MISSION
To improve college outcomes for low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students.

GOAL
To raise the number of students who attend and complete college by encouraging and assisting high school students with their college searches, applications, financial aid, and making the transition to postsecondary education.

HISTORY
In the fall of 2013, the USC Center for Enrollment Research, Policy and Practice partnered with the College Advising Corps to launch the USC College Advising Corps. The launch was made possible by a seed grant from the College Advising Corps.
Our vision is to assist 100,000 students to enroll in college by 2026

Thus far we’ve assisted 55,511 students to enroll in college
Difference in college enrollment rate at USC CAC served schools vs. other Title 1 schools in LA County (65% vs. 56%)

74% of students we serve are low income

89% of students we serve come from communities underrepresented in higher education

WHERE WE WORK
School District Partners - 2021

Alhambra Unified
Compton Unified
Duarte Unified
El Monte Union
Glendale Unified

Long Beach Unified
Los Angeles Unified
Lynwood Unified
Paramount Unified
West Covina Unified
CUMULATIVE IMPACT

224,503
One-on-one advising meetings

207,917
Group advising meetings

58,037
Students submitted college applications

$86,885,895
Financial aid received

55,511
Students enrolled in college
OUR ADVISERS

The secret behind USC CAC’s impact at scale is the impact at the individual level. Behind each number represented in this report is an individual student connecting with their college adviser having meaningful conversations about the future. Each relationship results in significant change for students, families, schools and communities. We place exceptional recent college graduates on high school campuses to lead low-income and first-generation students to college. College advisers work full-time alongside school staff to mentor, encourage, and assist students one-on-one as they search for colleges, complete admissions and financial aid applications, and transition from high school to higher education.

**Full Time.** Advisers work full-time at one high school exclusively. Students are always able to access advisers, and advisers carry out consistent outreach to students.

**Staff Excellence.** A very selective hiring process results in highly motivated, skilled, near-peer college advisers.

**Extensive Training.** Advisers train for 160 hours prior to school placement. They complete nearly 400 hours of training over their 2-year term.

**Access for All.** Advisers have no cohort or caseload. They are there for all students.

**Data Informed.** We track and analyze data to inform and improve service.

**Capacity Building.** Advisers increase capacity of other student support staff by taking on a large portion of college access activities.

**Building College-Going Culture.** Advisers play a major role in the district’s comprehensive efforts to build a college-going culture for all students.
MODEL & PARTNERSHIP

USC CAC is a partnership between the USC CERPP and the national nonprofit organization, College Advising Corps, headquartered in Chapel Hill, NC. We place well-trained, recent college graduates as full-time college advisers in high schools across Los Angeles County.

Advisers work to foster a college-going culture by collaborating with teachers and administrators to tie college-going into the life of a school, devising creative approaches to reach and connect with students, and most importantly, opening the eyes of students and their families to the possibility of college. Equally important, advisers supplement, not replace, existing high school counseling staff, thereby reaching more students.

Our national partner, College Advising Corps, serves students across the nation through similar partnerships with various universities.

College Advising Corps traces its roots to 2005 at the University of Virginia. With the help of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, Dr. Nicole Hurd, then serving as Dean and Director of the Center for Undergraduate Excellence at the University of Virginia, launched the “College Guide” program by placing 14 recent UVA graduates in rural communities where college-going rates were below the state average. In March 2007, the program was renamed the National College Advising Corps, added 10 new higher education partners and moved its headquarters to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with the steadfast commitment of UNC’s senior leadership. In 2013, College Advising Corps became an independent, nonprofit organization. Today, after more than a decade of growth and impact, 829 near-peer advisers serve more than 240,000 students in 782 high schools across America.
Sebastian S.
Hoover High School
Glendale Unified
USC Class of 2025

Sebastian was one of the first students that Talia Guiragossian, Hoover High School’s first college adviser, met. Sebastian is a first-generation student—the eldest of four. They got to know each other and discussed postsecondary options. They talked about multiple colleges, majors, and application timelines. Sebastian’s dream was to pursue screenwriting at USC. Ms. T encouraged and helped him with his application and writing supplements. After submitting, Sebastian decided against applying to any other school. He wanted to follow in the footsteps of his hero and fellow Hoover alum, producer and screenwriter, Sev Ohanian.

In Sebastian’s mind it was SC or bust. Though Ms. T wanted nothing more than for Sebastian to attend his dream school, she knew he needed fall back options. Upon her urging, he also applied to Glendale Community College on a transfer path.

By mid-March, Sebastian had received news of his USC acceptance to the screenwriting program. Sebastian was thrilled! And while Ms. T. was thrilled for him, she knew that his persistence to graduation depended on the type of financial aid he received. It was her duty to carefully review his financial aid package before he committed. She needed to make certain that the financial aid was renewable—a nuance most first generation, low-income students are unfamiliar with. They called the financial aid office together and were relieved to learn that his aid was indeed eligible to renew on an annual basis. Sebastian was grateful that his college adviser helped guide, support and look out for him through the complex and ambiguous college access process.

Flash forward to Sebastian’s freshman year at USC and he has nothing but great things to say about it. He loves his screenwriting program. He finds his classes demanding but manageable, as well as therapeutic, creative, supportive and calming. Sebastian has been maximizing his time at USC. He now has a network of friends within his screenwriting program and is collaborating with many of these friends. He directed a music video that will be released soon! Sebastian has no doubt that the creativity that USC sparks in him will continue and will lead to great projects. He plans to explore advertisement classes at Annenberg to expand his educational dreams. Through the support of his college adviser, Sebastian has been able to live out his dream and Fight On!
Jordan International Baccalaureate student Joel worked hard but was sometimes unsure of himself. He maintained good grades but struggled in some classes. As a first-generation student, Joel knew he wanted to go to college, but the application process was a rocky road.

