their annual raffle fundraiser, raising \$2,212 to host regular social gatherings on campus with younger foster youth to promote higher education for this population. Finally, PATH Scholars launched its first Donation Drive to collect items for Welcome Packages for new students, including bedding, towels, toiletries and gift cards so students could purchase essentials specific to their needs. The majority of donations came from the campus community, with a small number of outside donors.

Diversity Efforts

- Formalized partnership with Accessibility Resource Center by assigning a liaison within the department.
- 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.
- Services continue to be offered to older and re-entry students with a foster care background. There has been an increase in this student population seeking additional services as active PATH Scholars participants.

III. CHANGES IN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

N/A

IV. RESOURCES SUMMARY

Resource Allocation

Johnson Foundation Implementation Grant allocation for 2017-2018	\$0
Rollforward from Johnson Foundation Implementation Grant allocation for 2016-2017	\$12
General Fund allocation (transferred from EOP General Fund)	\$7,828
Work Study allocation for 2017-2018	\$5,000
Total Allocation	\$12,840
Projected Annual Expense	(\$12,251)
Unused Work Study	(\$8)
Projected Balance	\$581

Note: The Foster Youth Program was partially funded by the Walter S. Johnson Foundation (WSJF). Grant fiscal year is based on an October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018 timeline. Salary for the Foster Youth Program Coordinator is included within the EOP General Fund allocation.

Human Resources

N/A

Facilities/Equipment

- After being assigned a temporary location in Siskiyou Hall, the PATH Scholars Center was moved to another location in the Meriam Library (MLIB162). As before, the Center is still being shared with another program, the Dream Center. The configuration is different from the Siskiyou location which has created some challenges around privacy.

V. PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OF PAST YEAR

Program Objectives for 2017-2018:

1. Stabilize funding to continue providing services to students, especially to sustain the Peer Coach model.
Met – Base funding has been allocated to sustain program operations on an annual basis. This covers one Peer Coach and operating expenses. Additionally, \$5,000 of work-study was assigned to PATH Scholars for the first time. This will be utilized primarily to support a student receptionist for the PATH Scholars Center, at 20 hours per week. Even with the base funds, fundraising and seeking outside funding will still be essential to provide resources such as social/cultural activities and critical/emergency needs for students.
2. Incorporate an intentional focus on mid-semester progress reports.
Met – The program continues to partner with EOP to request electronic progress reports from faculty. As students met with their Peer Coach, an intentional discussion took place regarding progress and course grade at the mid-semester mark. If progress reports were not available, Peer Coaches encouraged students to log in to Blackboard during their session to further explore progress. The highest number of sessions with students occurred in October (fall) and between February and April (spring), which indicates that a mid-semester intervention was deliberate and critical. Furthermore, students with GPA below 2.0 have either stayed the same or decreased as compared to past years.
3. Explore options for a permanent PATH Scholars Center
Ongoing – Because of the current configuration in Meriam Library and its challenges, we continue to work with the VPSSA's office to identify a more permanent space. This may take some time.

Ongoing Assessment Efforts

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Grade Levels

Grade Level	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Freshman	33 (27%)	49 (35%)	38 (24%)
Sophomore	24 (19%)	29 (21%)	25 (16%)
Junior	25 (20%)	30 (22%)	45 (29%)
Senior	43 (34%)	31 (22%)	49 (31%)
Total	125	139	157

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Ethnicity

	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
White	52	55	58
Hispanic/Latino	26	31	36
Black/African American	19	19	27
Two or More Ethnicities/Race	21	24	29
Asian	3	5	3
Native Hawaiian/Other Pac Islander	3	3	2
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	1	1
Not Specified/Decline	1	1	1
Total	125	139	157

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Term GPA

Term GPA	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Below 2.0	37 (30%)	32 (24%)	23 (15%)
2.0 – 2.99	41 (33%)	48 (36%)	80 (51%)
Above 3.0	47 (37%)	53 (40%)	54 (34%)
Total	125	133	157

Foster Youth/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Cum GPA

Cum GPA	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Below 2.0	20 (16%)	14 (11%)	17 (11%)
2.0 – 2.99	66 (53%)	79 (59%)	86 (55%)
Above 3.0	39 (31%)	40 (30%)	54 (34%)
Total	125	133	157

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	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Below 2.0	15 (45%) 14 (42%)	11 (35%)	10 (29%)
2.0 – 2.99	14 (42%) 19 (58%)	15 (48%)	16 (46%)
Above 3.0	4 (12%) 0	5 (16%)	9 (25%)
Total	33	31	35

