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The California State University's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Student Achievement Program

An Evaluation of Progress From Spring 2024 Through Fall 2025

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Executive Summary

The California State University (CSU) Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Student Achievement Program (ASAP) represents a statewide investment in addressing inequities in access, persistence, and success for AANHPI students. Established through California *Education Code* Section 89297.1, the program provides annual funding to the CSU to enhance student educational experiences and promote higher education success for low-income, underserved, and first-generation AANHPI students through culturally responsive services across seven legislatively mandated service areas:

- culturally responsive learning communities
- advising and counseling services
- mental health counseling and awareness services
- career development, career readiness, and employment services
- supplemental instruction and tutoring
- Asian American and Pacific Islander studies courses and curriculum development
- leadership development, internships, and mentorships

The funding is disbursed to all CSU universities to grow new services and/or expand existing programming within the seven service areas and to fund a statewide ASAP Central Office that supports program implementation across universities.

This report presents findings from a multimethod evaluation of ASAP implementation from spring 2024 through fall 2025. Given the program's early stage of implementation and variation in programming across campuses, this report focuses on describing how funds have been used, identifying early successes and challenges of the programming, and presenting considerations for future data collection to be able to measure program impact more rigorously.

Methods

WestEd conducted a multimethod study that draws on both qualitative and quantitative data sources. Data collection included document review (e.g., university proposals for ASAP funding and universities' annual ASAP reports); interviews with 107 ASAP leaders across all 22 CSU universities; interviews with ASAP Central Office staff; and eight site visits to various universities (Cal Poly Pomona, Cal State East Bay, CSU Northridge [CSUN], Sacramento

State, San Diego State, San José State, Cal State San Marcos, and Stanislaus State).[1] During the site visits, WestEd facilitated student focus groups with 68 students to capture their perspectives on ASAP-supported programming.

In addition, a student survey was administered in November 2025 at four universities (Cal State East Bay, Cal State LA, Cal State San Marcos, and San Diego State) to examine students' perceptions of campus climate, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy. The survey compared students who participated in established ASAP-supported programs with students who did not participate in any ASAP-supported programming.

Findings

During the period examined in this evaluation, the ASAP services offered across the universities ranged from being in their initial stages to being fully established and iterated on. Universities exercised local discretion in how they translated the seven legislative service areas into campus-specific programming, and this depended on student needs and existing assets and partnerships within the university. As a result, ASAP-funded activities ranged from the establishment of new infrastructure (e.g., staffing, space, new supports) and programming to the expansion or enhancement of preexisting AANHPI-focused initiatives.

Program leadership and coordination were typically situated within small campus-based teams that worked across academic affairs and student affairs and collaborated with faculty, staff-led cultural centers, and student organizations. Student participation in the programming ranged from attending one-time events to receiving consistent, tailored support across many months. Although program design and implementation varied by university, a consistent pattern emerged across the data sources: The first year and a half of ASAP programming increased AANHPI students' sense of academic, cultural, and social well-being.

The findings described in the main body of this report are organized into four interrelated areas that reflect the program's early implementation and emerging outcomes. First, the evaluation reports the role of the ASAP Central Office in supporting campuses through coordination, professional learning, and data-related guidance. Second, the evaluation describes how universities have implemented programming across the seven legislative service areas, highlighting variation across campuses in design, scope, and maturity. Third, findings from a student survey compare the experiences of ASAP participants and non-participants, focusing on campus climate, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy. Finally, the evaluation identifies institutional and structural factors (e.g., staffing, funding, space, data capacity) that support positive program outcomes and long-term sustainability.

1 Short form names for CSU campuses are used throughout the report. These names can be accessed at CSU's Campus Names web page.

The Central Office was established by the legislation to provide technical assistance, outreach, statewide and regional training, curricula development, and capacity building to the universities. Through the Central Office's hosting of the AANHPI Middle Leadership Academy, participants of the Academy were guided to think about data collection and analysis as tools for measuring program effectiveness and determining resource allocation. ASAP leaders reported being grateful for the leadership and support of the Central Office.

Evidence from interviews, focus groups, and site visits suggests that students see ASAP-supported initiatives as providing safe, affirming spaces that support their academic engagement, personal well-being, and connection to AANHPI cultures and histories. Across universities, students described these programs as communities that helped them feel seen, heard, respected, and supported within institutions in which they might otherwise feel invisible or disconnected. Cohort-based learning communities, peer and faculty mentorship programs, and culturally responsive advising functioned as entry points for navigating academic requirements, accessing campus resources, and building relationships with peers and staff who understood their cultural experiences. These supports were particularly salient for transfer and commuter students, who often reported difficulty finding community and understanding institutional expectations prior to participating in ASAP-supported programming. Collectively, this evidence suggests that ASAP programming plays a critical role in creating culturally responsive supports that strengthen students' sense of belonging and motivation to persist.

Survey findings from students further reinforce the findings regarding the ASAP services. Across participating universities, ASAP students reported more positive perceptions of campus climate, higher levels of sense of belonging, and higher levels of academic self-efficacy compared with non-ASAP students. Notably, these outcomes reflect constructs that prior research has consistently linked to student persistence, academic success, and well-being in higher education, particularly for minority students.

WestEd also identified several structural factors that helped university ASAP leaders in supporting AANHPI students' outcomes. These included factors such as continued institutional support, dedicated staffing for ASAP initiatives, and physical spaces specifically designated for ASAP initiatives.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

This evaluation also identified several systemic challenges that impact a university's capacity to mature toward sustained institutional implementation. Analysis of campus proposals, annual reports, and interviews with program leaders found variation in how individual universities allocated ASAP funding based on factors such as historical campus support for AANHPI-focused initiatives, staff capacity, student needs, and existing data infrastructure. This variation across universities in ASAP programming emerged as a defining feature of

ASAP's early implementation, and the evaluation highlighted how culturally responsive student success initiatives must balance adaptation to local contexts with alignment to shared systemwide goals.

Less institutional support at some universities hindered them from fully realizing their program goals. Universities with programming for AANHPI students that predated ASAP were generally better equipped to allocate funds toward expanding on programs with established success records, whereas campuses for which AANHPI student services were an emerging priority dedicated significant resources toward building foundational infrastructure. Program leaders on campuses at both ends of the spectrum cited the need for sustained support from campus-level administrators.

Even when funding was available, staffing capacity limited program implementation. Several universities experienced delays in hiring or were unable to fully staff key positions, constraining their ability to institutionalize programs or sustain intensive supports such as mentoring and learning communities. At some universities, program leaders were hesitant to hire full-time staff because they were uncertain about the status of future funding. At other universities, internal processes slowed the timely hiring of staff members. In these contexts, small teams were often required to take on multiple roles simultaneously, slowing implementation and limiting program reach.

Program leaders also varied in their capacity and access to resources for developing systems that measure AANHPI student success. While some ASAP leaders had prior experience working with institutional data around common AANHPI student metrics (e.g., admission, retention, persistence, graduation), others had not yet set up systems to access or analyze these data. These constraints made it difficult for program leaders to ensure that services reached the full diversity of AANHPI student subgroups, particularly Pacific Islander, Southeast Asian, and AANHPI transfer students.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The CSU ASAP initiative is in an early and promising stage of implementation. Across the CSU, universities are delivering meaningful programming that students value and that is associated with more positive perceptions of campus climate, a stronger sense of belonging, and higher levels of academic self-efficacy. While data limitations (i.e., tracking a student's participation in each of the ASAP activities and having that information be stored in the campus's student information system) preclude a rigorous impact evaluation of ASAP at this time, this study surfaced promising practices and demonstrated that ASAP has generated early momentum. At the system level, the ASAP Central Office is well positioned to continue playing a coordinating role by supporting professional learning for program leaders and facilitating cross-university collaboration. At the campus level, sustained

staffing, dedicated space, and stable funding will be critical for moving from early implementation to long-term institutionalization.

To deepen impact, the CSU system would benefit from continued investment in staff capacity and institutional support for AANHPI-student focused work. Additionally, a system that tracks each student's involvement in all ASAP activities and then connects that information with the student's administrative data (e.g., persistence, grades, graduation status) would strengthen the CSU's ability to rigorously examine the impact of the program on student outcomes.

Introduction

Overview of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Student Achievement Program

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students in the California State University (CSU) system come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and each student has a unique history, strengths, and needs. However, their range of identities frequently lead to a generalized view of AANHPI students that overlooks the distinct experiences within this group (Gutierrez et al., 2021; Teranishi et al., 2025). According to the CSU Student Success Dashboard, 62% of the entire 2018 freshmen cohort graduated within 6 years of enrolling (CSU, n.d.). However, graduation rates varied widely among the AANHPI student groups, with Asian American students graduating at a rate of 73% compared with Pacific Islander students graduating at a rate of 56%. The difference in graduation rates among AANHPI students underscores the need for support that is intentionally designed with a deep awareness of the varied, unmet needs within the AANHPI communities, particularly as the AANHPI population grows (Budiman & Ruiz, 2021).

The AANHPI Student Achievement Program (ASAP) was established through California *Education Code* Section (*EDC* §) 89297.1 and is designed to provide "culturally responsive services to enhance student educational experiences and promote higher education success for low-income, underserved, and first-generation AANHPI students and other underrepresented students" at CSU campuses. The bill states that participating universities shall provide the following services:

- culturally responsive learning communities
- advising and counseling services
- mental health counseling and awareness services

- career development, career readiness, and employment services
- supplemental instruction and tutoring, such as English language development and support
- Asian American and Pacific Islander studies courses and curriculum development
- leadership development, internships, and mentorships

Disbursement of Funding

In February 2024, funding totaling $6,405,000 was allocated to the 19 universities within the CSU system that submitted proposals for the 2024–25 school year to implement culturally responsive programming aligned with the seven service areas outlined in *EDC* § 89297.1 (CSU, 2025). In July 2025, funding totaling $32,500,000 was approved for allocation to all CSU universities over a 5-year period (2025–26 through 2029–30), as announced in a letter to the CSU presidents. Decisions about funding for universities were based on the amount of funding requested, the proposed use of the funds, and the university's status as a federally designated Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander–Serving Institution (AANAPISI). Annual funding allocations for each university are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Funding Allocation to Each University

University	Funding amount 2024–25	Funding amount annually 2025–26 to 2029–30
Bakersfield	$200,000	$215,000
Channel Islands	$300,000	$230,000
Chico	$400,000	$260,000
Dominguez Hills	$225,000	$255,000
East Bay	$370,000	$325,000
Fresno	$360,000	$350,000
Fullerton	$0	$370,000
Humboldt	$360,000	$175,000
Long Beach	$375,000	$360,000
Los Angeles	$370,000	$350,000

University	Funding amount 2024–25	Funding amount annually 2025–26 to 2029–30
Maritime Academy[2]	$360,000	(Combined with San Luis Obispo)
Monterey Bay	$0	$230,000
Northridge	$0	$280,000
Pomona	$360,000	$360,000
Sacramento	$360,000	$350,000
San Bernardino	$360,000	$220,000
San Diego	$360,000	$365,000
San Francisco	$460,000	$360,000
San José	$160,000	$375,000
San Luis Obispo	$325,000	$325,000
San Marcos	$375,000	$280,000
Sonoma	$325,000	$225,000
Stanislaus	$0	$240,000
Total	**$6,405,000**	**$6,500,000**

Evaluation Design

The CSU Chancellor's Office contracted with WestEd in June 2025 to evaluate the ASAP. The original scope of the evaluation sought to compare ASAP with similar programs at CSU campuses and to detail the findings in a report that will satisfy the requirements outlined in *EDC* § 89297.1 and Assembly Bill 190. However, the wide variation in the availability of data across all the universities made it impossible to rigorously measure the impact of student participation in ASAP on outcomes such as retention and graduation.

2 The CSU Board of Trustees approved the integration of California State University Maritime Academy and California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, on November 21, 2024 (Beall, 2024). The two universities began operating as one single institution, the Cal Poly Maritime Academy, on July 1, 2025, in advance of the 2025–26 school year.

A full evaluation of ASAP requires a data system that tracks each student's participation in any ASAP-funded activity. This would include attendance at single events, such as a Lunar New Year celebration, as well as participation in high-dosage programs, such as a yearlong mentorship program. Furthermore, this participation data for each of the various ASAP-funded activities and programs would need to be linked to the university's student information system that contains information on student outcomes such as retention, grades, and graduation. With information on each student's participation in ASAP-funded programing and the associated outcomes for each student, the outcomes of ASAP students could be compared with those of non-ASAP students. Some ASAP participation data are collected at many universities currently, but it is not the case that every single ASAP-funded activity is collecting the names or IDs of each participating student. And at many universities, the ASAP participation data at the student level are not linked to the student information system that contains each student's data on retention and graduation outcomes.

In addition, as detailed later in the report, the depth and breadth of services offered at the universities for this program varied widely. Some institutions were able to leverage ASAP funds to build upon existing efforts, expanding and enhancing the quality of services offered, whereas others did not have any existing programs to support AANHPI students and used ASAP funds to establish new services. Each university also had discretion in how much it wanted to focus on each of the seven services outlined in *EDC* § 89297.1. For instance, one university might heavily target more programs devoted to supporting career development, career readiness, and employment services. By contrast, another campus might heavily target programs devoted to supporting supplemental instruction and tutoring. These decisions made by each university were made based on the differing student needs at each institution. These university-based decisions made it more difficult to define what the ASAP was for a CSU student given that it varied so widely across campuses and even across students within the same campus.

Given the data limitations, in addition to the relative newness of the program and the wide variation of program activities across and within the universities, WestEd collaborated with the CSU Chancellor's Office and the executive director of the CSU ASAP program to design the methodology of this evaluation. This evaluation focused on describing how the funding has been used across universities and identifying early successes and implementation challenges of the program.

The research questions that guided the evaluation are as follows:

1. How have the California State Universities used the ASAP funding?
2. What are ASAP leaders' and students' perspectives on the successes of the program?
3. What are ASAP leaders' and students' perspectives on the challenges of the program?
4. What supports has the ASAP Central Office offered to universities?
5. What are promising practices for implementing ASAP that can be shared across universities?

Data Collection

WestEd used several data collection activities to conduct the evaluation.

- **Collected Relevant Documentation.** WestEd gathered and analyzed documents to inform the evaluation. Documentation included the following:
    - universities' proposals for funds
    - midyear and annual campus evaluation results from the ASAP Central Office
    - 2025 ASAP annual report
    - universities' logic models
    - letter to CSU presidents detailing ASAP's 5-year funding allocations
- **Observed the AANHPI Middle Leadership Academy (AMLA).** In July 2025, WestEd researchers attended AMLA, in which ASAP staff members from the universities convened to build community, discuss data collection and its importance, and plan for the upcoming school year.
- **Conducted Interviews With ASAP Leaders.** In August and September 2025, WestEd researchers met either virtually via Zoom or in person with ASAP staff members at each university to understand and document the components of the program. WestEd researchers used a semistructured interview protocol, occasionally asking follow-up questions to gather more information. (See Appendix A for the staff interview protocol.) The goals of the interviews were to understand each university's AANHPI-focused programming prior to ASAP, learn about the implementation of ASAP at the campus level, identify the successes of each university's implementation, and document any challenges to implementation. WestEd researchers spoke with a total of 107 program leaders who represented all 22 universities in the CSU.

