



# AGGIE jump START

END OF YEAR REPORT 2019-2020



## SECTION 1: About Aggie Jumpstart

Aggie Jumpstart is a student success initiative piloted by the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP) in Fall 2019-Spring 2020. Student participants enrolled in a Career Discovery Group (CDG) course that was mentored by a graduate student TA; worked with academic advisors; engaged in service activities in the community; participated in leadership workshops; and joined community building activities hosted by the various Student Affairs Retention Initiatives. The program was administered by UAP in partnership with the Retention Initiatives and the Internship and Career Center.

Through an integrated approach, we aimed to mitigate the opportunity gaps experienced by first-generation, low income, underserved students by facilitating experiences that boost institutional navigation, community building, and a sense of belonging which are tied to a student's motivation to engage and persist at the university.

Informed by research-based practices, this program provided first year (freshman and transfer) students with mentorship, community engagement and leadership opportunities, career exploration experiences, and an identified individualized network of campus resources.

### Program Components

#### Leadership and Service

Students had the opportunity to participate in two "Leadership through Learning" days each quarter facilitated by the UAP Student Leadership Coordinator. They also engaged in community service through one service activity each quarter at a local community-based organization with an intentional space to reflect on their experience post-trip. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of all leadership, service, and community events.

#### Network of Support

Pillars to students' UC Davis network of support include an assigned UAP Dean's Office academic advisor and Retention Initiative Director or Associate Director. Students met with advisors and/or Retention Initiative staff at least one to two times each quarter with consistent electronic touchpoints (e.g., email, discussion boards) in-between meetings. UAP Dean's Office academic advisors ensured students were connected to their department major advisor for more specific curricular advising. Retention Initiative directors ensured students were connected to other Student Affairs units. All advisors and directors are equipped to make sound referrals to other program offices catered to a student's individual needs (i.e., Aggie Compass, Financial Aid, Student Disability Center, etc.).

Throughout the 2019-2020 academic year we offered community engagement activities to foster a network of support for Aggie Jumpstart student participants and to develop a sense of community among all Aggie Jumpstart students and staff. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of all community events.

#### Career Discovery Group (CDG)

CA&ES Aggie Jumpstart students enrolled in a special unit-bearing [CDG course](#). Incoming transfer students enrolled in a Fall quarter CDG course. Freshmen enrolled in CDG courses for the entire 2019-2020 academic year. CDG provides students with a graduate student mentor who supports them through their academic transition to university, introduces students to campus resources, and helps them explore potential major and career paths. Career counselors from the Internship and Career Center

provide their expertise by incorporating practical professional development components to the course, including strengths assessments, and best practices for cover letter, and resume writing. In CDG during the winter and spring quarters, students met working professionals, attended group field trips, and reflected on experiences meeting professionals and observing them on site at their workplace. During the spring quarter, these activities were remote due to COVID-19 campus restrictions. Students also prepared a poster which presented their exploration of a selected career, and reflected on their experiences during the course.

## **Aggie Jumpstart 2019-2020 Cohort at a Glance**

The 2019-20 cohort consisted of 82% First year (Freshmen) and 18% Transfer students. A total of 49 students were originally admitted to the 2019-2020 cohort and 40 continued to fall 2020-21. Reasons for leaving the program included time conflicts with the CDG course and Aggie Jumpstart (AJS) program events and/or withdrawal from the university. The vast majority of the students who encountered time conflicts withdrew from the program by the end of fall quarter/start of winter quarter and these students were not included in further assessment of outcomes. Students who withdrew after the end of fall quarter/start of winter are included in the data summaries below.

The rapid implementation of the program in 2019-20 meant that we apparently did not adequately explain the expectations for participation so that all students understood the requirements, particularly the requirements for participation in the CDG courses. We have attempted to address this in 2020-21 by providing clearer program expectations through email outreach and webinars, and by clear communication with students after application and before acceptance to the program.

The 2020-21 cohort was racially diverse. Overall ~60% of participants identified as Mexican American; ~15% identified as Chinese; ~12% identified as Latino; and African American, Native American, Vietnamese, and Other Asian each comprised ≤ 5% of the total cohort.

Fourteen different CA&ES majors (including Exploratory/Undeclared students) were represented in the cohort. Overall 25% of students were declared as Animal Science majors at the start of the academic year, 15% were Exploratory/Undeclared, and 12% were in the Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology major. The following majors each comprised ≤ 10% of the total cohort: Agricultural and Environmental Education, Animal Biology, Environmental Horticulture and Urban Forestry, Food Science, Global Disease Biology, Human Development, International Agricultural Development, Managerial Economics, Nutrition Science, Plant Sciences, Viticulture and Enology, and Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology.

