

College Trip Evaluation!

Salesian Family Youth Center



Executive Summary - College Exposure Trip Evaluation

The recent College Exposure Trip provided 18 students from our community with a valuable opportunity to explore multiple university campuses across Northern California, including UC Santa Barbara, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, CSU Monterey Bay, and Cal Poly. This initiative aimed to increase students' awareness of higher education pathways, build their confidence in pursuing college, and offer direct experience with campus life.

Key Insights:

- **Prior Experience and Aspirations:**
Most participants had some exposure to college environments, though only one student had never traveled outside the Los Angeles area prior to this trip. The majority planned to attend a four-year university, with several considering community colleges.
- **Learning Outcomes:**
Students gained important new knowledge about college admissions, financial aid opportunities, housing options, and available academic programs. Many expressed a better understanding of campus culture and the realities of college life.
- **Impact on College Interest and Confidence:**
The trip positively influenced students' motivation and readiness for college. On a confidence scale, students rated their preparedness for college at an average of 4.2 out of 5, and overall satisfaction with the trip was rated 4.5 out of 5.
- **Preferred Campuses:**
UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Barbara were among the most favored campuses, chosen for their academic offerings, campus atmosphere, and student support resources.
- **Memorable Experiences and Suggestions:**
Students valued the guided tours, peer bonding activities, and opportunities to explore campuses independently. Suggestions for future trips include increasing guided access, extending trip duration, and improving logistical organization.
- **Next Steps for Students:**
Following the trip, many participants plan to deepen their college research, engage more with counselors, apply for financial aid, and enhance their academic focus.

Acknowledgments and Financial Summary:

This trip was made possible thanks to Southern California Edison and our anonymous Angel Donor, their generous support of our donors who believe in expanding educational opportunities for young people. Their contributions funded transportation, lodging, meals, and campus fees, ensuring a safe and enriching experience for all participants.

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Expense Overview:

College Trip Finances	
Dec-25	
Income	
Students Support	\$ 1,700.00
Angel Donor	\$ 2,500.00
Souther California Edison	\$ 5,000.00
	\$ 9,200.00
College trip Expenses	
Hotel San Francisco	\$ 2,398.00
Gas for vans	\$ 860.64
Oil change Kia	\$ 246.38
Parking	\$ 97.50
Citation for Van	\$ 96.00
Employee	\$ 2,400.00
Various - unexpected	\$ 750.00
	\$ 6,848.52
Income - Expenses	\$ 2,351.48

Note: We maintained a positive balance by making a couple of last-minute changes to reduce the cost of the experience. One decision was not to rent vans but to use our own; this saved us a lot of money. In this overview, we don't include the maintenance expenses we will incur later. However, the leftover money will be saved for our next year's college trip.

Another important point is that our young people paid \$100 for this trip. We change this amount of money because we need their commitment. If they cannot come up with the money, we will find a way to sponsor them. On this trip, we sponsor one young person to attend at no cost.

This trip significantly strengthened students' college-going mindsets and equipped them with practical knowledge and experiences essential for postsecondary success. It stands as a promising model to support first-generation and under-resourced students in their college

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journey. We encourage you to review the full evaluation report following this summary to explore detailed findings, student feedback, and recommendations for program enhancement.



Thank you for your support!

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College Trip Complete Evaluation Report

1. Program Overview

The College Exposure Trip was designed to increase students' awareness of postsecondary opportunities, strengthen college-going identity, and provide firsthand experience of university environments in Northern California. Participating students visited institutions including UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, CSU Monterey Bay, and Cal Poly. Data for this evaluation was collected through pre-trip and post-trip surveys completed by participating students.

A total of **18 students** completed the pre-evaluation, and **18 students** completed the post-evaluation.

2. Pre-Trip Findings

Prior Exposure

- Most students had prior travel experience outside of Los Angeles.
- College exposure varied:
 - Several students had visited **5 or more campuses**.
 - Others had visited **0–2 campuses**, indicating a wide gap in prior access.

