



National Association of Peer College Advisors
A Division of the NAPCA Foundation

CPCA Training & Certification Program Overview

For High School & College Student Leaders



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About the CPCA Training & Certification Program

NAPCA trains thousands of high school and college student leaders each year across the nation to become a Certified Peer College Advisor (CPCA) through classroom and online training. In order to become a CPCA, high school and college students are required to complete a total of 140 hours of CPCA training and certification, which consist of 100 hours of classroom training and 40 hours of supervised fieldwork while enrolled in the CPCA Training and Certification Program. In addition, CPCAs are required to complete at least 20 hours of on-going training throughout the school year to reinforce a wide range of competencies learned from their CPCA training. The on-going training will ensure CPCAs are providing quality peer college advising services to middle and high school students. Additionally, the on-going training will provide a space for CPCAs to come together as a peer group to discuss any challenges or needs that they are facing during their service as a CPCA. Each year, CPCAs will also be required to attend a one day professional development conference where CPCAs will meet with other CPCAs in their region or local community to discuss ongoing challenges, share best practices, and work together on professional development. After participating in the professional development conference, CPCAs will receive credit towards the 20 hours of on-going training required per year. This conference will be offered multiple times throughout the year at local high school or college campuses.

In order to complete the 140 hour CPCA training and certification program, NAPCA offers a 3 week summer intensive CPCA training and certification program for high school and college student leaders aspiring to become a Certified Peer College Advisor. In addition, we offer CPCA training throughout the year (September through May), specifically during the weekend, winter break, and spring break. Training is usually held at the CPCA Training Facility in Los Angeles, local high school campus, or college campus. During the year, we will work with chapter founders and chapter advisors to plan specific training dates and times.

As part of the rigorous 3 week summer intensive CPCA training program, aspiring CPCAs will visit and learn about the college admissions and financial aid processes at a variety of public and private regionally accredited four-year colleges/universities as well as two year trade and technological schools and community colleges. Aspiring high school and college CPCAs will gain a broad understanding of the many postsecondary opportunities and career pathways that are available to students. CPCAs will also complete training exercises in educational psychology and learn how to effectively advise their peers and assist school counselors and college counselors. Furthermore, CPCAs will become familiar with web-based college and career focused programs such as College Board, Naviance, Educational Planner, FAFSA, and NCAA Clearinghouse.

The CPCA training for high school and college student leaders program topics include but are not limited to: college affordability planning, college admission processes, college and career assessments, academic planning for college readiness, college aspirations, enrichment and extracurricular engagement, transition from high school graduation to college enrollment, advising culturally diverse students, and professionalism and ethical standards for CPCAs. The CPCA training program will be facilitated by experts in college admissions and financial aid counseling, and postsecondary planning.

CPCA Training & Certification Program Curriculum Snapshot

The CPCA training program topics include but are not limited to:

Certified Peer College Advising				
Ethical Standards for Peer College Advisors	Peer College Advising Process	Advising Culturally Diverse Students	How to Develop a Strong College Going Culture	
How to Help Guide Peers Through the Career Planning Process	Peer College Advising Fieldwork	Academic Planning for College Readiness	How to Develop & Implement a School-Wide College Enrollment Action Plan	
College Admissions: Navigating the College Admissions Process				
The System of Higher Education in the United States	Differences Between High School and College Admission Requirements	Demystifying the Four-Year College/University Application Process	Demystifying the Two-Year College/University Application Process	Writing the Personal Statement and Admissions Essay
How to Select a Major	How to Select your “Best-Fit & Top-Choice” College	SAT Test Prep - Math, Reading, & Writing	ACT Plus Writing Prep- English, Reading, Math, Science, & Writing	Student Athletes & the College Admissions Process
Personal Statement & Admissions Essay One-on-One Instruction and Feedback	How to be Better Prepared & Competitive When it’s Time to Apply for College	College Admissions Application Process		
Financial Aid & Scholarships: Paying for College				
Completing the FAFSA: Applying for Financial Aid	Understanding & Comparing Financial Aid Award Letters & Packages	Applying for Financial Aid Practicum	Demystifying Student Loans	Repaying your Student Loans
Scholarships: Effective Strategies to Find & Win Scholarships	Scholarship Application & Essay Writing Practicum	Understanding Work Study	Securing Financial Aid to a Two-Year College	Securing Financial Aid to a Four-Year University

