

Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center  
Proposal for Associated Students,  
Inc. Fiscal Year 2020/2021

**Project Abstract**

The Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center ('ABACC') is a direct service child care and development program located on the campus of Cal State L.A. The Center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children ('NAEYC') and is operated by the University Auxiliary Services ('UAS'). The Children's Center provides child care services which enable student parents to attend the University.

Established in 1968 the Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center is operated primarily for use by the students of Cal State LA. The Center is licensed to provide education and care for 102 children daily and enrolled 110 families this semester. Flexible scheduling, reduced rates for students, and tuition assistance for low-income families provide support for student parents as they work to complete their education. Student parents on our waiting list are given first priority for enrollment.

The purpose of this proposal is to request \$140,779 to continue to provide enhanced child care services for Cal State L.A. students and to support the availability of child care spaces for low-income student families. Associated Students, Inc. ('ASI') support is critical for the Center to continue to provide the quality of services that students expect and deserve. These services help provide the means for student parents to complete their education and secure jobs that will allow them to provide adequately for their families. At Cal State L.A., the Children's Center represents not only a survival tool for student-parents, but also a critical component of access to higher education.

## **Project Description**

Cal State L.A. students founded the Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center in 1968 for the express purpose of providing child care for student-parents. For the past 50 years, the ASI has provided support for the operation of the Children's Center. During this time, the Center has increased capacity and funding for low-income parents, begun a state-funded food program, and become accredited by NAEYC. These are just a few of our achievements that demonstrate successful operation. Our largest measure of success is in the lives of the parents, who both have graduated from college because they found supportive, affordable child care, and who were able to oversee the healthy development of their children because they were taught and cared for by the ABACC.

The Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center respectfully requests \$140,779 to continue to offer the level of services currently provided by the Center. The requested funding will be used to support the ongoing operation of the Center with an emphasis on the areas of program availability, program quality and program support for low-income student families. The target population for this project is Cal State L.A. student-parents.

### ***Objective I: Provide Child Care Services for Cal State L.A. Student-Parents***

The availability of affordable, quality child care while they are attending classes is essential for Cal State L.A. student-parents. Child care availability lets student-parents make steady educational progress. For a family that is seeking financial self-sufficiency, affordable child care means not having to choose between the education they need to succeed and quality care for the children they love.

In an effort to assist student-parents in balancing their education, work, and family life, the Center offers flexible and convenient child care services and gives Cal State L.A. student-parents first priority for enrollment. Of the 110 families enrolled this semester the Center provided 50 child care spaces for Cal State L.A. student-parents. Student-parents have used child care while attending school, while working and studying, and represent 45% of enrollment. The Center also serves Cal State L.A. alumni and the neighboring community, which comprise approximately 23% of enrollment, as well as faculty and staff, which account for 32% of enrollment.

The Center enrolls children from six months through preschool. We currently have a waiting list with 189 student families, 73% of which are low-income.

## **Objective II: *Maintain or Enhance Program Quality***

The quality of the child care program is critical to the success of the project outcome. Providing a safe, nurturing, and enriched child care program reduces parental anxiety and stress, allowing for improved performance while attending college. A good program also is essential to the healthy development of the children we serve. Research shows that children who receive quality early care and education are more motivated and committed to school; literature from brain research is confirming the strong influence of early care on intelligence, motivation, social skills, and the overall success of the individual.

Factors that influence quality are good teacher/child ratios, the high education and training of staff, and a low rate of staff turnover. The Children's Center sustains well-educated, consistent staff, and excellent teacher/child ratios. Staff education levels are well above average, with all full time professional level staff holding a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and Teacher Permits from the State of California. Teacher/child ratios meet all Title V and Title 22 requirements and teacher training is ongoing. The quality of the program is further evidenced by the Center's accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children; only between 8 and 10 percent of early child care programs nationwide meet the high standards required to become and remain accredited by NAEYC.

## **Objective III: *Provide Support for Low-Income Student-Parents***

Child care is a major expense for many families and additional help is needed to make it affordable for low-income families. Through a variety of state, federal, and local sources, the Center is able to provide subsidized services to children of income-eligible students at little or no cost. By augmenting these resources with ASI funding, we maximize the impact of ASI's support. This year 76% of student families at the Center received free or low-cost child care. The remaining 24% of student families received child care at a 10% reduction in cost.

To provide further support for low-income families, hot meals are provided for all children at the Center, free of charge. The meals we provide are exceptionally nutritious and, for some families, represent the only balanced meals their children may receive. This objective is made possible with a continuing grant from the California Department of Education ('CDE') and the support of ASI. By pairing resources, we are able to stretch the impact of ASI funding. This year, the CDE grant provided for 60% of the cost of the food program and ASI funding provided 2.5%.

#### **Objective IV: *Employment, Education and Training for Cal State L.A. Students***

The Children's Center not only directly benefits families and children through enhanced program services, it also indirectly benefits Cal State L.A. students by providing a model early care and education program where Child Development and Education majors have the opportunity to work, observe and study. ASI funding has improved the quality of the program that Cal State L.A. student's use for their training experiences. This widens the impact of ASI funding as future teachers graduate from our campus and use their experiences at the Children's Center as a model for their own teaching programs.

The Children's Center program provides both employment and educational opportunities for Cal State L.A. students. The Center employs an average of 50 part-time Child Development majors each semester as classroom teacher assistants. Many students work at the Center throughout their college years and describe their work as an important addition to their education and campus life. Sixteen of our current full time professional staff are graduates of Cal State L.A.

