

United We Stand: Incorporating Family Support into First Year Success

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The Heart of the Matter

Parent and family engagement is part of Cal State LA's effort to become student-ready, as opposed to waiting for students to become college-ready.

- Moving away from “Deficit Model” thinking and moving towards recognizing student strengths
- Seeing students as multifaceted individuals, not just numbers, including honoring/recognizing their communities

“Traditional” Student (Myth)

- 18 years old
- One or more parents/guardians have a college degree
- Live on or near campus/away from the home (residential)
- Want to “Do it on their own”

Typical Cal State LA Student

- 23 years old
- 57% First Generation college student
- Living at home (commuter) – 91.5% from Greater Los Angeles area
- Still heavily involved in family/community life daily



The Parent Academy



Parent Academy



Parent Academy Overview

- Year 1 – primarily serves parents and families of first-time freshmen
 - 3 Sessions
- Year 2+ – serves families of continuing students
 - 1 Conference + Mental Health First Aid for Parents
- Sessions offered concurrently in Spanish and English
- Offered currently at no additional cost to families

Parent Academy Overview

Parents and family support members hear from:

- Campus partners
- Year 2+ parents and family support members
- Current Students

Parent Academy Overview

- More than 450 families welcomed at Family Welcome Day
- FTF retention rate of 88%
- 92% of family support members said they felt confident in discussing university resources and opportunities with their students

Parent Academy Overview

Student Perspective

[Link to video interview with Jazmin](#)

Learning Outcomes

- Participants will learn best practices for building campus partnerships in order to support the integration of family programs
- Participants will examine their institution's relationship with family support members and determine where they might improve

Building a Parent/Family Program

Poll

**Do you have a parent program currently?
Which department/division does it live in?**

Building a Parent/Family Program

Committees are (not always) Awesome!



Building a Parent/Family Program

Learn What Others are Doing

- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)
- Upward Bound
- Academic Colleges (BE & ECST)

Building a Parent/Family Program

Show Up and Chip In

- Housing Move-In
- College of Business & Economics Parent Night

Building a Parent/Family Program

Shoulder-tap from a Wide Pool

- College Deans
- Academic Advisors
- Faculty
- CAPS Counselors
- Colleagues in Student Involvement
- And others

Building a Parent/Family Program

Build Community for Participants Outside of the “Curriculum”

- Athletic/Campus Spirit Events
- Finals Help Week
- First Generation Students Celebration
- Family Support Essays



Building a Parent/Family Program

Challenges and Shortfalls

- Parent/Alumni Mixer
- Guess Who's (not) Coming to Dinner

The Impact of COVID-19

The Impact of COVID-19

Educational Opportunity Program Summer Bridge

- Parent engagement dropped significantly.
- Family discussions about transportation or residential experience were not necessary.
- Vacation conflicts were non-existent.
- Parents unaware of free technology offered to students.
- The realization that students are the gatekeepers to communication with parents.

The Impact of COVID-19

Upward Bound

- “We’ve always been the people with the answers.”
- Parents sought guidance when circumstances changed.
 - Financial Considerations
 - Health and Safety
- New Bridge Program Following Graduation
 - Emotional Support Navigating Change
 - Academic Coursework
 - Food/Groceries Stipend

The Impact of COVID-19

Opportunities

- Transition Program for Upward Bound Parents
- Parent Portal Consideration
 - Timely information within a dashboard format
 - Podcasts
 - Increased ability to provide content in multiple languages

Breakout Rooms and Discussion Questions

Discussion Questions

- How does your campus currently interact with parents and family support members?
- When does your campus begin engaging with this community? During admissions process? Summer Orientation? Etc.
- Does your campus offer parent/family programs and/or communications in multiple languages?
- Name one or two immediate ways to increase parent/family engagement in your area/department.

Final Questions?