Re-Applying for Financial Aid				
Academic Skills Development & Writing for College Success				
Time Management & Goal-Setting Skills	Balancing Academics with Extracurricular Activities	Effective Listening & Note Taking Skills	Memorization Skills: Learn to Remember, Remember to Learn!	Organizational Skills for Student Success
Intro to College Writing	Exam Taking Strategies & Relieving Test Taking Anxiety	Power reading Strategies: Comprehension & Speed	Academic Writing for College Success	Taking Advantage of Office Hours with your Professor
Effective Study Techniques	Academic Presentations & Using PowerPoint	Taking Advantage of Academic Support & Campus Resources	Basic Research Skills for Student Success	Effective Reading Skills for Students Success
Breaking Through the Barriers: Path to College Enrollment and Career Entry				
Breaking Through Stress & Anxiety	Breaking Through Depression	Breaking Through the Barriers to College Enrollment	Transitioning from High School to College	
Career Planning & Development				
Defining your Purpose/Career Path	Personal Strategic Planning: Education & Career Action Plan	Writing a CV or Resume	Writing an Effective LinkedIn Profile	Applying for a Job/Internship Aligned with your Career Path
Effective Interview Skills	Writing a Cover & Thank You Letter			
Leadership & Personal Development				
Decision Making Strategies for Student Success	Developing Interpersonal & Communication Skills	Intro to Public Speaking	Financial Literacy: Managing your Personal Budget	Conflict Management: Confronting Without Offending

Ethical Decision Making	Working in Groups and Teams			
Experience College Life				
Living & Dining on Campus	Public Two-Year/Community College Tours	Public & Private Four-Year University Tours	Visit University Course Lecture	Visit your Intended Academic Major Department
College Student Panel	Intro to Greek Life: Fraternities & Sororities	Eating Healthy & Staying Fit		

Note: CPCAs are taught to refer a problem to their advisor that is not within their scope of work so that a professional counselor can address the problem. CPCAs are not professionals and will not act in such a manner.

The CPCA Training and Certification programs utilizes information from the following professional organizations in the field:

- [California Association of School Counselors \(CASC\)](#)
- [Higher Education Consultants Association \(HECA\)](#)
- [Independent Educational Consultants Association \(IECA\)](#)
- [National Association for College Admission Counseling \(NACAC\)](#)
- [Western Association for College Admissions Counseling \(WACAC\)](#)

Aspiring High School & College CPCAs Complete A Draft Personal Strategic Action Plan

Aspiring high school and college CPCAs will work on developing a solid draft of their personal strategic plan (education and career action plan) during the CPCA training and certification program to help take ownership of their future college and career goals. CPCAs will continue working on their Personal Strategic Action Plan during the CPCA Service Learning and Leadership Elective Course offered during the school year.

Aspiring High School & College CPCA Certification Capstone Project

School-Wide College Enrollment Action Plan

Aspiring high school and college CPCAs will develop a school wide college enrollment action plan to accomplish the program objectives of the NAPCA peer college advising chapter program such as strengthening or establishing a strong college going culture within our partner schools, increasing college enrollment rates, and improving college readiness of all students. Aspiring CPCAs from the same high school or college/university will work together to develop a draft action plan before they finish the CPCA training and certification program. A template will

be provided to each group to help them write an action plan for their school. CPCAs can work with their chapter advisors - school counselors and administrators - if they attend the training or the CPCA groups can share their school-wide action plan with their chapter advisors via google doc so they can participate in the development of the action plan.

Aspiring High School & College CPCA Online Fundraising

Aspiring high school and college CPCAs are using gofundme.com, kickstarter.com, and indiegogo.com to do online fundraising to help them secure the funds to attend NAPCA's 140 hour CPCA Training and Certification program. Students and parents have reported that online fundraising was the best way to secure the additional funds needed to cover their cost to attend the CPCA training and certification program. NAPCA provides partial and full scholarships to help all students with financial need cover the cost of CPCA training and certification.

