

# BRIGHT FUTURES NEWS



## CARING CONNECTIONS NETWORK

### Bright Futures Connects with Community

Similar to Hartnell College's focus on Caring Campus, creating a caring culture to wrap around local youth is at the forefront of this newly formed group of Caring Connections. Bright Futures and a number of community organizations participated in a day's session led by strategist Michelle Slade at Digital NEST in June.

Focused on expanding youth development in the rural valleys between Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, the group is comprised of community-based

organizations, educators from K12 to higher education, youth council leaders, and city leaders throughout the two counties from King City to Watsonville.

The group formed because of the Hartnell College Foundation's modern life skills mentorship program piloted in 2021 to address workforce gaps within the rural regions of Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, an initiative of its Salinas Valley Five Cities partnership, and funded by both the James Irvine Foundation and the Wallace Foundation.

The pilot provided mentorship support to first-generation immigrant youth of middle school age through five key success pillars including



social/emotional health, civic engagement, and leadership development, money management, career pathways, and academic success plans, and implemented by its core partners of Partners For Peace, Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance and the Center for Community Advocacy, with founding support from both the Monterey and Santa Cruz County Workforce Development Boards.

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## LOCAL IMPACT - CALKIDS

### Collaborations and Parent Involvement

The Hartnell College Foundation and Bright Futures of Monterey County are happy to share about the collaboration with CalKIDS, a fund in California that provides free college savings accounts for millions of kids. In Monterey County, there are over 64,000 qualified children with \$33 Million up for grabs. A campaign to disseminate information and promote registration began in May and will continue through 2024.

“Local Families from our community have the opportunity to claim these funds to support their children’s future and we are excited to work with all of our steering and community partners and supporters to ensure that thousands of Monterey County children claim their free college funds,” said Jackie Cruz, vice president of institutional advancement at Hartnell College and executive director for the Hartnell College Foundation.



Tony Amezcua delivering bilingual yard signs of CalKIDS to partner organizations.

Each child may qualify for up to \$1,500 to start their college savings account. For Sandi Picazo, mother of two, this is an amazing way to relieve the stress of the costs of a college education. The Alisal Union School District Family Resource Centers helped her fill out the CalKIDS forms for her children. “It is so important to have this program for kids to get motivated and have a college fund for the future,” she said. The CalKIDS campaign is made possible by the support of funders United Way, Teresa Matsui, and Betsy & Barry Adler. Visit [www.calkids.org](http://www.calkids.org) to apply.

## STRIVE TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

### A Conference in Washington D.C.



On June 5 – 7, 2024, Tony Amezcua and Michael Applegate attended the Strive Together for Change Conference held in Washington D.C. Nationwide, members of the Strive Together Cradle to Career Network are shifting policies at all levels to get better, more equitable results for youth and strengthen civic infrastructure. This was the third annual StriveTogether Policy Summit. They talked strategies to shift policies for better, more equitable outcomes for young people – from development and advocacy to implementation.



### Contact Us

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