



University Prep (UP!) Program 2025-2026 Application Information

Canal Alliance is a nonprofit champion of immigrants who are challenged by a lack of resources and an unfamiliar environment. We believe everyone has the right to achieve their dreams. Every day, we educate, empower, support, and partner with motivated immigrants to best meet all their unique needs—from putting food on the table, to becoming American citizens, to learning English, to graduating from college. Because when we support immigrants, Marin becomes a place where everyone can live, work, and succeed.

Program Description

University Prep (UP!) is an intensive, college readiness and success program. We work with students in grades 6-12 after school, Monday-Thursday from approximately 3pm to 8pm. University Prep provides the following services to support students to graduate from high school eligible to enroll in a 4-year university:

- Academic progress monitoring
- Academic Tutoring
- Opening Meeting: Study skills, college knowledge and exposure, career exploration
- Weekly Classes: Career Exploration, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and Restorative Justice Council
- Summer Academic Workshops
- Daily homework support
- Behavioral health services

Once students complete University Prep, they are expected to move onto our College to Career Program. The College to Career Program provides support through scholarships, advising, community referrals and career development support. The College and Career Program follows college graduates for two years after undergraduate completion, working to ensure that students make a livable and equitable wage.

Organizational Benefits: When a student is enrolled in University Prep and College to Career, their families can request referrals to all services that Canal Alliance offers. Canal Alliance services include:

- Social services support (rental assistance, emergency funding, etc.)
- Immigration and Legal Services
- Adult Education (English and Citizenship Classes)
- Workforce Development (Career Programs for Adults)
- VITA (Tax preparation)
- Advocacy and Policy (Support in voting and Leadership Academy)
- Behavioral Health Service (Therapy)

Please note this does mean we will ask for personal information from your family, so we can serve both your child and your family. This information is confidential.



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Student Eligibility Requirements

Students must:

- Be in grades 6 through 11 in the 2025-2026 school year, and enrolled in San Rafael City Schools
- Live in the Canal community, or have transportation to and from Canal Alliance (711 Grand Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901 – Our new building)
- Have a strong desire to participate in the program, and be committed to enrolling in and graduating from a 4-year university
- Commit to participate in the program until 2 years post college graduation
- Be performing academically in the middle C grade range and is driven to get into the high A/B grade range
- Middle school students must attend program 2-4 days/week Monday-Thursday. High school students must attend program Monday-Thursday, or at the discretion of University Prep program staff
- Attend daily, arrive on time, and fully participate in University Prep program activities
- Demonstrate respect and follow all University Prep norms for themselves, peers and adults at all times
- Come from a family with significant financial need
- Be willing to participate in 10,000 Degrees, and not be involved in other college access programs which provide similar services (example: Next Generation Scholars, Summer Search, College Dream Team)
- Attend at least 1 college trip per year through Canal Alliance
- Attend the month-long summer program Aim High if student is in Middle School
- Participate in an internship, dual enrollment college class, or other summer activity if the student is in High School

Students with siblings in the program will be given special consideration, but are not guaranteed admission, and must meet above eligibility requirements.

Parent/Guardian Eligibility Requirements

Parent/Guardian of applicant must:

- Hold student to the expectation that they can and will graduate from a 4-year college and obtain a career that earns a livable and equitable income
- Ensure that student consistently attends UP!, arrives on time, and fully participates in tutoring, the weekly classes (career exploration, social emotional learning, and restorative justice), workshops, and homework help
- Ensure that student consistently attends school and arrives on time
- Participate in a family intake assessment during summer and regularly use the family support services. Personal family information will be confidential
- Attend all UP! family events including:
 - Orientation
 - At least 3 parent education nights held throughout the year



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- End of year family celebration
- Participate in school events and meetings including Back to School Night, Open House, and Parent Teacher Conferences
- Maintain regular communication with UP! program staff
- File federal and state income taxes and provide recent tax returns. This is necessary so the student qualifies for college financial aid. We will regularly ask about your family income
- Bring snacks for students at least once per month

How to Apply and Selection Process

To apply for University Prep, you will need to do the following:

- Submit Online Application: Complete an online application at the following link:
<https://forms.office.com/r/YBepmsTs4A>
OR scanning the QR code on your phone below:





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- **Submit Documentation:** Return all the following required documents to Canal Alliance by either taking photos and emailing Elci Vara Escobar at elciv@canalalliance.org or physically turning in the documents at Canal Alliance (711 Grand Avenue, Bay Building, San Rafael, CA 94901) Monday – Thursday 10am-6pm.

The following documents are required:

- Completed and signed online application
- Teacher recommendation form (this form will be emailed to your student's teacher)
- Student short answer questions (included in the online application)
- Report cards for last 2 years* (elementary/middle school) / transcripts (high school) - can be requested from the school
- Current ELPAC scores* - can be requested from the school
- Most recent SBAC/Caaspp scores* - can be requested from the school
- IEP Records from last 2 years (if applicable) - can be requested from the school

***IMPORTANT:** If your child attends San Pedro or Bahia Vista you do not need to worry about any of the documents with an asterisk (*) mark. Canal Alliance staff will work directly with San Pedro and Bahia Vista staff to get the documents needed for your child. By submitting this application, you agree in allowing the school to send over necessary documents.

All applications will be reviewed, and selected applicants will be interviewed. Students are NOT admitted on a first come, first serve basis. All applications submitted WITH ALL required documents by the deadline will be given consideration. Final decisions will be made on a rolling basis from April-May and applicants will be notified through text message.

- 6th Grade Submission Deadline: Friday, March 7th, 2025
- 7th-10th Grade Submission Deadline: Friday, April 25th, 2025

If the student is selected for an interview, they will be asked to complete a project and bring it to the interview. The project instructions will be provided only if we would like to interview the applicant.

If you have any issues completing this application online, please contact Elci Vara Escobar. For more information, please call Elci Vara Escobar at 415-874-1260 or email at elciv@canalalliance.org. Please note that the program is closed on Fridays and may not respond to your messages until the following week.