- **Conducted Interviews With ASAP Central Office Leaders.** In September 2025, WestEd interviewed Central Office staff members in person to understand what supports they have offered to universities and to gather their perspectives on the implementation of the program. (See Appendix B for the Central Office interview protocol.)
- **Conducted Site Visits.** In consultation with the CSU Chancellor's Office, WestEd selected eight universities to visit in order to gain a deeper understanding of the services offered to students. WestEd sought to visit universities with diverse geographic locations and program maturity—six of the universities received funding in the first year, and two of the universities did not receive funding until the second year. WestEd visited the following universities in September and October 2025: Cal State East Bay, CSUN, Cal Poly Pomona, Sacramento State, San Diego State, San José State, Cal State San Marcos, and Stanislaus State. In addition to conducting interviews, WestEd also engaged in the following research activities on site visits:
    - *Conducted focus groups*. WestEd facilitated in-person focus groups with 6–10 university students each. The purpose of the focus groups was to understand students' perspectives on the ASAP services offered at their universities. WestEd researchers spoke with a total of 68 students who represented eight universities in the CSU. (See Appendix C for the focus group protocol.)
    - *Observed events*. WestEd observed ASAP events taking place on campus in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the services offered.
- **Administered Surveys.** In November 2025, WestEd administered a survey to students at four universities who participated in specific, well-established programs offered through ASAP (referred to as ASAP students) and students with similar demographics who had not received the services (referred to as non-ASAP students). Universities were invited to administer the survey if they had an established program supported through ASAP funds and were willing and able to distribute the survey to non-ASAP students. The following universities distributed the survey to students: Cal State East Bay, Cal State Los Angeles (Cal State LA), Cal State San Marcos, and San Diego State. The purpose of the surveys was to (a) understand students' perspectives on services offered through ASAP and (b) compare how ASAP students and non-ASAP students viewed their sense of belonging, the campus climate, and their self-efficacy at the university. (See Appendix D for the student survey instrument.)

Table 2 displays which universities participated in the data collection activities.

Table 2. Data Sources

University	Interviews	Student focus group	Student survey
Bakersfield	**yes**	no	no
Channel Islands	**yes**	no	no
Chico	**yes**	no	no
Dominguez Hills	**yes**	no	no
East Bay	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**
Fresno	**yes**	no	no
Humboldt	**yes**	no	no
Long Beach	**yes**	no	no
Los Angeles	**yes**	no	**yes**
Monterey Bay	**yes**	no	no
Northridge	**yes**	**yes**	no
Pomona	**yes**	**yes**	no
Sacramento	**yes**	**yes**	no
San Bernardino	**yes**	no	no
San Diego	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**
San Francisco	**yes**	no	no
San José	**yes**	**yes**	no
San Luis Obispo	**yes**	no	no
San Marcos	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**
Sonoma	**yes**	no	no
Stanislaus	**yes**	**yes**	no

Data Analysis

Researchers analyzed the quantitative and qualitative data concurrently, merging the data sets to create a combined analysis. WestEd analyzed the qualitative data using ATLAS.ti software to support the coding of data. For each data set, WestEd researchers engaged in a multistep open coding process that included the following: (a) identifying and defining initial codes based on background knowledge, documentation review, and meetings with the Chancellor's Office; (b) using initial codes to code a subset of the data; (c) refining the initial codes and adding codes to capture additional themes and subthemes not previously identified; and (d) recoding the subset of the data in the sample and coding the remaining data in the sample using the revised codes (Strauss, 1987). WestEd then reviewed the coded data to develop findings.

The analysis of student surveys consisted of two components. First, to compare outcomes between ASAP students and non-ASAP students, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine whether there were statistically significant differences on three key outcome variables: sense of belonging, perception of campus climate, and self-efficacy. These analyses were conducted both across the full sample and within each campus to identify campus-specific patterns. Second, for program-specific outcomes among ASAP students, WestEd summarized the 11 program impact items by reporting the mean as well as the distribution of student responses (1–5) for each item by campus, highlighting the proportions of students who disagreed, were neutral, or agreed.

Findings

This section presents findings in four subsections:

- **Central Office:** discusses the roles and responsibilities of the ASAP Central Office; describes early accomplishments, including the AANHPI Middle Leadership Academy; and notes implementation challenges
- **Seven Service Areas:** describes campus-level practices across the seven legislatively mandated service areas, drawing on focus groups, interviews, ASAP annual reports, and site documentation (Note that in these sections, some ASAP programs may be referenced across multiple service areas when their activities span more than one service area.)
- **Student Perceptions of Campus Climate, Sense of Belonging, and Academic Self-Efficacy:** compares student responses on a survey between ASAP and non-ASAP students concerning the topics of campus climate, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy
- **Factors That Support Positive Program Outcomes:** describes factors across universities that support positive program outcomes

Central Office

The authorizing legislation required that a statewide central office be established to provide technical assistance, outreach, statewide and regional trainings, curricula development, and capacity building to the universities. In April 2024, Dr. Timothy Fong began duties as the inaugural executive director, and in July 2025 Dr. James Fabionar joined as the director of professional learning and communications of the Central Office. Among a host of other duties, the ASAP Central Office provided technical assistance and training to the campuses through the AMLA.

AANHPI Middle Leadership Academy

The Central Office organized the in-person convening of university ASAP leaders during the summer of 2025. The main purposes of AMLA were to build a community of university staff and faculty that could discuss collecting and using data to inform decision-making and plan for the upcoming year among themselves and across universities. Half of the universities in the CSU participated in the first session, held June 3–6, and the second half participated in an identical second session, held July 15–18. Members of the WestEd research team attended the second session.

Data collection and analysis were clear areas of focus for the Central Office at AMLA. Facilitators dedicated a significant amount of time to helping program leaders think about the data they collected on ASAP participants and the data that they could consider collecting in the future. Facilitators stressed that data collection and analysis were important for addressing questions about accountability, and they encouraged campus program leaders to use data to measure program effectiveness and determine how to allocate resources.

Program leaders discussed approaches for gathering data through attendance sheets and student ID swipes to monitor attendance at events or visits to the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Center facilities, with the ultimate goal of examining the correlation between participation in ASAP and improved outcomes such as enrollment, recruitment, retention, and graduation rates. Program leaders also discussed how to analyze and disaggregate student demographic data from university offices of institutional research in order to inform programming decisions and goals. In addition to discussing the use of quantitative data, program leaders discussed examples of qualitative sources such as campus climate surveys, pre- and post-event surveys, student focus groups, and student testimonials.

In addition, each campus team left AMLA having developed a preliminary logic model to document some of their planned activities for the 2025–26 school year. In focus groups with university leaders, attendees expressed the continued need for professional development and opportunities for cross-campus collaboration under the coordination of the Central Office. They also shared appreciation for the Central Office helping them navigate the current sociopolitical climate.

Early Successes and Challenges

The Central Office staff described the seven service areas mandated in the legislation as broad and inconsistently interpreted across the universities. The staff noted that this lack of clarity contributed to variation in how universities operationalized the objectives. To improve guidance to the universities, the Central Office and the Chancellor's Office will work to more clearly define the service areas.

According to interviews with university ASAP leaders, the universities were grateful for the leadership and responsiveness of the Central Office. As a result of support offered by the Central Office, ASAP campus leaders attended and collaborated at AMLA, improved their capacity to use data to make decisions and measure student outcomes, and received helpful technical assistance from the Central Office through one-on-one appointments and weekly office hours. Regarding AMLA, one program leader shared, "It was incredibly helpful to see and connect and understand what other campuses are doing [at AMLA]." Another program leader noted how supportive the Central Office staff were: "In terms of the support from the Central Office, Dr. Timothy Fong has been phenomenal. … He and the team in the Central Office have made themselves incredibly accessible by holding office hours."

Program leaders also felt the need for additional support in interpreting and operationalizing vague legislative objectives and for moving forward given the uncertainty around funding—learning communities and mentoring were especially difficult to sustain due to the staffing and funding needed to run them.

Seven Service Areas

This subsection presents the second set of findings, describing how universities implemented ASAP programming across the seven legislatively mandated service areas.

In developing programming, ASAP university leaders implemented activities that often addressed more than one service area. Table 3 is a noncomprehensive list of example activities and programs by service area based on WestEd's interpretations of service areas and ASAP activities. In some instances an activity or a program may not be funded solely through ASAP. For instance, a person who is supporting academic advising services or providing career workshops may be funded through ASAP funds as well as funds from another source. Because the service was at least partly funded through ASAP funds, it is included in this report. In some instances a service or activity may have existed in some form prior to the ASAP funding; the ASAP funding may have strengthened the service or allowed it to continue in the time frame that this report examines.

Table 3. Examples of Activities and Programs Within Each Service Area

Service area	Example activities and programs
Culturally responsive learning communities	• Cohort-based learning communities for first-year and/or transfer students • Extracurricular programming integrated with AANHPI studies coursework[3]
Advising and counseling services	• Partnerships with campus academic advising, counseling, and/or career services • Academic advising by APIDA Center staff
Mental health counseling and awareness services	• Partnerships with counseling and psychological services (CAPS) • Happy Hours, Tea Time, and Spill the Tea workshop sessions that focused on mental health issues
Career development, career readiness, and employment services	• Partnerships with career services • Career workshops and presentations • Internship and employment opportunities
Supplemental instruction and tutoring	• Partnerships with tutoring centers, writing centers, and/or student learning centers • "Study hall" • Peer tutoring
Asian American and Pacific Islander studies courses and curriculum development	• Creation and expansion of AANHPI majors, minors, and concentrations • Faculty development and curriculum redesign (e.g., general education [GE] courses)
Leadership development, internships, and mentorships	• Student leadership in clubs and organizations • Student internships and research assistantships • Peer mentorship

Culturally Responsive Learning Communities

CSU universities used ASAP funding to design culturally responsive learning communities that affirm AANHPI students' identities, histories, and lived experiences through curricula, cocurricular engagement, and community building. These efforts often integrate Asian American studies coursework with experiential learning and culturally rooted programs to

3 No university had an academic department titled Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Studies. Here "AANHPI studies" refers to Asian American studies, ethnic studies, and related academic departments.

strengthen students' sense of belonging and academic success. Much of the work related to culturally responsive learning communities overlapped with activities described in the Leadership Development, Internships, and Mentorship section later in this report.

Cohort-Based Learning Communities

Cohort-based learning communities integrate Asian American studies and GE courses to create structured, credit-bearing pathways that foster both academic progress and cultural belonging among AANHPI students. There are several examples of these types of activities across the universities.

- At CSU Dominguez Hills (CSUDH), faculty and staff are developing a first-year cohort model in which students take three linked lower division courses (i.e., Introduction to Asian-Pacific Studies, Freshman Composition, and either an Asian-Pacific literature course or Social Movements in the Asian-Pacific Region) while fulfilling GE requirements. One faculty member explained that the model aims to push students toward degree completion while "naturally forming a cohort and community" supported by tutoring and writing assistance.
- Similarly, Cal State Long Beach connects students through a two-course GE pathway that includes a written communication course infused with Asian American studies content and an ethnic studies GE course in Asian American studies.
- CSU Channel Islands launched a Transfer Learning Community (TLC) in fall 2024. Eight students enrolled in the community, which was tied to a course focused on globalization. In spring 2025, 3 of these students joined 13 additional peers in an affiliated study abroad opportunity in New Zealand, where they engaged with Indigenous Māori communities.
- At San Diego State, the APIDA Leadership, Identity, Scholarship, and Togetherness (A-LIST) learning community serves as a model of a culturally responsive, cohort-based program anchored in the APIDA Center. Open to all students interested in APIDA cultures and histories, A-LIST focuses on dismantling the model-minority myth and redefining success through community and identity development. Students are coenrolled in the A-LIST University Seminar and receive priority access to APIDA Center programming, such as experiential field trips, heritage events, and leadership workshops. Faculty and staff described the program as "a safe and intellectually stimulating space to pursue active development and engagement as a member of the APIDA community," in which students build academic skills, leadership capacity, and a strong sense of belonging. One student reflected that through A-LIST, "we gain the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully transition into college while celebrating and exploring various APIDA heritages and histories."

Other Examples

Still other universities are building culturally responsive models suited to their context. Across universities, students, faculty, and staff described belonging to culturally responsive learning communities as transformative experiences that foster belonging, cultural identity, and academic engagement. Staff credited ASAP funding for elevating AANHPI visibility and embedding culturally relevant learning into the university fabric. As one CSUDH representative summarized, "This is something that we have not had before on campus ... a new area of focus that connects learning, community, and culture." Staff and faculty also noted that culturally grounded learning communities enhanced student engagement, confidence, and persistence.

- At Cal Poly Humboldt, staff observed that their eight student interns "are teaching and learning together ... [in] a culturally responsive learning community in action." These peer-led spaces have cultivated leadership and collaboration among students with diverse AANHPI backgrounds.
- At San José State, the Street Team has extended culturally responsive learning to a broader student population. One staff member reflected that by connecting STEM students with Asian American studies, "I was able to help provide resources for a larger Asian American student population ... [and] reach a sort of different audience that may not have been reached without this position."
- A student participant in the Asian Pacific Islander Empower Mentorship (API EM) Program at San José State explained how the learning community boosted both academic confidence and personal and professional growth: "Being part of this community helped me be more confident in my schoolwork and professional development."

Advising and Counseling Services

University ASAP leaders used ASAP funding to support academic advising and counseling services, primarily in partnership with existing student learning centers and career advising centers. Program leaders described academic advising and counseling services as key activities in boosting AANHPI student retention, and these services were often integrated into long-term programming such as cohort-based learning communities and peer mentorship programs.

Partnerships With Academic Advising, Counseling, and Career Services

Most universities did not use ASAP funding to create new ways of conducting academic advising and counseling services for AANHPI students. Instead, program leaders leveraged existing resources at academic advising and career advising centers. For example, at Chico State, the APIDA Resource Center coordinated with academic advisers from graduation

advising services, the Office of the Registrar, and the College of Business and with supplemental instruction leaders to hold office hours at the APIDA Resource Center every week. Similarly, program leaders at Cal Poly Pomona coordinated efforts with partners at the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences student success office to monitor AANHPI students in danger of dropping out and made phone calls to these students. In 2024–25, about 36% of these students returned to campus, according to a staff member.

Many university ASAP leaders see their role as connecting students to services and opportunities elsewhere on the campus. A program leader at San José State shared this about the students with whom they work:

> "They're looking for identity and friendships and community and a safe place to be. But they're never actually really thinking, 'How does this connect to my academic skills? How does this relate to taking Asian American studies classes? Or how does this relate to empowerment on a larger level, or how does this connect to history, or maybe a career in research, or a career in organizing?'"

Some university leaders often tailored support for students. As one student shared, "[The program leader] helped me look into scholarships, and he also wrote one of my letters of recommendation to run the scholarship."

Several universities noted that the challenge is not the number of opportunities for academic advising and counseling but the task of connecting students to those opportunities. One program leader at Fresno State shared, "There [are] so many resources, but students sometimes have a hard time navigating [them]." Some universities, such as Cal Poly Pomona, already have mandatory advising for first-year students, which presents an opportunity for the dedicated training of advisers on culturally responsive practices that could better serve AANHPI students. For example, program leaders at Cal State Long Beach are developing an AANHPI student handbook that will include resources for advisers, counselors, and students that are specific to AANHPI needs.

