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## **Scholarship Foundation ‘Future Scholars’ Program Encourages Area Students During Summer Months**

**Through partnerships with other organizations, Foundation program advisors instruct county youth on the importance of college and financial aid.**

**Santa Barbara, CA** — The Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara is instructing local schoolchildren on the importance and practicability of attending college or vocational school through an innovative summer program presented in partnership with area youth development organizations. As part of its “Future Scholars” program, the Scholarship Foundation has teamed with United Way of Santa Barbara County and Girls Inc. of Carpinteria, among other organizations, to present young students with information about college-level study, financial aid, careers, and related subjects. The goal is to encourage children as young as age 8 to plan for their future.

“We want to normalize the idea of college among children who might otherwise overlook it as a viable future path,” said Scholarship Foundation President and CEO Melinda Cabrera. “If we can encourage them at a young age to view college as a realistic option following high school, they are more likely to apply themselves academically and consider their career interests in relation to their studies. Our early outreach is all about getting kids to visualize themselves as college students and professionals, which is essential if they’re to make informed decisions about their future.”

The Scholarship Foundation’s “Future Scholars” summer initiative principally involves partnerships with Girls Inc. of Carpinteria’s Eureka! program and United Way of Santa Barbara County’s Fun in the Sun program.

Eureka! is an intensive, five-year program that emphasizes science, technology, engineering, and math, while incorporating physical activity, personal development, and college and career readiness. Under

the “Future Scholars” partnership, Foundation program advisors work with junior high school students from Carpinteria at UC Santa Barbara, where they provide a foundational understanding of college and financial aid through a series of presentations and activities. Topics include types of colleges, the meaning of terms such as cost of attendance, various forms of financial aid, majors, and careers. This year’s Eureka! sessions took place June 20 to July 11.

Under the organization’s “Future Scholars” partnership with the United Way of Santa Barbara County’s Fun in the Sun program, Foundation program advisors instruct elementary school students on the basics of college and financial aid at sites throughout the county. Participants also learn about the Scholarship Foundation and its efforts to assist local students and families. The 2024 Fun in the Sun program began June 17 and will run through August 2.

Scholarship Foundation “Future Scholars” partnerships also encompass organizations and programs serving local high school students during the summer months. Later this month, Foundation program advisors will present comprehensive information about college and financial aid to incoming seniors attending Santa Maria-area high schools through UCSB’s Early Academic Outreach Program and the Upward Bound program at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. In August, they will present similar information to students in grades 9-12 from Santa Barbara and Ventura counties at Rancho El Chorro in San Luis Obispo through Future Leaders of America.

“No other organization in our region does what we do on a comparable scale,” said Ms. Cabrera. “We enjoy partnering with other community organizations to provide financial aid and college access information to individuals and families in our county. In terms of generational impact on local students, the Scholarship Foundation’s financial aid advisory service, including our ‘Future Scholars’ program, is in a league all its own. We are exceedingly proud of our efforts to instill an appreciation of the value of postsecondary education among area young people.”

The Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara is the nation’s largest community-based provider of college scholarships, having cumulatively awarded in excess of \$150 million to some 62,000 county students since its founding in 1962. A nonprofit organization, the Scholarship Foundation also provides free financial aid advising services. For additional information, visit [www.sbscholarship.org](http://www.sbscholarship.org).

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