The Upward Bound/Health Careers Opportunities Program is an academic support program that focuses on helping low-income, first generation college students and underrepresented students in their academic journeys to earn a college degree.

SDSU’s Pre-College Institute’s Upward Bound/HCOP serves 167 students across nine high schools and three school districts. Our goal is to instill motivation and skills in students to complete a secondary education program and enroll and succeed in a program of post-secondary study. Program services include academic advising, building study/test-taking skills, college and financial aid information and assistance with application completion, career exploration, and educational field experiences during the academic year.

The program also provides a Summer Academy, in which students live on a college campus, take credit-barring courses, and participate in team building, cultural, leadership development activities and Field Experiences.
Welcome Back!

by Dr. Cynthia Park, Executive Director

As Executive Director of the Pre-College Institute, I am delighted to welcome all the returning and new students to the Upward Bound/HCOP academic year program. The staff is very excited to engage you in a series of online Saturday experiences that are interesting and engaging and that will help you build academic and critical thinking skills. This year, there will also be a small stipend for your online participation in the Saturday program once you have passed the probationary period successfully. A shout out to all of you who were able to complete the totally online program this summer. We know that you learned a lot and that you became much more proficient on Zoom than your peers who did not participate in the program. For the seniors: Congratulations on getting to your last year of high school, but you are not finished yet.

I am not the doctor you go to see for tonsillitis or a broken arm but I am a Dr. of Educational Psychology. I am the one you go to when you have challenges in your education. I want to warn you about a well-known disease called “senioritis.” It can happen to you without your even being aware that the bug has bit! You know you have senioritis when you start thinking that high school is really...well just over! Yet, you have courses left to take before you graduate. When senioritis hits, you stop putting the effort you used to put in your courses and your grades go down. Many colleges will give you a “temporary” admission on the basis of your work as a sophomore and junior. When you apply to the CSU, you will not even have the first semester of senior year courses completed so you cannot submit them. That is why at San Diego State and other four-year universities, you must submit your senior grades before you are given final admission. Some students I have known have been denied admission to the college of their choice at the last minute because their senior grades brought down their average below the minimum acceptable. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Doctors will tell you that preventing a disease is a whole lot more effective than trying to cure it. That is why there are inoculations for polio, whooping cough, and measles. We hope to have a vaccine for COVID-19 soon. One of your best inoculations against senioritis is continued participation in Upward Bound/HCOP. Getting to Saturday sessions, and keeping up with your UB/HCOP counselor or advisor are the ways UB/HCOP can help you ward off senioritis and get final acceptance to the college of your dreams. I am wishing all of you a very successful year.

Welcome!

by Ms. Tomasa Mauricio, Director of Summer Residential Programs

I hope you are all as excited as I am to begin the 2020-2021 Academic Year! Although the beginning of this academic year looks different than any we’ve had before, we at SDSU Pre-College Institute’s Upward Bound/HCOP (UB/HCOP), are ready to continue to provide the information, support, and tools needed for our students to be successful during this unprecedented time. Our counseling staff will continue to provide advising sessions bi-weekly, so be sure to schedule your appointments with them promptly. We are also excited to continue to host virtual Saturday Sessions that will be fun, engaging and will range in a variety of topics.

The UB/HCOP Team is here to support you in helping you reach your educational goals and understand that it will be your effort and hard work that will make that happen. Don’t be shy about reaching out to us when you have a question, are facing a challenging situation, or just want to check-in. We are here for you!
Low-income and First Generation Student Demographics

Race & Ethnicity

- Hispanic or Latino: 68.8%
- White: 5.3%
- Black or African American: 7.9%
- Asian: 12.7%
- More than one Race: 5.3%

Income and Education

- Low-income, First Generation, and high risk: 3.0%
- Low-income only: 16.2%
- First Generation only: 10.1%

Number of students per school

- CP: 27
- CR: 18
- ECV: 25
- HO: 30
- MM: 22
- MO: 17
- MV: 16
- SD: 23
- SOH: 17

Gender

- Male: 92
- Female: 106

Number of students per grade level

- 10: 70
- 11: 80
- 12: 48

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
In January of 2020, students had the opportunity to take a trip to Chollas Creek, which is a local park in the community. In this Saturday Session, students took action in cleaning the area and planting new plants to create a healthier environment and provide homes for the critters. Not only were students contributing to making a positive impact in the community, they also were able to connect with other students from different schools and were able to build on their team building skills. Students also earned community service hours by participating in this session, which is something that they can include on their college applications or resumes.