### **Aggie Jumpstart Affiliated Units**

The program involved extensive cross-campus staff collaboration with the following units:

- College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: Undergraduate Academic Programs
- Career Discovery Groups
- Internship and Career Center
- Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success
- Center for African Diaspora Student Success
- Native American Academic Student Success Center
- Strategic Asian Pacific Islander Retention Initiative

### **Aggie Jumpstart Student Learning Objectives**

Aggie Jumpstart aimed to provide students with the following learning objectives:

**Objective 1:**

Students will have an increased sense of belonging through relationships with graduate student mentors, professional advising and student affairs staff, and peers.

**Objective 2:**

Students will develop leadership skills and participate in community engagement activities.

**Objective 3:**

Students will learn about and utilize various campus resources to build network of support and better navigate the university.

**Objective 4:**

Students will explore various academic and career paths and gain skills to compete for jobs, internships, and research opportunities.

The learning objectives outlined above are informed by the mission, vision, values, and learning objectives of the Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP), as outlined in [Appendix 2](#).

This initiative is also aligned with the [campus strategic plan](#), specifically Goal 1 and Goal 3:

**Strategic Plan Goal 1:** Provide an educational experience that prepares all of our students to address the needs and challenges of a diverse and changing world.

Aggie Jumpstart spans most of the undergraduate education sub-sections of Goal 1, aligning with the expansion of existing first year programming in CA&ES through the Career Discovery Groups, in addition to these sub-goals:

- Close gaps in academic outcomes for students from underrepresented, first generation and socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Enhance the quality of the student academic experience.
- Support curricular flexibility and student preparation for future careers.
- Enhance experiential learning.
- Develop a strong first-year program for student success.

**Strategic Plan Goal 3:** Embrace diversity, practice inclusive excellence, and strive for equity, and make UC Davis a place of excellence for learning and working by supporting a culture that values the contributions and aspirations of all our students, staff and faculty, promotes wellness, and cultivates the open interchange of ideas.

Aggie Jumpstart addresses sub-goals related to supporting our underrepresented, marginalized and underserved undergraduate students by identifying, “spaces and people dedicated to their success, support, and enrichment,” with a program curriculum integrating, “cultural awareness and inclusion” (UC Davis [Campus Strategic Plan](#), p. 36).

Aligning with the campus strategic goal metrics for Goal 1 and Goal 3, the effectiveness of the CA&ES Aggie Jumpstart Program in its first year was evaluated with the following measures:

- Student persistence measures (e.g. retention to second year, GPA, progress towards degree)
- Future assessments of the effectiveness of the Aggie Jumpstart Program beyond the first year of participation will measure the following:
  - Student academic success, including degree completion and time to degree, for all demographic groups
  - Post-graduation outcomes including career and additional degrees

## Response to COVID-19

In spring 2020, modifications were made to move all Aggie Jumpstart activities online via Canvas and Zoom. All efforts were made to maintain student engagement and sustain the program components.

**Career Discovery Groups:** All spring instruction was on-line and students participated remotely.

**Academic Advising:** Students continued to receive academic advising throughout the academic year. In response to COVID-19, appointments were offered to students as individual one-on-one virtual Zoom appointments, as well as in virtual Zoom drop-in sessions open to all students.

**Community Engagement:** Students were invited to attend virtual check-ins and community building events in Zoom meetings and webinar spaces.

**Leadership Development:** As in-person leadership workshops were no longer feasible during COVID-19 campus closures, we offered leadership skill development and engagement through TedTalk videos. Videos were selected based on the themes we had intended to cover in our leadership curriculum. Students watched the videos and submitted reflections through Canvas.

**Service Component:** In response to the challenges experienced by students during COVID-19, in addition to the limitations of the campus closure, the opportunities for students to engage with service were broadened. During the spring 2020 quarter, students were able to pursue service through assisting family with childcare or household needs, volunteering with a local organization (since many students did leave the Davis area), or other activities that required them to help another with a task or activity. Students were asked to provide a brief description of the service work they engaged in, submitted to the program Canvas page.

## Assessment Methodology

To gauge the effectiveness of the Aggie Jumpstart Program during its pilot year, we obtained both qualitative and quantitative data. We collected information about Aggie Jumpstart student participants' academic outcomes (GPA, unit load per quarter, academic standing), as well as student responses to an End of Year Survey. Additionally, we collected student narratives from the Capstone Project, submitted at the end of the year-long program. Together, these data provide a better understanding about the academic outcomes of Aggie Jumpstart participants, the success of the program in meeting Goal 1 and Goal 3 of the Campus Strategic Plan, as well as the learning objectives identified for the program.

