

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## Achieving Success

Roughly 350 high school students who have set their sights on a college education will get some firsthand experience when they visit UC Santa Barbara Oct. 13 for Achieve UC.

An annual event held across the University of California system, Achieve UC focuses on schools with large numbers of high-achieving students in communities with relatively low college-going rates. The goal, in part, is to allay concerns about cost and access that can cause eligible California students to rule out a UC education — or worse, cause them to forego college altogether.

At UCSB, the day will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a mock lecture by sociology professor [Victor Rios](#) in Corwin Pavilion. Students will find copies of his Sociology 1 syllabus on their chairs, and he will come in and begin his lecture as if he were addressing his freshman Soc 1 class. He also will discuss his own path, which led him from high school dropout to a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley. Rios is now a renowned author and public speaker.

Presentations by representatives from the Office of Admissions and the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will follow Rios's lecture, providing students an overview of the admissions and financial aid processes. That includes the UC Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan, which covers not just tuition, but also provides financial help with housing, books and other college costs for students from households with incomes of \$80,000 or less.

“A UC education is more affordable than many students think,” said UC President Janet Napolitano. “More than half of California undergrads have all their tuition and fees covered by financial aid.”

Noted EAOP Director Britt Ortiz, “This is a great day for our EAOP high school students to engage with the campus, learn from Professor Rios, hear about admissions and financial aid and interact with current UCSB undergraduates.”

He reiterated Achieve UC’s goal of helping students to separate fact from fiction regarding UC admissions and financial aid. “We want them to know the reality of how affordable, attainable and welcoming the UC system really can be when you know the ins and outs of the admissions and financial aid processes,” said Ortiz. “We want to assure our EAOP seniors and juniors that they can attend UC either as a first-time freshman or as a transfer student, and we are here to help guide them along the entire process.”

The prospective UC students will join UCSB first-generation college students for lunch, listening to their stories about being the first in their families to complete four-year degrees. They’ll also speak candidly about the differences between high school and college life. “Stories can open the imagination to what’s possible and the multiple pathways students can take to reach their goals,” said Catalina Mendiola, EAOP college site coordinator for participating Santa Paula High School. “We want students to know there are multiple support systems at UC and an active community willing to share their stories, encouragement and guidance.”

Among the high schools taking part in Achieve UC are Carpinteria, Pioneer, Santa Maria and Ernest Righetti high schools in Santa Barbara County; Rio Mesa, Channel Islands, Santa Paula and Fillmore high schools in Ventura County; and South High School in Kern County.

“We are here to tell students: Don’t miss out on a world-class education because you think you can’t afford it or because you think that students like you don’t go to schools like UC,” Napolitano said. “Students like you are thriving on our campuses every day — and going on to do amazing things.”

More information about Achieve UC is available at <http://eao.sa.ucsb.edu>.

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.