Aside from attending bi-weekly advising sessions, students must also participate in Saturday Sessions. One Saturday per month, SDSU Upward Bound/HCOP provides all students with educational, and interactive sessions. Every month carries a different theme. Some themes that we have covered in the past are criminal justice, sustainability in the community, and college.

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In order to follow social distancing guidelines due to the global pandemic, Saturday Sessions for Fall 2020 will be held virtually. While sessions will be held via Zoom, the program is still finding creative ways to keep the students engaged and connected with their peers. Some of the sessions that are planned are using applications on phones and laptops to assist with school work, painting sessions, engineering design with legos, and virtual museum tours. Saturday Session information will always be shared via UB/HCOP counselors, emails, remind, and our social media platforms.
Last year, the Pre-College Institute at San Diego State University welcomed to campus over 500 students, teachers and volunteers from the communities we serve in our annual STEM Exploration Day. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, and the day was filled with activities surrounding these subjects. Students were able to get their hands on scientific experiments, visit laboratories and other workshops that gave them a look into careers and the research related to STEM.

This day could not have been successful without the help and commitment of many volunteers who dedicated the day to teach and demonstrate how things work and how it relates to real life careers. Students were able to ask questions and learn about majors that they may otherwise not be exposed to.

Upon arrival, students were directed to their first location while also touring the SDSU campus. Each school experienced three workshops in which students did hands-on activities. Some of these activities included:

- DNA Extraction
- Genomics 101
- Hand-on Molecular Modeling
- Egg Drop Experiment
- Hip Hop Lab
- Smart Budgeting
- Sediment Microbial Fuel Cells

In the past, we welcomed about 300 high school students, and each year the number keeps growing! Students come to SDSU with excitement to be part of a college campus and envision themselves as future scholars. This year, we will be having a virtual STEM Day still filled with activities. Save the date and look for more information with your program counselor about how you can be part of STEM Day.
This year, due to the COVID-19 social distancing measures, our Summer Academy was completely virtual. Our 2020 Virtual Summer Academy took place from June 10th until July 16th. Given the virtual nature of our program, we had to make some changes to our summer experience while still focusing on providing an enriching, positive experience for our students. In total, we had 87 students complete our Summer Academy, 51 from UB Classic, and 36 from UB STAR.

Students also participated in Tutor/Mentor meetings where they had the opportunity to help build on that sense of community and family that is so important to our UB/HCOP students.

Our Summer Academy concluded with a Closing Ceremony that recognized students for their hard work and dedication. The recipients for our McCabe Award were Jasmine Vasquez (UB Classic, Mount Miguel High School) and Tahnyce Newton (UB STAR, El Cajon Valley High School). The recipients of our Elizabeth De La Torre/Chanda Beasley Memorial Award were Alem Zuga (UB Classic, Castle Park High School) and Jose Muñoz (UB STAR, El Cajon Valley High School).

A special shout-out to all the staff that made this summer experience a success, Mrs. Fink, Diana, Rosa, Martin, Michelle, Paola, Grecia, Christina, Rochelle, and our Destination:College representative, Virginia. A very special thank you to our Executive Director, Dr. Cynthia Park, for her vision, leadership, and continued support.

Food Gift Cards!

On Saturday, September 26th, 2020, UB/HCOP staff will be distributing gift cards from local grocery stores, valued between $200 and $400 to students who participated in the UB/HCOP 2020 Virtual Summer Academy. These gift cards are available to make up for the meals you would have received during your participation in the Summer Academy.
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to modify the way we celebrated our graduating seniors. On June 7th, we acknowledged Upward Bound/HCOP Seniors in our Senior Recognition event. This year’s recognition included a graduation walk and a virtual ceremony. In this recognition, our staff went to each of the recognized seniors’ schools and/or homes with a red carpet and graduation attire to congratulate them for their achievements! A video was created to commemorate their achievements and was presented at the Senior Recognition Event. Dr. Cynthia Park, PCI Executive Director, provided the welcome, and Dr. Carmen Moffet, Program Director for Gallup-McKinley County Schools, provided the keynote address.
Our commitment to you, our students, is year-round! During the academic year, you will have the opportunity to explore and learn from our Counselors the importance of career exploration and college preparation. The focus for our students is to help you be successful in high school and be prepared for college. This year we have prepared different presentations on topics such as: improving studying skills, distance learning & time management, setting SMART goals, working on A-G requirements, and school/community involvement. For our current 11th graders, we will work on getting you ready to apply for college next year; we have presentations for you on “What to expect during Senior year & my transition to college”. Our ultimate goal for our Juniors is to have a smooth transition into Senior year.

