

## ACE Evaluation Research Consent

You will receive a \$10 Starbucks gift card upon completion of the survey.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

The National Latino Research Center (NLRC) at California State University San Marcos is working with ACE Scholars Services staff to conduct a program evaluation of ACE Scholars Services. This survey is part of the program evaluation.

The purpose of the survey is to help us better understand the impacts and value of the program, as well as facilitate reflection and ongoing learning about how to strengthen and refine the program going forward. Your input will contribute to shaping the future of ACE Scholars Services at CSUSM.

This survey should take you approximately 7-10 minutes to complete. All of your answers will remain CONFIDENTIAL. Only NLRC evaluators will have access to your individual responses. The ACE Scholars Services team will receive a summary report. No personal identifying information will be included in the report.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact Dr. Arcela Nunez-Alvarez at [anunez@csusm.edu](mailto:anunez@csusm.edu) or (760) 750-3503 or Shinya Uekusa at [suekusa@csusm.edu](mailto:suekusa@csusm.edu) or (760) 750-3501 at the National Latino Research Center.

We greatly appreciate your participation in this process!

**\*1. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to participate in this study, you can choose not to answer a question or stop at any time. You are providing your consent to participate by selecting "Accept" below or you may choose not to participate by selecting "Decline." However, ACE Scholars Services greatly values your participation.**

Accept

Decline

**\*2. Please provide your CSUSM campus email:**

## Student Demographics

### 3. What is your current class level or academic standing?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate School
- Graduated Already
- No longer attending college

### 4. What is your age?

### 5. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Decline to answer

### 6. How do you identify your racial/ethnic heritage?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- African American/Black
- Hispanic/Latino
- Caucasian/White
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- More than one race
- Other (please specify)

## Student Demographics (continued)

**7. When did you first enroll at CSUSM? Please enter semester and year:**

**8. What was your academic standing upon entering CSUSM?**

- First Year Student/Freshman
- Transfer Student (Please specify what is the name of community college or other institution you are transferring from)

**9. What is your current overall CSUSM GPA?**

**10. What is your major?**

**11. Where do you live?**

- On campus
- Off campus (If off campus, in which city do you live in?)

**12. Do you currently work?**

- Yes
- No

**13. If you currently work, how many hours per week do you work?**

**14. If you currently work, do you have an on- or off-campus job?**

- On campus
- Off campus
- Both

**15. What was your academic standing upon starting the ACE Scholars Services program at CSUSM?**

- First year student
- Transfer student
- Continuing student

**16. How did you first learn about ACE Scholars Services?**

- HS counselor
- Career center
- Teacher
- Friend
- CSUSM ACE Scholar website
- Other (please specify)

## About ACE Scholars Services Staff

**17. The following statements refer to your interactions with ACE Scholars Services staff members and how they have supported you at CSUSM. Please read the statements below and check the response that best describes your experiences with ACE Scholars Services staff.**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not aplicable
1. Ace Scholars Services staff members have directed you to campus resources (i.e. financial aid, disability services, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. ACE Scholars Services staff members have created a comfortable environment for you on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. ACE Scholars Services staff members have advocated on your behalf.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. ACE Scholars Services staff members have demonstrated sensitivity to your unique needs as a former foster student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. ACE Scholars Services staff members have encouraged you to stay in college and to do well in your classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. ACE Scholars Services staff members have reminded you of important deadlines.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**18. Describe how ACE Scholars Services program staff have helped you in the past (open ended).**

## ACE Scholars Services & Resources

**19. The following statements refer to your experiences using services and resources ACE Scholars Services provides for former foster students. Please read the statements below and check the response that best describes your experiences with ACE Scholars Services and resources.**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
1. ACE Scholars Services and resources are helping you to make progress towards completion of your degree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. ACE Scholars Services and resources are helping you to maintain good grades.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. ACE Scholars Services and resources are helping you to complete entry-level math and writing requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. ACE Scholars Services and resources are offered at times/days that are convenient for you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**20. Which program services and resources have been most helpful to you? (please select your top 5 choices):**