Additionally, the Children's Center is an excellent training facility for future teachers. Approximately 60 students annually complete their training as practicum and teacher interns at the Children's Center. The Center also serves as an observation and research site for up to 130 additional students from a variety of departments and hosts many additional visitors from the campus and community. ASI funds contribute to the quality of the program overall, and thus indirectly impact all students who work or train at the Center.

The Children's Center has a long history of serving Cal State L.A. students and of using every available resource to maximize that service. We actively have sought out and attained funding from a variety of sources in order to provide the best quality service at the lowest possible price. Regardless of funding source, Cal State L.A. students always are given first priority for enrollment. ASI funding has been, and will continue to be, a cornerstone of the Center's program – while grants from other agencies help to further enhance our services. These additional sources of funding are:

- U.S. Department of Education – CCAMPIS Grant (specifically for student-parents)
- California Department of Education – General Child Care Grant (targets low-income families)
- California Department of Education – CA State Preschool Grant (targets low-income families)
- California Department of Education – Child Care Food Program Grant

ASI funding constitutes about 7% of the Children's Center Operational Budget. Grants for low-income students make-up 65% of funding, parent fees 23% and the General Fund and IRA constitute the remaining 5%.

The Children's Center program clearly fits with the ASI mission of, "*supporting child day care centers for children of students of the campus*". The Center is open to all students and gives student-parents first priority for use. As a long standing program, founded and supported by students, the Children's Center has demonstrated a commitment to serving student-parents, expanding and changing as the needs of student-parents have grown, and providing the best possible program within available means.

### **Marketing and Outreach**

The Children's Center recognizes the enormous positive impact that ASI funding has on the quality and cost of the program. As a result of this, ASI is credited in the Center's brochure and website, in every public affairs piece about the Center, and in all campus orientation programs and parent orientation programs conducted at the Center. We are proud of the history of student involvement with the Center and believe that students have every right to be informed of, and take pride in, their support of our excellent program.

We always welcome ASI participation. ASI may become involved in activities that support the families at our Center. Some possible events to participate in are: Saturday work days, Spring Festival and a book drive for children's books.

### **Financial Plan**

ASI funding is used to support all aspects of the Children's Center operation. Attached is a detailed operating budget for our request. ASI funding is critical to each area of the Center's operation. There is no area of low priority. We offer a program of substantive quality without excess.

We are requesting \$140,779 for this proposal. The requested amount is consistent with funding amounts which were approved by student referendum. Our preferred time line for funding would be to receive the funds over two semesters in relatively equal distributions. This time line is consistent with past years' funding plans.

Any reduction in funding from ASI would burden the Center and would be extremely detrimental to the program. Any reductions would require that we lay off staff, reduce program offerings, and significantly raise rates. As is evident from the attached budget, ASI funding supports all areas of the Children's Center operation. Without this support the program would be forced to cut services program wide and increase child care tuition rates drastically.

### **Program Evaluation and Quality Control**

The Children's Center assures program quality in a number of ways, the first of which is by maintaining our status as an accredited program. Accreditation is not a requirement of our license but

rather an honor that is conferred upon programs that meet the high standards accreditation requires. Only 8% of all Centers in the U.S. have NAEYC accreditation and we have been accredited since 1992. By using the NAEYC accreditation self-study guidelines as an evaluative tool to assess the effectiveness of the program, the Center measures qualitative gains. These guidelines provide a method for looking closely at the child development program, environment, health and safety, staff development, parent needs, and administration. The program was re-accredited in 2019 for a five-year period. We will continue to maintain accreditation status by an annual internal review and external review every fifth year. The annual internal review consists of a self-study using the NAEYC Academy guidelines followed up with a written report to the NAEYC Academy Accreditation Board. The results of the self-study will be used to modify the program where need is indicated.

Additionally, every four to six years the program is subject to a “Contract Monitoring Review” by the California Department of Education ('CDE'). This review requires a team comprised of staff, parents and an outside evaluator to review documents, talk with parents, and observe and interview staff. The assessment provides information regarding the effectiveness of our program as well as a means for discovering areas needing change. The results of this evaluation are shared with staff and parents and the information is used to implement changes and set future goals. The Center completed a Contract Monitoring Review in 2014 and was commended in every area of operation.

The Center further maintains annual records to account for Center usage by Cal State L.A. students and student-parents. These statistics verify the amount of student use as well as indicate future student need. The statistics that are maintained by the Center are used in compiling reports to ASI. The Center has consistently met ASI reporting requirements in a timely and thorough manner.

The Center also tracks student need by our waiting list. Most semesters there are over 300 families waiting to receive child care services demonstrating the profound need for child care services at Cal State L.A.

The contact person for this proposal is Cara Dallamora, Children’s Center Director.

Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center  
Budget Proposal for Funding Year 2020-2021

**EXPENSE DETAIL FOR ASI REQUESTED FUNDS**

<i>Total Requested</i>		<b>\$ 140,779</b>
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<b>Compensation/Benefits</b>		
Salaries		
Assistant Teachers	12 part-time CSLA student assistants. Some receive work study - the number varies annually. Each classroom is staffed with a Lead Teacher, Teacher and Student Assistant for 18 to 21 children. This allows excellent teacher/child ratios, enhancing the quality of the program and providing great job training opportunities for students.	\$ 131,500
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<i>Subtotal</i>		<b>\$ 131,500</b>
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<b>Operating</b>		
Admin. Fee	3.75% Accounting charges to maintain ASI trust account	\$ 5,279
Food	2.5% of cost's for daily breakfast, lunch and snack	\$ 3,000
Supplies & Services	Children's supplies: art supplies, equipment	\$ 1,000
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<i>Subtotal</i>		<b>\$ 9,279</b>
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<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$ 140,779</b>