Mission Statement
California State University, Fullerton’s Guardian Scholars program is committed to supporting ambitious college-bound students exiting the foster care system. We provide a comprehensive program that contributes to the quality and depth of the student’s university experience. We serve as a resource for young adults by assisting them with the educational and interpersonal skills necessary to become self-supporting, community leaders, role models, and competent professionals in their selected fields.

2012-13: A Time of Transition
The Guardian Scholars Program has gone through major transitions over the 2012-13 academic year. Beginning in October 2012, a Counseling Psychologist was hired by the Student Health and Counseling Center to work directly with the Guardian Scholars Program. This partnership was developed to help meet the mental health needs of the Guardian Scholar students in the program.

In November 2012, the Guardian Scholars program lost its program director. Shortly after, in December 2012 the university brought in an Interim Director to assist during the transitional period of the program until the new director was hired.

After an extensive search, in April 2013, Sara I. Gamez, M.S. began her tenure at the university as the new director for Guardian Scholars. Mrs. Gamez, a former foster youth herself, comes to us with over 8 years of experience in higher education, and a true passion to serve youth from foster care.

In June 2013, the longtime Administrative Support Coordinator for the program retired after serving over 12 years with the Guardian Scholars Program.

Accomplishments:
- In partnership with Counseling and Psychological Services, assigned Maria Antonieta Toriz, PSY.D, MA.MFT, MA.MPC as the Guardian Scholars Counseling Psychologist.
- Appointed Sara Gamez, M.S. as the new Director for Guardian Scholars.
- Retained 93% of 2012-2013 in-coming Guardian Scholar cohort
- Celebrated 9 graduating seniors at the 2013 Guardian Scholars Banquet.
- Admitted 12 students to Guardian Scholars for fall 2014.
- Two graduating scholars were awarded paid summer internships with donor, Donahue Schriber.
• Raise $415,000 in private donations from individuals and foundations.
• Continued partnership with CSUF Department of Social Work faculty, Dr. Hogan, to provide support pertaining to grant proposal supporting research of emancipated foster youth in higher education.

Exciting New Partnership:
Meeting Mental Health Needs of Scholars
The psychological counseling services offered at the Guardian Scholars Center has successfully increased the number of student contacts with CAPS. Building the staff connection was critical in getting students to feel comfortable enough to seek the much needed mental health services in times of crisis. Dr. Toriz has greatly enriched the services Guardian Scholars is able to offer students. Not only has she connected with over half of the students through Life Coaching or Individual Therapy, she has also facilitated a number of workshops that enhance student learning and success. Workshop topics include: Time Management, Freshman Workshop, Study Strategies, Reaching Your Goals and the Spring Mixer.

KEY FINDINGS:
• 27/40 (68%) students requested a counseling appointment
• 21/40 (53%) participated in Individual Therapy Sessions
  o 20 individual counseling
  o 1 family counseling
  o 4 students received counseling sessions in the Spanish language
• 34/40 (85%) students participated in at least two Life Coaching Sessions

![Diagram](chart.png)