DESTINATION GRADUATION℠

Addressing the high school graduation disparity gap among socio-economically disadvantaged students and building a viable workforce.

THE PROBLEM

Last year, there was a 3.5 percentage point gap between the graduation rate of students who are not socio-economically disadvantaged and those who are (90.4 percent and 86.9 percent, respectively). The most underserved districts in the county continue to struggle in supporting their neediest students.

OUR RESPONSE TO DROPOUT RATES

Orange County United Way’s Destination Graduation Program helps provide undeserved students with social and academic support to help them graduate on-time ready for college and career opportunities through strategic educational partnerships.

Together, we will increase the high school graduation rate to 95% among students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds by partnering with colleges/universities, school districts, and community-based education partners, empowering teachers, and creating opportunities for increased student engagement that will help students achieve their potential.

After participating in one of our workshop, our student participants expressed the following:

- **90%**
  - 90% of students felt knowledgeable or extremely knowledgeable about the cost of college.

- **90.5%**
  - 90.5% of students felt confident or extremely confident about pursuing their career goals.

- **97.5%**
  - 97.5% of students felt knowledgeable or extremely knowledgeable about applying to college.

DESTINATION GRADUATION

We’re excited to partner with administrators, teachers, and parents to prepare students to succeed as skilled workers and responsible global citizens.
United Way’s Destination Graduation program provides students, teachers and parents additional resources and services to round out its comprehensive approach to a complex community challenge by:

### COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE WORKSHOPS
United Way works with school counselors, specialists, and coordinators to organize workshops for students and parents on college essay preparation, college application support, financial aid options, and more.

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
A two-day conference geared towards first-generation high school juniors and seniors. Through a series of workshops, panels, and activities, students learn about college and career readiness, professionalism, personal finance, and networking. Students leave the conference feeling empowered to graduate high school and pursue higher education.

### STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND CAREER EXPLORATION
Through our partnership with Roadtrip Nation, students work through lessons designed to help them identify personal skill sets and create an intentional road map for their future success.

### ACADEMIC TUTORING
Providing Destination Graduation students increased tutoring opportunities during the school day helps ensure students keep up with rigorous course work.

### CORPORATE SHARE DAYS
United Way invites corporate partners to share their personal high school and career experience with students. Partners are excited to connect to the future workforce, and students and teachers are excited to have relevant examples of career and education pathways.

### STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
In this six-month student advisory council, high school sophomores and juniors learn more about leadership and community service. Students walk away with a completed civic project, which they execute and demonstrate to community and corporate partners.

### STUDENT & PARENT HIGHER EDUCATION WORKSHOPS
Our Destination Graduation partnership with California State University, Fullerton fosters a college-going culture for students and their families by providing important information on how to access and pay for college via a variety of workshops.

### SCHOOL-BASED COLLEGE FIELD TRIPS
Through direct support to local schools, United Way partners with high schools to customize their high school education activities for students by providing resources to visit community colleges and universities across the state.

**For additional information about Destination Graduation, please contact:**

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Orange County United Way’s United for Student Success initiative aims to ensure children and youth receive the support they need to stay on track in school, graduate high school on time, and are college- and career-ready.