- Advising and counseling (academic, career and/or personal)
- Assistance dealing with other departments on campus (advocacy)
- On-campus jobs
- Campus housing
- Career development and internship opportunities
- Emergency financial assistance
- Social activities
- Crisis management support
- Freshman seminar
- Personal development training
- Career assistance after graduation
- Connection to other support services on-campus
- Other (please describe)

**21. Do you have additional comments about the services and resources ACE Scholars Services provides? If so, please write your comments below (Open ended):**

## Inclusiveness & Community-building

**22. The following statements refer to your experiences at CSUSM as a former foster student. Please read the statements below and check the response that best describes how ACE Scholars Services has helped you become more connected on campus and/or build a stronger sense of community for former foster students.**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
1. ACE Scholars Services has helped you feel more connected on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. ACE Scholars Services has provided opportunities to meet other former foster students on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. ACE Scholars Services is increasing campus awareness and understanding of challenges former foster students face in college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. ACE Scholars Services is contributing to building a sense of community on campus for former foster students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. ACE Scholars Services promotes a sense of pride and belonging at CSUSM for ACE Scholars.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**23. Do you have additional comments about your experiences at CSUSM as a former foster student? If so, please write your comments below (Open ended):**



## Financial Need & Literacy

The following statements refer to your financial need and support you are receiving at CSUSM. Please read the statements below and check the response that best describes how ACE Scholars Services are helping you financially.

### 24. Are you currently receiving enough financial aid to pay your educational and living expenses?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

If you are not receiving enough financial aid, how much more do you need?

### 25. Are you concerned about accumulating excessive loan debt?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

### 26. Have you applied for scholarships?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

### 27. If you have applied for any scholarships, how many scholarships have you applied for?

### 28. If you have applied for any scholarships, how many have you received and for how much?

### 29. Have you taken or are you currently taking out loans to pay for educational and living expenses?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

**30. Do you understand the difference between subsidized student loans and unsubsidized student loans?**

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

**31. Do you need more information and/or guidance to help you develop a management plan?**

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

**32. What is the best part of being an ACE Scholar? (Open ended)**

**33. What is the least favorite part of being an ACE Scholar? (Open ended)**

**34. What is the most effective means for ACE Staff to communicate with you?**

- Email
- In person
- Texting
- Mail
- Phone
- Other (please specify)

## Thank you very much!

You have completed the survey!

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. You will receive a \$10 Starbucks gift card via email shortly.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact Dr. Arcela Nunez-Alvarez at [anunez@csusm.edu](mailto:anunez@csusm.edu) or (760) 750-3503 or Shinya Uekusa at [suekusa@csusm.edu](mailto:suekusa@csusm.edu) or (760) 750-3501 at the National Latino Research Center.

We greatly appreciate your participation in this process! Good luck at Cal State San Marcos this spring.

### Focus Group/Interview Script Protocol

Hello.

I want to thank each of you for taking time to participate in a focus group/interview. The purpose of our focus group/interview is to help me gain more insights into your experiences with the ACE Scholars Services program at Cal State San Marcos. As you know, we are conducting an evaluation of the program and want to know how ACE Scholars Services has helped you achieve your educational.

Participation in this focus group/interview is completely voluntary and you can choose not to share information at any time. Please take your time to read the consent form and sign it before we begin.

The purpose of the focus group is to help me answer two main questions:

- What has ACE Scholars Services done for you?
- How has the support ACE Scholars Services provided for you helped you?

To guide today's conversation, I have come up with a few questions related to specific services or benefits that are provided by the program or the program helps to refer students to other campus services. However, please feel free to mention other support services you have received which I missed.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. To open up the discussion, I would like each of you to tell us three things: 1) your first name, 2) year at CSUSM (First-year student, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior) and 3) how did you first learn about the ACE Scholars program.

#### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

2. One of the missions of the ACE Scholars Services is to provide academic support to help you succeed at CSUSM. Generally, **in what ways, has ACE Scholars Services supported you academically?**
  - a. Have you ever taken part in academic support activities (i.e. tutoring at math or writing labs)? If so, which ones?
  - b. How helpful is the academic support ACE has provided for you?
  - c. In what ways, if any, have any ACE staff members monitored your academic success?