Data:

- Student Academic Records
  - GPA
  - Unit enrollment and completion
  - Workload course enrollment
  - Enrollment in 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- End of Year Survey
  - 29 Student responses (72% response rate)
  - 15 Questions
- Capstone Project
  - Students created a 1-minute Selfie Video or a reflective essay in which they described how Aggie Jumpstart impacted them in their first year at UC Davis.

## SECTION 2: Student Academic Performance and Outcomes

This section introduces the student academic performance measures for the 2019-2020 AJS cohort. Tables 1-3 present data for Aggie Jumpstart student GPA and enrollment for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrate an increase in student academic performance through the progression of their participation in Aggie Jumpstart during the 2019-2020 academic year. Overall, the average GPA for Aggie Jumpstart students increased by 0.198 grade points from the end of fall quarter to the end of spring quarter.

Comparing the retention outcomes for Aggie Jumpstart participants to the overall retention of students at UC Davis offers additional insight into the effectiveness of this program and its success in mitigating the opportunity gaps experienced by first-generation, low-income, underrepresented and underserved students. Tables 2 and 3 provide comparative expected retention and GPA figures.

**Table 1: Student academic performance measurements to assess the effectiveness of Aggie Jumpstart in meeting Goal 1 and Goal 3 of the UC Davis Campus Strategic Plan.**

Metric	Fall 2019	Winter 2020	Spring 2020
Overall average GPA	2.86	2.89	3.06
Average # of units completed <sup>1</sup>	11.45	13.89	14.49
Average # courses enrolled <sup>2</sup>	4.5	4.4	4.7
% Students taking 1 or more developmental courses <sup>3</sup>	45%	24%	22%
% Students with GPA < 2.0	14.3	9.8	4.9
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year enrollment <sup>4</sup>	-	-	98%

<sup>1</sup> Units completed does not include the units received from non-credit bearing developmental courses (i.e., Workload courses).

<sup>2</sup> Number of courses enrolled includes non-credit bearing developmental courses in the calculation of the average number of courses Aggie Jumpstart students were enrolled in for the term indicated.

<sup>3</sup> Math 12 (Pre-calculus) is not included in the non-credit bearing (workload) courses here.

<sup>4</sup> Determined as percentage of Aggie Jumpstart participants from 2019-20 who enrolled in courses in Fall 2020.

Table 2: Fall 2020 retention/enrollment for entering fall 2019 Aggie Jumpstart cohort compared to retention of CA&ES first-generation and URM students.

	Returned for 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year*
Aggie Jumpstart	98%
CA&ES Freshmen, Overall	93.6%
CA&ES First Generation Freshmen	91.8%
CA&ES URM Freshman	91.1%
CA&ES Transfers, Overall	93.4%
CA&ES First Generation Transfers	93.7%
CA&ES URM Transfers	94.1%

\* Comparative data retrieved from

[https://aggiedash.ucdavis.edu/#/views/UndergraduateCohortRetentionandGraduationRates\\_0/RetentionandGraduationRate?.iid=1](https://aggiedash.ucdavis.edu/#/views/UndergraduateCohortRetentionandGraduationRates_0/RetentionandGraduationRate?.iid=1)

Table 3: Average GPA by quarter for Aggie Jumpstart students and for underrepresented CA&ES students in 2019-20.

	Fall 2019	Winter 2020	Spring 2020
Aggie Jumpstart Overall	2.86	2.89	3.06
Aggie Jumpstart Freshmen	2.85	2.94	3.04
CA&ES Freshman URM	2.80	2.84	3.05
Aggie Jumpstart Transfer	2.86	2.65	3.12
CA&ES Transfer URM	2.84	2.82	3.04

Overall, the average GPA for each term of the 2019-2020 academic year was slightly higher in Fall and Winter quarters for Aggie Jumpstart participants than for underrepresented minority freshman students in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (Table 3). While the average GPA earned by Aggie Jumpstart students is similar to the college average by the end of the spring term, the higher fall and winter GPA's for freshmen may have longer term positive impacts on student confidence, self-esteem and academic outcomes and is suggestive of the effectiveness of the program in supporting student academic success, particularly during the first quarters of their transition to university. Transfer students in Aggie Jumpstart ended their first year with a higher overall GPA than CA&ES underrepresented students on average. While the total number of transfer students in Aggie Jumpstart was relatively small in this first pilot year, this trajectory for transfer students also suggests positive academic outcomes for the Aggie Jumpstart transfer students.

