



# **CAL STATE LA**

CENTER FOR ENGAGEMENT, SERVICE & THE PUBLIC GOOD

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## **Educational Participation In Communities (EPIC)**

**ASI Funding Proposal  
AY 2018-2019**

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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 significantly to support 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 system. 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 effective 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 from diverse 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 program area 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 serve through 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 to plan, coordinate, and implement various service engagement activities; (b) coordinate the responsibilities of volunteer recruitment, community placement, and the follow-up of student volunteers and service learners; (c) coordinate with community agencies to learn and update agency needs and volunteer opportunities; (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. Curricular and co-curricular community engagement gives students direct experience with community issues related to what they are studying in the curriculum. Students have the opportunity to apply what they are learning in real-world settings and creatively 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:**

- **Volunteer Recruitment:** On a semester basis, EPIC student leaders coordinate and conduct classroom presentations, campus walkway tabling activities, and outreach to clubs and organizations in effort to inform students of the reciprocal benefits of volunteering. These efforts reach and encourage students campus-wide.
- **Service Impact Project:** In effort to create service context for student recruitment and encouragement, EPIC student leaders are involved in 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:

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>

Review of Service, Fall 2015  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujSlouDf9sg>

Summer Youth Employment Program 2015  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPLw5DqpZDA>

- **Community Placement:** EPIC supports the placement of hundreds of student volunteers in on- and off-campus service opportunities. Students engage in curricular and co-curricular service projects, events, and activities which support a variety of efforts. The community-based agencies where students serve represent a broad geographic and socioeconomic cross section of Los Angeles and include: Educational Services, Legal Services, Medical Services, and Social Services.
- **Academic Credit/Service Learning:** Students enrolled 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's work 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 student service referral, agency updates, evaluation, and risk management. We are active in building new partnerships to build capacity for 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 partnership development for capacity building.
- **Community Partner Orientation:** On a semester basis, EPIC supports the 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 for an informative presentation reflecting our campus vision for service, engagement, public good, and partnership development.
- **Cal State LA Gives Back:** On a semester basis, 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. The system will generate reports reflecting the CSU community engagement efforts and will be used to generate reports for legislation at the CSU level.

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 implement the system and to prepare training and support for students and faculty.

### **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 subjects of reading and math. The program runs the academic year long, and students make a commitment to serve for the academic year. Cal State L.A. students provide academic intervention support within the elementary school classroom setting, serving an average of 10 direct service hours per week. Annually, the program employs 20-30 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 co-curricular service projects, over 2000 elementary school children are served.

The program partners with five LAUSD elementary school site. 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 activities.

**The objectives of the program** are to promote careers in education, provide students with an off-campus student employment opportunity, develop community partnerships, and provide much needed support to our partner elementary school sites. **The program outcome** will have provided Cal State L.A. students the opportunity to gain experience, network for potential career development, support the improvement of academic achievement of the elementary school children served, and sustain viable partnerships

There are two annual special events coordinated by this program:

- **“Read Across America” Fall Semester:** Coordinated by the program tutors and school site coordinators, this one-day service 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 our individual students and student organizations with an opportunity to engage in a service project. Student volunteers go

out to school sites to assist with the implementation of event activities. On average, 150 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 hosts an estimated 400 elementary school children on our campus from our partner sites with a college day experience. Children engage in special educational presentations focused on promoting student success and academic majors, they engage in spirit rally, and dine in the Golden Eagle just as Cal State LA students do. This event engages an estimated 200 students, faculty, and staff volunteers together, and it bridges the university 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 38 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. professional 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 coordinate this opportunity for low income youth. EPIC student leaders are vital to the implementation of this program. They serve as work-site aides and are directly involved in all aspects of the program.

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.

The **objective of the program** is to expose community youth to the possibilities of a higher education, while engaging the campus community in service. Cal State L.A. students serve as worksite aids and gain 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, and college exposure for the youth participants.

### **Toy and Food Drive – Fall Semester**

The Toy and Food Drive is a campus-wide event that has taken place for the past 46 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, 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 objectives 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. EPIC student leaders provide direct support to the coordination and implementation of Drive.

### **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 throughout the academic year. Students, community partners, staff, faculty come together and are recognized. EPIC student leaders plan and implement all aspects of the event, which include preparation and delivery of speeches, media production, logistics, and other creative aspects for the event.

### **ASI Funding History**

In 2018/19 we will enter our 53<sup>nd</sup> 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. ASI funding helps supplement other campus funding sources and permits for the expansion of EPIC's work. 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.

### **2018/19 FUNDING REQUEST**

	Other Source	ASI Request
<b>Student Salaries</b>  15 Student Assistants @ \$11.00/hr @ 20 hrs/wk @ 34 weeks/academic year = \$112,200	\$82,200 Federal Work Study Student Success Fees	\$30,000
<b>Toy and Food Drive</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Volunteer Engagement</li> <li>• Additional Toys and Food</li> <li>• Supplies and Materials</li> </ul>	\$5,000 Private Donations General State Fund	\$3,000
<b>America Reads and Counts</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Volunteer Engagement</li> <li>• Student Tutor Program Training and Materials</li> <li>• Special Co-curricular Event and Project Supplies &amp; Services</li> </ul>	\$20,000 Federal Work Study Student Success Fees General State Fund	\$5,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$107,200</b>	<b>\$38,000</b>