Last but not least, we are beyond excited to get to work with our Class of 2021. We have prepared many presentations that will help you with your UC, CSU, Common Application, and Community College applications. Even though this academic year will look a bit different, we are still committed to you to get you through the college application process. We will also work together on getting you prepared for the FAFSA application so you can receive financial aid assistance for college.

Overall, this academic year is full of activities that will help you be successful in high school and beyond. Please connect with your UB/HCOP Counselor Intern and or Counselor to ensure you are meeting program requirements leading to our Summer Academy 2021.

We hope we can all be together next summer at SDSU. But for now, let’s continue to work together to achieve our goals!
Meet the UB/HCOP Staff

Dr. Cynthia Park, Executive Director
Cynthia Darché Park has a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Research. She is the Executive Director and founder of the Pre-College Institute, which houses two Upward Bound Programs, two Talent Search programs, a Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP), and Pathways Service-learning Tutoring Program. She believes that with the appropriate access to resources, opportunities, services, and support systems, all students can develop a skill set that can help them change their narrative, create a new story, and essentially improve their life chances through advocacy and learning. Her philosophy begins with, “Accepting the whole student, by honoring the students’ choices, and by providing the student with the academic, social and emotional support to be successful in an environment that is often unfamiliar to that student’s way of being and knowing.”

Dr. Park cultivates an “Asset-Based Perspective,” in which she believes that all students are competent and capable of succeeding and accomplishing their personal, academic, and professional goals. She has received numerous local, regional, and national awards for her community engagement and service to underrepresented communities.

Ms. Tomasa Mauricio, Director of Summer Residential Programs
Ms. Tomasa is originally from the Imperial Valley (about 120 miles east of San Diego). Ms. Tomasa comes from an immigrant family, daughter of farm workers and is the first person in her family to obtain a degree from a university. She graduated with a degree in Psychology from San Diego State University and a Master’s degree in Educational Counseling from National University. She began her work with the SDSU Pre-College Institute (PCI) as a volunteer for the Talent Search Mentoring program her last year at San Diego State. After graduation, she worked as a Resident Advisor for Upward Bound.

She has since been at PCI in a variety of roles in her almost 25 year career at SDSU PCI. Ms. Tomasa enjoys spending time with family and friends and reading.

Michelle Valles, Internship Coordinator
Michelle Valles graduated from SDSU with a bachelor’s in Philosophy. Throughout her education and work experience, she found her passion for helping students. Making an impact on our students’ lives fulfills her goal of making the world a better place. She is the proud mom of two kids and knows first hand the importance of having a support system in order to succeed. That is why she loves being part of the SDSU UB/HCOP Family and is committed to our students’ success.

Diana Cortes Garcia, Administrative Assistant
Diana Cortes is the Administrative Assistant to Upward Bound/HCOP. She initially went to Southwestern College where she got her Associates in Political Science. She then transferred to San Diego State University where she graduated with a Bachelor’s in Political Science and a minor in International Security and Conflict Resolution (ISCOR). While a student at SDSU, she became a tutor for Pathways and worked tutoring middle schoolers. Now working with Upward Bound/HCOP, she continues to do what she enjoys most: helping first-generation students from her communities accomplish their academic goals.
Meet the UB/HCOP Staff

**Rosa Buenrostro, Program Assistant**

Rosa is the Program Assistant for Upward Bound/HCOP. She graduated from Monte Vista High School in 2016 and continued with her studies at Cuyamaca College, then transferred to SDSU where she got her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology with a minor in Counseling and Social Change. Throughout her time at Cuyamaca, she worked as a mentor for a program similar to Upward Bound/HCOP, helping students navigate their way through the college system, educating them about study skills, financial aid, emotional intelligence, and much more. She discovered her passion for helping students and the urge to want to spread her knowledge so that others are able to succeed in their goals. She likes taking pictures of cool things, enjoys watching Disney movies, and she doesn’t like pineapple on pizza.

**Martin Ahumada Padilla, Technical Assistant**

Martin Alejandro Ahumada Padilla is the Technical Assistant for Upward Bound/HCOP. He is an SDSU graduate with a Bachelor’s of Science in Mechanical Engineering. He is very interested in learning more about automation, machine learning, and controls. He has been part of Upward Bound/HCOP since 2019 and is excited to continue working to serve the students in his community!