High School and College CPCA In-Service Training, Supervision & Support

High school and college CPCAs are required to complete at least 20 hours of on-going training throughout the school year to reinforce a wide range of competencies learned from their CPCA training/certification. The on-going training will ensure CPCAs are providing quality peer college advising services to high school students. Additionally, the on-going training will provide a space for high school and college CPCAs to come together as a peer group to discuss any challenges or needs.

High school and college CPCAs receive on-going supervision and support from their chapter advisors, specifically from professional school counselors and college counselors. CPCAs and chapter advisors meet at least twice a month to engage in problem solving conversations and develop actionable plans. This process is crucial for CPCAs to accelerate their service-learning, develop professionally, and meet their goals. Through these individual sessions with their professional advisors, high school and college CPCAs develop the skills and practices to identify the root cause(s) of problems and seek solutions. Additionally, each CPCA is assigned a regional program director who serves as a source of support, guidance, and feedback during their CPCA experience, and increasingly, we are utilizing online platforms to deliver content, build community, and capture and share knowledge and resources.

High school and college CPCAs will also be required to attend, at least once per year, a one day professional development conference where CPCAs will meet with other CPCAs in their region to discuss ongoing challenges, share best practices, and work together on professional development. CPCAs will receive credit towards the 20 hours of on-going training required per year. The conference is organized by a NAPCA Regional Director and will be offered in the Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer at local high school or college campuses.

High School & College CPCA Post Training & Service Learning Timeline

Fall Semester	Spring Semester
August - December	January - May
Induction Ceremony	Ongoing Supervision & Support
College Knowledge Bowl	Professional Development Conference

CPCA Service Learning & Leadership Elective Course	CPCA Service Learning & Leadership Elective Course
Ongoing Supervision & Support	End of Year CPCA Assessment
Professional Development Conference	
Mid-Year CPCA Assessment	

High School & College CPCA Toolkit

The CPCA member only site includes a student achievement toolkit, which is a collection of documents and resources designed to help CPCAs achieve success from day one. CPCAs will also be equipped with college and career resources and tools.

CPCA College and Career Resources



A step by step planning tool for finding colleges, exploring careers, and paying for college.

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>



Matches up high school students who have highlighted their interests and attributes with profiles and advice from professionals who have experienced similar life journeys.

<http://roadtripnation.com/wyr>



Texts reminders, information, and encouragement about all things college – college search and application, FAFSA completion, even student loan repayment. Just text COLLEGE to 44044!

<https://bettermakerroom.org/up-next>



A comprehensive resource for helping students complete the FAFSA and apply for financial aid.

<https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/fafsa-guide/>



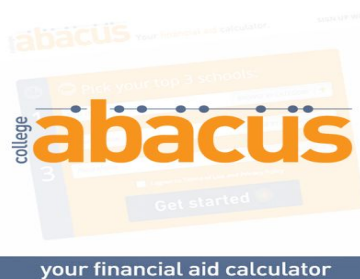
Enables high school students, starting in the 9th grade, to earn “micro-scholarships” towards college based on their individual achievements and progress toward graduation.

<https://www.raise.me/>



Enables high school students to find answers to questions about college and career from real working professionals.

<https://www.careervillage.org/>



Provides high school students with individualized financial aid estimates direct from colleges and a one-stop search for comparing higher education pricing before they apply to college.

<http://www.collegeabacus.com>



Helps students who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch to get college price estimates without answering detailed financial questions that would require a parent or tax form.

<https://pell.collegeabacus.org/>



Earn points toward rewards for completing activities that help you go to and succeed in college.

<https://getschooled.com/>



Find great tools like scholarship search, college matching, school rankings, internships and more.

<https://www.unigo.com/>



A community with specific information and guidance for first generation college-goers along with inspiration from other students who were first in their family to achieve college.

<http://www.imfirst.org/>



A mobile app that provides community college students with advice, alerts, and rewards to help students stay on track to academic success and graduation.

<http://www.gradguru.org/for-students.html>



A mobile app that uses a cognitive strategy called Wish Outcome Obstacle Plan to help students overcome obstacles and achieve their goals of getting to and through college.

<http://www.wooptoandthroughcollege.com/>



A free and personalized platform matching students to their best fit college and scholarship opportunities. Connects low-income, first-gen, and underrepresented students to colleges where they can succeed, and scholarships to fund their education.

<https://www.collegegreenlight.com/>