

THE umoja® EFFECT

At Umoja we believe that when the voices and histories of students are deliberately and intentionally recognized, the opportunity for self-efficacy emerges and a foundation is formed for academic success. The 2024 California State Legislature commissioned evaluation showed that our theory of change is empirically sound, both in academic and psychological outcomes for black and other students.

The Challenge

California is home to more than 2.2 million Black residents. Yet, Black students face persistent systemic barriers across the educational pipeline, from under-resourced schools to low college completion rates. These outcomes are driven by institutional failure, not a lack of ability or ambition. Despite a focus on investment, Black students continue to face persistent opportunity gaps shaped by inequitable systems, limited access to culturally affirming learning environments, and barriers to belonging and support.

Umoja's Impact on Scholars

Academic Outcomes

- 1.2x** higher first-year course success (64% vs. 54%)
- 1.5x** higher term-to-term persistence (88% vs. 58%)
- 2.0x** more likely to attain a credit certificate (within 3 years).
- 2.3x** more likely to complete an associate degree (within 3 years).
- 2.8x** more likely to transfer (within 3 years)

Psychological Outcomes

22-pt increase in student self-concept

58

80 (0-100 scale)

After joining Umoja, self-concept rises from 58 to 80
(N=546) T(546)=19.62, P<0.001, 95%CI OF THE (DIFFERENCE[19.74, 24.13]

Source: 2024 California State Legislature commissioned evaluation; outcomes shown for Umoja Scholars vs. non-participating peers.
[Read the full report here.](#)

Umoja's Effect on Institutions

- Belonging, mattering, and engagement through culturally affirming spaces and community-based supports.
- Pathway clarity through structured maps, checkpoints, and aligned curricular/co-curricular supports.
- Data-informed decisions via shared metrics, reporting cadences, and continuous improvement.
- Persistence, retention, and credit momentum supported by proactive advising and coordinated services.
- Faculty development and instructional improvement through Umoja-aligned, culturally responsive pedagogy.
- Institutional capacity aligned to equity goals (governance, staffing/space commitments, and shared accountability).

How Our Partners Cultivate the Umoja Effect

Nationally Recognized

African-centered model advancing Black student success through culturally responsive...

Statewide Network

70+ campuses and hundreds of practitioners enabling shared learning and scaling.

Content Experts

Access to experts in African centered and culturally relevant curriculum, implementation, and evaluation.

Professional Learning

Implementation training and ongoing development via UGI and SLI.

Structured implementation

Shared language and approach to strengthen consistency, fidelity, and alignment.

Ongoing support

Coaching and technical assistance for planning, launch, improvement, and sustainability.

Evaluation capacity

Evidence-building, storytelling, dashboards, and briefs for accountability/visibility.

Institutional Capacity

Support to strengthen systems, structures, and practices that improve outcomes.