



CAL STATE LA

CENTER FOR ENGAGEMENT, SERVICE & THE PUBLIC GOOD

**ASI Funding Proposal
AY 2016-2017**

Educational Participation In Communities (EPIC)

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The EPIC Program Mission and Collaboration with ASI

ASI and EPIC share a common mission in supporting the educational enrichment and community service involvement of our students. In utilizing a student development model of leadership in all of our work, EPIC and ASI have collaborated to contribute significantly to our students' contributions to the community and the enhancement of our students' educational experience.

Program Abstract

Established in 1966 by the Associated Students Inc., and the Division of Student Affairs, the Educational Participation In Communities (E.P.I.C.) Program was created in the wake of the Watts Rebellion of 1965 to help address critical community needs by placing student volunteers in local non-profit organizations. EPIC is recognized as one of the longest sustained community service and engagement programs in the CSU. For over four decades, EPIC has engaged Cal State L.A. students in co-curricular public good service projects, placed students in a wide range of agencies serving a broad spectrum of communities throughout the Los Angeles area, and has supported service learning across academic disciplines. EPIC student leaders play a key role in the program planning and implementation process. They are at the forefront of volunteer recruitment, community partnership development, service learning course support, co-curricular service projects, and have sustained the EPIC tradition on the Cal State L.A. campus and in the community.

In 2014, EPIC came under the direction of the newly established Center for Engagement, Service, and the Public Good. The goal of the center is to transform the University into a hub of civic engagement and public service for our communities, our city, and our region. This change has put EPIC in a position to work collaboratively with other Center programs to support campus initiatives and to build capacity for the new general education civic engagement requirement and service learning.

Community Engagement – A High Impact Practice

Service learning, community-based learning, and collaborative projects are high impact educational practices that have shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds. These instructional strategies are practices supported by educational research that suggests increase rates of student retention and student engagement.

Service Learning and community-based learning are field-based “experiential learning” with community partners. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

The EPIC student leaders provide direct support in the areas of partnership development, direct service, student community placement and development, and course project support. Our student service leaders work directly with faculty, community partners, and the Center for Engagement, Service, and the Public Good full time staff in all service, engagement, and public good efforts. Our students build capacity for campus community service and engagement efforts.

EPIC PROGRAMS

Community Service Learning (CSL) Program Component

This is the primary vehicle that is utilized for the placement of university students in the community. When being processed through this component, students can choose to either: be solely a volunteer or enroll in a service learning course. **There are multiple objectives for this component and they are:** (1) to provide our **program student assistants** with training and opportunities to: (a) work together as a team implementing various community service learning strategies of the university; (b) coordinate the responsibilities of recruitment, placement, and the follow-up of student volunteers and service learners; (c) meet with community agencies and help assess their volunteer needs; (d) work with faculty in developing and implementing service learning courses and course projects; and, (2) to provide **Cal State L.A. student volunteers** with: (a) opportunities to utilize classroom theory in real life settings while serving the community; (b) opportunities to gain valuable experience in areas that can benefit their educational and career choices. **The expected outcomes** of the component are in alignment with and meeting the University Strategic Plan for Community Engagement. Service learning and community-based learning give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. Students have the opportunity to apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. Students gain valuable experience from using their education to serve the community while the community gains from the service provided by students. **To meet our objectives, EPIC conducts the following activities during the academic year:**

- **Recruitment** – Classroom presentations are coordinated every quarter across academic disciplines. Semester walkway recruitment activities- information tabling and campus event participation- are coordinated and lead by EPIC student leaders. Throughout the academic year, these separate efforts reach and encourage thousands of students to be of service to the community.

Service Impact Project: In effort to create service context for student recruitment and encouragement, EPIC student staff are involved a special media project focused on capturing the service impact on Cal State LA students, faculty, staff, community partners and their constituents. An impact video captures the service learning course project from course

preparation to course reflection, and everything that occurs in between. These impact videos serve to provide students with an understanding of their role in service and the needs of the community. Also, this media helps EPIC to document the important work that reflects our University's vision and strategic plan for student development in this area. Media examples from the 2015-16 AY:

Presentation Video for Service Learning Courses

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBuGDhTfOYc>

Read Across America at Anton Elementary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91-LtvIrbVU>

Overview of Fall Quarter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujSlouDf9sg>

Summer Youth Employment Program 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPLw5DqpZDA>

