

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## **UCSB's Early Academic Outreach Program Hosts UC Success Nights and Expanded Elementary School Swim Program**

April is proving to be a particularly busy month for UC Santa Barbara's Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP). With its weeklong series of UC Success Nights that begins this evening, and a newly expanded third grade swim program that continues through May 2, counselors are reaching out across grade levels to students both in high school and elementary school.

Co-sponsored by UCSB's Office of Educational Partnerships and presented annually, UC Success Nights celebrate the academic achievements of high school seniors from EAOP partnership schools who have been admitted to any campus in the UC system. Seniors and their families from Carpinteria, South, Rio Mesa, and Fillmore high schools are invited to attend individual events at their respective schools.

The UC Success Nights continue through April 25. In addition to award presentations, the events include recognition by representatives from the offices of State Senator Hannah Beth Jackson, State Senator Jean Fuller, State Assemblyman Das Williams, and State Assemblyman Jeff Gorel, among others. Also on the program are student keynote addresses in English and Spanish. Attendees will also have the opportunity to meet UCSB faculty and staff members, administrators, alumni, and current

undergraduate students.

"This is the twelfth year that EAOP has hosted this event as part of our effort to promote a college-going culture of academic achievement in our partner schools," said EAOP Director Britt Ortiz. "Many of these students will be the first in their families to attend college."

The first of four UC Success Night events will take place on Monday, April 22, at 6:30 p.m. in the South High School library, 1101 Planz Rd. in Bakersfield. Fillmore High School will host its event on Tuesday, April 23, at 6 p.m. at El Pescador Restaurant, 1305 W. Ventura St. in Fillmore. The event at Rio Mesa High School will take place on Wednesday, April 24, at 6 p.m. in the school cafeteria, 545 Central Ave. in Oxnard. Carpinteria High School will host its event on Thursday, April 25, at 6 p.m. in the school library at 4810 Foothill Ave.

Meanwhile, the 3rd Grade Swim to College Program (3GSCP) proved so successful in its inaugural session last summer that the Santa Barbara Unified School District approved expanding it to include students from McKinley and Franklin Elementary Schools who participate in the Afterschool Opportunities Program (A-OK). The A-OK program serves low-income students who stay after school and engage in enrichment activities, particularly those that advocate academic achievement, physical fitness, proper nutrition, and healthy lifestyle behaviors.

So, beginning April 9, a group of 45 A-OK students came to the UCSB Recreation Center Aquatics Complex to begin a series of free swim lessons. The 45-minute lessons, during which they will learn how to tread water, float on their backs, and swim 25 yards, are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the shallow pool at the aquatics complex.

The program, a unique opportunity for everyone involved, is truly a group effort. The school district provides transportation and support staff; UCSB undergraduate students -- all Water Safety Instruction certified -- give the swim lessons; and EAOP coordinates a campus tour and student panel presentations to give the third-graders an introduction to the university. In addition, the South Coast Community Aquatics Center (SCCAC) donates goggles, swimsuits, caps, and mesh equipment bags, which the students may keep after the series of swim lessons is completed.

"The water just bubbles with pure joy and happiness when the A-OK students get in the pool," said Ortiz, who co-founded the swim program.

Noted Kevin Kuga, the coach of the Dos Pueblos High School women's swim team and lesson coordinator for 3GSP: "Even though they are just learning how to swim, and some of the students have a little fear of the water, you can hear and see the anticipation and excitement every time they arrive on the pool deck. They can't wait to get in the water."

"Now these students have a chance to belong -- to fit in -- and take part in other aquatic programs and all the other associated water sports in and around our community," added SCCAC's Peter Neushul, also a 3GSP co-founder.

At the end of the program, the students will tour the campus and have an opportunity to interact with UCSB students. They'll also visit interactive laboratories, and learn about some of the campus's sustainability initiatives.

Questions can be directed to the EAOP office at (805) 893-7260.

Related Links

[Early Academic Outreach Program](#)

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.