## SECTION 3: Student Experience

*"Overall, [this program] helped me find the community I was seeking to find. Without this program I would have not found the resources I needed. Thank you, Aggie Jumpstart, for everything!" —Jumpstart Student*

We assessed a variety of student experiences via an End of Year survey in June and July of 2020. Students also responded to an End of Fall Quarter 2019 survey. We were able to compare some responses between the fall and spring surveys. Copies of the survey questions are available [here](#).

A total of 29 students responded to the end of year survey for a response rate of 72%. Aggregated responses for all questions can be found [here](#).

### Sense of Belonging

**Objective 1:** Students will have an increased sense of belonging through relationships with graduate student mentors, professional advising and student affairs staff, and peers.

The student responses to the prompt “tell us how your relationship with Aggie Jumpstart staff contributed to your sense of belonging at UC Davis” indicate that positive community building and mentorship through student-staff relationships resulted in an increased sense of belonging for Aggie Jumpstart participants. Additionally, survey respondents agreed (30%) or strongly agreed (70%) that community engagement activities helped them to feel like they belong at UC Davis (see [Appendix 1](#), Section C for a list of community building events offered). And, 100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Aggie Jumpstart strengthened students’ relationship with the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Below are some specific student responses related to creating a sense of belonging by building relationships with Aggie Jumpstart staff:

*“This past spring quarter was a rollercoaster for me, I went through some difficult dilemmas and Aggie Jumpstart staff was there for me when I needed to talk to someone about it. Staff has also supported through my academics and my journey at Davis. Thanks to AJS staff I feel like I belong at Davis because there’s been numerous times where I feel like I don’t belong, but all I needed was for someone to bring back my confidence and AJS was able to help me with that”.*

*“My relationships with Aggie Jumpstart staff contributed to my sense of belonging at UC Davis because they all helped me feel welcomed & supported me throughout my first year”.*

*“I was able to know the resources available at Davis and they offered me some good advice on which class to take. For example taking the co-math class really helped me do well in the class”.*

*“[Jumpstart staff] made my transition 100x better, I was able to ask questions and get answered. I was able to get advice and be able to navigate my first year with very helpful resources”.*

*“[Jumpstart staff] really made me feel welcomed when I was doubting my belonging at Davis. If I had any questions, they were more than happy to help”.*



In alignment with the Campus Strategic Plan Goal 3, Aggie Jumpstart aimed to foster opportunities for students and staff to “develop stronger support networks and familiarity with each other through organized events that bring people together from across campus” ([UC Davis Strategic Plan](#), p. 34) through community engagement events hosted at the Retention Initiative Centers across the UC Davis campus. Students also utilized these community spaces to access important resources for academic success, including printing services, study spaces, tutoring, and workshops.

Table 4: Aggie Jumpstart student use of Retention Initiative Center(s) throughout the 2019-2020 academic year (multiple responses were allowed). Percent of respondents indicating they used the indicated Retention Center.

Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success (CCLASS)	44.44%
Center for African Diaspora Student Success (CADSS)	8.33%
Native American Academic Student Success Center (NAASSC)	27.78%
Strategic Asian Pacific Islander Retention Initiative Center (SAPI)*	5.56%
None of the above	13.89%

\* At the time of the survey, the Strategic Asian Pacific Islander Retention Initiative was housed in the Student Community Center and had not yet received a more permanent space like the other retention initiative centers.

Table 5: Frequency of use of the Retention Initiative Centers’ physical spaces during the 2019-2020 academic year. Data collected from student responses from the End of Year Survey.<sup>5</sup>

Retention Center	0	1-3	4-6	7-9	10 or more
CCLASS	20%	60%	5%	15%	0
CADSS	80%	20%	0	0	0
NAASSC	45%	55%	0	0	0
SAPI	90%	10%	0	0	0

In winter quarter we initiated conversations with campus partners and Retention Initiative Directors to better understand student utilization of the Retention Initiative Centers. In winter 2020, students had not yet utilized CADSS (based on student responses to the End of Fall Quarter survey), and by the end of the year only 20% of respondents in the End of Year survey had visited CADSS 1-3 times throughout the entire academic year (Tables 4 and 5). Moving forward, we want to increase utilization of these spaces and provide opportunities for increased collaboration and student utilization of space to increase sense of belonging, support network, and use of campus resources.

CCLASS had the highest overall utilization which could be related to the center location, as part of the MU (Table 4). It may also reflect the high proportion of Latinx/Chicanx identified students in this cohort.