Supplemental Long-Term Programming

Many universities incorporated academic advising and counseling into long-term programming such as cohort-based learning communities and peer mentorship programs. For example, advising and counseling were described as key components of Fresno State's Bulldog Scholars Program, Cal State San Bernardino's Yotie Oso Undergraduate Retention and Success (YOURS) Program, Cal State San Marcos's APIDA Wayfinders Peer Navigator Program, Cal Poly Pomona's Asian & Pacific Islander Student Center's Mentor

Program (AMP), Cal State East Bay's Pacific Islander Asian American (PIAA) Program and Transformative Allyship Rooted in Our Stories (TARO) Pathway, and San José State's API EM Program. In addition, some APIDA Centers offered in-house academic advising and counseling services, including at San Diego State. San Diego State hosted 941 academic advising appointments with 437 unique advisees during the 2024–25 school year.

Mental Health Counseling and Awareness Services

ASAP funding helped program leaders address student mental health needs through direct counseling services, activities designed to educate students on the importance of mental wellness, and connections to other existing resources on campus. Across the CSU, program leaders emphasized the importance of addressing the "general stigma around mental health" among AANHPI communities. Several campuses prioritized a culturally responsive and asset-based approach to programming.

Partnerships With Existing Mental Health Providers

Many universities prioritized connecting students with existing resources on campus such as CAPS, which typically offers short-term or group counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric evaluation and medication management, mental health education, and referrals. Leaders often opted to leverage existing resources on campus largely because mental health services require personnel with specialized training. At Chico State, CSUDH, Cal Poly Humboldt, CSUN, and San José State, students had access to trained mental health professionals (e.g., CAPS therapists, licensed clinical social workers) at their university's APIDA Center or cross-cultural center. These professionals held regularly scheduled office hours and were either hired directly by their respective center or enlisted through CAPS.

Beyond direct counseling services, ASAP leaders and student leaders at CSU Bakersfield, Chico State, Cal Poly Humboldt, and Cal State Long Beach collaborated with university counseling centers on workshops, series, and one-time presentations. These events focused on topics around well-being and mental health, including healthy relationships, stress management, and self-care.

Although some universities saw success with embedding mental health professionals in their APIDA Centers, others found that students were hesitant to participate in office hours or counseling services because of cultural stigmas around mental health. For example, program leaders at Sacramento State found that AANHPI students did not take advantage of having an embedded counselor at the APIDA Center. They transitioned to having a dedicated peer wellness advocate—an AANHPI-identifying graduate student in counseling—serve as a "gateway to mental health services" for hesitant AANHPI students. Sacramento State reported that this change increased the participation of AANHPI students, particularly male AANHPI students, in mental health services. Similarly, program

leaders at San José State found that AANHPI students are more likely to seek help from peers rather than trained mental health experts. As a result, San José State specifically instructs peer mentors in the API EM Program to encourage mentees to utilize CAPS and other campus resources.

New AANHPI Mental Health Services

In-house staff (e.g., through APIDA Centers and ASAP mentorship programs), program leaders, peer mentors, and guest speakers presented on the importance of mental health among AANHPI communities through workshop sessions called Happy Hour, Tea Time, or Spill the Tea. In addition, program leaders stressed that holding social events and offering community-building activities are key strategies for addressing students' mental health needs. Mental health education was also a key component of many long-term, cohort-based programs, such as Cal State Fullerton's Asian Pacific Excellence (APEX) leadership program; Cal State Long Beach's Project Resilience; San Francisco State's Access, Relevance, Community (ARC) Peer Mentor Program, Cal State San Marcos's APIDA Wayfinders Peer Navigator Program, and San José State's API EM Program.

Program leaders identified the need to erase the stigma around discussing and addressing mental health among some AANHPI communities. One program leader at CSU Bakersfield pointed to the need to "build awareness … that group therapy or therapy alone is not necessarily a bad thing." Similarly, a program leader at CSUDH shared, "Our goal was to really destigmatize mental health and well-being so that students don't feel like … it's hard or something difficult to talk about."

Some universities are already seeing increased usage of mental wellness services among AANHPI students. For example, Cal State San Marcos saw an increase in students who attended the APIDA Center's Spill the Tea sessions from 2 in the 2024–25 school year to 73 in the 2025–26 school year so far.

Career Development, Career Readiness, and Employment Services

Program leaders used ASAP funding to provide career development, career readiness, and employment services primarily through partnerships with campus career centers. These partnerships included workshops on topics related to career exploration (e.g., resumes, financial literacy, job searching) and one-time events such as guest speaker presentations from AANHPI-identifying working professionals. As with the academic counseling and advising services, leaders integrated career and professional development activities into many long-term, cohort-based mentorship programs.

In general, universities did not address career development as a service distinct from other program goals. Rather, they incorporated career development services as part of broader academic advising and counseling activities or long-term, cohort-based mentorship and

leadership development programs. At some universities, such as Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, program leaders spent the first year of ASAP funding gathering data to identify the career development needs among AANHPI students.

Partnerships With Existing Career Services

At the time of data collection, many universities were in the planning stages of implementation. For example, staff at Cal State Long Beach were collaborating with career counselors at the career development center to physically meet with AANHPI students at the Asian, Pacific Islander, & Desi (APID) Resource Center, where they are less likely to feel anxious discussing career decisions and planning. Similarly, program leaders at Cal State Monterey Bay were in discussions with the career center about having a career adviser meet with students at their new APIDA Center.

Career Workshops and Presentations

One-time events like professional workshops and guest speaker presentations exposed AANHPI students to a range of career possibilities. One student at Sacramento State described how their thinking about career options expanded after "seeing that there are Asian people successful in all different types of realms—not just healthcare, not just engineering, not just STEM. There are professors, there are English teachers, there are journalists, and it's really awe inspiring."

Informally, involvement with ASAP programming informed the way students thought about their career plans. One student involved with Sacramento State's APIDA Center described their experience this way:

> "The APIDA Center definitely helped more with my personal growth because I have never been … proactive with the APIDA community up until I became a part of it. And it's especially impacted my future career because I now plan on becoming a travel nurse to help underrepresented communities who don't have as much access to healthcare, whether it's Indigenous people in the Pacific [or] more remote parts of Asia."

Internship and Employment Opportunities

Universities also supported students' career development through paid internships, employment opportunities, and mentorship programs, often through APIDA Centers or research institutes affiliated with Asian American studies and ethnic studies departments. These opportunities are described in the Leadership Development, Internships, and Mentorship section.

Beyond internships and employment on campus, program leaders at Cal State Fullerton, Sacramento State, San José State, and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo built relationships with local businesses and community organizations to secure internship, employment, and volunteer opportunities for students. These partnerships are intended to create pathways for post-graduation employment, and many universities saw integrating alumni networks in ASAP activities as a key priority for establishing these pathways.

Supplemental Instruction and Tutoring

CSU universities used ASAP funding to expand access to tutoring, study halls, and supplemental instruction by embedding these supports within AANHPI-serving spaces such as APIDA Centers, learning communities, and mentorship programs.

Cultural Center–Based Study Hubs and Collaborative Learning Spaces

Cultural center–based study hubs and collaborative learning spaces bring tutoring, advising, and peer learning into identity-affirming environments, allowing students to study, seek help, and connect with others in culturally familiar and supportive settings. Embedded and peer-based tutoring models place trained tutors or student academic coaches directly into classrooms or cultural centers so that students can receive tailored academic support from peers who understand their cultural and learning contexts.

- At CSUDH, program leaders described efforts to scale a comprehensive peer-based academic support model that includes both academic coaches and embedded tutors trained through the university's Toro Learning & Testing Center. Tutors were assigned to courses and to the Asian & Pacific Cultural Center based on high-need subject areas identified through student surveys. These tutors offer more than just subject-specific assistance—they receive training on fostering cultural relevancy and working with the student populations within the Asian & Pacific Cultural Center.
- The APIDA Resource Center at Chico State collaborated with the student learning center to integrate both academic and cultural supports. Tutors and supplemental instruction leaders work with students at the APIDA Resource Center weekly as part of a system that brings together tutoring, advising, and mental health counseling in one shared space.
- At Cal State Monterey Bay, staff members shared that the APIDA Center partners with the cooperative learning center—which provides free tutoring services to students—to hold study nights and tutoring sessions in a building that houses other affinity centers. The model also brings career and academic advisers into these shared spaces, linking tutoring to holistic student development. One program leader noted that holding tutoring sessions inside the APIDA Center "encourages students to … seek tutoring services in an environment they feel more comfortable in."

- Cal Poly Humboldt plans to implement supplemental instruction in collaboration with the learning center and other cultural centers. Staff members noted that the model is inspired by the university's Umoja Center for Pan African Student Excellence, which successfully places dedicated tutors in identity-based spaces, and that they intend to use this "borrowed model" to serve AANHPI students.

Across universities, embedding tutoring and supplemental instruction in culturally responsive spaces has led to greater access, reduced stigma, and stronger academic engagement for AANHPI students. Faculty and staff emphasized that colocating tutoring in identity-based centers helps students feel more comfortable and supported.

- CSUN has connected tutoring directly to classroom learning. One faculty member shared that the peer-to-peer aspect is especially meaningful for first-generation students: "It's important to have someone from your community talk to you and say … hey, I took that Asian American studies class. I struggled too. Here's some things that I did to overcome that."
- At Cal State East Bay, one student noted how the study sessions support student involvement:

> "It's just so nice to … have study sessions integrated with this organization. Because, like, most people … just go to school and then leave. And then a study session is … a bridge to … get them to … meet new people and … get involved [on] campus more."

Cross-Divisional and Writing-Focused Academic Partnerships

University leaders shared that it is challenging for AANHPI hubs to provide expertise in all subject areas. Therefore, tutoring tends to fit more naturally within the colleges on campus, where faculty and fellow students with subject-specific knowledge can tutor students in need of academic support. With that in mind, several universities are expanding academic support through cross-divisional partnerships that connect learning centers, ethnic studies departments, and faculty.

- CSUN's Learning Resource Center has become a model for culturally informed supplemental instruction. Staff and faculty explained that the campus is establishing an Asian American studies writing center within the resource center, staffed by tutors and supplemental instruction (SI) leaders trained on issues of race, class, and privilege. As one supplemental instruction program coordinator described, "We create [culturally responsive learning communities] for our SI leaders during our training meetings. …

They all get to talk to each other and build those communities. [So they can] then go to their SI classes that are attached to … freshman composition courses and create [culturally responsive learning communities] with the students."

- At CSU Channel Islands, guided by campus data on student performance and enrollment trends, faculty and staff spoke of working with the Writing & Multiliteracy Center to add embedded tutors to key classes. Although staff did not name specific courses, they noted that the goal was to target classes in which students (particularly AANHPI students) were experiencing academic difficulty or lower success rates.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies Courses and Curriculum Development

Program leaders used ASAP funding to create, expand, and strengthen AANHPI studies programs and curricula. Efforts ranged from developing new majors and minors, revising existing courses to include AANHPI content, integrating community-based learning, and supporting faculty professional development in order to enhance culturally responsive teaching. Across universities, these initiatives aimed to institutionalize AANHPI studies, increase student access to ethnic studies courses that meet GE requirements, and connect academic learning to identity, leadership, and community engagement.

Creation and Expansion of AANHPI Majors, Minors, and Concentrations

Several universities used ASAP funding to build or expand formal academic programs in studies.

- At Fresno State, faculty reported a "huge transformation" in the Asian American studies program. As one faculty member noted, "We went from two classes … to a major … [and] we now have 30 new classes."
- At CSU Bakersfield, faculty created new courses that meet the CSU's ethnic studies requirement and are working toward establishing concentrations in Asian American studies and Critical Pacific Islands and Oceania Studies.
- Cal State LA revised and streamlined its Asian American studies major and minor since they were moved to the newly established College of Ethnic Studies in 2020. Faculty described the ongoing curricula redesign that aligns courses with current social issues and student needs.

Faculty Development and Curricula Redesign Initiatives

ASAP funding supported faculty learning communities, curricula redesign, and culturally responsive pedagogy training.

- At CSUN, Asian American studies faculty are implementing a program redesign to address declining enrollments and refresh course offerings. The university also launched faculty learning communities in order to coordinate curriculum planning.
- With ASAP funding, Chico State supported 11 faculty professional development resources (e.g., for curriculum redesign and conference participation), all of which helped faculty integrate new research into and leverage community partnerships for their courses.
- Cal State East Bay developed the AANHPI Faculty and Staff Learning Community, a 6-week professional development series on AANHPI pedagogy. The program includes in-person convenings and a Canvas-based module series that introduces Bay Area AANHPI histories, equity strategies, and student engagement strategies. The inaugural cohort included 21 participants.
- Cal Poly San Luis Obispo hired a faculty fellow in Filipinx and Pacific Islander studies to coordinate lectures, poetry readings, and performances featuring underrepresented AANHPI voices. The faculty fellow also hosted weekly Boba Tea and Office Hours and quarterly Spam and Eggs breakfast events, some of which were attended by over 100 students.

Expansion of AANHPI Curricula Across Disciplines and General Education

CSU universities embedded AANHPI content across GE pathways and academic disciplines to ensure that all students, regardless of major, encounter coursework that reflects AANHPI histories, cultures, and contemporary issues. These efforts both broaden participation in AANHPI-focused courses and strengthen the relevance of ethnic studies across fields such as public health, literature, education, and the arts.

- At Cal State Long Beach, faculty developed a new Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander ethnic studies course—the first of its kind on campus—along with modules that help ethnic studies instructors incorporate Pacific Islander histories into their GE courses. The course was codesigned with Pacific Islander–identifying faculty, student organizations, and community members, ensuring that it reflects authentic cultural and community perspectives.

- Cal State East Bay established TARO, an academic pathway that bridges Asian American studies with student affairs programming. To align with this pathway, faculty developed lower and upper division GE courses such as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Popular Culture and API Racialization in Schools. One faculty member explained, "We wanted to embed Asian American studies into the experiences of students … because studies show that if students take ethnic studies or Asian American studies, they have better social skills as well as academic achievement." In addition, the university's faculty developed two new ethnic studies courses that have earned approval for GE and university requirements, and they have an additional course in the pipeline that is undergoing revision.

Other universities are incorporating AANHPI content across disciplines through innovative course design.

- At Cal Poly Pomona, faculty integrated content about Asian American artists and performance into ethnic studies courses, allowing students to explore identity and representation.
- At Cal State Fullerton, faculty are streamlining interdisciplinary curricula that link public health, education, urban studies, and Southeast Asian studies. Faculty noted that these collaborations "ensure that the curriculum we're offering covers a more well-rounded, broader focus" while meeting the ethnic studies GE requirement.
- At Cal State San Bernardino, program leaders partnered with the Department of History to cosponsor lectures and integrate modern Asian literature into classroom discussions, creating an interdisciplinary bridge between Asian studies and ethnic studies and the humanities.

Community-Engaged and Applied Learning Approaches

Finally, ASAP funding also enabled universities to enhance AANHPI curricula by incorporating community engagement, local histories, and applied learning.

- At Cal Poly Humboldt, faculty created a sequence of lower division and upper division Asian American studies courses and incorporated place-based learning through walking tours in and film screenings about Eureka's historic Chinatown.
- Cal State San Marcos used funding to support the Gagana Samoa Language & Performing Arts Program developed by a Pacific Islander faculty member.

- San Francisco State's Oceanic Scholars Program (OSP) is supported by a partnership between Critical Pacific Islands and Oceania Studies and Asian American and Pacific Islander Student Services. Faculty embedded OSP programming into Pacific Islander studies courses so that "students … engage the discourses that embrace OSP visibility [and] cultural engagement."

