



TheChicagoSchool®

2023-2024 Community Partnerships Annual Report



The Chicago School – Walk to Feed OC 2023

Community Partnerships

The Chicago School

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TEAM

Jill Glenn, LCSW, Executive Director

Dr. Nadia Rojas Jones, EdD, LMFT, Associate Director

Colleen Falconer, AmeriCorps VISTA

Ana Aviles, Graduate Assistant, Chicago Community Partnerships Coordinator and Liaison

Bonnie Badillo, Graduate Assistant, SoCal Community Partnerships Coordinator and Liaison

Kathleen Martinez, Graduate Assistant, SoCal Community Partnerships Coordinator and Liaison

Meet the Community Partnerships Team

Jill Glenn
Executive Director

Nadia Jones
Assistant Director

Ana Gabriela Avilés
Grad Assistant

Colleen Falconer
Americorps Vista

Bonnie Badillo
Grad assistant

Kathleen Martinez
Grad Assistant

THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS DEPARTMENT ACTS AS THE 'COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HUB AND AN INITIAL POINT OF CONTACT BETWEEN OUR FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS AND MANY OF OUR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS- CREATING A BRIDGE BETWEEN TCS AND THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES IN WHICH IT RESIDES. THE TEAM DEVELOPS SERVICE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COMMUNITY-BASED VOLUNTEER, COLLEGE WORK STUDY (CWS), FEDERAL WORK STUDY (FWS) POSITIONS AND COMMUNITY BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROJECTS.

Acknowledgement

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Please contact Community Partnerships at communitypartnerships@thechicagoschool.edu for any comments or questions about the content of this report.

NEW PARTNER SITES 2023-24

Chicago	SoCal
Center on Halsted	Survivors of Torture International (SoTI)
Kipp One Academy	The Children Advocacy Center (CAC) Los Alamitos and Covina
LadderUp	
Tutoring Chicago	
Westside Heroin & Opioid Task Force	

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS HIGHLIGHTS

2023-2024 Accomplishments at-a-Glance

- A total of **101 Chicago School Chicago campus students** participated in long-term community service projects through the Community Partnerships Department (CPD).
- The Chicago School – Chicago campus students provided a total of **16,160 hours of service** in our community (not including clinical practicum hours).
- The monetary value of community services provided by The Chicago School Chicago campus students is **\$541,198¹**.
- **7 Chicago Campus students** and **9 SoCal Students** completed the Social Justice Leadership Academy providing **1093 hours** of service to the community with their work. The monetary value of this work is **\$36,605²**
- A total of **60 Chicago School – Chicago campus students, faculty, and staff** participated in one-day service projects.
- A total of **27 Chicago School - SoCal students, faculty, and staff** participated in long-term community service projects through the Community Partnerships Department.

¹ The value of volunteer time is based on the hourly earnings (approximated from yearly values) of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls average (based on yearly earnings provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). Independent Sector (2021) indexes this figure to determine state values and increases it by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits. Value of volunteer time in Illinois is \$29.95 per hour. See https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

² The value of volunteer time is based on the hourly earnings (approximated from yearly values) of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls average (based on yearly earnings provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). Independent Sector (2021) indexes this figure to determine state values and increases it by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits. Value of volunteer time in Illinois is \$29.95 per hour. **As of 2023, the value of a volunteer hour has risen by 5.3%, reaching an impressive \$33.49 per hour**

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- A total of **214 Chicago School – So Cal – campus students, faculty, and staff** participated in one-day service projects providing **878 hours** of service to the community. The monetary value of this work is **\$32,767³**.
 - The Chicago School SoCal students provided a total of **2,880 hours of service** in our community (not including clinical practicum hours). The monetary value of community services provided by The Chicago School So Cal students is **\$ \$107,482⁴**.
 - A total of **9 Chicago School Online students** participated in long-term community service projects through the Community Partnerships Department (CPD).
 - The Chicago School Online students provided a total of **1,440 hours of service** in our community (not including clinical practicum hours). The monetary value of community services is **\$43,128⁵**
 - A total of **260 students** participated in Service-Learning courses with The Chicago School, providing approximately **3,120 hours of service**. The monetary value is **\$104,488⁶**.

 - **The total monetary value of community service among all of our efforts was: \$865,668.**

³ The value of volunteer time is based on the hourly earnings (approximated from yearly values) of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls average (based on yearly earnings provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). According to the 2023 Volunteer Impact Report from IndependentSector.org, the value of a volunteer's time in California was \$37.32 per hour. This makes California one of the top five states for volunteer value, behind Washington, D.C. at \$50 per hour and Massachusetts at \$39.19 per hour.

