

Cal-SOAP

California Student Opportunity and Access Program

Increasing college opportunity for more than 160,000 low-income California students each year

Cal-SOAP, the California Student Opportunity and Access Program, is a vital component in California's effort to build an educated workforce for the 21st century by providing college, career and financial aid assistance to traditionally non-college going students.

The program was established by the California Legislature in 1978 and is administered by the **California Student Aid Commission**. Statewide projects support the Commission's objective "to make education beyond high school financially accessible to all Californians". The projects sustain and enhance the work of K-12, college and university partners and increase the value and reach of other important federal and state college preparation programs.

Cal-SOAP communicates important information about financial aid, postsecondary opportunities and career technical education. Through tutoring programs and outreach efforts, projects have raised the achievement levels of low-income elementary and secondary students from geographic regions with documented low-eligibility or college participation rates, and who may be the first in their family to attend college. Cal-SOAP projects provide academic tutoring, peer mentoring, college and career advisement, college access and admissions counseling, SAT/ACT test preparation, college tours and financial aid workshops and grants.



- **Cal-SOAP is successful: Over 80% of our students attend college each year.** More than 77.1 percent of Cal-SOAP participants enrolled in a California public college or university after high school graduation in 2008, compared to the statewide rate of 47.1%. In addition, another 6.2% of Cal-SOAP students enrolled in independent, career or out-of-state institutions.
- **Cal-SOAP is present in over 300 elementary, middle and high schools across the state.** Cal-SOAP projects are based in 16 regions serving 27 counties: Central Coast (Santa Maria), Central Valley (San Joaquin), East Bay (Oakland and Richmond), Greater Long Beach, Los Angeles, Merced County, North Coast (Eureka), North Valley (Marysville), Sacramento, San Diego and Imperial counties, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Barbara, Solano, South County Gilroy, and South San Joaquin (Bakersfield).
- **Cal-SOAP's strength is its partnerships with all education segments, including:** 126 public school districts, 9 of the 10 general campuses of the University of California; 18 of the 23 campuses of the California State University, 42 of the state's 112 California Community Colleges; 16 of the 77 Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities members; and 53 community-based organizations.
- **Cal-SOAP leverages over \$15 million in federal investments, doubling the State's investment.** Cal-SOAP partners contribute millions in cash and in-kind support. Cal-SOAP projects are required by state law to match the federal funds they receive with at least a 1:1 cash or in-kind match.
- **Cal-SOAP invests \$2.2 million annually to support students working toward their college degrees.** At least 30% of each project's budget is set aside for the stipends of college students who serve as positive role models and provide college and career counseling, tutoring and mentoring.
- **Cal-SOAP projects work with their communities and partners to augment limited resources.** In California, College Access Challenge Grant funds support Cal-SOAP. One of the project requirements is to minimize duplication of services. Consortia work closely with the TRIO, GEAR-UP, Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search programs in their areas.
- **Cal-SOAP Scholarship Awards** Since 2006, several projects have awarded more than \$10 million in scholarships with the support of funding and partnership with College Access Foundation of California.