

BRIGHT FUTURES NEWS



BRIGHT FUTURES BEGINS STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE AOA INITIATIVE IN NEW YORK

Bright Futures traveled to New York City to kick off planning for the Advancing Opportunities for Adolescents (AOA) initiative through our new national partnership with The Wallace Foundation. This multi-year effort will expand access to high-quality out-of-school opportunities and support local economic mobility through cross-sector collaboration.

We were proud to be joined by Supervisor Chris Lopez, Laura Cortez, Superintendent of Greenfield Union School District, Janet Shing, Director of Grantmaking at the Community Foundation for Monterey County, and Yvette Padilla, Family and Community Engagement Coordinator for North Monterey County Unified School District. Their leadership helped ensure local voices were centered in this foundational conversation.

The Wallace Foundation is investing in seven communities nationwide, including Bright Futures in Monterey County, to strengthen collaboration across schools, community-based programs, and youth development systems. In collaboration with Wallace, we identified Greenfield and North Monterey County as the two focus communities for this initiative.

This visit marked our first in-person planning session with Wallace. It laid the groundwork for our collaboration, and we are grateful to both Wallace and our local partners for helping launch this important effort for Monterey County youth. We look forward to building on this momentum and creating more opportunities that inspire, engage, and support our young people.

WALLACE VISIT THE BIG APPLE



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2025 November Newsletter

MONTEREY COUNTY ACHIEVES SYSTEMS CHANGE DESIGNATION

Bright Futures has officially reached the Systems Change milestone in the national StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network. This powerful designation recognizes the deep, coordinated work happening across Monterey County to transform the systems that shape opportunity for children and families, from early childhood through college and career.

We are proud to be one of nearly 70 communities across the country working alongside StriveTogether to improve outcomes through sustained, data-driven collaboration. At the heart of this national movement is the Theory of Action™, an evidence-based framework that guides communities in building civic infrastructure and aligning across sectors like education, housing, and health.

In Monterey County, this milestone reflects years of effort to create lasting change. From launching early literacy initiatives and youth leadership programs to leading outreach for CalKIDS and developing strategies that support economic mobility, Bright Futures and its partners are demonstrating what is possible when systems align.

This designation is not the end of the journey. It is a clear signal that our shared efforts are working and a reminder to continue our progress. The leadership of our partners, families, and community continues to drive this effort and shape what's possible for Monterey County.



"From early childhood to college readiness, Bright Futures Education Partnership is reimagining what's possible when systems work together for kids and families. The Systems Change designation puts Monterey County at the forefront of a national movement to increase opportunity, and it celebrates lasting, measurable impact."

- Jennifer Blatz, President and CEO, StriveTogether

HARTNELL COLLEGE DISBURSES FALL 2025 CALKIDS SCHOLARSHIPS



Hartnell College has disbursed \$184,450.31 in CalKIDS scholarships to 336 students for the Fall 2025 term. This marks the first round of CalKIDS funding awarded for the 2025-26 academic year, providing critical financial support to eligible students as they pursue their educational goals.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Ramon Serrano, Director of Financial Aid, Ana Valles, Financial Aid Specialist, and the entire Financial Aid team for their leadership and effective coordination of this effort. Their commitment ensured the timely distribution of funds via BankMobile and in-person checks. By making these funds accessible, the Financial Aid team supports student success where it matters most.

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