⁴ The value of volunteer time is based on the hourly earnings (approximated from yearly values) of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls average (based on yearly earnings provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). According to the 2023 Volunteer Impact Report from IndependentSector.org, the value of a volunteer's time in California was \$37.32 per hour. This makes California one of the top five states for volunteer value, behind Washington, D.C. at \$50 per hour and Massachusetts at \$39.19 per hour.

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- **Nine faculty members** received National Faculty Service-Learning Awards to implement new and innovative service-learning projects:
 - Hector Adames, Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Benjamin Toubia, Marriage & Family Therapy, SoCal (LA)
 - Aubrey Statti, Educational Psychology & Technology, Online
 - Jamie Johnson, Marriage & Family Therapy, SoCal (LA)
 - Casey Sharpe, Forensic Psychology, Chicago
 - Christine Nazarian, Marriage & Family Therapy, SoCal (LA)
 - Natasha Wheeler, Clinical Psy.D., SoCal (LA)
 - Laird Bridgman, Clinical Psy.D. SoCAL (AN)
 - Nancy Bothne, Clinical Psy.D., Chicago

 - **Twenty-seven students** received a Fellowship through Community Partnerships
 - Ruqaiyah Qureshi, Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Carolina Bezerra, Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Jordan Hladyshevsky, Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Pooja Das, Industrial Organization, Chicago
 - Shreya Jain, Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Tanvi Shah, Industrial Organization, Chicago
 - Jordanna Jones, School Psychology, Chicago
 - Quincy Pereira, ABA, Chicago
 - Alicia Alba, Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Sierra Gandy, CMHC, Chicago
 - Jaime Lagosch, Clinical Psy.D., Chicago
 - Riya Aggarwal, CMHC, Chicago
 - Tina Amari, Clinical Psy.D., Chicago
 - Marie Renaudin, Clinical Psy.D., Chicago
 - Jain Shreya, MA Counseling Psychology, Chicago
 - Vina Napolis, PhD Business Psychology, SoCal (LA)
 - Erik Davis, PsyD Applied Clinical Psychology, SoCal (LA)
 - Tasneem A Khraisat, MFT, SoCal (AN)
 - Kathleen Martinez, MFT, SoCal (LA)
 - Jocelyn De Guzman, MFT, SoCal (LA)
 - Bonnie Badillo, MFT, SoCal (LA)
 - Aleksandra Slijepcevic, MFT, SoCal (LA)
 - Karen Ann Patti, MFT, SoCal (LA)
 - Liza Fisher, MFT, SoCal (LA)
 - Nikki M Curry, Clinical Mental Health, (Online)
 - Jairo Guillen-Vasquez, Applied Behavioral Analysis, (Online)

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- Kendra Hill, International Psychology, (Online)
 - Stephanie LaBonte, Business Psychology, (Online)
- Chicago Clinical Psy.D. student, Colin Rubright, received the 2023-24 Newman Civic Fellowship.

Service-Learning Highlights

Service-Learning Report

Faculty/ Staff Name	Dr. Benjamin Toubia
Program/ Department	MFT
Service-Learning Course	MM528
Community Partner	Cal Poly Pomona Womxn's Center
Number of Students	25
Number of Service Hours	Each student 10-15

- **Project Goals**

Students will create a blog series designed to scaffold a psychoeducational asynchronous experience to an identified community regarding a clinical topic relevant to that community, while incorporating contemporary diversity and cultural issues unique to that identified community. The purpose of the assignment is twofold: 1. Students must demonstrate a synthesis of course material, classroom discussions, and clinical knowledge when addressing a mental health related issue relevant to their identified community, and 2. Students must demonstrate an ability to effectively communicate their clinical knowledge in a simple yet relatable way to the community. Each blog post must be between 500-800 words in length and must include developmentally and culturally appropriate information for their target audience. The information must be insightful, interesting, accurate, formatted creatively, and written directly to the reader.

Project Outcomes

Students will be introduced to the Womxn's Resource Center blog editor at Cal Poly Pomona. The editor will introduce students to the university's communities of interest and discuss ongoing mental health issues that the student body is identified as relevant to their collective experience. Students will then have an opportunity to identify a target community and relevant mental health topic to address in their blog posts. Students will pick a topic of communal concern with mental health

importance that they would like to address using their clinical skills and professional education.

