

Empowering Students Through Financial Literacy: CalKIDS Institute Joins AAP's Freshmen Transfer Summer Program and Open House

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The Academic Advancement Program (AAP) at UCLA hosted its annual Freshmen Transfer Summer Program (FTSP) and Open House, signature initiatives to support incoming students transitioning into university life. This year, the UCLA CalKIDS Institute joined as a partner, presenting valuable insights on financial literacy and higher education funding. The collaboration highlighted both organizations' shared commitment to fostering equity and access to education.

AAP's Freshmen Transfer Summer Program

As UCLA's largest and most comprehensive program dedicated to supporting underrepresented students, AAP's Freshmen Transfer Summer Program serves as a cornerstone for community building, academic preparation, and student empowerment. This year, the event introduced incoming Bruins to crucial resources, including CalKIDS—a groundbreaking children's savings account program that provides eligible students with free college savings.

“AAP's annual program is about more than just introducing students to UCLA—it's about giving them the tools to thrive academically, socially, and financially,” shared an AAP team member.

“Having the CalKIDS Institute present this year added incredible value by addressing financial literacy and asset building.”



Nayiri Nahabedian, Director of the UCLA CalKIDS Institute, introduces the program to FTSP students. Photo by Sabella Tran

AAP's Open House

The CalKIDS Institute presented during the AAP Open House, introducing students to the CalKIDS initiative, which provides eligible California students with savings accounts to offset college expenses. Eligible students can receive up to \$1,500, depending on their circumstances, to be used for tuition, books, room and board, and other qualified educational costs.

The UCLA CalKIDS Institute program's vision is to promote socio-economic justice by ensuring students and their families have the tools necessary to achieve financial and educational well-being.



Nahabedian guides students through the CalKIDS claiming process during the AAP Open House. Photo by Jimmy Mejia



Jimmy Mejia shares an informational flyer with a student at the AAP Open House. Photo by Nayiri Nahabedian

Event Highlights

The FTSP and Open House events provided an engaging platform for the CalKIDS Institute to connect with new students. Key moments included:

- **Interactive Workshops:** Students participated in sessions that demystified the process of claiming CalKIDS funds and using them effectively. Many attendees were surprised to learn about their eligibility, with one student commenting, *“It’s so reassuring to know there’s money set aside for me to pursue my education.”*
- **Hands-On Support:** CalKIDS representatives guided students through the eligibility and account-claiming process. This included helping them locate their Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) and explaining the next steps for accessing their funds.
- **Community Building:** AAP team members emphasized the collective effort to spread awareness about CalKIDS. One student remarked, *“This idea of ‘we’re all in this together’ really stood out—I’m going to share this with friends who might also qualify.”*

Looking Ahead

The partnership between AAP and the CalKIDS Institute underscores UCLA’s commitment to fostering equity and student success. Moving forward, the CalKIDS Institute aims to collaborate further with AAP and other campus partners to ensure every eligible student knows about and benefits from this transformative program.

Through this partnership, AAP continues to create a welcoming and resource-rich environment for incoming Bruins, empowering them with the knowledge and tools to achieve their academic and personal goals. To learn more, visit CalKIDS.org and AAP.UCLA.ed.