### **CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

3. Another aspect of ACE Scholars Services is to provide career counseling while you are in school and after graduation. **One way they do this is by helping students identify internship opportunities. How has this service helped you?**

- a. How has ACE helped you prepare to get an internship or a job?

### **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

4. One of the benefits of the program is to help students enroll and stay in school by providing financial support. What types of financial support do you receive?

- a. How important is the financial support ACE provides you and why?

### **HOUSING**

5. Another benefit ACE Scholars provides is access to on campus housing. Have you lived on campus before?

- a. How important is it to have access to campus housing for former foster students?

### **MENTORING**

6. ACE provides faculty mentoring to establish connections with professors on campus. Have you had a faculty mentor?

- a. How has the faculty mentoring helped you?

### **PERSONAL COUNSELING**

7. ACE Scholars provides personal counseling. Have you sought personal counseling from ACE Scholars? If so, how important is it to have this service on campus?

### **OTHER SERVICES**

**National Latino Research Center**  
**ACE Scholars Services Focus Group**  
February 2012

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- a. Have you received other services from ACE Scholars? If so, which ones?
- b. How have these services enriched your academic or social experience at CSUSM?

Thank each of you for taking time to answer my questions. Do you have any final comments or follow up questions for me? As I mentioned in the introduction, your input is very important and will help us to better understand your experiences in the program and important this program is to helping students succeed on campus.

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**ACE Scholars Services Focus Group**  
February 2012

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**ACE SCHOLARS SERVICES**  
Benefits List Reference

<b>BENEFITS</b>	<b>Did you receive this service?</b>	<b>How did this service help you?</b>
<b>Academic Support</b>		
<b>Career Development</b>		
<b>Financial Support</b>		
<b>Housing</b>		
<b>Personal Counseling</b>		
<b>Other Services</b>		

**ACE Scholars Services Survey**  
**Open Ended Questions/Responses (Coded)**  
February 2012  
Compiled by Arcela Nuñez-Alvarez

Below is a coded summary of the responses from the survey along with a brief analysis for each section. This is based on a complete list of all student responses provided to open-ended survey questions. Student responses below are unedited.

**About ACE Scholars Services Staff**

**QUESTION 18: Describe how ACE Scholars Services program staff members have helped you in the past (Open ended).**

ACE has helped me with finding information about graduation. They have also helped me by providing a gift card to buy books at the book store.

ACE has opened up a lot of opportunities for me and has encouraged me to stay on track. They are helping me strive towards my goal and give me a lot of advice.

ACE Scholars has advocated on my behalf several times. They have helped me talk with professors, bought textbooks I could not afford, helped with food, and helped me with finances in my rent just to name a few.

ACE Scholars has been a great support system that I can rely on. Through good times and bad times ACE has been able to help me out emotionally and financially. I appreciated all the help they gave me.

ACE Scholars has helped advocate for me in situations. They have also helped me stay on track.

ACE scholars has helped me in guiding me through my academics by offering support.

ACE Scholars have given me the support that I needed in order to fulfill my career goals.

ACE Scholars not only gave me a sense of belonging to my college, but they helped with all my financial aid problems.

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**SUMMARY: QUESTION 18**

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**The ACE Scholars Services program provides a critical support system for former foster students at CSUSM. Students report that program staff has helped students in many different ways. The most common ways students mentioned in the survey are: fostering a sense of belonging; providing emergency financial assistance; emotional support and encouragement to persist and stay on track; counseling and advice; facilitated job placement on campus; tracking student progress and checking in with students to see how they are doing; advocating with professors and other campus services on behalf of students; etc. These are some of the most salient ways students noted staff helped them in their responses.**

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**The most common types of Emergency Financial Assistance students reported needing are for books, food, and rent.**

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**The most commonly mentioned type of support students mentioned is "help to stay on track." The encouragement, advice, and personal connection established with students helped students to stay focused on their goals including graduation and on graduation and post graduation. Some students went on to pursue graduate studies.**

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(which was plentiful) and allowed me to enroll in the classes I needed by providing us with priority registration. With all the budget cuts, classes were hard to get into and college became discouraging. ACE Scholars was there to help me and guide me to graduation. I will graduate at the end of this year and I owe a lot of thanks to my ACE Scholars supporters. They also helped me find a job within my field of study. The experience and knowledge I've gained and continue to gain will be a great help in leading me to a successful job post graduation.

