



NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA • COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
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Superior Court Leads Effort to Encourage Foster Youth to Attend College

The San Diego Superior Court, along with numerous groups and agencies, is sponsoring a free event to encourage Foster Youth to think about college as a realistic option.

The event, titled "*I Can Go To College!*," is scheduled for **Saturday, September 26, 2009** and will be held at the **Hahn University Center on the campus of the University of San Diego (5998 Alcalá Park)** from **8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

The program is open to dependents, 12 years old and up, who reside in foster/kinship homes or non-relative extended family members. It is estimated more than 550 young people fit that description in San Diego County.

This event is sponsored by: Commission on Children, Youth and Families with support by Child Welfare Services, San Diego County Office of Education-Foster Youth Services, Cal-SOAP, Grossmont College-FAKCE, Casey Family Programs, San Diego Juvenile Court, University of San Diego Center for Community Service Learning and United Parcel Services (UPS).

"I broached the idea for this event with the other agencies because too often foster youth have very limited visions for their future. We want them to know that we view them as capable of attending college. By including caregivers in the program, we hope that the messages can be reinforced in the home," says Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Susan D. Huguenor.

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The foster youth will get answers to questions about college, take a tour of the campus and see a dorm room. They will also meet with representatives from local community colleges and universities and listen to a panel of former foster youth who will share their college experiences.

“San Diego County Office of Education believes that every young person should have exposure to the opportunities that post-secondary education offers. For students in foster care, it becomes the responsibility of our entire community to give them access to this information. We want every student in foster care to know that there is a support network out there for them when they leave foster care, and that higher education is the gateway to a successful adulthood,” says Michelle Lustig, MSW, Ed.D, Coordinator, SDCOE, Foster Youth Services.

“The University of San Diego is deeply committed to promoting and expanding opportunities for foster youth and their caregivers to access and succeed in higher education. We are honored to support this great event, and we are excited to welcome the participants to our campus,” says Brenna Hughes, Program Direction, USD Center for Community Service-Learning.

Registration for the event starts at 8:30 a.m. and the program will begin at 9:30 a.m. Free parking is available in the Mission Parking structure.

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