- **Placement** – We support the placement of hundreds of student volunteers in on- and off-campus service opportunities. Students engage in co-curricular service projects on campus, which support a variety of efforts to host community on campus. Off-campus, students are placed in the community at non-profit community based agencies. The community-based agencies represent a broad geographic and socioeconomic cross section of Los Angeles and include: Educational Services, Legal Services, Medical Services, and Social Services, in local community agencies.
- **Academic Credit/Service Learning** – Students who elect to enroll in Community Service Learning courses require special assistance in the areas of orientation, training, placement, documentation of service, evaluation, and reflection. We work with faculty and community partners to plan and coordinate service learning support. EPIC promotes and supports the creation of new service learning courses and service learning course project development. EPIC plays a vital role in the community placement process, record keeping and follow-up of student volunteers and service learners.
- **Community Agencies** – EPIC works directly with the office of Risk Management and the Office of Contracts and Procurement to maintain active community partner agreements. Currently, our list of community partnerships includes 200+ agencies. Sustaining these community partnerships requires regular contact with agencies for purposes of referral, updates, evaluation, and risk management. As our campus moves toward the new civic and service learning general education requirement, we are active in building new partnerships to build capacity for student placement. This process includes working directly with faculty and the Service Learning Faculty Director. As service learning moves toward a project-based model, assessing community needs and course learning outcomes are key in preparing community agencies for Cal State L.A. student placement. EPIC student coordinators are

actively involved in the partnership development process. Working directly in the community and on campus, they play a vital role in build capacity for service placement.

Community Partner Orientation: EPIC supports the quarterly Community Partner Orientation, hosted for prospective partners of the University. On average, we host 50-60 community based organization on the Cal State LA campus, and now at our Downtown LA campus for an informative presentation reflecting our campus' vision for service, engagement, public good, and partnership development.

Cal State LA Gives Back: Quarterly, EPIC supports the coordination of a service day at one of our community partner sites. Students, staff, and faculty are invited to join together for a day of service. On average, a day of service accommodates 50-60 members of our campus community.

- **S4 CSU Service Data Initiative**

Across the CSU system, campuses are in the pilot and implementation phase of the new S4 data collection system. This system is designed to capture data of community engagement across all area of the campus community. They system will generate reports reflecting the CSU community engagement efforts and will be used to generate reports for legislation.

EPIC is providing support to the implementation of S4 on the Cal State LA campus. The service learning component is working with service learning courses to pilot the system and to prepare training and support for students and faculty. We expect this system to be fully operating in the Fall 2016.

- **EPIC Community Service Learning Project, Introduction to Higher Education 101 Course** – The Introduction to Higher Education Course objective focuses on the application of knowledge and skills for academic and social success, and understanding the myriad aspects of student life and the structure of Cal State, Los Angeles. The learning outcomes for the class project are explicitly applied through the service learning project with EPIC. Students brainstorm topics, themes and issues related to college preparation and literacy for elementary school students. The class selects the most relevant themes to structure 30 minute presentations for children. Cal State L.A. students work in groups to create a student success presentation by identifying research articles and activities relevant to the topic to develop their presentation points. Student groups select a grade level and each group presents to one class at EPIC elementary school partner sites. Over fall and spring semester, this project aims to support an estimated 300 first-time freshman to present to an estimated 2500 elementary school children.

America Reads/Counts Program

Established on the Cal State L.A. campus in 1999, this national tutorial program targets elementary school students who are achieving below grade level in the subject of reading and math. The program begins in late September and ends mid-June, and Cal State L.A. students make a commitment to serve for the entire academic year. Cal State L.A. students provide

academic support within the elementary school classroom setting, serving an average of 10 direct service hours per week. Annually, the program employs 30-35 students through the Federal Work Study program.

On average, through day-to-day academic support, the program serves roughly 400 elementary school students in grades K through 6th. Through service projects, over 2000 elementary school children are served.

The program serves five partner elementary school site, three of which are in the GO ELA initiative family of LAUSD schools. This program has help to establish important community partnerships with elementary schools, which have served as fantastic service sites for service learning course projects, campus initiative implementation, and special co-curricular service projects.

The objective of the program is to promote careers in education through providing valuable opportunities for firsthand experience, relevant training, and engagement.

The program outcome will have provided Cal State L.A. students the opportunity to gain experience and contacts for potential career development, while assisting in improving the academic achievement of the elementary school children served.