He had dreams of attending a UC as an engineering major, but struggled significantly with the Personal Insight Questions (PIQ or short essay questions). One morning in the college center, USC CAC advisers Gerrel Sayles and Stacy Anguiano noticed that his demeanor had changed and asked what was the matter. After several drafts and iterations of his PIQs, he had had enough. “I’m just not going to apply to the UC system,” Joel said. Thankfully, Mr. Sayles and Ms. Anguiano were there to ensure that he did not give up.

“You miss every shot you don’t take.”
“Don’t reject yourself. Put in the application--if it doesn’t come out how you want it, it’s not a rejection. It’s a redirection pointing you to a school that might be a better fit for you.”

The encouragement worked. Joel got back to work on his PIQ’s with Mr. Sayles and Ms. Anguiano’s support. Where others had told him to start over, they decided the best strategy would be to help him build on what he already had. By the end of the day all three felt more confident about his essays. They were proud to see him click submit.

In March, acceptance letters began to roll in. Joel was not admitted to UCLA. Next UC San Diego sent a redirection as well. Seemingly, his fears about his essays had been confirmed. But then, he received an admission as an engineering student at UC Berkeley! Through his perseverance and the support of his college advisers, Joel went from taking himself out of the running to attending one of the top universities in the world.
We pride ourselves on running our USC CAC program as efficiently as possible.

- 81 cents from each dollar goes directly into schools.
- The bulk of expenses are for adviser wages and fringe benefits as USC employees.
- Fringe benefits include health care, vision, and dental plans and retirement matching funds.

Remaining expenses include:
- Materials, supplies and costs related to adviser professional development.
- Each adviser also has an $800 budget to spend on Decision Day and other college access events.

Finally, administrative wages and fringe are an essential part of the budget. The administrative team:
- Oversees advisers who work primarily off-site.
- Recruits, hires, trains, and places advisers.
- Ensures advisers receive support they need to do their job effectively.
SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INVESTMENT IN PROGRAMMING

The USC College Advising Corps has a sustainable funding model shared among its key stakeholders. School district partners generally contribute 60% of the cost of placing each adviser serving their district. The USC College Advising Corps also raises funds from local foundations and corporations. Our national partner, College Advising Corps, raises the remaining cost.

Our Investors:
GROWTH THROUGH INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE

An important factor for USC CAC to continue its trajectory of programmatic growth and impact is adviser wages. In order to recruit and retain the quality of advisers, and sustain our high-level of impact, USC CAC is committed to increasing adviser pay to a living wage.

As we work toward achieving VISION 2026, enrolling 100,000 students in college, raising adviser wages to $20 per hour will be key.
Appendix: Impact Data

USC CAC vs. Equivalent LA County Schools

College going rate for All USC CAC partner schools compared to other Title I schools across Los Angeles County (12 months after high school completion)

According to an independent evaluation of our work by Stanford University, seniors who meet with a USC adviser are:

+6% 6% More likely to have at least one college acceptance

+8% 8% More likely to take the SAT

+18% 18% More likely to apply to college

+19% 19% More likely to apply for financial aid

+20% 20% More likely to apply for scholarships
## CUMULATIVE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### School Years 2013-2014 through 2020-2021*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students in Senior Class</td>
<td>95,151</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adviser to Student or Family Interactions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students Met in 1:1 setting at least once</td>
<td>53,402</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total 1:1 Meetings</td>
<td>224,503</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students Met in either Group or 1:1 setting at least once</td>
<td>74,808</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Group Meetings</td>
<td>207,917</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families/parents Met in Group or 1:1 setting at least once</td>
<td>7,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College Exposure</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students visiting a college campus at least once</td>
<td>2,168</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students attending college rep visits at least once</td>
<td>12,479</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>College Entrance Exams</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students assisted to Register for SAT or ACT</td>
<td>16,335</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students assisted to receive SAT or ACT Fee Waiver</td>
<td>11,726</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>College Applications and Acceptances</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students with 1+ College Apps Submitted</td>
<td>58,037</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students with 3+ College Apps Submitted</td>
<td>28,304</td>
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<td>Total College Apps Submitted</td>
<td>176,629</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students with 1+ College Apps Accepted</td>
<td>45,413</td>
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<td>Total College Apps Accepted</td>
<td>88,601</td>
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<td><strong>Financial Aid</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students received 1+ College App Waiver</td>
<td>16,901</td>
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<td>Total # College App Waivers</td>
<td>76,036</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Waiver $ Value</td>
<td>$4,516,524**</td>
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<td>Total Institutional Aid $ received by Students</td>
<td>$35,228,841**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students Submitted FAFSA</td>
<td>56,519</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Students Assisted with Financial Aid (FAFSA + CA Dream Act)</td>
<td>49,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total $ Scholarship + Instit. Aid + Waivers + Test Waivers</td>
<td>$86,885,895**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data Source: USC CAC student database. Interactions and activity recorded by college advisers with backup materials.

**This information is difficult to collect. This total is vastly underreported; the actual amount is significantly higher.
I want to change and give back to my community.