Across universities, faculty and staff emphasized that ASAP funding helped improve the institutional growth and visibility of AANHPI studies through, for example, formalizing courses, alleviating faculty workload, and connecting academic content with students' lived experiences. Investments in Asian American studies and ethnic studies has helped expose all students to new ways of thinking about identity, history, and career paths. One student at San José State shared:

> "A lot of my peers in STEM are unaware of all these resources that we have for Asian American students. Being able to talk to them about these things and show them the resources that are available to them … was really rewarding. … A lot of the resources that I was able to direct them to ended up really helping them out. We're also able to get a lot of people who are in STEM into the Asian American studies pathway, and that also helps open up more opportunities for them because of the programs that we do with the local community."

Faculty and staff shared that there are structural challenges that limit long-term sustainability. For example, many universities noted difficulty in hiring and retaining faculty in Asian American and Pacific Islander studies, especially tenure-track specialists. At Stanislaus State, one faculty member noted, "It's been hard to retain … Asian women who have left. … It really speaks to something structural going on." Without consistent faculty in place, it can be challenging to maintain continuity or mentorship for students.

Additionally, developing new courses and getting them approved through campus-level and system-level processes often takes years. Cal State San Marcos faculty noted, "It's such a road to get those GE forms in … and convincing faculty to see the need for AANHPI-focused courses takes sustained effort."

APIDA Wayfinders Residential Academy, Cal State San Marcos

In the first year, Cal State San Marcos launched the APIDA Wayfinders Residential Academy, a 5-day summer bridge program open to all incoming first-time freshmen. The program highlights Asian, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, or Desi American cultures while offering students the opportunity to experience living on campus. Incoming students establish connections with current and incoming students and faculty and staff while engaging in various college and career prep workshops and social activities designed to help prepare them for a successful first year in college. ASAP funds were used for expenses associated with the Wayfinders Residential Academy, including lodging and food for participants and staff, pay for student and professional staff who supported the efforts, and costs for excursions. Many students who participated in Cohort 1 of the academy returned to serve as mentors in Cohort 2, as illustrated by one student:

> "I met so many of my friends [during Cohort 1]. It was such an easy transition from high school to college. So when the opportunity was given [to help] the second cohort, I definitely wanted to be part of it."

Another student shared how the program helped them build community:

> "I love [APIDA Wayfinders Residential Academy]. … Last year, I had a small circle of friends, but I think being a peer leader this year … it's so fun seeing them on campus and … we know each other. So it's definitely … a community that we built, and it makes my day happier."

Leadership Development, Internships, and Mentorships

Program leaders used ASAP funding to develop students as leaders on campus and in their communities by connecting students to paid or unpaid opportunities to be interns, research assistants, or peer mentors. Funding also supported faculty and staff in mentoring students.

Many of the activities under this objective overlapped with activities related to career development services (e.g., taking paid or unpaid internship opportunities), course and curriculum development for AANHPI studies (e.g., acting as research assistants), and culturally responsive learning communities (e.g., being peer mentors).

Student Leadership

Program leaders used funding to support student leaders in existing student organizations that serve AANHPI communities. These partnerships allowed program leaders to support the work already being done by student leaders because many of these student-run organizations have historically served as anchoring points for organizing cultural and social events for their communities.

For example, program leaders at CSU Bakersfield, CSU Dominguez Hill, and Sacramento State recruit and advise leaders of preexisting AANHPI student organizations. Student leaders with Pacific Islanders United at Sacramento State noted that ASAP leaders at the APIDA Center are proactive about reaching out to offer assistance in funding, advertising, and creating programming. "APIDA has been a big help with reaching out to [Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander] students," one student leader shared, "especially since we don't know much [about] where we could find them or who we could reach out to."

Student Leadership Retreat, San Diego State University

In the first year, San Diego State's APIDA Center piloted a student leadership retreat in which students spent 2.5 days off campus in a local campsite. The program was open to all students. In addition to traditional camping activities (i.e., hiking, building campfires, archery, rock climbing, crafting) designed to immerse students in nature, the retreat included activities designed to simulate team-building, problem-solving, and career development skills such as negotiation, collaboration, and competition. Participants also engaged in discussions and reflections that were focused on AANHPI-specific issues such as the model minority, the experience of being a perpetual foreigner and belonging, representation and narrative change, and bamboo ceilings. One student shared the following regarding their experience:

> "[The program leaders] give us amazing experience, and we're gonna remember this [in] our years after college. [They] made the biggest positive impact on us in college so far, and it's been absolutely fantastic."

Student Internships and Research Assistantships

ASAP funding helped place students in paid and unpaid internships. Many universities see academic research and ongoing program evaluation as key components of student internships. Similarly, mentorship programs that connect students to faculty and staff serve as

opportunities for students to explore career options and develop skills for future academic or employment goals.

On campuses such as San Diego State, Chico State, and CSUN, student workers run and manage their APIDA Centers. These student interns often handle the day-to-day operations of their APIDA Centers and plan a mix of social, cultural, and educational events for their peers. The activities usually involve collaborations with campus resources such as the career center or counseling center. Additional responsibilities and opportunities may vary by campus. Examples include the following:

- At Chico State, ASAP supported two paid undergraduate research fellowships at their APIDA Resource Center.
- At San Diego State, student interns write grants to secure additional funding for APIDA Center activities.
- At CSUN, Asian American Studies Pathways Project interns manage the Glenn Omatsu House (which currently houses the university's APIDA Center) and conduct research with Asian American studies faculty.
- At Cal Poly Humboldt, student interns and faculty collaborate to blend cultural learning with academic engagement. Student interns run the new Asian, Desi, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and North African (ADPI+MENA) Center, plan events, and host heritage showcases that introduce campus peers to holidays and traditions across Asia and the Pacific. Faculty integrate place-based learning through field trips such as a pilgrimage to Manzanar and walking tours of Eureka's historic Chinatown, connecting regional history to coursework in Asian American studies.

Student internship and research assistantship opportunities are not limited to positions at APIDA Centers. For example, student interns at CSU Channel Islands and Sonoma State conducted needs-sensing research projects to inform further programming for AANHPI students. Students also had opportunities to conduct academic research with the support of ASAP funds.

- Cal State Fullerton is in the process of creating the APEX leadership program to provide culturally relevant learning opportunities for students and connect them with job opportunities after graduation by leveraging partnerships with the Asian American Pacific Islander Faculty Staff Association. According to a program leader, one of the goals of the program is to help students "understand what the landscape is for them as an AAPI student and entry level employee. … What are some things they should be mindful of, skills that they should have, and language that they should understand around how they talk about themselves and their identities?"

- At Fresno State, about 15 student research assistants are planning to publish academic papers in the 2025–26 school year. As one program leader put it, "That is not a small thing. Publishing a publication on their record … the highest [liberal arts] universities … do that as a standard, and [it] is because of the funding that we did it." In addition, students are producing three separate documentaries with faculty about local Asian communities in the Central Valley. "That type of benefit for the students and the families—not just the students but their entire families and [the] entire community—is really intergenerational."
- San Diego State's APIDA Center launched three research institutes, which provided students with an introduction to conducting research. Faculty worked with students on developing research questions and designing inquiry methods. After completing the research institute, students are eligible for the next phase, which will be pairing students with a faculty mentor. With a mentor, students will be encouraged to engage in professional experiences such as presenting at conferences, writing or cowriting papers for publication, and participating in the university's annual Student Symposium.

Peer Mentorship

While ASAP-funded peer mentorship programs differed across universities, they often provided training for peer mentors and included supports related to career exploration, academics, and mental wellness for mentees. Mentee students tended to be first-time or transfer students. ASAP stabilized funding for existing mentorship and leadership programs and, in many cases, created opportunities for program leaders to expand on existing opportunities or replicate similar programs on campus. As with student internships, peer mentorship opportunities were a key strategy for introducing students to research opportunities with faculty and staff.

- In partnership with their Southeast Asian Student Success Center, Fresno State created the Bulldog Scholars Program for AANHPI first-year students, with a focus on students not part of any other special programming on campus. Two students supported the Bulldog Scholars Program through paid internships, monthly workshops on academic and career advising, wellness resources, and civic engagement.
- At Cal State LA, the Rooted in Togetherness and Scholarship (ROOTS) Scholars Program supports student academic success through a structured cohort of first-year and transfer students. The program provides spaces for identity exploration, offers academic success workshops, and fosters community connection through informal gatherings such as "snack hours." A staff member explained that these activities are designed to "help students explore things like identity, connect to other students, and really start feeling like they belong somewhere." In its inaugural year, the ROOTS Scholars Program served 63 students and has plans to grow. Funding was used to rebrand the ROOTS Scholars Program and hire a graduate assistant to support the program.

- Cal Poly Pomona expanded on the Asian & Pacific Islander Student Center's Mentor Program. Paid student mentors were paired with first-year students according to common interests, including majors. Mentors were trained in supporting mentees through advising, "quasi-paraprofessional counseling," and retention supports. To ensure consistency, mentors were required to document contact points with mentees for review by the student center's coordinator. With ASAP funding, program leaders expanded the opportunity to second-year students in the 2024–25 school year. In explaining the decision, one staff person shared that the first-year retention rate among students of color is quite high (approximately 90%) but the second-year retention rate is lower.
- At San José State, peer mentors supported the API EM Program for first-year students. Peer mentors receive training on how to provide their mentees with supports related to time management, academic balance, and campus resources. Mentors meet with program leaders weekly. Program leaders at San José State see the API EM Program as a "retention strategy" because many students return to be mentors in subsequent years. In the 2024–25 school year, the API EM Program doubled in the number of participating students to nearly 50 compared with the inaugural cohort in spring 2023. The university's Institutional Research and Strategic Analytics department in the process of developing dashboards to track the retention and graduation rates of students.
- The OSP at San Francisco State hired five Student Navigators to provide peer advising, career development, and leadership support to a cohort of Pacific Islander students. A representative shared that the OSP teaches students to see themselves as leaders "positioned to fight and engage in the fight for social justice, economic justice, racial justice … epistemological justice, all kinds of justice." San Francisco State cited the OSP as a driver of increased visits to the school's Asian American and Pacific Islander student services from 64 in the 2023–24 school year to 445 in the 2024–25 school year.

Pacific Islander Asian American Program, Cal State East Bay

Cal State East Bay's Pacific Islander Asian American (PIAA) Program is focused on providing academic support services and resources for first-year and continuing students who may identify as Pacific Islander and/or Asian American. Through PIAA, students have access to an adviser who provides academic, financial, and personal guidance; peer and faculty mentors; and sociocultural community and academic enrichment programming and events. Using ASAP funds, Cal State East Bay was able to improve the quality of and expand the PIAA program. For example, Cal State East Bay increased the number of peer mentors from four to seven, reducing peer mentors' case-loads from a ratio of 1:80 to 1:20. This has allowed peer mentors to provide more personalized support for students. It also began offering faculty-sponsored study halls, providing a welcoming place for students to get help in their academic work. Two students described the impact of PIAA as follows:

> "Because [of PIAA], I feel more supported. I feel like I feel more confident in reaching out for help when I'm struggling academically."

> "During freshman year here when I wasn't a part of PIAA, I feel like I was surrounded by people who weren't motivating me to do well and seeing them not do well made me feel like … I don't have to do well either. But being a part of a community where everyone is trying to uplift each other and seeing my fellow peers … is very inspiring. We had a little … event [for] graduating classes, and just seeing them be able to stand up on stage and receive … recognition—it was very inspiring. It makes me feel like that's what I want to be too."

ASAP funding created opportunities for universities to develop students as leaders in spaces throughout their schools and communities. Staff believe that internships are not merely employment opportunities—many universities hired student staff with the expectation that they would participate in a cohort-style of professional development or mentorship by faculty and staff. A Chico State representative stressed the importance of leadership development: "[Programming] builds on [students'] career development and communication skills, interpersonal skills, [and] leadership development [which] benefits the university as well. Students become representatives on our campus." Campus leaders focused a lot of attention on building connections with the surrounding area and training students to be leaders in their communities. As one faculty member at San Francisco State described the work of OSP,

> "When I was hired, I was hired to teach and focus on my scholarly work. But that was a very self-centered approach to teaching because that approach is oblivious to the needs of our students, which are unique, which are shaped by socioeconomic challenges, which are shaped by the histories of our people … and the experiences of diaspora. And so what [the Oceanic Scholars Program has] done and continue[s] to do is to create a conducive environment to nurture a generation of Pacific Islanders who see the university as a place of belonging [and] as a place and space where they can engage academically, culturally, socially."

School leaders are using ASAP funding to address campuswide issues related to AANHPI student recruitment, enrollment, and retention. For example, Fresno State noted in their annual report that campus data from 2014 highlight that only 8% of Southeast Asian students graduated in 4 years, and only 43% graduated in 6 years. They plan to use the Bulldog Scholars Program as a means of addressing Southeast Asian students' needs. A student at San José State who has been both a mentee and a mentor in the API EM Program shared

that the program helps illuminate "inside knowledge" about navigating student issues at the university such as switching majors and making friends at a commuter school. Another student shared the following:

> "[My mentor] helped motivate me to ... aim to be the best version of myself while also being comfortable with my cultural identity. Because when I was younger ... I was bullied and made fun of a lot for ... things ... I identify with ethnically. So my mentor helped me to overcome those things and helped me realize that instead of being ashamed or trying to hide who I am, I should take time to help educate others so they can also appreciate [my culture] because ... my culture has a lot of rich things and traditions that are very important. [My mentor] also inspired me to [join the] Associated Students Board of Directors. ... And now [that I am] in that position, I feel like I have a better capacity to help represent more students' voices. ... So I think especially being a mentee, my mentor helped me to ... gain confidence in myself as well as step out of my comfort zone to, like, expand what, um, I want to do with my life."

Beyond structured programming, program leaders regularly develop students' soft skills. In describing their experience with San Diego State's APIDA Center, one student shared that they are "held accountable" in the space. They explained, "I can't come late [to an event] and expect to do all the fun things, because everyone else came in on time." Empowering student leaders also serves to develop students' career aspirations. One student worker at the Sacramento State APIDA Center shared:

> "When I first came here, I was very green. I didn't know how to be professional. ... I know that I wanted to work in higher education, but working [in the APIDA Center] made me think broader. I want to not just work with education; I want to support community centers, create a space just like this one for a wider people."

Mentorship programs have already produced observable gains in students' sense of belonging and academic motivations, particularly among first-year and transfer students. For example, a ROOTS Scholars Program leader at Cal State LA shared that many students previously "didn't really feel like they belonged anywhere on campus" but now see the cohort as "a place they can connect and thrive."

Asian Pacific Islander Empower Mentorship (API EM) Program, San José State University

The Center for Asian Pacific Islander Student Empowerment (CAPISE) at San José State launched the API EM Program to support first-year AANHPI students through culturally responsive, peer-led guidance. Supported by a faculty associate from Asian American studies, the program bridges academic and student affairs through advising, workshops, and culturally grounded community events. Peer mentors meet weekly with staff and biweekly with mentees for one-on-one sessions focused on time management, academic planning, and campus resource navigation. Each semester includes three workshops, an orientation, and an end-of-year celebration to strengthen community and self-advocacy.

The program leader shared that participation has doubled since the pilot year. In its third cohort, during the 2024–25 school year, the program paired 48 first-year mentees with 10 trained peer mentors who provided ongoing one-on-one and group mentorship focused on academic success, belonging, and self-advocacy. Many students return as mentors, creating a sustainable leadership pipeline.