Ace scholars staff has helped me obtain my on campus job, making it easier to work and study. Also, they have helped me pay for much needed tutoring in physics as well as other financial discrepancies. [NAME OF STAFF] have both played a huge role in helping me graduate in a timely manner. I would be lost without the help, care, support, and encouragement that Ace Scholars has provided.

ACE staff has helped me personally in the past by helping me stay on track with my academics in school. They did this by frequently checking in on me to make sure I was doing ok and being a support system that I really didn't have. They also helped me out by helping me get an on campus job which then helped me gain new skills in the work area.

Enrollment in CSUSM & Financial Help

Found an on campus job and provided mental support

Getting a job on campus and staying on the right academic path

Helped find an on-campus job.

[NAME OF STAFF] used to always contact me throughout the semester to see how well my classes were going. He made sure I was doing well and if I needed help he would direct me to the right place. [NAME OF STAFF] usually tries to get everyone communicating with him, even to just say hello. [NAME OF STAFF] helped me out with telling me about how to get my Master's.

[NAME OF STAFF] has been one of my number one motivators and encourages me to continue through the obstacles.

Never give-up reaching for my goal, and reaching my goals will not be easy. The Ace Scholars Services has been and still is very supportive.

They have always made a point to make contact with me and inquire about my academic progress and work situation. They have also provided important email reminders and updates about important scholarships and job opportunities. And most importantly have always done an excellent job creating a sense of belonging and community on campus with other ACE scholars.

They have assisted me in job placement and meet educational goals.

They have helped me in every way necessary. They are very helpful without them I do not think I would of been focused on school as much as I am now.

They have helped me stay in school and are always willing to help me in any way.

They have told me about scholarships and the deadlines for them. Got me a job, helped me with buying books and have provided counseling.

### **ACE Scholars Services & Resources**

**QUESTION 21: Do you have additional comments about the services and resources ACE Scholars Services provides? If so, please write your comments below (Open ended):**

ACE Scholars staff has gone out of their way to make sure I am on the right track to graduate.

I do not know what I would do without ACE Scholars support in my educational and life goals. This is a great program that I would highly recommend to any former foster accepted to Cal State San Marcos. I would even encourage former foster youth to attend Cal State San Marcos not only because it is a great university, but because ACE Scholars truly makes a difference in the lives of the former foster youth in its program.

I forgot to add that ACE has also helped me figure out my financial aid and work studies.

I have always found ACE scholars to be an organization dedicated to providing assistance to former foster youth in any way they are able. They are aware of the challenges that this community faces, and are excellent advocates for us on and off campus.

I hope that ACE continues to get the financial support that is needed to remain open to students to receive help when they need it.

I know I wouldn't be where i am today without their support!

I think this program is great!

Please continue to allow Ace Scholar Services continue to change the lives of former foster youth. The work they do and support they offer is priceless.

The ability to have priority registration have helped me to maintain a succesful college experince thus far

The Ace Scholars Services can provide counselors like EOP. EOP does a good job guiding me through my academic plan. Ace should try to gain more knowledge in academic advising.

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### **SUMMARY: QUESTION 21**

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**When asked to comment on the services and resources ACE Scholars Services provides, students affirmed the significance of the support system the program provides. The services and resources the program provides “truly makes a difference in the lives of the former foster youth in its program” (Survey Participant). The services and resources help students to stay on track to graduate. Several students recognized that the program has provided such meaningful support that “I know I wouldn’t be where I am today without their support” Survey Participant). One student concluded that “The work they do and support they offer is priceless” (Survey Participant).**

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The ACE Scholars Services continue to encourage me to take advantage of the university to learn a profession and the importance of helping others. Thank you, [NAME OF STAFF], you are the best.

This program is wonderful.

