ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Caltech Y Rise Program provides intensive math and science tutoring and academic mentoring with the overarching goal of helping students become stronger college candidates. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rise Program moved online and was expanded via the new Y-Tutor Program to serve a wider audience of students in the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) and at Pasadena City College (PCC).

The Caltech Y is continuing both programs in the 2020-21 academic year to support the educational needs of the community, while providing Caltech students an outlet for service. Service programs enable the students to gain and improve important skills, such as communication, as well as create meaningful relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Often times, the volunteer gains as much from the experience as those they are serving.

"The Rise Program gave me an outlet for my passion for education and science. Throughout my five years as a Rise tutor, I was able to form really meaningful relationships with my tutees, which allowed me to continually improve my ability to communicate complicated scientific and mathematical topics. No matter how my week was going, Rise always served as a welcome respite, where I felt I was doing something meaningful and fun."

- Stephanie Threatt, Caltech graduate student
Our new Y-Tutor Program is a drop-in tutoring program where students can book online tutoring sessions with any available tutor based on their needs.

ONLINE TUTORING - RISE & Y-TUTOR

267 Total Tutors
151 Rise Tutors
60 Y-Tutors
56 new Rise SAT/ACT Tutors

335 Total Students
149 Rise Students
186 Y-Tutor Students

872 sessions from April - June
Serving students from 6th grade to college
RESPONSE TO COVID-19

In the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rise Program quickly transitioned online to support students during distance learning. The amazing response of our Caltech volunteers during this challenging time allowed us to expand the Rise Program with the new Y-Tutor Program and start new partnerships with the Pasadena City College (PCC) MESA Program, Upward Bound, and the Flintridge Center.

Adaptations made to the Rise Program during the pandemic have laid the groundwork for lasting changes that remove barriers for students and support new partnerships.

These changes enable the Caltech Y to play an important role in the community by increasing diversity in STEM fields and providing knowledgeable math and science tutors during the global pandemic and beyond.
RISE PROGRAM GROWTH

The Rise Program is approaching its 15th year on Caltech's campus. The program has grown tremendously over the years, and 2020 marked the program's biggest growth yet.

TUTOR GROWTH

77% increase in the number of tutors from the 2018-19 academic year to the 2019-20 academic year

STUDENT GROWTH

152% increase in the number of students from the 2018-19 academic year to the 2019-20 academic year
The Rise Program is excited to announce our 2020 college scholarship recipients. We are incredibly proud of each of our students. It was a historic time to graduate, and we have been amazed by the creativity this special Class of 2020 has used to celebrate their accomplishment. We know that our students will thrive regardless of current events, and we are excited to see where their next adventure leads.

Henry Vargas | Award Amount: $1000 | Attending Pasadena City College

"The tutors participating in the Rise program are amazing. They understand that communication between a tutor and a tutee is imperative. It would be an understatement to say that all of the tutors I've had the opportunity to meet have been an enormous help to my personal life, as well as my academic life.

The Rise Program has not only provided the assistance necessary for my success, but also improved my communication skills. Meeting new people, especially people who are older than me, has proven challenging. But because of my participation in the Rise Program, I've become comfortable and accustomed to meeting new people."

Adolfo Murillo Carrada | Award Amount: $1000 | Attending University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB)

"As I received help from my tutors, I decided to ask them about their experience at Caltech and what advice they could give me for college. The most common piece of advice I got is to not leave work until the last minute, which is something I am constantly guilty of. Another service that my tutors provided was helping me write my college essays and answering my questions about college. They would help me proofread and give me advice on things I should add or omit from my essays. They would also debunk common misconceptions I had heard about college. For example, I used to believe that colleges took the financial situation of students into account and made that one of the key factors influencing their decision to admit a student. Thanks to their advice, I felt a little less stressed about the college application process."

Juan Castro | Award Amount: $1000 | Attending University of California, San Diego (UCSD)

"I had the great privilege of meeting actual Caltech students and getting advice from them about higher education. I distinctly remember the conversations I would have with my Wednesday tutor, Adrian, about quantum mechanics, multivariable calculus, and the college application process. He even told me about his process for applying to colleges and how he eventually ended up at Caltech, explaining everything from filling out the FAFSA to writing his essays for Caltech. With my Thursday tutor, Felipe, I remember conversations about special relativity, learning how to use Wolfram Mathematica, and topics that are introduced to students in higher-level physics classes. He also told me about his process for applying to colleges, but also described the weird transition from high school into a highly-selective university. I had never discussed any of these topics with other high school students, and getting the opportunity to interact with Caltech students (the geniuses of the future) on a weekly basis and discussing these topics is nothing short of amazing."

"My tutors would debunk common misconceptions I had heard about college."

- Adolfo Murillo Carrada
During the months of June and July, the Rise Program ran an SAT/ACT Math Prep Program, where our tutors helped Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) students prepare for the future. All tutors were Caltech students who wanted to make a positive impact in the community by volunteering in the program. This was the third year of the program and the first time running it online.

Rise students were matched with two regular tutors and met over zoom to get personalized tutoring with the SAT or ACT. Students came twice a week while most tutors volunteered once a week. The program lasted 6 weeks, with 90 tutors serving more than 40 students.

This program was started by graduate student Alexandra Phillips, one of our wonderful Rise Program tutors. Here is what she said about the program:

“I noticed that the Rise Program has a long hiatus over summer break and approached the Caltech Y staff about extending the program to include SAT prep over the summer for juniors and seniors. I am so thankful to the Caltech Y for listening to my idea and helping it come to life”
Thank you to all of the amazing tutors, students, and donors that make the Rise Program possible!

The Caltech Y Rise Tutoring Program is supported by the Roethke Funds, Cheryl Kane, the Tom Apostol Endowment Fund for Math and Science Outreach, and the Caltech Employees Federal Credit Union.

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