- **Challenges**
 - Students experienced challenges on how to take their academic and clinical knowledge and communicate in a manner that was relatable for their reader
 - Students struggled with a healthy use of personal anecdotes to connect with their readers
- **Successes**
 - 5 students had their blogs published by the community center and one had hers distributed via paper form.
 - Several other students submitted their blogs to other blogs for publishing.
 - One student has decided to use the community that he wrote about to be his target demographic for his clinical work.
- **Impact on Students**
 - The students struggled quite a bit trying to learn a new skill and translate their knowledge in a manner that was relatable. Once they were able to overcome this challenge they excelled magnificently. Both in the depth and breadth of what was written about but also in terms of their own personal and professional growth.
- **Impact on Partner**
 - Partner published several blogs from the students to their community over the course of several months. Please click [HERE](#) to see 3 blog samples.
- **Personal/Professional Impact**
 - Students were empowered to learn and practice a new skill that they would not otherwise have practiced. Students also refined their ability to effectively communicate their clinical knowledge in a simple yet relatable way to the community.
- **Critique of Reflective Activities**
 - Students spoke most directly about the challenge of learning this new skill and the struggle of learning how to use their experiences as tools rather than rely on anecdotes to get their point across. Since several students used experiences that they had gone through themselves or spoke to communities

they were part of it was a challenge to learn how to speak to rather than about these issues without generalizing their experience to others.

- **Future Considerations & Recommendations**
 - As a result of their experience the blog series was cut down from 4-3 blogs and more detailed feedback was given to students. More time was allowed between blogs and resubmits will be accepted so they get the feedback they need to produce the high quality of work they aim to create.
- **Sustainability of teaching this course**
 - I teach it every term.

Service-Learning Report

Faculty/ Staff Name	Natasha Wheeler, Psy.D.
Program/ Department	Clinical Psychology
Service-Learning Course	Research II: Qualitative Design, Program Evaluation and Research Design.
Community Partner	Harvest Home
Number of Students	29
Number of Service Hours	20 hours plus 6 hours for Trauma Informed Care Presentation with one student

Service-Learning Project with Harvest Home and Research II Spring 2024 Course

Natasha Wheeler, Psy.D. Core Faculty at The Chicago School

Service-Learning Project with Harvest Home and Research II Spring 2024 Course Sophia Frontino, M.S.W. Director of Harvest Home, and Natasha Wheeler, Psy.D. Core Faculty in the Clinical Psychology Program at The Chicago school developed a partnership to facilitate a Service-learning Project for Dr. Wheeler's Research II Spring 2024 course in the Fall of 2023. The purpose of the Service- Learning Project was to conduct a Qualitative Interview and provide feedback to

the program. Students under Dr. Wheeler's direction interviewed staff at Harvest Home to better understand staffing needs to promote retention and develop trauma informed training for Harvest Home. This report is to discuss findings from the Qualitative Research conducted by Dr. Wheeler's Research II course and make recommendations for staffing and training needs at Harvest Home. The goal is to promote the mental health and wellbeing of pregnant and postpartum women who are enrolled in Harvest Home's programs and are unhoused through trauma-informed training and system delivery. We thank Ms. Frontino for providing the opportunity for students to engage in qualitative research and apply culturally competent practices and work to strengthen the integral work being conducted at Harvest Home. In addition, I would like to thank the students who actively engaged in the qualitative interview process with training, scheduling, interviewing, and transcribing. These students are Briana Boskovich, M.A., Katelyn DeSantis, M.A., Haley Edler, M.A., Sophia Felson, M.A., Elise Franks, M.A., Dania Juarez, M.A., and Fatima Maltez, M.A.

Method

The method used to gather data for this report was a qualitative interview. Staff voluntarily consented to the interview process. Students scheduled interviews which were conducted over telehealth. Six staff were successfully interviewed by six students from Dr. Wheeler's Research II course. Students volunteered for the opportunity and gained extra credit from the experience. They interviewed staff and were charged to transcribe the interview. The qualitative material was then analyzed in a classroom setting noting themes and making recommendations through active discussion and collaboration.

Qualitative Interview

With the help of Pearl Wongthipa Wongserbchart, M.A., Dr. Wheeler's teaching assistant ten qualitative questions were developed to provide information about staffs' role at Harvest Home, their work experience, and training needs (Appendix A). These questions were vetted by Harvest Home prior to the interview process. Identified students in Dr. Wheeler's Research II course were trained to conduct qualitative interviews. Six staff were interviewed successfully and two staff dropped out of the interview process. There were various staff roles represented in the interview process, from line staff to administrative staff and part-time staff.

Quantitative Analysis

Identified students transcribed the interviews for analysis. Each class reviewed the information independently. The classes reviewed the material several times, identifying salient themes. Through classroom discussions, the class then agreed on common themes and re-analyzed the

transcripts. The information was then coded, and frequency of themes were noted. For clarity, only one class’s analysis was chosen for review to discuss in this report.

