

# TITAN REPORT

## Research on Youth Sports Participation Makes National News

A national study of 11,235 youth ages 9 to 13 found that participation in a team sport is associated with fewer mental health difficulties. Youth who are exclusively involved in an individual sport — such as tennis or wrestling — may face greater mental health difficulties than those who do no sports at all.

The study, led by Matt Hoffmann, CSUF assistant professor of kinesiology, was published in the open-access journal PLOS ONE on June 1.

“As mental health trends continue to change, it’s important to get up-to-date information about the link between organized sport participation and mental health,” said Hoffmann. “In this study, we analyzed one of the most comprehensive datasets on U.S. youth sport participation and mental health to date.”

In line with the researchers’ expectations, the analysis showed that youth involved in team sports were less likely to have signs of anxiety, depression, withdrawal, social problems and attention problems. Hoffmann noted that the data was collected before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We can’t say anything with certainty, but we know that playing individual sports can involve a lot of pressure and stress,” Hoffmann explained. “These athletes don’t have teammates to share any losses or failures with, so they may shoulder a lot of the blame. It’s important that we not jump to strong conclusions about the possible mental health problems that may stem from individual sport participation. Overall, I think more research is needed to figure out what may be happening with individual sports and their role in youth mental health.”

[BIT.LY/CSUF-HOFFMANN-YOUTH-SPORTS-2022](https://bit.ly/CSUF-HOFFMANN-YOUTH-SPORTS-2022)



## Guardian Scholars Provides Healing for Newly Graduated Foster Youth

At age four, Juan Garcia became part of the foster care system. By age seven, he never saw his biological parents again.

His foster parents instilled in him the importance of academic achievement and higher education to better his life and he worked hard to get good grades and attend college.

“Because you are a foster youth does not mean that you amount to nothing. I did not let my past get in the way of what I had in store for myself. Instead, I focused on my goals,” Garcia said.

In May, Garcia graduated with a bachelor’s degree in public health from Cal State Fullerton — made possible by the support from his foster family, the nonprofit OC United and the university’s Guardian Scholars Program.

“Being a part of the Guardian Scholars Program has helped me to reflect on my life and my college journey,” Garcia said. “Knowing at age seven that I would never see my parents again was one of the hardest things to accept as a kid.

“Guardian Scholars helped heal my scars by creating a community where foster youth can come together and relate to one another. Most importantly, the program empowered me by helping me gain access to higher education.”

Garcia was among 26 graduating Guardian Scholars who were recognized for their achievements this year. Launched in 1998, the program, funded through donor and community support, offers a range of services and resources to current and former foster youth exiting the foster care system.

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## It Takes a Titan Campaign Achieves Goal of \$250 Million

After five years, Cal State Fullerton's 'It Takes a Titan' comprehensive capital campaign has reached its goal of \$250 million.

Greg Saks, vice president for university advancement, recently told the *Orange County Register*, "We're celebrating but we are also trying to remind people that we are not done yet. The dollars are certainly very important but the larger goal for this effort is to create a culture of philanthropy on our campus and be able to make sure all stakeholders really understand how investment-worthy Cal State Fullerton is."



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**TITAN** noun | tī-tən  
one who stands out for **greatness of achievement**

## Water Polo Returns to Campus in new Olympic Pool

It's been nearly four decades since Cal State Fullerton fielded a men's water polo team. A revival of the sport was seen by many as a pipe dream. But dreams sometimes do come true. The school is adding men and women's water polo teams next year.

Cal State Fullerton had a men's water polo team for two decades before dropping the program in 1985. The women's team will be a first for Fullerton.

"I'm excited that we're one of the few institutions in the country that's actually adding intercollegiate sports," said Jim Donovan, director of athletics. "Southern California is the world's hotbed for water polo. We can be nationally competitive in men and women's water polo in just a few years."

[BIT.LY/CSUF-WATER-POLO-TEAM-2022](https://bit.ly/csuf-water-polo-team-2022)