



Cal-SOAP San Diego Newsletter

January 2024 | *The latest on college admissions, financial aid and more!*

TOP STORIES



Cal-SOAP will kick off Financial Aid season on Jan. 20

The new [FAFSA](#) is now open and we can help 12th graders/families fill it out. Cal-SOAP is coordinating multiple events where families can get help filling out their FAFSA or CA Dream Act forms. We will have a county-wide BLITZ on Saturday, January 20, 9am-1pm at 21 physical locations around the county, as well as an online option. If you will be filling out the FAFSA, students should [get an FSA ID now](#). Parent(s) should also get an FSA ID now. If a student will be filling out the CA Dream Act, you can [create an account now](#). Register [here](#) to attend a January 20 event. *Please note that it was just announced that site maintenance could affect access to the FAFSA throughout January. We will keep you posted if we need to cancel any events.*

Need help with a FAFSA or CADAA? Join a FREE hands-on financial aid app workshop!

**CASH
FOR
COLLEGE**

**JANUARY 20, 2024
9:00AM-1:00PM**

**@ MULTIPLE
LOCATIONS IN SAN
DIEGO COUNTY**

Hosted in collaboration with colleges,
schools, and community partners

How FAFSA delays will impact students

The new FAFSA is simpler; but the application's open period is delayed. This will cause problems for the 84% of college students who rely on financial aid. EdTrust explains the domino effect in this [article](#).



FREE College Bound Webinars

Learn about all the opportunities available at local community colleges, including the Promise Scholarship for two years of free tuition. Wednesday, January 17, 6pm-7pm.

[Cal-SOAP Calendar/Event Registration](#)



Scholarships due January/February!

- [Big Future Scholarships](#): rolling deadlines
- [San Diego Foundation Common Application](#) opens January 17
- [Bea Gonzalez Biliteracy Scholarship](#) due February 16

Apply to Camp Cinder

CAL FIRE's **free** Firefighter camp for young women ages 16 - 18. This five day experience will be held in June of 2024 at two locations: Shasta and San Luis Obispo.

[Applications](#) due 1/31/24.



[Information](#)

Cal-SOAP Events: 2023-2024

Check out our upcoming [events and opportunities in 2023-2024](#).

College Applications Continue

Community Colleges: Applications for most [community colleges](#) for Fall 2024 are open now and are FREE. Local community colleges: [Mesa/City/Miramar](#). [Southwestern College](#). [Grossmont College](#). [Cuyamaca College](#). [Mira Costa](#). [Palomar](#). [Imperial Valley College](#).

California State University: Several CSU campuses have extended their application deadlines for freshman applicants. Visit the [application dates & deadlines page](#) and use the “*Is Your Campus Still Accepting Applications?*” feature to view open campus programs and their deadlines. Students who expressed interest and the intention to apply to the [Educational Opportunity Program \(EOP\)](#) in Cal State Apply should check individual campus EOP application and document deadlines on the [EOP Admission by Term website](#). Document deadlines include letters of recommendation.

University of California: After submission of a UC application, applicants can log in to their [UC application](#) to pay any remaining fees due, to view and print a PDF of their application and to make updates to limited information such as their personal details. All personal information updates such as name, email or mailing address should be made online in their UC application. Beyond personal information, applicants should be advised that very little information can be updated in the UC application after submission. Applicants are unable to update information included in the “Activities and awards” section or their Personal Insight Question responses. Minor changes to activities, awards, volunteer work or employment are unlikely to have an impact on the admission decision.

Private/Out of State: check with your specific university or your [Common App](#) account. Common App is looking for interested students to support in a Student Advisory Committee, a great activity to list on a resume or college application. Open to high school juniors and seniors. Application opens January 16 [here](#).

FAFSA and CADAA are now open. 12th graders should fill out **2024-2025** form ASAP.

- *If you are graduating early (Dec/Jan) and taking college classes this spring/summer, you might need to fill out the 2023-2024 FAFSA as well.*
- The FAFSA or CA Dream act are the main ways CA students can qualify for FREE money for college. Even if you think you won't qualify for state or federal grants, you might qualify for work study, scholarships from your college, middle-class scholarships, optional loans, etc.
- Which would you fill out, the FAFSA or the CADAA? Find out [here](#).