PATH Scholar Events/Activities and Participation

Date	Monthly Group	Number of PATH Scholar Attendees
Fall 2017		
8/18/2017	New Student Orientation	19
9/1/2017	PATH Scholars Center Fall Open House	16
9/6/2017	Welcome Reception at Selvester's Café	31 (+16 Staff, faculty, community members)
9/22/2017	Cal-Fresh Workshop	3
10/6/2017	Academic Advising Success Workshop	24
10/18/2017	Networking Know How Event at Career Center	5
10/20/2017	Lunch with President Hutchinson	15
10/27/2017	Haunted Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch Event	12
11/3/2017	Network Partners Event (Butte College and Shasta College) at Woodstock's Pizza	11 (+ 14 Outreach)
11/15/2017	Housing Workshop with Dan Herbert	10
12/7/2017	PATH Scholars Holiday Party at Peeking Chinese Restaurant	23
Winter Break		
1/9/2018	Movie Tuesday at Tinseltown	7
1/18/2018	Game Day at the Center	7
Spring 2018		
2/16/2018	Building Rapport with Faculty Workshop	7
3/2/2018	Tax Prep and VITA Assistance Workshop	4
3/9/2018	Game Night at the Center	8
3/13/2018	Lunch at the Center	19
3/14/2018	Academic Advising Success Workshop	10
3/20/2018	Spring Break Brunch and a Movie Event at Morning Thunder and Tinseltown	5
3/28/2018	Lunch at the Center	13
4/20/2018	Lunch with President Hutchinson	10
4/24/2018	Lunch at the Center	18
5/3/2018	March for National Foster Care Awareness Month	12 (+2 Admin/faculty)
5/10/2018	PATH Scholars End of Semester Dinner at Crepeville	25

Tier II Student Retention Rates

Academic Year	Total Number of Students	Student Retention Rate	Graduates
2015/16 Tier II	36	88%	10
2016/17 Tier II	55	94%	3
2017/18 Tier II	90	90%	15

PATH Scholars Center Visits

	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	AY Total
Number of Student Visits	617	801	1,418

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 88 students (Tier II/active). Thirty-eight students completed the survey (43% 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 (19 respondents), 74% 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 (21 respondents), 71% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As a result of attending PATH Scholars Networking Opportunities (20 respondents), 80% of respondents stated that it was *Extremely Helpful* or *Very Helpful* to their overall success.
- As a result of attending a Cultural Activity (21 respondents) and/or a Social Activity (30 respondents), 90% of respondents and 80% 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 (17 respondents), 65% 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 respondents), 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 (28 respondents), 82% of respondents stated that it made a *Significant Impact* or *Moderate Impact* to their overall success.
- As a result of participating in PATH Scholars (34 respondents), 15% of respondents stated that it *Completely* assisted in overcoming challenges, 35% of respondents stated that it *Considerably* assisted in overcoming challenges and 26% of respondents stated that it *Moderately* assisted in overcoming challenges.

VI. ANALYSIS

- Overall, 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. Ultimately, the goal is to increase access, retention and graduation rates. According to the end of the year survey distributed after the end of this academic year, 64% are *Very Satisfied* and 30% are *Moderately Satisfied* with their PATH Scholars experience. One survey respondent stated, “I know I haven’t been as active as I should be, but you guys do not know how much of an impact you’ve made in my life and career at Chico State. You guys are awesome! Thank you!” Another student shared, “PATH Scholars is the necessary support system that I needed to graduate college”.
- The PATH Scholars Center continues to play an integral role in the success of the program goals. The Center celebrated its one year anniversary in May 2018 and the data representing usage of the Center is evidenced by the number of student visits. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion donated an iPad for students to sign in as they enter the Center. There was a 25% increase in the number of students utilizing the Center since the fall opening, with over 800 visits during spring 2018 as compared to just over 600 in the fall. Even though there was a rise in students visiting the Center, the biggest challenge had to do with lack of privacy and confidentiality. The location divides PATH Scholars and the Dream Center with office partitions, which leads to high noise volume and the opportunity to overhear sensitive conversations by both populations. Students from both programs shared that they did not feel comfortable utilizing the Center due to this reason. Ultimately PATH

Scholars needs a space solely dedicated to this program in order to effectively and appropriately serve this student group.

- Due to reaching maximum capacity from a significant increase in student numbers and need, as well as limited staffing and resources, the program coordinator will need to put a cap on the number of students being admitted to PATH Scholars. The program will continue to be structured using a tier system – Tier I, to include students that have been verified with a foster care and/or unaccompanied homeless background and will continue to receive priority registration as well as useful information and resources; and Tier II, comprising of active students that submit an application packet and receive intrusive advising and case management services. For next year, the program coordinator will admit fifteen students that demonstrate the greatest need and highest level of motivation to use their education to make a positive impact on their families and communities. A waitlist will be considered as the process develops and is evaluated throughout the year. In the future, hiring another professional staff will be vital in order to effectively serve all students seeking services to obtain a college degree.
- Even before program inception, a Foster Youth Committee was created to plan and implement next steps. The Committee was instrumental as the program developed, but was paused for some time as the program expanded and evolved. At this time, it is necessary to start utilizing campus and community partners on a deeper level to assist with the significant growth of the program. This requires a dual approach. First, by reactivating the campus Foster Youth Committee, the members can further support and assist the program coordinator by exploring possibilities as well as carrying out tasks and projects. Second, the campus Committee will partner with Butte County Office of Education and Butte College Inspiring Scholars for a County Advisory Council to extend into the local community and leverage resources on a larger scale.
- While collecting and analyzing data for the past four years, the trend shows that students receiving a cumulative GPA below a 2.0 has either decreased or stayed the same over the years. Similarly, students receiving a cumulative GPA above a 3.0 has either increased or stayed the same. As the program continues, it will be beneficial to start evaluating academic progress for the total student group (Tier I) as compared to the active student participants (Tier II). This will inform program services and interventions, and how they are delivered.

VII. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR 2018-2019

1. Continue to explore options for a permanent PATH Scholars Center.
2. Reactivate/revive campus Foster Youth Committee.
3. Compare academic progress of Tier I participants vs. Tier II (active) participants.