

# Special Needs Network and HBCU Heroes Launch Free College Readiness Series for Neurodivergent Students and Parents

*New virtual workshop equips neurodivergent students and parents with college, career, and life-readiness tools for lasting success.*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Special Needs Network](https://www.einpresswire.com/special-needs-network) (SNN), California's leading disability rights organization, has partnered with national nonprofit [HBCU Heroes](https://www.hbcuheroes.org) to launch the Fall 2025 PAM College Advocacy & Readiness Program—a free, virtual workshop series aimed at empowering neurodivergent students and their parents with tools for college and career success.

The two-part series, powered by HBCU Heroes, will be held on two tracks: October 18 & 25 and November 15 & 22, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. PT via Zoom. It is open to California-based high school juniors/seniors, college freshmen/sophomores, and their parents or guardians. Attendance with a parent is required for incentives.

## Bridging the Gap for Neurodivergent Students

While 1 in 36 U.S. children are diagnosed with autism, fewer than 40% of neurodivergent students enroll in college—and only 20% graduate. Many face challenges navigating campus accommodations, financial aid, and mental health resources.

The PAM College Advocacy & Readiness Program (short for Parent Advocacy & Mentorship) aims to close this gap through culturally responsive training in self-advocacy, financial literacy, executive functioning, and mental wellness—designed to uplift students and parents as partners.



A Special Needs Network Steps to Success Initiative

**College Advocacy + Readiness Program**  
AN EXTENSION OF THE PARENT ADVOCACY MENTORSHIP (PAM) PROGRAM

FALL 2025  
POWERED BY  
**HBCU  
HEROES**

**Unlock Your Future!**  
College. Career. Community.  
Open to California High School & College Students

FREE Virtual Program on **zoom**  
RSVP today to secure your spot and chance to **WIN \$250!**

**SCAN TO RSVP**

**FIRST SESSION**  
✓ Self-Advocacy in College/Disability Rights  
✓ Campus Navigation

**SECOND SESSION**  
✓ Financial Literacy for College Success  
✓ Executive Functioning  
✓ Mental Wellness Toolkit

**FIRST SESSION**  
October 18, 2025 | 9AM -11AM PT

**SECOND SESSION**  
October 25, 2025 | 9AM -11AM PT

[www.snnla.org](https://www.snnla.org) | [www.hbcuheroes.org](https://www.hbcuheroes.org) | [traceypennywell@hbcuheroes.org](mailto:traceypennywell@hbcuheroes.org)

**SNN x HBCU Event**

“Every student deserves the right support to thrive—not just academically, but emotionally and socially,” said Areva Martin, President and CEO of Special Needs Network. “This series is about empowerment through access.”

### What Participants Will Learn

Across two interactive sessions, families will:

- Learn how to request college accommodations and services
- Gain financial literacy and budgeting skills
- Strengthen executive functioning (organization, time management)
- Explore strategies for emotional wellness and resilience
- Each student who attends both sessions with a parent will receive a \$25 stipend and be entered into a drawing to win a \$250 cash prize. A certificate of completion will also be provided.



Areva Picture

“We believe every student deserves a fair shot at success,” said Tracey Pennywell, CEO and Co-Founder of HBCU Heroes. “This program helps neurodivergent youth not just get to college, but thrive once they’re there.”

### A Continued Commitment to Mental Wellness

This initiative follows the successful “Beat the Summer Blues” program—a previous collaboration between SNN and HBCU Heroes—which supported hundreds of California youth in managing anxiety and depression during school breaks. Participants reported significant improvements in emotional well-being.

The new PAM series builds on that success, adding financial literacy and executive functioning training tailored to the needs of neurodivergent students and their families.

### How to Register

Eligible California students and their parents can register here:

<https://forms.gle/vEHp27xXCBCNcP1J7>

### Program Dates:

- Track 1: October 18 & 25, 2025
- Track 2: November 15 & 22, 2025
- Time: 9:00–11:00 AM PT (each session)

Eligibility:

- Neurodivergent high school juniors/seniors or college freshmen/sophomores
- Must reside in California
- Students must attend both sessions with a parent/guardian

Participant Benefits:

- \$25 stipend for attending both sessions
- Entry into \$250 cash raffle
- Certificate of Completion

Seats are limited — early registration is encouraged.

About Special Needs Network (SNN)

Founded by attorney and media personality Areva Martin, SNN is California's premier advocacy and direct-service organization for families impacted by autism and developmental disabilities.

Learn more: [www.snnla.org](http://www.snnla.org)

About HBCU Heroes

Founded by Tracey Pennywell and former NBA player George Lynch, HBCU Heroes is a national nonprofit that connects underrepresented students with scholarships, mentorship, and career opportunities. Learn more: [www.hbcuheroes.org](http://www.hbcuheroes.org)

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