Themes included Workplace Experience, Work Issues, Staff Needs, and Workplace Values. Workplace Experience reflected positive supportive supervision, positive relationship with staff, busy at work, many crises at work, and multiple roles. an attitude of whatever it takes. In terms of issues at work items such as onboarding overload, need for more staffing, multiple roles, caseloads high, unpredictable schedule, low pay, poor infrastructure, and unclear work life boundaries. Identified staff needs included maintenance staff, training after onboarding, a quiet work environment for paperwork, and scheduled self-care versus identified self-care. Finally, two themes related to workplace values including an identification of self-care focus, flexibility in work time, and attitude of whatever it takes.

Results

Themes	Staff 1	Staff 2	Staff 3	Staff 4	Staff 5	Staff 6
Workplace experience	12	10	11	6	12	2
Work Issues	15	2	5	3	8	5
Staff Needs	4	1	3	7	6	3
Workplace values	2	2	10	3	7	3

Themes	Average Frequency Score
Workplace experience	8.8
Work Issues	6.5
Staff Needs	4
Workplace Values	4.5

Themes

1. Workplace Experience

- 1.1. “flexibility”
- 1.2. “kind, competent people”
- 1.3. “multiple tasks,” “busy,” “high workload”
- 1.4. “unpredictable,” “little bit of everything”

2. Work Issues

- 2.1. “staffing issues,” “short staff”

-
- 2.2. "lack infrastructure supports"
 - 2.3. "training overload"
 - 2.4. Lack quiet space to do work
 - 2.5. Clearly defined roles
 - 2.6. "Communication"
3. Staff Needs
- 3.1. "more frequent trainings," "refreshers"
 - 3.2. "boundaries"
 - 3.3. "ethics related to disclosure (clients)"
 - 3.4. "allocated time for self-care"
4. Workplace Values
- 4.1. "supportive," "supportive supervision," "debriefs," "good amount of supports"
 - 4.2. "caring"
 - 4.3. "honest, transparent"
 - 4.4. "self-care focus," "slack (self-care channel)"
 - 4.5. "whatever it takes"

Overview

Strengths related to working at Harvest Home include feeling supported, receiving the right kind of supervision for the need, for example, administrative problem solving to a reflective and supportive focus. Staff are willing to "hold a baby" and "do whatever it takes" to support one another and serve clients. There is also a value of therapy for staff and self-care with the use of the Slack app. However, staff often do not have the time to engage in self-care or mindfulness activities. Staff respect one another and the work each one does to support Harvest Home reflecting cohesion and connection. Overall, the workplace culture is positive.

Staff reflected that onboarding was intense and overloaded. It was a "long time ago" and spoke about a need for "refreshers". Staff valued the training they received and seemed keen on improving their abilities related to self-disclosure and boundaries with clients. Many staff were unclear about what trauma informed care was but were able to identify resources through outside training and the initial training with Harvest Home. It may be helpful to incorporate trauma informed practices and values into the weekly or monthly curriculum.

An area of concern described by staff working at Harvest Home is the lack of infrastructure and staff shortages. Staff often carry dual roles addressing maintenance issues, serving clients, dealing with frequent crises and tending to their administrative work. A common theme was overload and being busy with multiple roles. Staff seemed to appreciate the flexibility, but it may

be at the cost of poorly defined roles and responsibilities. Poor infrastructures, staff shortages, and not well-defined work duties could potentially contribute to issues of burnout and stress. Harvest Home, like many community agencies, struggles with strong staffing and infrastructure. In community mental health, it is an “all out crisis” in retaining direct core workers (Applebaum & Janssen, 2023). Turnover rates among mental health workers are greater than 50%. Issues of turnover leads to understaffing and increasing workloads contributing to worker dissatisfaction. In addition, turnover contributes to the financial burden on an organization (Young, 2022). By decreasing turnover, it can increase the quality of care for clients and support work-life balance for staff.

Recommendations

- 1) Continue to support positive supportive workplace culture.
- 2) Address issues with understaffing through competitive salaries, flexible schedules that are conducive to the work needs of Harvest Home and supporting career growth.
- 3) Trauma Informed Care or TIC (National Child Traumatic Stress Network) includes four key components:
 - a) Realize the widespread impact of trauma; b) Recognize its signs and symptoms; and c) Respond by integrating trauma-related knowledge into policies, procedures, and implementations of practices to prevent re-traumatization. Interconnected support of staff via ongoing training, coaching to implement TIC practices and resources to address burnout and compassion fatigue.

