

## Press Release

*The San Marcos Promise, San Marcos Unified School District and University of Connecticut team up to provide an unprecedented opportunity for local students.*

**San Marcos, August 31, 2015 – The San Marcos Promise (TSMP) and University of Connecticut (UConn) have secured a three year partnership that will provide up to five scholarships, each worth \$84,000, to graduating students accepted to UConn pursuing a major in any of the Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM) fields.**

The San Marcos Unified School District (SMUSD) graduating class of 2015-16 has a new opportunity that could land them in Storrs, Connecticut next Fall. A recent agreement between UConn and TSMP builds upon the success of the PACE Promise and provides a cost-effective opportunity for students to pursue their educational goals across the country.

The UConn Promise will provide up to five qualifying students with a 4-year/\$20,000 scholarship towards tuition and mandatory fees, offsetting out-of-state costs making a UConn education similar to that of an institution in the UC system. In addition to the UConn scholarship, qualifying students will also receive the PACE Promise scholarship award valued at \$1,000/4-years. In totality, the scholarship benefit for students is \$84,000 over four years. Students interested in the UConn Promise are required to meet all PACE Promise academic benchmarks, maintain a 3.0 GPA, declare a STEM major, and gain acceptance to UConn through their application process.

SMUSD Superintendent, Dr. Kevin Holt described the agreement as “the first of many innovative partnerships we will foster with Universities across the nation. Similar to our PACE Promise agreement with CSUSM, our goal is to guarantee our graduating seniors who are college ready, guaranteed admission to a variety of universities. The guarantees are a reflection that SMUSD students are so well prepared for college that they will not only be academically successful but will add great value to their student body.”

“UConn has great interest in attracting talented youth in STEM disciplines from the cross section of America and beyond,” explains UConn Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Nathan Fuerst. “We are thrilled that the UConn/TSMP agreement will offer San Marcos students the opportunity to benefit from our challenging academic programs, as well as internship opportunities in nearby New York City, Boston and Hartford, CT.”

SMUSD Administrators and The San Marcos Promise see the UConn Promise as the first step in a new trend for the district to expand post-secondary opportunities for students. Herbie Smith, Executive Director of The San Marcos Promise, believes that “the exceptionally high persistence rates of PACE Scholars at California State University San Marcos since 2009 illustrate the level of rigor teachers and administrators in SMUSD expose students to, preparing them for college. If we use this data to prove our students are more likely to succeed in a college environment, we hope to secure similar agreements with higher education institutions throughout California and the Country, providing SMUSD graduates with a menu of high-quality and cost-effective options to pursue their educational goals.”

**For more information and details of the UConn Promise, please visit The San Marcos Promise website below:**

<http://thesanmarcospromise.org/>