

Guardian Scholars and Similar Programs

The number of college and university programs that provide support services to former foster youth to assist them with their goals in higher education is increasing all the time. The programs vary from college to college and each may offer different support services. If you are interested in going to college, it would definitely be worthwhile to spend a little time finding out where you can find such a program to fit your needs.

One of the best known is the Guardian Scholars Program, a comprehensive program with a goal of supporting former foster youth in their efforts to gain a university, community college or trade school education. Guardian Scholars students receive:

- Full Financial Aid Package - grants and scholarship packages cover tuition and living expenses.
- Housing – priority for campus housing and availability of year-round housing, either on or off campus.
- Academic Advisement – assistance with class selection & registration.
- Employment Services, Mentoring and Career Counseling – job placement, shadowing and advising.
- Personal Guidance, Counseling, Tutoring – regular contact with a consistent counselor to develop and monitor an education plan.
- Supplemental Support Services – child care, transportation help, book and supply vouchers etc.

Guardian Scholars are collaborative programs:

- The program leverages the expertise and resources of the private sector and public agencies to achieve “significant synergies” to support students effectively and cost-efficiently. Together, academic institutions, foundations, public agencies and private citizens create a powerful team dedicated to assisting deserving foster youth achieve their dreams of an education, realize true independence, and reach their full potential.
- The university or vocational school provides a dedicated program director to coordinate services and meet regularly with the students.
- The privately funded catalyst organization raises additional funds for scholarships, housing and emergency services, as well as coordinating social events and mentoring.

Most programs are called Guardian Scholars. Examples of similar programs are the Renaissance Scholars Program at Cal-State University, Chico, the CME Society at San Jose State University, and the Promise Scholars Program at Cal-State University, Stanislaus.

The growing list of colleges, universities and vocational schools which have already created or are in the process of creating such support programs for former foster youth includes:

- American Career College
- California State University, Chico
- California State University, Los Angeles
- California State University, San Bernardino
- California State University, Stanislaus
- California State University, Sacramento
- California State University, San Francisco
- California State University, San Jose
- California State University, East Bay
- California State University, Fullerton
- California State University, San Marcos
- California Polytechnic, Pomona
- Chapman University
- Concordia University
- Cypress College
- Fullerton College
- Hope International University
- Loyola Marymount University
- Orange Coast College
- Santa Ana College
- Taller San Jose
- UCLA
- University of California, Irvine
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- USC
- City College of San Francisco
- Cuyamaca Community College
- Grossmont Community College
- Mira Costa Community College
- Napa Valley College
- San Diego City College
- San Diego Miramar College
- Santiago Canyon College