The Career Discover Groups are an important component of the Jumpstart program and a potential mechanisms for building peer and staff connections. In the 2019-2020 pilot year, Aggie Jumpstart students were enrolled across all of the various CDG sections (13 total sections). A potential advantage of having Aggie Jumpstart students enrolled in sections that also contained non Jumpstart participants was that students had the opportunity to develop relationships with other students outside of the Aggie Jumpstart cohort. However, we also observed that this distribution of Aggie Jumpstart students limited

<sup>5</sup> Data reported in Table 6 reflects student self-reported frequency of use.

community building activities within the cohort to those activities occurring outside of the class. This also made it difficult to integrate the CDG activities and the Aggie Jumpstart activities.

## Leadership and Community

**Objective 2:** Students will develop leadership skills and participate in community engagement activities. End of Year survey respondents largely agreed that the Leadership events helped to develop and enhance their overall leadership skills:

- 95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Leadership events helped them to feel more confident in their leadership skills.
- 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they better understand their leadership style as a result of participating in Aggie Jumpstart Leadership events.
- 95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they understand others more as a result of participating in Aggie Jumpstart Leadership events.
- 100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they are able to build relationships with other UC Davis students.

Students were also asked to identify the skills they developed through participation in Aggie Jumpstart. They were able to select all of the skills they felt they developed from a provided list of six skills. Over 60% of respondents indicated that Aggie Jumpstart helped them develop the following skills:

- Working well with others who are different than me
- Networking
- How to identify skills to apply to a job or internship

Over 50% of respondents indicated that Aggie Jumpstart helped them develop the following skills:

- Communication skills
- How to identify opportunities to develop leadership skills

Finally, 25% of respondents identified public speaking as a skill gained through participation in the program.

In addition to specific Leadership events, the Career Discovery Group (CDG) course, one of the main components of the program, also provided training and opportunities for students to develop the leadership skills identified above. Students were asked to elaborate on ways that Aggie Jumpstart, and particularly CDG, helped them to develop these skills. Here are some of their responses:

*"AJS hosted events for students to attend and I personally enjoyed going to these because they were always fun and interactive. Another way they develop the skills I have now like being able to talk in front people and present was when we had to choose a career we were interested in and make a poster [for CDG] explaining that career and presenting it in front of many people."*

*"I feel like being in Aggie Jumpstart and also taking the Career Discovery Courses on the side really helped since the both go hand in hand when they both do workshops that connected with each other."*

*"Aggie Jumpstart helped me develop some skills, such as public speaking, by constantly going to the AJS staff appointments, participating in the CDG course and the presentations that were assigned helped a lot."*

*"AJS gave me opportunities to develop these skills, practice them, and learn about them."*

*"Aggie Jumpstart helped to develop these skills through the CDG course where we presented our posters and also talked to professionals. Also, in the workshops we often had to talk to each other."*

## Building Networks of Support and Navigating University Resources

**Objective 3:** Students will learn about and utilize various campus resources to build a network of support and better navigate the university.

Students were asked about the campus resources they utilized throughout the academic year, the frequency with which they utilized these resources, and why they used them (e.g., The Writing Studio, Success Coaching and Learning Strategies Workshops, Academic Assistance and Tutoring, Student Disability Center, Internship and Career Center, Cross Cultural Center, etc.).

- 80% of respondents said they used the resources identified because they learned about them through Aggie Jumpstart.
- 100% of respondents said that using the campus resources identified made it easier to navigate UC Davis
- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they now know how to utilize campus academic advising as a result of participation in Aggie Jumpstart.
- 95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Aggie Jumpstart helped them to be more confident in their academic abilities (with 1 student disagreeing).

Given the importance of mentorship and networks of support in fostering a sense of belonging, the findings presented thus far indicate that Aggie Jumpstart offered students a network of support to navigate resources at UC Davis by providing relationships for participants with academic advisors, retention initiative staff, and peers. This network included academic advising through the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, as well as the cross-campus resources students utilized throughout the academic year.

## Academic and Career Exploration

**Objective 4:** Students will explore various academic and career paths and gain skills to compete for jobs, internships, and research opportunities.

We assessed various aspects of student confidence and preparation for exploration of diverse academic and career paths. When asked to indicate how prepared they feel to explore their academic and career paths (on a scale of 1-10, where 0 - not prepared at all; 10-very prepared), the average response for preparedness for exploring diverse academic paths was 8.10 (standard deviation of 1.76) and career paths was 7.40 (standard deviation of 1.69). In addition:

- 95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Aggie Jumpstart helped them to feel more confident in their academic abilities.
- 95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Aggie Jumpstart helped them to develop skills to compete for jobs and internships.
- 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Aggie Jumpstart taught them how to look for research opportunities.
- 85% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Aggie Jumpstart taught them how to prepare for research opportunities.
- 100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Aggie Jumpstart helped them to evaluate their skills, interests, and abilities.

