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## Showing high school students how education, leadership and careers intertwine

[Shelly Leachman](#)

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One of University of California's largest and oldest pre-college academic preparation programs, the UC Santa Barbara Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) strives to promote a college-going culture at local high schools. The goal is to increase student enrollment rates from its partnership schools to the four systems of higher education in California.

On Saturday, Feb. 3, UCSB EAOP will host 300 students from six school districts across Santa Barbara, Ventura and Kern counties at its 11th annual Education, Leadership, and Careers Conference (ELCC).

"For many participants, this might be where they will meet and hear from professionals who not only look like them but also have shared life experiences," said EAOP Interim Director Rosa Martinez. "We know from previous conferences that this is an impactful experience for the students as they learn how the speakers overcame obstacles, took advantage of opportunities and strove to meet their goals,

and to set new ones.”

The primary aim of the conference is to inspire and motivate students by showcasing how education, leadership and careers intertwine, shaping an individual’s life and opening avenues for diverse lifestyle opportunities. ELCC strives to provide both professional and undergraduate perspectives that will help students envision their success — both as college students and as professionals. The majority of participants are first-generation students who are enrolled in EAOP and on track to complete their California State University-University of California eligibility requirements by high school graduation.

“These students are extremely motivated and many are school leaders, highly competitive academically and interested in pursuing a four-year degree,” Martinez noted.

Students will be welcomed to the conference by UCSB’s Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Margaret Klawunn and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services Mike Miller, followed by keynote speaker Eunice Gonzalez-Sierra, a teacher in the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District. They will then participate in three sessions where they’ll hear from several different presenters; altogether the conference will feature 15 speakers from a broad range of fields and professions at various stages in their careers.

Participants will also have the opportunity to participate in a Q&A with a panel of UCSB undergraduate students from a diverse range of majors, campus leadership roles and career interests who will discuss topics such as the college application process, academics, financial aid, campus life and their transition from high school.

Media Contact

**Shelly Leachman**

Editorial Director

(805) 893-2191

[sleachman@ucsb.edu](mailto:sleachman@ucsb.edu)

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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.