**Jose Mondragon Torres, Program Counselor**

Jose Mondragon is the new Program Counselor here at Upward Bound/HCOP. He will be working closely with students from Southwest High School, Mar Vista High School, and Hoover High School as their Upward Bound/HCOP Counselor. He is a first-generation college student, meaning that he is the first one from his entire family to graduate from college. His college trajectory started at San Diego City College where he gained the skills and knowledge to then transfer to the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) where he received a B.A. in Sociology and Latin America & Latino Studies. Growing up in San Diego, a Border region, he always saw the need for community advocacy. His way of giving back to the community has been through the work he has done as a social justice educator.

For the past 10-years, Jose has worked closely with underrepresented students, first-generation college students, and families to assist them in pursuing a post-secondary degree. He is an advocate for higher education and college access; this is the reason why he decided to get a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Education. Jose graduated with a M.A. from the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque, NM. He claims this to be one of his greatest experiences, getting to know a different state and new people from all over the country. Some fun facts about Jose; He likes to read self-help books and be inspired by amazing writers. He also likes the outdoors, especially hiking and beach days. One of his favorite quotes is from Toy Story- he is a big fan of Pixar movies. He lives by the quote “To Infinity and Beyond” by Buzz Lightyear. He sees value in this quote because many times we have to “Feel the Fear & Do It Anyway” especially during challenging times. Jose is beyond excited to get to know you personally and work with you and your families to make your college and life dreams come true. Please don’t ever hesitate to reach out to him with any questions!
Meet the UB/HCOP Staff

Paola Romero, Counseling Intern

Paola Romero is the Counselor Intern for SDSU Upward Bound/HCOP at Crawford and Morse High School. A little bit about her, she was born and raised in San Diego. She is proud to say she is the first person in her family to graduate from college. She graduated from San Diego State University in May 2020 (yes, she graduated during a pandemic). Paola earned her B.S. degree in Applied Arts and Sciences. Her major was Child and Family Development with a minor in Counseling and Social Change. Fun facts about Paola, she LOVES to bullet journal. Her favorite Starbucks drinks are the vanilla bean frappuccino, with no whipped cream, and the pink drink (super basic, she knows).

Virginia Perez-Gonzalez, Counseling Intern

Virginia was raised in the agricultural community of the Coachella Valley by her two parents who immigrated from Mexico in the late 1970s. From a young age, Virginia’s parents motivated her to attend college. Growing up in a low income community and prospering to be a first generation college student, she did not feel supported by her high school counselor to attend college. Upon graduating high school, she moved to Chula Vista to attend Southwestern College (SWC). It was at SWC where she began to feel college was attainable for her; she participated in a number of programs including the Puente Project which helped her realize her career interest to become a counselor.

After three years at SWC, Virginia successfully transferred to the University of California, Davis where she earned her Bachelors of Arts in Chicana Studies. For two years she has been working with first generation, low-income and students of color to motivate and guide them to seek higher education.

Grecia Rivas, Counseling Intern

Grecia Rivas is a Counselor Intern for SDSU Upward Bound/HCOP. She graduated from Mount Miguel High School and was part of UB/HCOP during that time. As a first generation student, she recently graduated from SDSU with a bachelor’s in Chicana/Chicano Studies and a minor in Counseling and Social Change, and is currently enrolled in the Master’s of Education program with a Concentration in Counseling. Upward Bound/HCOP made such an impact on her growing up, that she wanted to come back and give back to a community that gave so much to her educational and personal growth. It inspired her to give back to the community by providing access and opportunities to students who are seeking a higher education and following their goals by taking advantage of the opportunities Upward Bound/HCOP has to offer.

Getting to know the students and their stories has inspired Grecia to continue her education to become a great fountain of resources for them and the future students to come. Outside from Upward Bound/HCOP and school she enjoys nature, taking pictures, and dancing. One of her favorite things to do is to go camping to the beach and read a book while she listens to the waves. Grecia also loves traveling around Mexico and getting to know the country where her family is from and where she was raised, especially trying its gastronomy and music!
Saturday Sessions

Tentative 2021
Summer Academy Dates

FAFSA Deadline
Opens October 1, 2020
Due March 2, 2021

College Application Deadlines

CSU's
October 1 - December 4, 2020
UC's
November 1 - 30, 2020

IMPORTANT DATES

September 19th
October 17th
November 14th
December 12th

January 23rd
February 20th
March 13th
April 17th
May 22nd

Veterans Day - Wednesday, Nov. 11th
Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, Nov. 26th
Christmas Day - Friday, Dec. 25th

Wednesday, June 16th to Thursday,
July 22nd, 2021