- The [FAFSA](#) and [CADAA](#) opened December 31, 2023. Priority deadline will be April 2, 2024, but 12th graders are encouraged to fill out as early as possible.
- “Contributors” are the student, the parent(s), (and the student's spouse if the student is married). Each contributor needs their own FSA ID with their own unique email address.
- If a student will be filling out the FAFSA, they should get an [FSA ID](#) 3-7 days before they plan to fill out the FAFSA..
- Each contributor must have an FSA ID to electronically sign the FAFSA. **Important to SAVE:** FSA ID or CADAA Username, FSA ID or CADAA Password, Email Address, and Backup Code.
- FAFSA help: 1-800-433-3243. CADAA help: 1-888-224-7268.
- These forms will ask for your 2022 tax return(s). If you haven’t yet filed for 2022, do so!
- Register for one of our [Cal-SOAP Cash for College events](#) where families can get FREE, one-on-one help with financial aid.
- What if federal and state grants might not cover college expenses? Start applying for [scholarships](#).
- The [CSS/PROFILE](#) is required in addition to (or instead of) FAFSA/CADAA by [numerous colleges and programs](#), especially private and out-of-state.

Hot FAFSA tips!

- If a student receives **Free/Reduced Lunch** at school, indicate that when asked that question on FAFSA. It might make your family exempt from having to enter assets.
 - Students, even if during high school you have taken college classes and/or tests that give you college credits, you should still mark yourself as a **first-time freshman** for the 2024-2025 FAFSA year. That will give you the maximum financial aid. You won’t be considered a “current college student” until after you graduate high school.
 - You’ll be asked for your **2022 tax return** so do not stress about rushing to fill out 2023. However, if your income changed drastically between 2022 and 2023, you can report that in late spring to the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend. If your income is low enough that you do not file taxes, that is OK, but you still have to grant “consent and approval” to have federal tax information transferred directly into the form via direct data exchange for the IRS. If the student or another contributor doesn’t provide consent and approval, the student won’t be eligible for federal student aid.
 - If you are inviting another contributor (for example, if a student invites a parent), be certain that you have their **correct email address, street address, birthdate, etc.** These things must match correctly and exactly.
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Spotlight on Staff

Cal-SOAP is pleased to spotlight educators, counselors, and student staff who support our youth. This month, we are proud to introduce you to Vianey Gonzalez.

From Imperial Valley Coordinator Daniel Lopez: In the spotlight of our newsletter is the exceptional Vianey Gonzalez, a San Diego State student majoring in Liberal Studies and serving as our dedicated Lead for Central and Southwest High School within the Cal-SOAP program. Vianey's contributions have been nothing short of extraordinary as she tirelessly works to ensure that first-generation, low-income students have unfettered access to vital higher education resources. Her commitment to the mission of Cal-SOAP is truly commendable, reflecting in the transformative impact she has had on countless students' lives. Vianey's role extends far beyond her title, as she embodies the essence of an invaluable asset to our program and a beacon of support for the students she serves. Her unwavering dedication, coupled with a genuine passion for empowering others, makes Vianey a standout member of our team. We are fortunate to have such a remarkable advocate working tirelessly to open doors and create opportunities for the bright minds of tomorrow.



Vianey's role as a lead extends far beyond the confines of her title, embodying the very spirit of our program's mission. Her work has become a catalyst for positive change, creating a nurturing environment where students can flourish. It's not just about the tasks at hand; it's about the genuine connections she forges with students, instilling in them the belief that their dreams are within reach.

As an asset to our program, Vianey's impact resonates on multiple levels. Vianey's enthusiasm and genuine passion for educational equity make her an invaluable ally, not only for our team but for the broader community. In celebrating Vianey Gonzalez, we honor not just a Lead for Central and Southwest High School, but a beacon of inspiration and empowerment. Her journey is a testament to the profound impact one person can have on the educational landscape, and we are grateful to have her on our team, tirelessly working to open doors and shape a brighter future for the aspiring minds under her care. Cal-SOAP is proud to have Vianey as part of our family.

[San Diego & Imperial Counties Cal-SOAP \(California Student Opportunity and Access Program\)](#) offers free services to help students pursue a postsecondary education, especially students who are low-income or will be first in their families to pursue a college degree. Through advisement and academic services, Cal-SOAP helps students and families understand the college-going process and how to do everything from applying to college to filling out the FAFSA or CA Dream Act to searching for the perfect career fit. Connect with us!

San Diego County: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter/X](#) | [YouTube](#)

Imperial Valley: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

Newsletter compiled by Beth Palencia and Karla Whitaker

FUNNY OF THE MONTH

What did the thief get
for stealing a calendar
in January?



12 months.

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