"A UC Santa Cruz education is transformative. It has the power to change the life trajectories of our students and to springboard tomorrow’s innovators, critical thinkers, and organizational and community leaders into the world. The Student Success Initiative enhances current resources and develops new programs, opportunities, and other means of support for our students so that they can take advantage of all that our university has to offer."

Chancellor Cynthia K. Larive
UC Santa Cruz provides students with an unparalleled educational experience. We are committed to ensuring that all students have access to financial support, secure sources of housing and food, mental health support, and connections that catalyze their social mobility.

Your support for UC Santa Cruz’s Student Success Initiative provides vital resources for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as access to guidance and experiences fundamental to their education at UC Santa Cruz and their successful careers.
Reducing financial barriers

UC Santa Cruz creates opportunities that empower students, catalyze upward mobility, break generational barriers, and ignite a ripple effect of positive change.

The **Student Success Initiative** works to provide scholarships and fellowships for undergraduates and graduate students to ensure that they have access to all the educational, research, and working-world experiences we offer.

“Being one of the 19 Wojcicki-Troper Scholars receiving annual support throughout my time at UC Santa Cruz means that I can pursue my education. We [in the cohort] all have different identities and face different barriers, but the scholarship is opening doors of opportunity and creating equity for all of us.”

*Jennifer Xilonzochilt*
(Merrill ’24, Anthropology/Sociology)
Holistic approach to student needs

Students thrive when their basic needs are met. When students have stable and reliable access to food and housing, they can better focus on their studies, connect with their peers and professors, participate in extracurricular activities, and fully engage with all aspects of their UC Santa Cruz experience.

“The Board of Trustees cares deeply about student success. Through our support of the Board Opportunity Fund and our Giving Day efforts, we are inspired knowing that we are helping to ensure students’ access to a world-class education and resources, as well as the opportunity to participate in experiential learning and extracurricular activities that contribute to their academic success and future accomplishments.”

UCSC Foundation Chair Linda Peterson (Stevenson ’70, History)

57% of UCSC students are new-generation students: the first generation of their family to attend college; Pell Grant eligible, meaning their family earns less than $45,000 a year; and/or from a background that is historically underrepresented in higher education.
“The new residential halls at Kresge are great—they are full of natural light, and I love how it feels like you’re living in the forest. I spend a lot of time in the common rooms studying and connecting with people. I think having campus housing is really important. I feel connected to the community, and I know there are people I can go to and resources I can access if I need help.”

Jordan McBride (Kresge ’27)
Navigating the complexities of university life can feel daunting and overwhelming, particularly for students from less-resourced backgrounds. The Student Success Initiative increases access to vital programs—through resource centers, mentor and peer networks, and social and emotional support services—to help guide students through their UC Santa Cruz experience.

“In peer tutoring, there’s a high comfort level because you’re working with a person who is traveling your same academic journey and there’s a strong sense of relatability. When a student—whether they are first gen, a person of color, or a transfer student—comes to peer tutoring, they see a person who looks like them and they can see themselves represented in the educational community.

“The active listening, communication skills, and empathy I’ve gained as a peer tutor will set me apart in the workforce. When I start my career, I will have not only the academic skills I earned through my degree, but also vital social and emotional skills that I gained specifically from this experience.”

Brianne Betancourt, Learning Support Services Peer Tutor
(Merrill ‘24, Economics/Math)
Experiences beyond the classroom

Some of the most remarkable aspects of a UC Santa Cruz education happen outside the traditional classroom through experiential learning and co-curricular activities.

“Attending the Hispanic Association of Colleges Universities 37th Annual Conference in Chicago, in a setting where other students looked like me, and the leaders looked like me was an empowering opportunity. It also gave me the chance to build my confidence, develop personal connections, and improve my networking skills.”

Daisy Rico
(College Nine ’25, Environmental Studies/Latin America and Latino Studies)

“The heart of what you learn about in your career is done through outside experience and interactions in the real world, rather than solely in the classroom. This internship has elevated my understanding of what I’ve learned in class.”

Amanda Safi, Transforming Futures intern
(John R. Lewis ’24, Politics; House of Representatives intern at the Office of Congressman Jimmy Panetta)

“Internships provide an important experiential learning opportunity for students to gain professional experience, build professional networks, and create future career pathways, and they’re an important component of student success. But unfortunately, a number of meaningful internships are unpaid, particularly at nonprofit or government organizations, and therefore are not an option for many students with limited financial resources.”

MR Macgill
Transforming Futures Donor

The Chancellor’s SSI Fund supported 10 UC Santa Cruz students’ attendance at the HACU conference, reflecting the Chancellor’s commitment to enhancing experiential learning opportunities.
A leading public research university in good company

UC SANTA CRUZ PROVIDES AN UNPARALLELED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

2022 U.S. News and World Report Undergraduate Teaching: Top 40 Public and Private

UC SANTA CRUZ PROVIDES AN UNPARALLELED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

#1 in the nation for racial and gender diversity in leadership
(2022 Women’s Power Gap Initiative)

#2 public university in the nation for “making a difference”
(Princeton Review)

Top 20 national public universities for excellence in undergraduate teaching
(U.S. News and World Report, 2024)

Ranked among the top universities in the nation for social mobility
(U.S. News and World Report, 2024)

Source:

“A student’s UC Santa Cruz journey should be magical. By providing our students with the essential resources and opportunities they need to thrive holistically, the Student Success Initiative promotes the full student experience, empowers students to pursue their dreams and achieve their goals, and helps today’s students become tomorrow’s world leaders.”

Akirah Bradley-Armstrong
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Success

Thank You

Your support of the Student Success Initiative elevates our students’ educational possibilities, strengthens their well-being, and generates momentum for social mobility—positioning them to meet our world’s biggest challenges.

Learn more about how your gift is making a difference for Banana Slugs.

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