

## THE SMOKE- AND VAPE-FREE SCHOLARS INITIATIVE (SVFSI)

- Initiated in 2022, the SVFSI pairs faculty and students from California State Universities (CSUs) and California Community Colleges with faculty researchers from doctorate-granting institutions to develop a pipeline of dedicated tobacco control researchers and advocates.
- Undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and masters' level students not only engage in scientific research but also learn to design and implement tobacco control activities and interventions in their communities.
- Goals of the SVFSI
  - ❖ To enhance the diversity of the biomedical research workforce.
  - ❖ To encourage enthusiasm for tobacco-related research among students.
  - ❖ To create a 'next generation' of researchers which represent the diversity of 'tobacco priority populations' — those disproportionately targeted by the tobacco industry in their advertising as well as those with disproportionate tobacco-related health disparities.
- TRDRP funded six SVFSI grantee teams in 2022 and another two in the 2023 cycle. Each initiative receives four years of funding and can support a maximum of 15 scholars. Beyond that, each team of institutions has the flexibility to select the scholars from the priority populations they serve and can decide how they choose to implement their projects.
- The program's mentorship, training opportunities, and funding for students may prove critical to their academic success, providing an easy-to-follow pipeline from undergraduate to graduate student, and for some, a satisfying lifelong career.

If you would like to know more about any of these topics or have questions about other commercial tobacco control topics, please contact [trdrp@ucop.edu](mailto:trdrp@ucop.edu).

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

*"I have been mentoring students in tobacco prevention and treatment research for years and was ecstatic to have a formal initiative elevate tobacco research and advocacy training at the state level."*

— CSU San Marcos Associate Professor Kim Pulvers, Co-PI of 'Reducing Tobacco Disease in Diverse Communities.'



*"SVFSI provided the vehicle to equip members of the community with the skills to be conduits of change and advocacy for their community."*

—Rosa Toro, CSU Fresno Associate Professor, Co-PI of 'Attaining the California Endgame by Building Capacity Among First Generation Latinx College Students.'



*"I am interested in making a change, especially around racial disparities and tobacco use. This program is allowing me to gain skills to do great work."*

—Kathryn Constantino, SFSU student



*"I plan on continuing my education in healthcare after receiving my Bachelor's in Nursing. The experience in research is an asset that will hopefully open new doors for me."*

— Heriberto Fuentes, Nursing student at Stanislaus State University



*"Since being in the program, I have developed my passion for research in Tobacco, Vape and Marijuana. It has made me change my major ... for when I apply for my PhD. I gained a lot of valuable experience, and I am thankful for strengthening my professional skills."*

—Samantha Cruz, CSU San Marcos Kinesiology Masters student