## SECTION 4: Looking to the Future

The assessment of the 2019-2020 year of the Aggie Jumpstart program presented here highlights areas of effectiveness and success as well as areas for future growth. In its first year, Aggie Jumpstart supported first-generation, low income, and underrepresented freshman and transfer students in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences in fostering a sense of belonging, academic and social integration, and academic excellence. The program helped students to develop a campus network of support and skills to navigate resources at UC Davis. So far, positive GPA outcomes and a high retention into the second year at UC Davis are associated with Aggie Jumpstart participation and indicate that the program is addressing barriers that prevent full participation by first-generation, low income, and underrepresented students in the campus community. Based on fall 2020 enrollment, 98% of 2019-20 Aggie Jumpstart participants continued in to their second year (out of 41 students who participated in Jumpstart activities beyond the first several weeks of fall quarter 2019).

Some aspects of program effectiveness and student academic outcomes will not be possible to assess until the 2019-2020 cohort is in their final year toward degree attainment. For example, we plan to measure time to degree, graduation rates, major and minor GPAs, and admission to professional and graduate degree programs in order to gain better insight into the overall effectiveness of Aggie Jumpstart.

Moving forward, we will implement improvements to some of the program components. These advancements are informed by student feedback collected in a brief Fall Quarter 2019 Feedback Survey, the End of Year Survey 2020, the Capstone Project responses, and collaborative conversations with Career Discovery Group Instructors, the Associate Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Retention Initiative Directors, and Aggie Jumpstart staff.

### Advancing Aggie Jumpstart: 2020-2021

#### **1) Career Discovery Group (CDG) sections specific to Aggie Jumpstart**

An important component of the Aggie Jumpstart program is enrollment in the Career Discovery Group classes, which focus on major exploration, career preparation and leadership skills development. In the first year of the program, Aggie Jumpstart students were enrolled in CDG sections that included students in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences who were not in Aggie Jumpstart. As discussed above, this created some challenges in developing community among the cohort participants. For the 2020-2021 academic year, we have collaborated with the CDG instructors and Internship and Career Center to design Aggie Jumpstart specific Career Discovery Group sections. We feel this change will allow for increased opportunities for Aggie Jumpstart participants to develop meaningful relationships within the Aggie Jumpstart cohort, while also affording more integration between Career Discovery Group content and the Aggie Jumpstart curriculum.

#### **2) Increased utilization of retention initiative centers**

As the data presented in Section 2 demonstrates, Aggie Jumpstart students, overall, underutilized the Retention Initiative Centers. In order to increase community connections and use of campus resources, which includes the network of support fostered through the retention initiative centers and the student services they provide, we will create more opportunities for retention initiative staff and directors to engage with the Aggie Jumpstart cohort. We will also increase event offerings to Aggie Jumpstart students that are hosted through the retention initiative centers. As UC Davis will still be impacted by COVID-19, recommendations for the 2020-2021 academic year for increasing engagement with these



centers will be done remotely. In practice, this increased engagement will occur through more touch-point events through Zoom, as well as one-on-one mentorship with retention initiative staff. Additionally, events hosted by the retention initiative centers, but outside of Aggie Jumpstart activities, will also be communicated to Aggie Jumpstart students in order to facilitate students' awareness of campus offerings and ways to expand their network of support.

### **Immediate Growth**

98% of 2019-2020 Aggie Jumpstart participants returned after the first year to enroll for fall quarter 2020. This level of retention demonstrates significant success in Aggie Jumpstart in mitigating barriers to academic persistence and success of URM students in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and conveys the importance of further development and sustaining Aggie Jumpstart as an integral component to student success at UC Davis.

We are also excited to report that, due in part to the feedback we collected throughout the year and the preemptive planning and collaboration that we enacted for recruitment, the incoming cohort for the 2020-2021 academic year is larger, more racially and ethnically diverse, and more academically diverse in terms of majors represented. We received 189 applications from interested incoming first generation, low income, underserved students. Of those who applied, we accepted forty freshman and twenty-five transfer students. With the advancements to the Aggie Jumpstart curriculum and continued cross-campus collaboration, we are able to offer two sections of Career Discovery Groups exclusively to Aggie Jumpstart freshman, and one section to admitted Aggie Jumpstart transfer students. Additionally, fifteen majors are represented by the incoming 2020-21 cohort.

### **Future Growth**

We will continue to strive to offer the most comprehensive and effective program we can. We have identified additional opportunities to develop the Aggie Jumpstart program and support student academic success, sense of belonging, and professional development. Below are additional programmatic goals we wish to address in the future.