Students describe the program as transformative, citing how it helped them build confidence, find community, and connect with their cultural identity. One mentee shared, "I used to be shy and stay in the corner, but my mentor

helped me realize I have a voice and can use it to help others find theirs." Another noted, "Without the mentorship program, I probably would've hidden away trying to just get my grades—but instead, I found friends and a home base at CAPISE." Mentors also reported growth: "Seeing my mentees gain confidence and find belonging reminded me why I wanted to give back."

Student Perceptions of Campus Climate, Sense of Belonging, and Academic Self-Efficacy

This section draws on data collected from student surveys to examine differences in perceptions of campus climate, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy between ASAP participants and nonparticipants.

Description of the Student Survey

The ASAP Student Survey, administered in November 2025, was designed to assess students' experiences on campus and capture data on key outcomes related to campus climate, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy. These three outcome areas were selected because they reflect core domains that are key campus priorities, and they are areas that research has shown to be central to culturally supportive environments and to students' academic confidence and persistence. The student survey included sections administered to both ASAP-students and non-ASAP students.

To examine differences between ASAP-students and non-ASAP students, the survey included three multi-item outcome scales, each measured using five statements rated on a 1–5 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). For each scale, the average of the five items was used as the composite score.

- **Campus Climate.** Five items assessed students' perceptions of cultural respect, inclusiveness, and opportunities to engage with their own cultural background (e.g., "My cultural background is valued on this campus"). These items were adapted from the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) framework, a validated model for assessing culturally supportive campus environments (Museus, 2014; Museus & Smith, 2016).
- **Sense of Belonging.** Five items captured students' feelings of connection, acceptance, and mattering within the campus community (e.g., "I feel accepted as a member of the campus community"). These items reflect the core components defined in Strayhorn's foundational work on sense of belonging in higher education (Strayhorn, 2019).

- **Academic Preparedness (Self-Efficacy).** Five items measured students' confidence in managing academic tasks and succeeding academically (e.g., "I can do well on tests and exams"). This scale aligns with established research on academic self-efficacy and was designed to reflect domains identified in Chemers et al.'s (2001) validated academic self-efficacy measure, including task management, note-taking, test-taking, and writing.

In addition, ASAP students were also asked to evaluate the impact of their campus-specific ASAP program. This section included 11 statements that assessed how program participation contributed to students' sense of belonging, leadership development, academic motivation, mental health, cultural knowledge, and awareness of campus resources (e.g., "Participation ... has helped me understand which resources are available on campus"). Students rated their agreement using the same 1–5 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Description of Sample

A total of 447 survey submissions were received across the four participating universities (i.e., Cal State East Bay, Cal State LA, San Diego State, and Cal State San Marcos). These include responses from students who participated in ASAP-supported programs (ASAP students) and students who are likely to be similar but who did not participate in ASAP-funded programming (non-ASAP students).[4] After excluding seven invalid responses (five duplicate submissions and two responses from ASAP students who selected the incorrect campus), the data set included 440 students: 135 ASAP students and 305 non-ASAP students.

At Cal State San Marcos, there was a substantial imbalance between ASAP and non-ASAP students (23 ASAP students and 232 non-ASAP students). This degree of imbalance limits the interpretability of the between-group contrast, and it could distort the analysis that pools all respondents from all four campuses. As a result, Cal State San Marcos was excluded from the analysis that compared ASAP students with non-ASAP students. Therefore, the final analytic sample consisted of students from Cal State East Bay, Cal State LA, and San Diego State University (Table 4).[5]

4 To form the group of non-ASAP students, WestEd requested that the universities survey AANHPI students who did not participate in ASAP-funded activities. However, it was often not possible to target only AANHPI students for the survey. For this reason, it is likely that the non-ASAP students in this analysis are mostly, but not completely, AANHPI students.

5 Although Cal State San Marcos was excluded from the pooled treatment–control analyses due to the substantial imbalance between ASAP and non-ASAP respondents, results for Cal State San Marcos are still presented in Appendix E for descriptive purposes. Analyses that included Cal State San Marcos in the pooled sample yielded similar patterns of results.

Table 4. Student Survey Sample

Campus	ASAP students	Non-ASAP students
East Bay	45	54
Los Angeles	11	9
San Diego	56	20
Total	**112**	**83**

Comparison Between ASAP Students and Non-ASAP Students

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine whether there were statistically significant differences between ASAP students and non-ASAP students on three key outcome variables: perception of campus climate, sense of belonging, and self-efficacy. In practical terms, this analysis tests whether the differences observed between the two groups (ASAP students compared with non-ASAP students) are unlikely to be due to chance; *p* values indicate the likelihood that an observed difference could occur if there were no real difference between groups.

Note that in the current study baseline equivalence between groups cannot be established because demographic covariates on the students surveyed were not collected. Accordingly, treatment/control comparisons should be interpreted as exploratory and descriptive, intended to provide early, suggestive evidence of how participation in ASAP-supported programs is associated with students' perceptions of campus climate, belonging, and self-efficacy.

Table 5 shows that, across the full sample of 195 students,

- ASAP students reported perceptions of campus climate that were more positive than did non-ASAP students, and the difference was statistically significant;
- ASAP students reported a higher sense of belonging than did non-ASAP students, and the difference was statistically significant; and
- ASAP students reported significantly higher levels of academic self-efficacy than did non-ASAP students, and the difference was statistically significant.

These findings suggest that the ASAP program is associated with higher levels of students' connection to the university community, higher levels of their perceptions of campus support, and higher levels of students' confidence in their academic abilities (self-efficacy).

Because campus-level sample sizes limited statistical power, campus-specific treatment/control analyses are presented in Appendix E. Also included in Appendix E are analyses that include only ASAP students. These supplemental analyses provide additional descriptive context.

Table 5. Student Survey Findings (Across Universities)

Outcome	ASAP students mean	Non-ASAP students mean	*p* value
Campus climate	4.21	3.81	<.001**
Sense of belonging	4.01	3.65	<.001**
Self-efficacy	4.06	3.80	.016*

Note. The number of observations was 195. One asterisk (*) indicates statistical significance at the 5 percent level; two asterisks (**) indicate statistical significance at the 1 percent level.

Factors That Support Positive Program Outcomes

This subsection presents the fourth set of findings, identifying structural and organizational factors that support positive ASAP program outcomes across universities. In evaluating the impact of ASAP funding across the seven service areas specified in the legislation, WestEd identified structural factors that support university ASAP leaders in addressing AANHPI students' outcomes as well as unmet needs and challenges in implementation.

Institutional Support

Program leaders consistently emphasized that strong institutional support was foundational for successfully serving AANHPI students. Committed executive leadership, access to institutional research departments, and funding from the campus to support AANHPI students emerged as critical to this success.

Committed Executive Leadership

Senior leaders who actively advocate for AANHPI students can remove barriers and facilitate collaboration, funding, and access to resources. For example, at CSU Channel Islands, a campus leader highlighted that an associate vice president in the Division of Academic Affairs "has been trying to pull together different folks … to see how we best integrate and weave in … the classroom-focused areas," demonstrating how engaged campus senior leadership can unite interest holders around shared goals. At Cal State East Bay, the University Diversity Officer, who sits on the Cabinet, convened faculty and staff to have meaningful conversations about what success looks like for AANHPI students; these convenings derived intentional programming.

Access to Institutional Research

Leveraging institutional research enables universities to use data to guide outreach, monitor retention and graduation rates, identify gaps, and make informed decisions about funding allocation.

At Fresno State, leaders used institutional data to identify AANHPI students who were not participating in any support programs. The resulting outreach effort included monthly workshops and targeted touchpoints to help these students acclimate and engage with campus resources, primarily through involvement in the Bulldog Scholars Program:

> We went in and identified our AANHPI students who are not a part of any special programs on campus … so we created the program, where we did touch points with them as well as monthly workshops to acclimate them to the campus, to get them to know the campus.

Professional Resource Group, Chico State

Program leaders at Chico State took an innovative, data-driven approach to using ASAP funding. Drawing from the existing volunteer Asian Pacific Islander Committee (APIC), they created a professional resource group and tasked three subgroups with different responsibilities. The first subgroup embarked on a yearlong study of disaggregating data on the student body from the institutional research office. The second subgroup focused on collaboration at the university and across the CSU. The third subgroup focused on academic and cocurricular activities to identify where ASAP funding could promote academic success among students, faculty, and staff.

The data subgroup's goal was to better understand AANHPI students' enrollment, retention, and yield rates. Their targeted data analysis helped shape the work of both the APIDA Resource Center and student organizations to improve retention and persistence. The subgroup's work also directly informed Chico State's new strategic enrollment management plan. As one campus leader explained,

> "[One data project] resulted in making very strategic recommendations, not only about outreach and recruitment … to get a larger … critical mass of AANHPI-identifying students on our campus, but also then is informing some of the work that we're doing both in the APIDA Resource Center and in partnership with the Asian Pacific Island Council and with our student orgs around retention and persistence."

Increasing individual universities' capacity to gather, analyze, and act on data remains a challenge. A campus leader from Cal Poly Pomona noted the ongoing need to further disaggregate campus data, advocating for a deeper understanding of the diversity within Asian American communities: "Administrators need to understand that Asian Americans [are a] diverse group. ... I also don't think that they understand the nuances, the needs of the respective different Asian American communities."

Many university leaders would benefit from technical assistance (from the Central Office) to develop outcome metrics, build assessment infrastructure, and track long-term data for current and future programming.

Funding

Universities that already had dedicated funding to support AANHPI students prior to receiving ASAP funds were especially well positioned to scale up their initiatives. In contrast, leaders from universities relying solely on the ASAP grant noted the time and costs associated with transitioning grant-supported programs into permanent, institutionally funded centers with established budgets, professional staff, and well-defined strategic roles to ensure lasting impact.

The students served by ASAP and similar programs named funding instability as an area of concern. At San Diego State, students expressed frustration that significant experiences like cultural field trips depend on uncertain funding cycles: "That trip may never happen again ... they always have to apply for funding every semester."

Faculty and staff at other universities echoed concerns that reliance on one-time funding allocation makes it difficult to maintain continuity in programming and staffing. Most programs, including cohort-based learning communities, mentorship, and cultural events, operate on semester-by-semester or annual grant cycles. This lack of stable funding limits the ability to plan long term, retain staff, and expand programming.

CSU Bakersfield and Sonoma State faculty described the challenge of operating with minimal institutional funding, often doing curriculum and programming work on top of other duties. Many leaders called for dedicated base budgets to support professional staff, faculty positions, and permanent spaces, moving beyond short-term initiatives to true institutional integration.

Staffing

Cross-departmental, cross-cultural, and cross-campus collaborations are regarded as essential for streamlining programming, sharing best practices, honoring the diversity within AANHPI communities, and helping universities effectively manage limited resources and staffing. Prior to ASAP, support for AANHPI students was highly decentralized, with individual

departments, colleges, centers, and student organizations often running separate, uncoordinated programs. While ASAP has allowed some university leaders to begin coordinating AANHPI student supports on campus, total centralization is not the goal for any campus. As one university leader described, "Students are involved in their own organizations—whether it's a culturally based group or a professional academic club. Faculty and staff always have the best intentions to come together and support one another, but everyone has so many responsibilities that people end up caught in their own specific spaces."

These early efforts to support AANHPI students often began as grassroots initiatives, such as student clubs or affinity groups, largely sustained by faculty and staff volunteering their time in what some leaders called "patchwork" support. ASAP funds enabled universities to hire dedicated professional staff and program coordinators to unify efforts between student affairs and academic affairs, allowing for seamless support for students. One Sonoma State leader underscored the shift:

> "Working uncompensated was really putting that cultural taxation on your brown faculty. To me, it is huge that this has allowed us to have people who can sustain the work instead of burning out in two or three years because they're taking this on top of their full-time jobs."

Dedicated staffing greatly increased efficiency across the CSU. For example, a CSU Bakersfield leader shared, "[The dedicated staff member] has really helped unite all our efforts together, helping us support continued and independent work more efficiently." At Cal State San Bernardino, the creation of an advisory board helped unify previously disconnected clubs and organizations, with leaders actively working to "bring folks together" and build a more integrated campus community.

Leaders also highlighted the importance of ensuring adequate staffing to avoid overwhelming existing team members. As a Cal Poly Pomona leader cautioned, "We can't burn out our regular staff to do the extras. It's really important that folks are hired into these key critical roles." At San José State, funds are now supporting the work of an outreach and retention coordinator focused on identifying gaps and collaborating with academic advisers to ensure student progress toward degrees.

Through ASAP funding, several universities have been able to compensate faculty for serving in consulting or mentoring roles. At CSUN, one leader explained, "We can offer some funding to the faculty member to ensure that they're compensated for their time in helping us build a writing center for Asian American students." Efforts to recruit faculty and staff ambassadors to oversee programs further reflect the growing intentionality and sustainability of campus supports.

A few campuses shared that because initial funding was only guaranteed for 1 year, they were initially hesitant to hire a full-time position like an ASAP coordinator; after the 5-year allocation was approved at the end of summer 2025, they felt comfortable moving forward with hiring a full-time position.

Even with ASAP funding, however, staffing capacity remains a recurring challenge. At Cal Poly Humboldt, for example, delays in hiring and limited personnel have slowed progress on institutionalizing positions such as a faculty adviser and full-time coordinator for the ADPI+MENA Center. Similarly, Cal Poly Maritime Academy and Stanislaus State described difficulties expanding beyond one-time events due to small teams balancing multiple roles.

Gaps in staff capacity directly hindered mentorship and leadership programming in particular. For example, Cal Poly Pomona paused its Asian & Pacific Islander Student Center's Mentor Program in 2025–26 due to lack of oversight staff.

Many efforts began as volunteer work or were added to already full workloads. Even with new hires, teams remain small and stretched. Faculty voiced the need for compensation and recognition for program development and student mentoring. At CSUN, modest stipends were appreciated, but long-term faculty engagement would require funded release time or permanent appointments. CSUN described a pre-ASAP history when limited tenure-track faculty capacity hampered the Asian American studies Pathways Project. Creating pathways for graduate students and early-career professionals was also highlighted as a way to build future leadership.

Space

University ASAP leaders emphasized the need for a dedicated space to support AANHPI programming and to serve as a true community hub. These designated spaces are often referred to as an Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Center; they are not simply office spaces (e.g., at the University Student Union) but rather composite lounge space and office space to be used by both students and full-time staff.

Universities where such spaces exist are accustomed to hosting events and fostering a welcoming environment for social, emotional, and academic engagement among AANHPI students. A student who frequents the APIDA Center at San Diego State, for example, highlighted its impact on their confidence and sense of inclusion: "I definitely felt supported every time I'm at the center … everybody's so nice, everybody's so welcoming. I can talk to people from other cultures … [it's] really comforting."

Across universities, dedicated spaces help anchor programming and provide a foundation for building sustained and inclusive AANHPI communities. For example, AAPI Student Services at San Francisco State is a space for students to build a sense of belonging, help navigate college, and develop a community that supports growth. The number of visits

increased from 64 in the 2023–24 academic year to 445 in the 2024–25 academic year (after receiving ASAP funding). Additionally, APIDA Centers better equip universities to meet the needs of commuter students, in particular, because they provide a physical location that allows commuters to gather, build connections, and take full advantage of campus services. As one student at CSUN explained, "These are spaces that are needed ... especially at commuter schools like CSUN. ... You learn about socialization, and you learn how to exist as a community. You learn how to have emotional intelligence."