Postsecondary Plans

Before the trip:

- Most students planned to attend a **4-year university**.
- Several students indicated interest in **community college**, and a small number reported uncertainty about their plans.

Information Needs

Students most frequently wanted to learn about:

- Financial aid and scholarships
- Application processes
- College life and housing
- Available majors
- Support programs for first-generation college students

Motivation for Participation

Students cited:

- Curiosity about campus life
- Desire to explore new environments and Interest in specific universities
- Personal motivation to prepare for the future

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3. Post-Trip Findings

Knowledge Gains

Students reported increased understanding in:

- How financial aid works and that multiple scholarship opportunities exist
- Differences in campus culture and housing options
- Academic support programs for first-generation and low-income students

A strong number of students specifically cited learning new information related to dorm life, campus transportation, and institutional support systems.

Perception of Guided vs. Self-Guided Tours

Guided Tours:

- Positively received when they included access to buildings, dorms, and opportunities to ask questions
- Main concern was limited time and restricted access at some campuses

Self-Guided Tours:

- Valued for independence and real-world student experience
- Reported challenges included lack of structure and unclear navigation

Changes in College Perception

- Most students stated the trip either expanded or confirmed their expectations of college life.
- Several students reported that college now felt more realistic and attainable.
- A small number indicated the trip did not change prior expectations due to previous exposure.

Impact on College Interest

Interest levels increased for most participants, with many describing:

- Increased motivation
- Clearer vision of preferred campus environments
- Greater sense of purpose regarding academic planning

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4. Outcome Measures

Confidence in College Preparation (1–5 scale)

Average score: **4.2 / 5**

Overall Trip Satisfaction (1–5 scale)

Average score: **4.5 / 5**

These scores indicate strong perceived impact and overall program effectiveness.

5. Institutional Preferences

Colleges most frequently reported as “best fit”:

- UC Santa Cruz
- UC Berkeley
- UC Santa Barbara
- CSU Monterey Bay
- Cal Poly

Reasons cited included:

- Campus environment
- Academic offerings
- Student life
- Access to support programs

6. Student-Identified Strengths of the Trip

Students consistently highlighted:

- Interactive campus exploration
- Bonding time during travel
- Exposure to real college environments
- Presentations by admissions staff
- Opportunities to imagine themselves as college students

Memorable experiences included walking across the Golden Gate Bridge, beach interactions, group activities, and peer bonding during travel.

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7. Areas for Improvement

Student recommendations focused on:

- More guided tours with structured access to buildings
- Longer trip duration
- More time at each campus
- Improved organization during self-guided portions
- Clear campus navigation and scheduling

8. Behavioral Intentions

After the trip, students reported plans to:

- Research colleges more deeply
- Speak with counselors
- Apply for financial aid
- Improve academic performance
- Start personal insight questions (PIQs) earlier
- Visit additional campuses

Several students wrote about registering for better grades, scholarship searches, and future academic planning.

9. Educational Goal Development

Many participants reported setting new goals such as:

- Improving GPA
- Taking academic preparation more seriously
- Exploring STEM pathways
- Preparing earlier for admissions and financial planning

10. Long-Term Impact

Students described:

- Increased clarity about their futures
- Greater confidence in college as an attainable goal
- Stronger college-going identity
- Expanded awareness of institutional options

Nearly all students stated they would recommend the trip to peers.

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11. Conclusion

The College Exposure Trip demonstrated strong effectiveness in increasing student knowledge, confidence, and motivation regarding higher education. The experience successfully created opportunities for students to visualize themselves in college environments, strengthened their academic intentions, and expanded their understanding of financial and institutional resources.

The data suggests this model is a high-impact, scalable intervention that supports college access, particularly for first-generation and low-income students. With improved structure and extended time, the program has the potential to further increase its effectiveness and long-term outcomes.