# Santa Clara University expands ‘California Promise’ program to all California families making $150,000 or less

SANTA CLARA, CA, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- SANTA CLARA, Calif., Sept. 24, 2026 — Santa Clara University is taking another step toward its goal of meeting the full demonstrated financial need for all students who seek to attend the private Jesuit institution. The University has expanded its California Promise aid program to include California students whose family income is $150,000 or less.

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>
> *Santa Clara University VP for Enrollment Management Eva Blanco Masias*

That means, starting in fall 2027, all accepted students from such families will receive a financial aid package that covers 100 percent of tuition, fees, and room and board expenses after their “expected family contribution.”

“Our goal is to ensure every accepted student has the financial support they need to benefit from a Santa Clara University education. This expansion here at home is a critical next step and advances California’s efforts to increase degree attainment across the state,” said Eva Blanco Masias, vice president for enrollment management at Santa Clara. “We pair robust financial aid with an exceptional student experience in which students graduate on time and thrive in their careers. Our California Promise program opens Santa Clara’s doors even wider to high-achieving students from all backgrounds.”

In addition to first-year students, transfer students are also now included in this program. Admitted transfer students with family incomes of $150,000 or less will receive scholarships of at least $35,000—with additional aid possible depending on individual circumstances.

Recognizing that the California Community Colleges system is the largest in the nation, as well as the state’s goal of increasing the number of residents earning postsecondary degrees, Santa Clara has prioritized growing the number of transfer students in its student body as part of its Impact 2030 strategic plan. The University has established Transfer Admission Agreements with 43 community colleges that guarantee eligible students admission to all three of Santa Clara’s undergraduate schools. Today, more than half of Santa Clara’s transfer students come from California Community Colleges, and roughly 300 new transfer students are expected to join the

University community during the 2026-2027 academic year.

Strong and growing impact

These programs, for households with typical assets, join the University's national Cristo Rey Promise program, which guarantees Santa Clara financial aid will cover 100 percent of a Cristo Rey Network high school graduate's demonstrated financial need. The aid packages for Promise recipients can include University grants as well as federal and state aid, and renew annually.

This year's incoming California Promise program students received an average of $71,358 in grants and scholarships—far beyond the cost of tuition. Over the next four years, the program is expected to include more than 1,000 students and to expand in the years ahead.

Overall, Santa Clara currently meets 81 percent of the demonstrated need of all of its first-year students, and is advancing toward its goal of meeting 100 percent for every student. More than four in five Santa Clara students receive financial aid, and of the students who graduate with debt, the average is less than $19,000 in federal loans, compared with the national average of more than $29,560.

A long-standing commitment to expanding access and success

Santa Clara University has made notable progress in creating access initiatives that foster student success.
The University's LEAD Scholars Program has been in operation for 23 years. It provides mentoring, support, and special programming for participating first-generation college students and recently doubled capacity to nearly 200 incoming students. The program has a graduation rate of 91 percent compared with a nationwide average of 24 percent for first-gen students.

Since 2023, the University has partnered with the Posse Foundation to offer full-tuition scholarships to select student leaders of diverse backgrounds from the Los Angeles area. Santa Clara has also welcomed several cohorts of College Track scholars and joined more than 130 member institutions in the American Talent Initiative, which aims to increase enrollment of talented low- and middle-income students at the nation's colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates.

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