- 1) Identify additional opportunities to increase student engagement with faculty.
  - a) This goal is related to Objective 4 of the Aggie Jumpstart Program, as well as Goal 2 of the UC Davis Campus Strategic Plan.

**Aggie Jumpstart Objective 4:** Students will explore various academic and career paths and gain skills to compete for jobs, internships, and research opportunities.

**Campus Strategic Plan Goal 3:** The university is passionately committed to embracing diversity, practicing inclusiveness and promoting equity. UC Davis seeks to create a culture that values the contributions and aspirations of all students, staff and faculty; fosters a culture of wellness and respect; and promotes the interchange of ideas.

**Implementation:** To provide additional student engagement with faculty, we will offer leadership events which focus on introducing students to the various career paths, areas of research, and educational experiences of faculty in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. During 2020-2021 academic year we will design new leadership events which will include a faculty panel along with a guide to informational interview questions for student participants. These workshops will allow for additional engagement between students and faculty, scaffold informational interviews, introduce students to potential career paths within their major, and provide students opportunities to learn more about conducting research within the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and at UC Davis.

- 2) Identify additional methods to track Aggie Jumpstart academic and social integration beyond their first year. This may take the form of additional surveys and/or focus groups and will be developed with the new Academic Community Coordinator that is being hired.

### References and Acknowledgements

We thank the UC Davis Office of the Provost for their financial support of this program. We recognize that work to mitigate opportunity gaps among our Aggies is under way in a variety of efforts on campus, such as the Hispanic Serving Institution Plan and the UC Davis Campus Strategic Plan. We have developed recommendations for future directions of Aggie Jumpstart program components and objectives, in part, based on the recommendations of the HSI Plan and UC Davis Campus Strategic plan goals. We are excited to contribute to the efforts of UC Davis to improve academic opportunities and outcomes for all students.

- [Chicanx and Latinx Strategic Action Plan](#)
- [UC Davis Campus Strategic Plan](#)
- [UC Davis Annual Report 2019](#). (Published 2020) *University of California Regents*.
- (March, 29, 2019) [UC Davis HSI Taskforce Report](#).
- Timo Rico. (2016) *Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Designation Aspirations: Where are we now?* Center for Student Affairs Assessment, Division of Student Affairs, University of California, Davis.

## Appendix 1

### Aggie Jumpstart Leadership, Service and Community Events in 2019-20

#### A. Leadership through Learning Events 2019-2020

1. **Transferable Skills:** This event introduced students to strategies for exploring their strengths and skills and ways to identify opportunities to further develop these skills.
2. **Networking 101:** This event introduced students to strategies to identify and enact networking opportunities. Students learned how to break down networking into manageable tasks and how to feel more comfortable in networking situations.
3. **What makes a leader?:** This workshop focused on different attributes of a leader by asking students who they view as leaders and what qualities they possess. In order to promote self-confidence and growth, students were asked to look at those same qualities and indicate which skills they felt were strengths and challenges they would like to improve. Through small group discussion the students were able to learn about what others values in a leader as well.
4. **Aggie Jumpstart Student Mixer:** Students engaged in a variety of team building activities in order to create more connections with each other and to develop their leadership skills. Dean Dillard also attended the event and engaged with the students in a short discussion and even played along in some of the activities.

*Flyer for Student Mixer Leadership Through Learning event.*



*Students participating in Student Mixer Leadership through Learning event.*





## Service Opportunities 2019-2020

1. **Tangelo harvesting:** Through the Community Harvest of Davis, students were able to harvest tangelos to donate to the Yolo Food Bank and low-income housing. This event included both Aggie Jumpstart students and other students from the college.





2. **Yolo Food Bank:** A small group of students joined Dean's Office Staff members at the Yolo Food Bank to sort, organize, and unpack food.

3. **Conlin Tree Planting:** Along with community members, students helped to resurface the baseball diamond with new dirt, reorganize and clean the park storage room, and clear the park of visible trash.

4. **Marriott Park Cleanup:** Along with community members, students helped rake leaves, clean up trash, and paint benches at Marriott Park in Sacramento, CA.



5. Ted Talk 1: Due to COVID-19 campus restrictions, students were given the opportunity to engage in leadership through learning by watching a selection of TedTalk videos and submitting a half page reflection response. The videos students selected from included:

- ["Why winning doesn't always equal success" \(Links to an external site.\)](#) by Valorie Kondos Field
- ["Your body language may shape who you are" by Amy Cuddy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- ["Grit: The power of passion and perseverance" by Angela Lee Duckworth \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- ["Get comfortable with being uncomfortable" by Luvvie Ajayi](#)

6. Ted Talk 2: (See description for Ted Talk 1).

## Community Building Opportunities 2019-2020

1. **Aggie Jumpstart Kickoff Event:** This was the first community event of the year, intended to introduce all Aggie Jumpstart participants, staff, and campus partners. Lunch was provided and students learned about the various resources provided by the Aggie Jumpstart campus partners. Some print materials were shared with students and the program syllabus was reviewed so students walked away with new connections and knowledge about the program components.