The need for visible, functional, and centralized space emerged as both a practical and symbolic issue. At Fresno State, a leader noted, "We do need a physical space ... especially with academic advisers, you need a space where the door can close and they can have that conversation." In their annual report, one leader from San José State emphasized the importance of having a stable space for students:

> One of the primary challenges in providing AANHPI services on our campus is limited space for our students. The CAPISE is housed in a space that regularly experiences overcrowding due to high student interest. Without a larger space, it becomes challenging to foster a consistent community and offer culturally grounded programming.

Leaders at universities without dedicated spaces identified establishing one as a top priority, frequently referencing the success of similar initiatives like the Black Student Success Center, which has created a strong sense of community for Black students. One leader from Stanislaus State shared that they would like a "place where [students] can feel like they can belong ... and talk to the staff ... or whoever is there."

Other Program Objectives

In addition to the seven objectives named in the CSU ASAP legislation, leaders articulated several other program objectives with ASAP funding. Many of these supplemental objectives overlap with and/or support activities described above. Examples that emerged across universities but that do not fit neatly into the seven named objectives are described in this section.

Promotion of a Sense of Belonging

The literature around sense of belonging suggests that program leaders' emphasis on sense of belonging may be a key driver of student success. A scoping review of 69 postsecondary reports on sense of belonging found that the majority of the associations between belonging and academic outcomes (e.g., GPA, persistence) were small but positive (Fong et al., 2024). The report further identified that larger associations between belonging and academic outcomes existed for marginalized college students, including racially/ethnically

minoritized students. Similarly, a meta-analysis found significant and positive associations at universities between sense of belonging and academic outcomes and between belonging and well-being outcomes (van Kessel et al., 2025).

Aligned with the research on sense of belonging, program leaders at every university emphasized the importance of students feeling a "sense of belonging." Data from faculty, staff, and student focus groups highlighted the importance of fostering a sense of belonging among students as a key factor in students' propensity to stay motived and focused on their studies. In addition, these interest holders see social programming as a mechanism for increasing the desire to be on campus and attend class among commuter students, specifically. Many program leaders dedicated funding to social events for students with the express goal of increasing students' sense of belonging at their respective universities. As one leader from CSU Channel Islands explained, creating "a safe space, a community for our students so they feel they belong" is at the heart of their approach. Campus leaders emphasized that building a welcoming and inclusive environment can make a meaningful difference in students' experiences and success. Examples of social events include activities related to exploring students' AANHPI identities, heritages, and traditions; cultural events such as Lunar New Year celebrations and AANHPI Heritage Month events; cultural nights and showcases; APIDA graduation ceremonies; and strictly social events such as night markets and movie nights. While some of these activities may include an educational component related to Asian American studies or be the result of planning by student leaders, a subset of social programming was designed primarily to address students' sense of belonging rather than to educate.

Strayhorn's (2019) widely cited definition of sense of belonging in higher education reads as follows:

> students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the campus community or on campus such as faculty, staff, and peers. (p. 4)

This definition mirrors descriptions students often provide during focus groups, and many students reported first coming into contact with ASAP (e.g., through the campus APIDA Center) in search of a social community. Transfer students, in particular, expressed the struggle of finding community on campus because many universities prioritize programming for first-year students. Though program leaders expressed that their services are open to all students, program participants appreciated the identity-based nature of most activities. One student at San Diego State shared that after returning to higher education following a brief absence, they "started getting more in touch with [their] hyphenated identities and … wanted to be around similar people and learn about [their] culture and other people's culture at the same time."

Program leaders are at the forefront of making students feel safe on campus. One student at Sacramento State shared, "When I hear APIDA throw some sort of event, or they host something … I always want to go just because … [APIDA is] a really comfortable place, and we feel welcome here." Another student at Sacramento State shared that their APIDA Center creates "a safe space for any student because you don't have to be some sort of Asian culture."

Some universities highlighted the importance of fostering staff's and faculty's sense of belonging. For example, Cal State East Bay established API Waves, which provides opportunities for programming and community building to build morale among faculty and staff across campus.

Challenges remain in building a shared sense of belonging among all communities under the AANHPI umbrella, including Pacific Islander, Southeast Asian, and South Asian students. One student at San Diego State reflected: "The focus is often on the Asian American side. … Learning more about Pacific Islander culture gave me a broader perspective of myself and my friends." Initiatives such as Native Hawaiian and Samoan language courses at Cal State Long Beach and Cal State San Marcos are promising steps toward inclusion.

Local Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention

Program leaders saw ASAP as an opportunity to improve recruitment efforts for AANHPI students at local K–12 schools and community colleges. Because many universities serve large populations of commuter students, program leaders sought to build and strengthen their university's presence in the area. Many universities often worked directly with their institutional research offices or recruitment offices to target AANHPI students in the local catchment area. Universities often referenced a desire for their student population to reflect the demographics of their local communities, including Cal State East Bay and Chico State. Several universities, including CSU Bakersfield, Stanislaus State, CSUDH, and CSUN, noted gaining (or regaining, in the case of the latter two) AANAPISI status as an explicit goal for their universities.

Efforts to boost recruitment and retention included social activities for local communities beyond enrolled students, including programming related to local AANHPI histories and celebrations and visits to surrounding historic ethnic enclaves. Many universities leveraged ties within their catchment areas as a means of engaging with current and prospective students' families, encouraging service learning and civic engagement opportunities for students, and tying classroom knowledge to concrete applications in the local area.

Investments in community programming played a dual role in building social networks and creating pathways to the CSU. One student pursuing a career in counseling shared their experience of volunteering with Sacramento State's APIDA College Day:

> "Seeing and supporting high school and middle school students get interested in college and Sac State … was very inspiring because [counseling] is the route that I want to go into. … When we do our fun events like open house and our Halloween socials, it just brings everyone together with people who don't know each other."

Some universities specifically identified integrating alumni networks as a mechanism for building connections with the local community and addressing current students' needs. Program leaders tapped alumni to mentor current students, particularly in career and employment areas. Some universities, such as CSU Channel Islands, proposed the idea of tracking postgraduate outcomes of students as a metric for evaluating ASAP programming.

Efforts to address AANHPI student recruitment, enrollment, and retention highlight a desire to stabilize enrollment in Asian American studies and ethnic studies courses. While some AANHPI GE-eligible courses have high enrollment, participation drops for upper division or specialized offerings. A leader at Stanislaus State shared, "Our Asian American and Pacific Islander Experiences course always fills up, [but] upper-division courses don't fulfill the ethnic studies requirement and therefore attract fewer students." Similarly, CSUN faculty saw falling enrollments in advanced courses, prompting program redesigns, and at Cal State San Marcos, low enrollment led to canceled API classes.

Focus on First Generation Students and Students From Low-Income Backgrounds

Some program leaders specifically named first generation students and students from low-income backgrounds as populations of focus for their work. A program leader at Fresno State described how they use the Bulldog Scholars Program to teach students that "navigating [college] is very difficult, especially for first generation [and] first-time students … coming onto campus." A program leader at Cal State East Bay expressed a similar viewpoint when they shared that one priority for ASAP is to teach AANHPI students that success at the university level is "more than just good grades and getting your assignments in." They went on to explain,

> Many of our first gen-students come from families where there hasn't been a lot of academic success, whether there's been dropouts in their family or other people who have engaged for maybe one or two semesters. … So their families might still have that stereotype of how they're supposed to perform, but yet they don't have a road map."

Sentiments around educating families on what college success looks like—and what it takes—also emerged in conversations with universities such as Cal State San Marcos and Cal Poly Pomona.

A program leader at Cal Poly highlighted the strength of their data dashboards, which disaggregate student data by multiple categories, including socioeconomic status and first-generation status. Analyses of these data inform how leaders allocate funding for ASAP initiatives. Similar moves toward data disaggregation are occurring at universities like Sonoma State.

Representation and Visibility

Many program leaders identified a need to increase AANHPI representation and visibility on campus. Beyond building infrastructure within Asian American studies and ethnic studies departments, universities hosted social events that included opportunities for campus members—AANHPI-identifying or otherwise—to learn about cultural and historical issues affecting AANHPI communities. Student focus group participants repeatedly cited the value of learning about topics "that normally aren't taught about in school," including the treatment of Sikh/Indian Americans after the September 11 attacks, Japanese internment during World War II, immigrant detention at San Francisco's Angel Island, the model minority myth, and sexuality and gender affirmation in Hawaiian culture.

In addition, several universities named inconsistent branding around CSU ASAP and other AANHPI services as a barrier to increasing student participation. To address this issue, program leaders at universities such as CSU Bakersfield, Fresno State, and Cal State San Bernardino dedicated resources toward standardizing branding, social media accounts, newsletters, and branded merchandise to better market opportunities to AANHPI students. Across the CSU, program leaders worked to institutionalize and coordinate efforts to educate University members on the specific needs of AANHPI communities.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The CSU ASAP initiative represents an important investment in supporting AANHPI student achievement across the CSU system. This evaluation took place between June 2025 and December 2025 and collected data from numerous sources, including (a) interviews with more than 100 ASAP program leaders who represented all 22 universities in the CSU; (b) site visits at 8 CSU campuses; (c) focus groups with a total of 68 university students; (d) observations of ASAP-funded activities on the university campuses; and (e) surveys with more than 400 students, including both ASAP students and non-ASAP students.

A number of themes arose from the data WestEd collected. First, the ASAP Central Office has played an important coordinating role in the early implementation of the program by supporting professional learning, facilitating cross-university collaboration, and advancing data-informed practices. Second, university ASAP leaders used ASAP funding in a variety of ways to implement programming aligned with the seven legislatively mandated service

areas, building on existing assets and responding to local student needs. Third, ASAP-supported initiatives strengthened students' sense of belonging, cultural affirmation, and access to academic and institutional supports despite variation in program design and maturity across universities. Student survey findings confirm these patterns, showing that participation in established ASAP-supported programs is associated with climate, higher levels of sense of belonging, and higher levels of academic self-efficacy.

At the same time, the evaluation highlights the importance of sustained staffing, stable funding, dedicated space, and accessible data infrastructure for supporting long-term implementation and continuous improvement. At the system level, the ASAP Central Office is well positioned to continue playing a coordinating role by supporting professional learning for program leaders and facilitating cross-campus collaboration. Building a shared understanding of what programming and support are included in each of the seven service areas would help ensure that universities across the system are aligned. At the campus level, sustained staffing, dedicated space, and stable funding will be critical to moving from early implementation to long-term institutionalization. To deepen impact, the CSU would benefit from continuing to invest in staff capacity and encouraging institutional support for AANHPI-student focused work.

Finally, the development of more robust data systems at the campus level that digitally track students' participation in all ASAP activities is critical for assessing the impact of the program more rigorously. Such data systems would track which students participated in each ASAP activity, providing information on ASAP dosage and duration for each student. This information would then be linked to the campus's student information system so that ASAP activity-level participation could be linked with student outcome data such as retention, course enrollment, grades, and graduation. This type of data system would allow one to compare the outcomes of ASAP students with those of non-ASAP students and assess the impact of various ASAP activities. It appears that such data systems are at different stages across all of the universities. A centralized effort—with the necessary amounts of funding and support across all levels of decision-making—could be critical to achieving these data systems in order to enable better evaluation and assessment of the program.

Glossary

The terms *Asian American*, *Native Hawaiian*, and *Pacific Islander* encompass diverse peoples from East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Pacific Islands, and Hawai'i. Some of the groups within the AANHPI community are defined in this glossary.

AANAPISI: acronym for Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander–Serving Institution

AANHPI: initialism for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander

API: initialism for Asian and Pacific Islander

APIDA: acronym for Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi American

Desi: of South Asian descent

East Asian: of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Taiwanese, and/or Tibetan descent

MENA: acronym for Middle East and North African

NHPI: initialism for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander

South Asian: of Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivian, Nepali, Pakistani, and/or Sri Lankan descent

Southeast Asian: of Bruneian, Burmese, Cambodian, Filipinx, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Mien, Papua New Guinean, Singaporean, Thai, Timorese, and/or Vietnamese descent

SWANA: acronym for Southwest Asian and North African

West Asian: of Bahraini, Iranian, Iraqi, Israeli, Jordanian, Kuwaiti, Lebanese, Omani, Palestinian, Qatari, Saudi Arabian, Syrian, Turkish, Emirati and/or Yemeni descent

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Appendix A. Staff Interview Protocol

- Please share your name, current title, and how long you've been supporting AANHPI students at your campus.
- What did AANHPI programming and services look like at your campus before receiving CSU ASAP funding? (if applicable)
- How did your campus use CSU ASAP funding in 2024-25? (if applicable)
- In what ways were the programming and services offered in the 2024-25 school year successful? How could they have been improved? (if applicable)
- The CSU ASAP legislation names seven services that all campuses are to provide for AANHPI students. For the next part of our discussion, I will name each service. After each service, please share if/how your campus plans to use the CSU ASAP funding to offer it and whether you are currently collecting data for it.
    - Culturally responsive learning communities
    - Advising and counseling services;
    - Mental health counseling and awareness services
    - Career development services;
    - Supplemental instruction and tutoring
    - Course and curriculum development for AANHPI Studies;
    - Leadership, development, internship, and mentorship opportunities.
- What supports from the Central Office (Dr. Timothy Fong and his team) have been helpful for you in planning or implementing CSU ASAP activities?
- How could the Central Office better support your work?
- What supports or resources on your campus have been helpful for you in planning or implementing CSU ASAP activities?
- How could your campus better support your work?
- What haven't we discussed that you think is important for us to understand?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Appendix B. Central Office Interview Protocol

- Please share your name, title, and how long have you been involved with AANHPI student success efforts across the CSU?
- What do you see as the key responsibilities of the ASAP Central Office?
- How did your team approach designing and launching the CSU ASAP program across campuses?
- What supports have you provided to campuses (e.g., guidance, training, resources, convenings)?
- In what ways have campuses' approaches varied depending on size, resources, or student populations?
- What do you see as the biggest needs of the campus ASAP programs?
- What successes have you observed across the CSU system in this first year of ASAP?
- What challenges have emerged, and how have you worked with campuses to address them?
- Are there examples of innovation at particular campuses that you think others could learn from?
- Regarding the seven objectives named by the legislation, is there a reference that you know of that defines each of them?
- How has your office guided campuses in approaching these objectives?
- Are there particular objectives that campuses are gravitating toward more strongly?
- Which objectives seem to be more challenging systemwide?
- What data are you collecting to track ASAP progress and impact?
- How do you plan to use this data to inform continuous improvement and communicate program impact to legislators and the public?
- What are your priorities for the next phase of ASAP?
- What additional supports or resources would strengthen the program across the CSU system?
- Is there anything we haven't asked about that you think is important for us to understand?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Appendix C. Focus Group Protocol

- Please share your name, which year you are in college, and your major (or what you're studying)
- Please describe the activities you have participated in that are geared toward AANHPI students.
- What made you decide to participate in the activities you described?
- What has your experience with the activities been like so far?
- What are the most helpful or meaningful experiences for you?
- Are there experiences that didn't feel as helpful?
- Has the program made a difference in how connected you feel to your campus, professors, or peers? Can you share an example?
- Have you felt supported in ways that are culturally meaningful to you? Can you share an example?
- Do you feel the program has made a difference in your academic journey, personal growth, or future plans? Can you share an example?
- If you could change or add one thing to improve the activities for students like you, what would it be?
- What advice would you give to campus leaders who want to better support AANHPI students?
- Is there anything we didn't ask about that you think is important for us to know?
- Do you have any questions for us before we wrap up?