**Inclusiveness & Community-building**

**QUESTION 23: Do you have additional comments about your experiences at CSUSM as a former foster student?**

I feel more connected and because of ACE. I've meet people I would have never met other wise

Many students on campus are becoming aware of ACE scholars and what they do. I am proud to be an ACE scholar because it is like a club on campus. A proud to be a former foster youth club that only foster youth can join. To know that only foster youth are part of ACE scholars helps me realize I can relate to the other ACE scholars.

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**SUMMARY: QUESTION 23**

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**Students report feeling more connected to the CSUSM campus because ACE Scholars Services has helped them to build a sense of belonging and community within the university. Former foster students have met other students with similar experiences through meetings and events hosted or sponsored by ACE Scholars Services. Students reported that it is a positive experience to be able to relate to other students on campus.**

## Financial Need & Literacy

### QUESTION 32: What is the best part of being an ACE scholar? (Open ended)

being apart of a close support community

Everything it is a great program to be a part of.

feeling proud of what I have accomplished with their support

Having a consoler to go to at any time

Having a support system on campus.

Having counslors you can contact and that respond quickly. I also like the meetins when we get fed.

Having people understanding where you are coming from.

Having someone there who will look out for you and wants the best for you which is making it to graduating. Also the constant reminders they send just in case I forget a deadline of something important, but also creating opportunities for us to get involved on campus with things we like.

Having someone to listen to what you have to say, with understanding.

Help with on-campus jobs.

I have a lot benefits that has helped me progress in school.

It is learning how to cope with this disadvantage in life.

Knowing I have someone there all the time to help me through difficult patches.

Motivation and Understanding

Priority registration

Receiving all the help I need and having an amazing support system!

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### SUMMARY: QUESTION 32

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**Overall, ACE Scholars Services provides a unique support community for former foster youth. According to the majority of students, ACE is a “great program” that provides a “support system on campus” that is helping students to get “through difficult patches.” The staff members listen to what students have to say with understanding and provide the support services and resources students need in order to make it to graduation.**

The best part is knowing that the other ACE scholars can relate to your experience.

The resources and the help.

The support I get from staff.

The support.

**QUESTION 33. What is the least favorite part of being an ACE scholar? (Open ended)**

Lack of sensitivity towards wanting to be private about being a former foster youth.

Nothing. Every staff member makes sure they meet your needs in every way.

Numerous emails about events that I do not find pertaining to my specific needs

The less knowledge in academic advising such as what classes we should take. How much more units I need to graduate.

The stigma associated with being a former foster youth.

There is nothing I no not like abouy ACE

Words that are said but are not kept.

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**SUMMARY: QUESTION 33**

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**When asked what about the least favorite aspects of being an ACE scholar, students mentioned a few things: lack of sensitivity towards wanting to be private about being a former foster youth; numerous emails about events that may not be that relevant to their needs; staff could increase level of knowledge about academic requirements such as units needed to graduate; and findings ways to overcome the stigma associated with being a former foster youth.**

## 22 WAYS ACE SCHOLARS SERVICES IS SUPPORTING CSUSM STUDENTS

Based on Student Survey Responses

ACE Scholars Services staff members provide the following services and resources to help students stay on track and succeed academically. Some of these may be interrelated but students listed them separately. This is an original coding system designed specifically for this program.

	<b>CODE</b>	<b>SUPPORT SERVICE OR RESOURCE</b>
1	A	Advising regarding graduation, graduate school and other areas
2	AS	Academic support including referrals to academic programs, services and resources on campus and off campus
3	AD	Advocacy on behalf of students facilitating faculty relations when issues or concerns arise
4	C	Counseling
5	CI	Check-In regularly to ask how students are doing
6	COMM	Communication with professors and other programs or departments
7	E	Emotional support
8	EFA	Emergency Financial Assistance for books, rent, and food
9	EP	Encouragement to persist
10	FA	Financial aid support to complete applications, information about scholarships, etc.
11	G	Goal setting support
12	GRAD	Graduation information
13	GS	Graduate school information
14	H	"Home" on campus where students feel welcomed
15	J	Job placement on campus
16	M	Motivation
17	MH	Mental Health support
18	N	Networking with other students with similar experiences
19	PR	Priority registration
20	R	Reminders about important deadlines
21	T	Tutoring support
22	U	Understanding