2. **Waffle Wednesday at The Native Nest:** Students were invited to a waffle breakfast hosted by the Native American Academic Student Success Center (NAASSC, a.k.a. The Native Nest). This was an opportunity to spend time with Aggie Jumpstart peers, meet with the NAASSC staff, and learn more about the resources offered by this retention initiative center.



3. **Asian Pacific Islander Fall Mixer:** This event was an opportunity for students to expand their connections with Asian Pacific Islander identified students, faculty, and staff. Students learned about opportunities offered by the API Retention Initiatives.





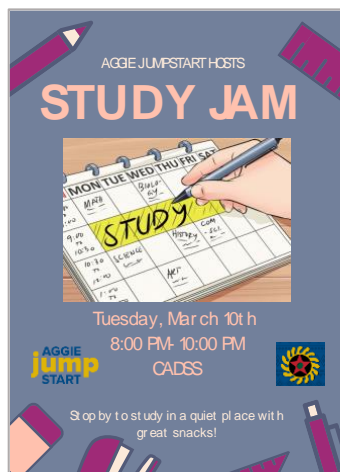
4. **Pan Dulce at CCLASS:** Students were invited to a Pan Dulce tasting hosted by El Centro, (Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success, also referred to as CCLASS or El Centro). This was an opportunity to spend time with Aggie Jumpstart peers, meet with the El Centro staff, learn about the history of Pan Dulce, and talk about the resources offered by this retention initiative center.



5. **Energy Boost Workshop:** This event was hosted by the Center for African Diaspora Student Success (CADSS). At this event students learned about strategies to de-stress, refocus, and re-energize.



6. **CADSS Study Jam:** This event was hosted by the Center for African Diaspora Student Success (CADSS). This was an informal event with snacks provided for students to share space together as they prepared for final exams.



7. **Virtual Yoga with CADSS:** This was a free yoga class hosted virtually.



## Appendix 2

### Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP) Vision, Mission, Values, and Learning Objectives

Retrieved from <https://caes.ucdavis.edu/students/advising/about/about-us>

#### **Vision**

We will be leaders in the creation of a community of support that engages and empowers all students to succeed academically and beyond.

#### **Mission**

UAP invests in students holistically from recruitment to graduation with strategic outreach, thoughtful advising, and innovative programming experiences. We support and challenge students to develop meaningful connections and build community while empowering them to achieve their educational goals. UAP uses inclusive and collaborative approaches to immerse students in the college's mission to understand agricultural, environmental, and social sustainability through research, education, and public engagement opportunities.

#### **Values**

**Diversity:** We recognize that our student population has varied backgrounds, academic interests, and post-graduation goals. We seek to empower each student to uniquely contribute to our college and university.

**Innovation:** Excellence in student learning and research motivates staff and faculty to continually challenge and reevaluate existing student success practices. We understand that student services should be dynamic and individualized, in order to best serve our student population.

**Respect:** We are committed to creating an inclusive environment, so students feel comfortable asking questions and engaging in dialogue.

**Integrity:** We provide students with intentional, accurate advising and meaningful skill-building leadership and engagement opportunities. Students are expected to synthesize information, reflect on experiences, and think critically to make educated decisions.

**Awareness:** We interact in a way which we are aware of students' academic, mental, and physical health. By maintaining campus partnerships, we direct students to available resources to meet varying needs.

#### **Student Learning Objectives**

**Students will create an integrated course of study in alignment with their academic, professional, and personal goals**

- Understand academic requirements and policies
- Participate in academic, professional, and/or co-curricular activities that align with educational goals
- Monitor individual progress with appropriate campus technology
- Develop academic plans with advisors

**Students will cultivate relationships with faculty, staff advisors, and peers that enhance their educational experience**

- Identify and participate in co-curricular experiences discussed when meeting with faculty, staff, or peers
- Utilize appropriate advising resources based upon advisor recommendations

**Students will improve their local area, campus, home region, and/or global communities**

- Cultivate leadership skills
- Engage in community development and service
- Attend events that will expand own knowledge and experience of world views
- Understand self as part of a larger community

**Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals**

- Assess strengths and values to identify appropriate major in alignment with goals
- Carry out advisor recommendations
- Intentionally reflect on personal development