Appendix D. Student Survey

- Which year of college are you in?
- Campus
- Major(s)
- Minor(s)
- Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement:
    - My cultural background is valued on this campus.
    - There are opportunities to learn about my own culture here.
    - There are opportunities to connect my cultural knowledge with what I am learning in class.
    - Faculty/staff on this campus respect students from all cultural backgrounds.
    - I feel that my perspectives are respected in the classroom.
    - I feel connected to others at this university.
    - I feel that I matter to people on this campus.
    - I feel cared about by people at this university.
    - I feel accepted as a member of the campus community.
    - I feel respected and valued by the campus community.
    - I can schedule and manage my academic tasks effectively.
    - I can take organized and useful notes in class.
    - I can do well on tests and exams.
    - I can write academic papers well.
    - I think I will succeed academically at this university.
- Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. Participation in [the program] has... (ASAP students only)
    - Helped me understand which resources are available on campus.
    - Increased my sense of belonging on campus.
    - Helped me become a stronger leader.
    - Made me feel seen and heard on campus.
    - Improved my mental health.
    - Motivated me to attend classes.
    - Motivated me to do well in my academic courses.

  - Motivated me to stay enrolled at my university.
  - Helped me build skills that will be useful in my career.
  - Helped me make friends on campus.
  - Increased my knowledge about AANHPI history and heritages.

- What aspects of [the program] have been most helpful? Please explain. (ASAP students only)

Appendix E. Supplemental Campus-Level Student Survey Analyses

This Appendix presents supplemental campus-level student survey analyses, including treatment/control comparisons and treatment-only results, which provide additional descriptive context to the pooled findings reported in the main text.

Treatment/Control Comparisons

East Bay

At Cal State East Bay, sample sizes were 45 treatment and 56 control. As shown in Table E1 below,

- ASAP students reported higher levels of sense of belonging than did non-ASAP students, but the difference was not statistically significant;
- ASAP students also reported perceptions of campus climate that were more positive, though this difference was not statistically significant; and
- ASAP students reported significantly higher levels of self-efficacy than did non-ASAP students.

Table E1. Cal State East Bay Student Survey Findings

Outcome	ASAP students mean	Non-ASAP students mean	*p* value
Sense of belonging	3.97	3.70	.065
Campus climate	4.13	3.91	.084
Self-efficacy	4.16	3.86	.013*

Note. The number of observations was 101. One asterisk (*) indicates statistical significance at the 5 percent level.

Together, these findings suggest that Cal State East Bay ASAP students showed higher levels across all three outcomes, with the difference in self-efficacy reaching the level of statistical significance. Because the survey was not designed to measure program mechanisms directly, we cannot attribute the higher self-efficacy scores to any specific ASAP component. However, qualitative feedback from East Bay students points to several program features that may help explain this pattern. Open-ended responses from East Bay

ASAP students describe increased academic confidence, improved awareness of campus resources, and greater motivation to stay enrolled. These themes also appeared in the East Bay focus group, where students highlighted the impact of highly personalized, culturally responsive mentoring; consistent guidance on study strategies and resource navigation; and identity-affirming community spaces through PIA, TARO, and the API Student Success Center. As one student explained, "I feel more supported, and because I feel more supported, I feel more confident in reaching out for help when I'm struggling academically." Students emphasized that this sense of community, tailored academic coaching, and emotional support made them feel more capable, more motivated, and better equipped to manage their coursework. Another student noted, "Having an adviser who understands my cultural background helped connect the bridges … I feel more confident knowing I can ask for help when I need it."

San Diego

At San Diego State, sample sizes were 56 treatment and 20 control. As shown in Table E2, at San Diego State University,

- ASAP-students reported a higher levels of sense of belonging than non-ASAP students, but the difference was not statistically significant;
- ASAP-students reported perceptions of campus climate that were significantly more positive compared with non-ASAP students; and
- there was no statistically significant difference in levels of self-efficacy between the two groups.

Table E2. San Diego State Student Survey Findings

Outcome	ASAP students mean	Non-ASAP students mean	*p* value
Sense of belonging	4.09	3.67	.052
Campus climate	4.28	3.74	.020*
Self-efficacy	3.95	3.76	.352

Note. The number of observations was 76. One asterisk (*) indicates statistical significance at the 5 percent level.

Together, these results suggest that the ASAP program at San Diego State is associated with stronger perceptions of campus climate among participants, with encouraging trends toward higher belonging, while levels of self-efficacy remained comparable between the two groups. Qualitative feedback from San Diego students points to several program features

that may help explain this pattern. In the survey's open-ended items, San Diego State ASAP students commonly pointed to feeling a greater sense of inclusion and connection, having stronger awareness of campus events and resources, and feeling more motivated to engage in campus life. Although their comments were somewhat general, they consistently showed the positive perceptions of campus climate and their sense of connection to San Diego State. Additionally, the student focus group provides greater detail about how they experience this improved climate. Students emphasized the APIDA Center as a reliable, culturally affirming community space where they feel welcomed, recognized, and supported. They described staff who actively check in on their well-being, help them navigate academic and personal challenges, and create opportunities for meaningful cultural learning and leadership development. One student explained the impact of this community on their academic experience: "Because there's a community here ... your experience is way better as a student, and that really pushes you." Another noted the attentiveness and individualized support provided by staff: "They notice your ups, they notice your downs ... the staff over here, they're fantastic."

Cal State LA and San Marcos State University

For Cal State LA and Cal State San Marcos, descriptive results are provided in Tables E3 and E4 below for reference but should be interpreted cautiously due to sample size limitations. At Cal State LA, sample sizes were 11 treatment and 9 control.

Table E3. Cal State LA Student Survey Results

Outcome	ASAP students mean	Non-ASAP students mean	*p* value
Sense of belonging	3.78	3.33	n/a
Campus climate	4.18	3.36	n/a
Self-efficacy	4.13	3.60	n/a

Note. The number of observations was 20. *P* values were not calculated due to the small sample size.

At Cal State San Marcos, the imbalance between groups (23 treatment and 222 control) also limits the interpretability of results.

Table E4. Cal State San Marcos Student Survey Results

Outcome	ASAP students mean	Non-ASAP students mean	*p* value
Sense of belonging	3.85	3.73	n/a
Campus climate	3.80	3.78	n/a
Self-efficacy	3.97	4.05	n/a

Note. The number of observations was 245. *P* values were not calculated due to the extreme imbalance between treatment and control students.

Program-Specific Survey Analyses

For program-specific outcomes among ASAP-students, WestEd summarized the 11 program impact items by reporting the distribution of student responses (1–5) for each item. Across all universities, ASAP students reported strongly positive perceptions of their campus-specific ASAP program. For nearly all 11 program outcome statements (except one statement for Cal State LA), the majority of students selected "Agree" or "Strongly Agree," indicating broad and consistent perceived benefits from program participation, as displayed in Table E5 below.

Table E5. Average Mean Scores Across Program Outcome Items, by Campus

Campus and programs	Average mean across statements	Average SD	Range of means
East Bay (PIAA)	4.09	0.78	3.78–4.22
Los Angeles (ROOTS Scholars Program)	3.98	0.65	3.55–4.36
San Diego (A-LIST / research institute / leadership retreat)	4.11	0.72	3.68–4.34
San Marcos (Wayfinders Residential Academy)	4.00	0.88	3.65–4.61

Across the surveyed universities, ASAP students reported that their campus-specific programs supported their sense of belonging and visibility, improved academic motivation and engagement, helped them connect culturally and socially, increased their awareness of campus resources, and strengthened peer and community connections. While responses related to leadership development, career readiness, and mental health showed somewhat greater variability, "agreement" still remained the predominant response.

Qualitative feedback reinforces these quantitative patterns. Students frequently highlighted supportive staff relationships, community-building spaces, and resource-focused events as the most valuable aspects of their experience. Differences across universities appear tied to variation in program visibility, maturity, and staffing structure, but the overall pattern is clear: ASAP students overwhelmingly view their programs as positive, supportive, and beneficial to their college experience.

More details for each university are provided below.

Cal State East Bay—Pacific Islander Asian American Program

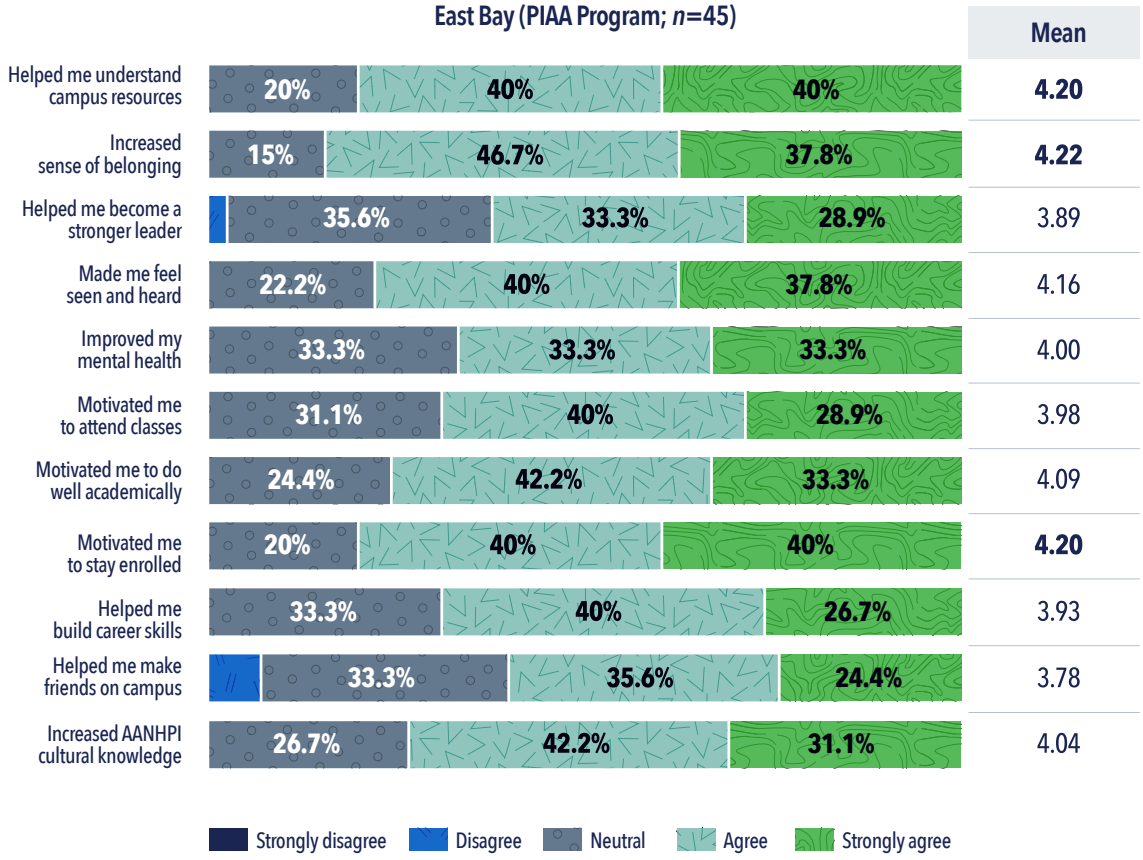
Cal State East Bay students reported consistently positive perceptions of the PIAA program across all 11 statements. The distribution patterns show that the overwhelming majority of students selected "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" on most items, with agreement typically ranging from 60% to 80%. Items related to campus resource awareness, sense of belonging, and feelings of being seen and heard were particularly strong, with 80% or more of students expressing agreement. Neutral responses appeared in the moderate range (20%–35%), while disagreement was minimal and limited to only two items—leadership development (2%) and making friends (7%).

The mean scores reinforce this pattern, ranging from 3.78 to 4.22, with the strongest items reflecting similar strengths: understanding campus resources (M = 4.20), increased belonging (M = 4.22), and motivation to stay enrolled (M = 4.20). Standard deviations were moderate (0.70–0.90), suggesting some variation in experiences, particularly in mental health support and leadership development.

Overall, the Cal State East Bay PIAA program appears to significantly support belonging, campus visibility, and academic motivation, while students' experiences with leadership, mental health, and peer connection—though still positive—were somewhat more variable.

In addition to rating the 11 statements, 39 out of 45 ASAP students offered responses to the open-ended question about their experiences in the PIAA program. They commented on the value of one-on-one advising, community events, and resource-sharing. These students often described the program as supportive and community oriented. Overall, engaged students described positive experiences.

Figure E1. Cal State East Bay Student Survey Results



Note. The data for this figure can be found in Appendix F, Figure E1.

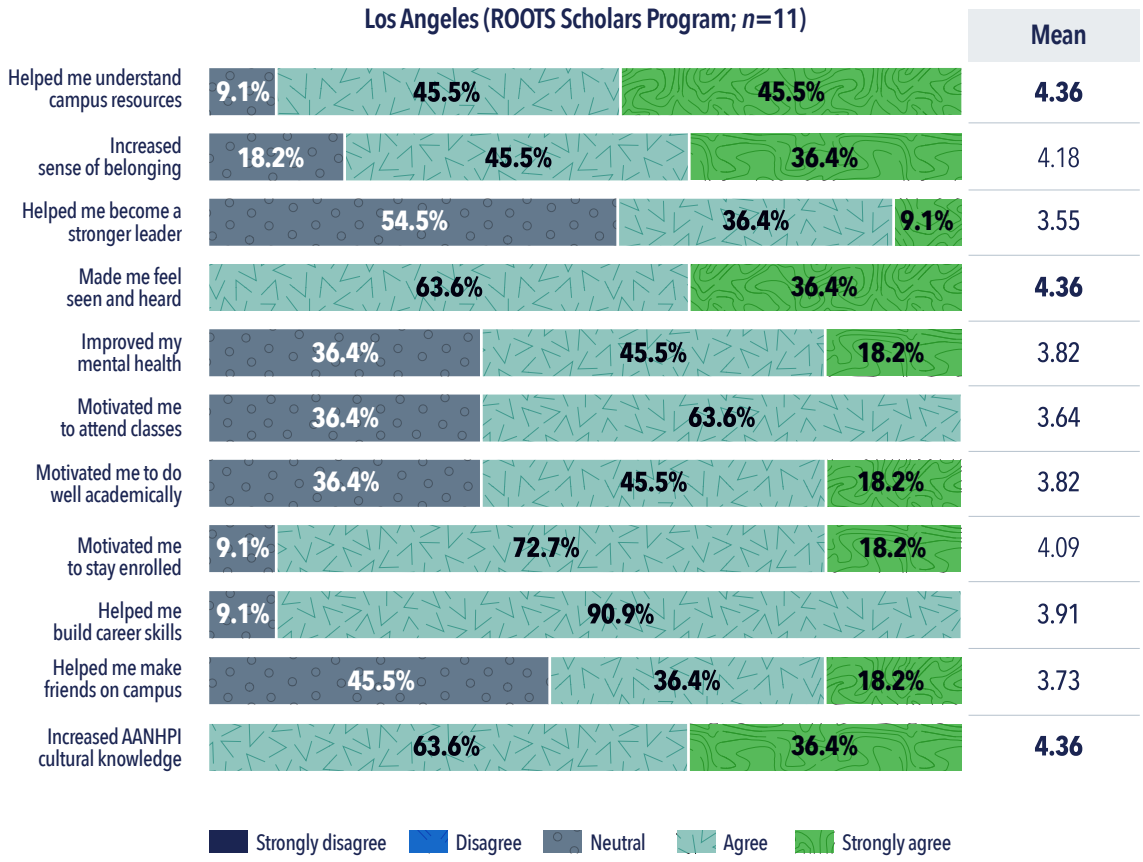
Cal State LA (ROOTS Scholars Program)

Cal State LA students provided positive and consistent ratings of the ROOTS Scholars Program. Distribution patterns show high levels of agreement (70%–100%) on most items, with especially strong support for feeling seen and heard, resource awareness, and AANHPI cultural knowledge—all of which had no disagreement and high agreement/strong agreement percentages. Neutral responses were more common in areas such as mental health, class motivation, and friendship building, but disagreement remained rare or nonexistent across items.