There are two annual special events coordinated by this program:

- **“Read Across America” Fall Semester** - Coordinated by the program tutors and coordinators, this nationwide literacy advocacy event celebrates Dr. Seuss’ birthday by exposing more than 1500 elementary school children to positive college role models, while engaging them in educational activities that encourage the importance of higher education. This creative event provides for a quarter-long service learning course project, and a student organization team building project. It also serves as a one day service opportunity for student volunteers. Individual student volunteers and student organizations go out to the school site to assist with the implementation of event activities. On average, 300 Cal State L.A. students are engaged in service through participation in this event.
- **“Cal State L.A., Here We Come!” Spring Semester** - This very special event gives elementary school children a unique opportunity to be a college students for a day. Engaging children in campus presentation (Biology, Anthropology, Athletics, Physics, Geology, Chemistry, and more..), which take place in labs and classroom setting gives children a sense of what a college class is like. This events hosts an estimated 400 children in the spring quarter. This event is carried out on the Cal State L.A. campus and engages the volunteer service of an estimated 200 students, faculty, and staff. This event bridges the university community with the children from the surrounding communities we serve. Through coordinating special events, EPIC student program tutors and coordinators build capacity to engage members of the campus community in a day of service.

Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP)

For over 36 years EPIC has coordinated the Summer Youth Employment Program on the Cal State L.A. campus. Working with our community partner Para Los Ninos, a five week training, work, and college awareness program is coordinated for an estimated 100 community youth. Cal State L.A. fulltime staff working in various campus departments volunteer to host youth for the 120 hour, five week program. EPIC works directly with the Offices of Risk Management, Public Safety, and Human Resources to implement this opportunity for low income youth.

Our partnership and Youth Work Source program model has been recognized by the City of Los Angeles as one of the best program placement sites. In April of 2015, the EPIC and Para Los Ninos Summer Youth Employment Program served to represent a Cal State L.A. partnership model at the annual WASC conference in Los Angeles (summary included with this proposal).

The **objective of the program** is to engage the campus community in service to the community, while specifically providing Cal State L.A. students serving as worksite aids with youth development experience, program coordination skills, and community partnership development skills. Through these efforts, **the program outcome** is the experience, leadership, and sense of team work gained by our EPIC student leaders. The fantastic contribution made by our Cal State L.A. staff reflects our campus commitment to educating and supporting community and prospective Cal State L.A. students.

Toy and Food Drive – Fall Semester

The Toy and Food Drive is a campus-wide event that has taken place for the past 39 years. EPIC has coordinated this Drive centered on **two main objectives**. First, to provide food and toys to low-income families during the holiday season. Second, is to give students, and all members of the campus community, the opportunity to make a positive contribution in their community by participating in a campus-wide public good effort. These goals are achieved through collaborative efforts made by Cal State L.A. students, staff, and faculty, who come together to collect toys and food. After the collection is completed, the donations are distributed to families selected from the caseloads of EPIC community partner agencies. These agencies represent the Asian, African American, Latino, and Native American communities. The **expected outcome** of the event is to provide a much needed service to the community, as well as engage the Cal State L.A. campus community in a public good effort.

Service Recognition Event- Spring Semester

This annual event takes place on the Cal State L.A. campus. It is an opportunity to celebrate the community service contributions made by our students, faculty, and staff throughout the academic year. Community partners are invited to the celebration as well, and they join in the agenda of service project presentations, speeches, and partnership recognition at the event.

ASI Funding History

In 2016/17 we will enter our 51st year working with ASI. ASI helped create the EPIC Program and has always financially supported the work and involvement of students in service to communities. For example, ASI funding: helps EPIC employ student assistants to support the Community Service Learning component; provides training support for the America Reads and America Counts tutorial program; supports the purchase of supplies and provision of workshops for the Summer Youth Employment Program; and has supported the purchase of food and toys for our Toy and Food Drive. Without the continuous support of ASI funding, we would not be able to provide students with the significant experiences that are gained through these programs and events.

20016/17 FUNDING REQUEST

	Other Source	ASI
Student Community Service Learning Component 10 Student Assistants @ \$10.00/hr @ 20 hrs/wk @ 32 weeks/year = \$64,000	\$44,000	\$20,000
Service Impact Media Project 3 Student Assistants @ \$10.00/hr @ 20 hrs/wk @32 weeks/year= \$19,200	\$17,200	\$2,000
Toy and Food Drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Toys and Food • Supplies and Materials 	\$4,000	\$2,000
America Reads and Counts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Training and Materials • Special Event and Project Supplies 	\$6,000	\$3,000
TOTAL REQUEST		\$27,000