Mean scores ranged from 3.55 to 4.36, and, notably, the campus had the lowest variability (standard deviations as low as 0.30), indicating stable and shared perceptions among the small group of respondents. Highest rated outcomes included feeling seen and heard (M = 4.36) and increased cultural knowledge (M = 4.36). Lower—but still positive—ratings were found in leadership development (M = 3.55) and peer connections (M = 3.73).

In addition, 7 out of 11 ASAP students offered responses to the open-ended question about their experiences in the ASAP programs. Although the sample was smaller, the responses at Cal State LA echoed themes of support and appreciation. Students described feeling helped and encouraged by the program and noted that events and communication were beneficial. Several students expressed interest in increased opportunities for involvement.

Figure E2. Cal State LA Student Survey Results



Note. The data for this figure can be found in Appendix F, Figure E2.

San Diego State (A-LIST / Research Institute / Leadership Retreat)

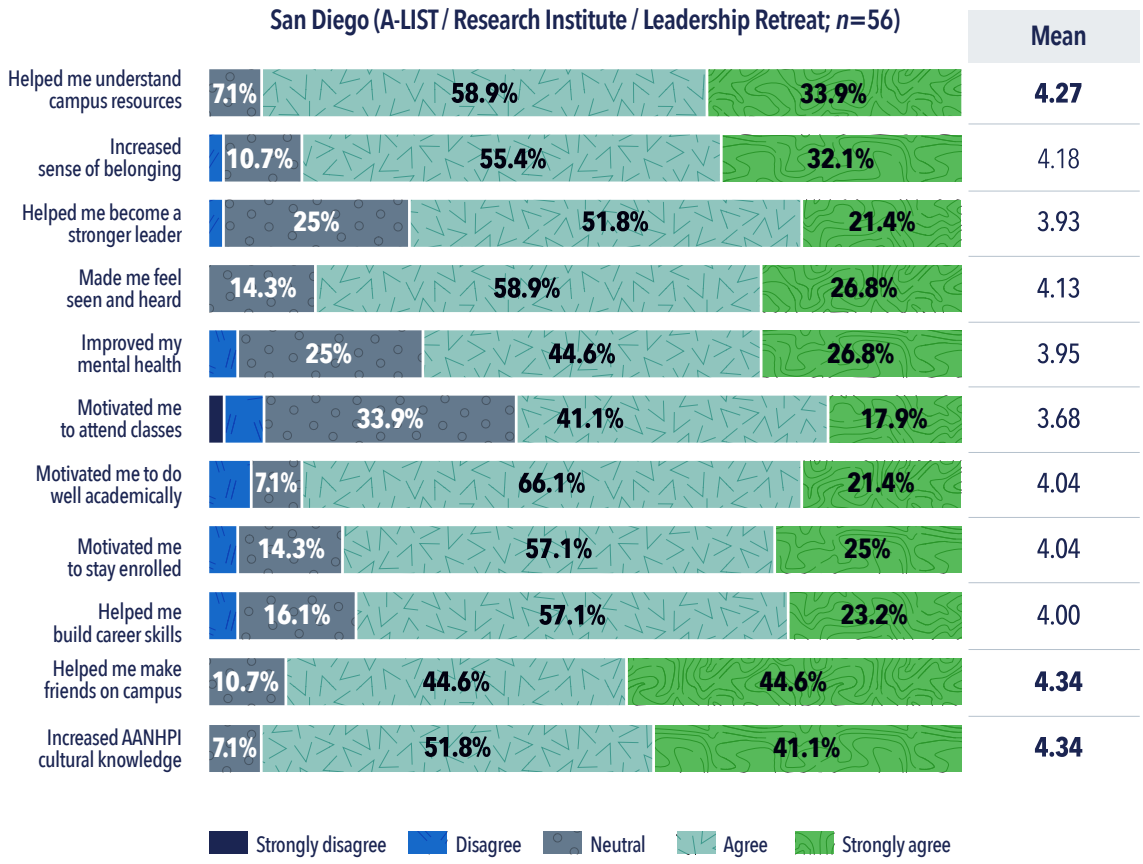
San Diego State students expressed some of the highest levels of program endorsement among all universities. Distribution patterns show that agree/strongly agree responses typically exceeded 80%–90%, especially on items related to cultural knowledge, campus resources, and making friends. Disagreement rarely exceeded 5%, though a moderate proportion of students selected neutral (10%–30%) on items such as leadership development, mental health, and class attendance motivation.

The mean values mirror these findings: Ratings ranged from 3.68 to 4.34. Items such as AANHPI cultural knowledge and helped me make friends received means of 4.34, among the highest overall. While still positive, motivation-related items (e.g., attending classes, $M = 3.68$) showed greater variability in both distribution and SD (0.82–0.90), suggesting experiences that were more mixed in these specific domains.

Taken together, the San Diego State programs offer a robust and affirming experience that strongly enhances cultural connectedness, campus engagement, and peer relationships while showing somewhat more variability in impacts on mental health and academic motivation.

In addition, all 56 ASAP students offered responses to the open-ended question about their experiences in the ASAP programs. They provided extensive and consistently positive feedback. Students frequently highlighted cultural events, workshops, and community-oriented programming as meaningful aspects of their experience. Many described strong connections with staff and peers, noting that the program helped them feel welcomed, motivated, and better informed about campus resources.

Figure E3. San Diego State Student Survey Results



Note. The data for this figure can be found in Appendix F, Figure E3.

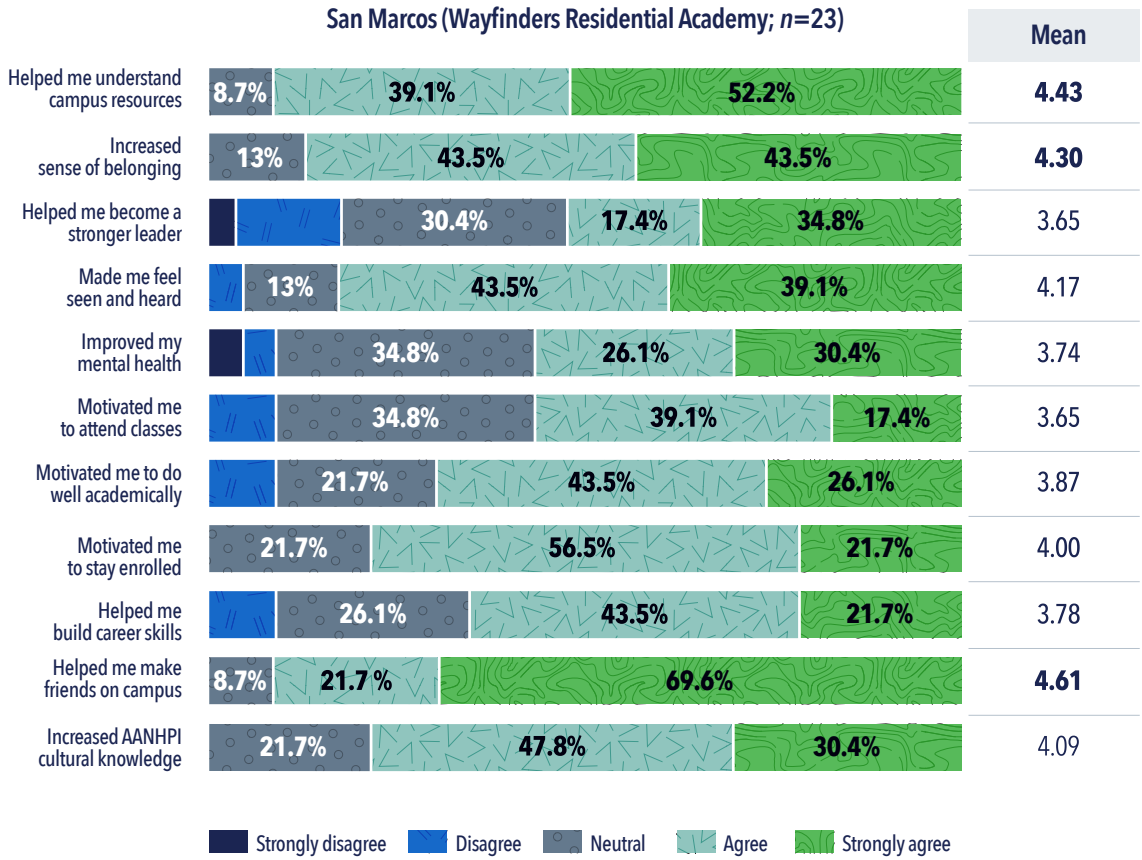
Cal State San Marcos (APIDA Wayfinders Residential Academy)

Cal State San Marcos students showed high but more variable perceptions of program impact. Distribution data reveal very strong agreement on several items—particularly making friends (over 90% agreement) and understanding resources—but also higher disagreement and neutrality on items such as leadership development, mental health, and class attendance, where disagreement reached up to 17% and neutrality up to 35%.

Mean scores reflect this variability. While some items scored exceptionally high (making friends, $M = 4.61$; helped understand resources, $M = 4.43$), others were notably lower (leadership development, $M = 3.65$; class attendance motivation, $M = 3.65$; mental health, $M = 3.74$). Cal State San Marcos also showed the largest standard deviations among all universities (up to SD = 1.23), indicating a wider spread of experiences and possibly reflecting diverse student needs or differing levels of program engagement within the unique residential model.

In addition, 21 of 23 ASAP students offered responses to the open-ended question about their experiences in the ASAP programs. They expressed appreciation for the help, communication, and support they received, especially from program staff. Many noted that the program increased their awareness of campus resources and provided emotional or academic encouragement. At the same time, some students expressed a desire for more events, more communication about program opportunities, and additional opportunities to connect with peers. The overall tone was positive, with constructive suggestions for expanded engagement.

Figure E4. Cal State San Marcos Student Survey Results



Note. The data for this figure can be found in Appendix F, Figure E4.

Appendix F. Descriptions of Figures E1 Through E4

Figure E1. Cal State East Bay Student Survey Results

Overview and Presentation

Figure E1 is a bar graph that shows the percentages of students who responded strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree to survey statements regarding Cal State East Bay's PIAA Program.

Figure E1 Data Table

Survey statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Helped me understand campus resources	no response	no response	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	4.20
Increased sense of belonging	no response	no response	15.6%	46.7%	37.8%	4.22
Helped me become a stronger leader	no response	2.2%	35.6%	33.3%	28.9%	3.89
Made me feel seen and heard	no response	no response	22.2%	40.0%	37.8%	4.16
Improved my mental health	no response	no response	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	4.00
Motivated me to attend classes	no response	no response	31.1%	40.0%	28.9%	3.98
Motivated me to do well academically	no response	no response	24.4%	42.2%	33.3%	4.09
Motivated me to stay enrolled	no response	no response	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	4.20
Helped me build career skills	no response	no response	33.3%	40.0%	26.7%	3.93
Helped me make friends on campus	no response	6.7%	33.3%	35.6%	24.4%	3.78
Increased AANHPI cultural knowledge	no response	no response	26.7%	42.2%	31.1%	4.04

Figure E2. Cal State LA Student Survey Results

Overview and Presentation

Figure E2 is a bar graph that shows the percentages of students who responded strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree to survey statements regarding Cal State LA's ROOTS Scholars Program.

Figure E2 Data Table

Survey statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Helped me understand campus resources	no response	no response	91.0%	45.5%	45.5%	4.36
Increased sense of belonging	no response	no response	18.2%	45.5%	36.4%	4.18
Helped me become a stronger leader	no response	no response	54.5%	36.4%	9.1%	3.55
Made me feel seen and heard	no response	no response	no response	63.6%	36.4%	4.36
Improved my mental health	no response	no response	36.4%	45.5%	18.2%	3.82
Motivated me to attend classes	no response	no response	36.4%	63.6%	no response	3.64
Motivated me to do well academically	no response	no response	36.4%	45.5%	18.2%	3.82
Motivated me to stay enrolled	no response	no response	9.1%	72.7%	18.2%	4.09
Helped me build career skills	no response	no response	9.1%	90.9%	no response	3.91
Helped me make friends on campus	no response	no response	45.5%	36.4%	18.2%	3.73
Increased AANHPI cultural knowledge	no response	no response	no response	63.6%	36.4%	4.36

Figure E3. San Diego State Student Survey Results

Overview and Presentation

Figure E3 is a bar graph that shows the percentages of students who responded strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree to survey statements regarding San Diego State's A-LIST learning community, research institute, and leadership retreat.

Figure E3 Data Table

Survey statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Helped me understand campus resources	no response	no response	7.1%	58.9%	33.9%	4.27
Increased sense of belonging	no response	1.8%	10.7%	55.4%	32.1%	4.18
Helped me become a stronger leader	no response	1.8%	25.0%	51.8%	21.4%	3.93
Made me feel seen and heard	no response	no response	14.3%	58.9%	26.8%	4.13
Improved my mental health	no response	3.6%	25.0%	44.6%	26.8%	3.95
Motivated me to attend classes	1.8%	5.4%	33.9%	41.1%	17.9%	3.68
Motivated me to do well academically	no response	5.4%	7.1%	66.1%	21.4%	4.04
Motivated me to stay enrolled	no response	3.6%	14.3%	57.1%	25.0%	4.04
Helped me build career skills	no response	3.6%	16.1%	57.1%	23.2%	4.00
Helped me make friends on campus	no response	no response	10.7%	44.6%	44.6%	4.34
Increased AANHPI cultural knowledge	no response	no response	7.1%	51.8%	41.1%	4.34

Figure E4. Cal State San Marcos Student Survey Results

Overview and Presentation

Figure E4 is a bar graph that shows the percentages of students who responded strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree to survey statements regarding Cal State San Marcos's Wayfinders Residential Academy.

Figure E4 Data Table

Survey statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Helped me understand campus resources	no response	no response	8.7%	39.1%	52.2%	4.43
Increased sense of belonging	no response	no response	13.0%	43.5%	43.5%	4.30
Helped me become a stronger leader	4.3%	13.0%	30.4%	17.4%	34.8%	3.65
Made me feel seen and heard	no response	4.4%	13.0%	43.5%	39.1%	4.17
Improved my mental health	4.3%	4.3%	34.8%	26.1%	30.4%	3.74
Motivated me to attend classes	no response	8.7%	34.8%	39.1%	17.4%	3.65
Motivated me to do well academically	no response	8.7%	21.7%	43.5%	26.1%	3.87
Motivated me to stay enrolled	no response	no response	21.7%	56.5%	21.7%	4.00
Helped me build career skills	no response	8.7%	26.1%	43.5%	21.7%	3.78
Helped me make friends on campus	no response	no response	8.7%	21.7%	69.6%	4.61
Increased AANHPI cultural knowledge	no response	no response	21.7%	47.8%	30.4%	4.09

Suggested citation: Fong, A., Sabalburo, E., Chen-Gaddini, M., Porterfield, A., & Finkelstein, N. (2026). *The California State University's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Student Achievement Program: An evaluation of progress from spring 2024 through fall 2025*. WestEd.

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