References

Applebaum, R. & Janssen, L. (2023). Who cares? Retention strategies for direct care workers. *Innovation in Aging*, 7. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network. [Nctsn.org](https://www.nctsn.org)

Young, D. (2022). Turnover and retention strategies among mental health workers. *Fortune Journal of Health Science*, 5(2).

For additional information on APA Style formatting, please consult the APA Style Manual, 7th Edition.



Community Interventions Service-Learning Course Summer 2024

Significant Community Work – Chicago

The Community Partnerships Department had a successful 2023-24 academic year. We hosted our 2023 Annual Fall Job & Volunteer Fair on September 13th, 2023. We had 25 Community Partner Sites and 4 Career Service Sites attend the Fair. Over 160 students attended the Fair and of that group, approximately 130 students interviewed with a Community Partnerships representative. We passed 119 students on to partner sites for an interview. 87 students were placed at a partner site at the beginning of the year. We finished the year with a total of 101 students placed in the community.

Chicago Job & Volunteer Fair Data	2022-2023 School Year	2023-2024 School Year
# of Sites attending the Fair	23 Community Partner Sites 5 Career Service Sites	25 Community Partner Sites 4 Career Service Sites
# of Students attending the Fair	139	167
# of Students interviewed with Community Partnerships	104	129
# of Students passed on interview at Partner Sites	92	119
# of Students placed at partner sites after 23-24 Job & Volunteer Fair	73 (86 with spring starts & returning students)	87 * <u>does</u> not include spring starts (101 with returning students & those joining after October)

The Community Partnerships Department continued to collaborate with The Community Builders – Oakley Square Apartments, an affordable housing complex located on the west side of Chicago. The Chicago School received a grant via The Community Builders Inc. through the Department of Family & Support Services for approximately \$10,000 to run our programming. The Chicago School provided matching funds to support the work being done with Oakley Square. We ran both the Homework Help Room (tutoring) and ExSEL (social-emotional learning) Program for students in kindergarten through 10th grade. We had over 38 unique students participate in our programs with an average of 16 students attending weekly. We taught lessons on adapt, courage, and strategy over the course of the school year. In December, we collaborated with the older adults in the community to host the holiday party providing gifts for over 100+ residents of Oakley Square. During the spring semester, we worked with the matriarch of the community to provide support to the 14–24-year-old age group. Two of our students, a volunteer, and the Executive Director of Community Partnerships led ten sessions providing support in creating resumes, applying for employment, and running mock interviews. In addition, we brought in two guest speakers to talk about different career options. Over 25 participants created new resumes and applied for employment.

In June of 2024, the Oakley Square community suffered a terrible loss when a seven-year-old was shot and killed on the property in the presence of several community members. A team of students and staff from The Chicago School quickly assembled and ran two days of programming for families in the community. We offered therapeutic art sessions to allow community members to honor this student’s memory and reflect on their loss. In addition, several of our students attended a peace walk in the community on June 21st, 2024. Oakley Square has lost several partner sites in the past year due to community violence. The Chicago School remains and aligns with community members to provide support. We also participated in the Bike-a-thon in June,

along with several of the students from our programs, as a means to stand by community members.

The Community Partnerships Department were able to meet our recommendations for the 2022-23 school year. We brought on Center on Halsted as a partner site. The Center on Halsted is the Midwest’s most comprehensive community center dedicated to advancing community and securing the health and well-being of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer people of Chicagoland. Center on Halsted will attend the 2024 Fall Job & Volunteer Fair and begin recruiting regular weekly volunteers from The Chicago School. We also worked with our Career Services Department in assisting students with adding volunteering to their resumes/curriculum vitae.

In May of 2023, Dr. Michael Crawford, Campus Dean, and Jill Glenn, Executive Director of Community Partnerships represented The Chicago School at the IL AHEC and IL Workforce Board event and spoke about their partnership with CPASS. CPASS provides programs and resources for underrepresented students to pursue STEMM/STEAM careers. In July of 2023, The Chicago School welcomed approximately 23 high school students to introduce them to the field of psychology. Students were on the Chicago campus and learned about the different types of careers in the field of psychology. Mrs. Glenn and her AmeriCorp VISTA delivered a hands-on presentation about the importance of volunteering. In addition, all of the high school students became certified in QPR, “Question, Persuade, and Refer,” a suicide prevention training.

On July 25th, the Community Partnerships Department hosted a partner lunch to discuss the upcoming Job & Volunteer Fair and learn about the different partner site needs and how to best collaborate. We had over 20 partner sites in attendance and provided opportunities for the sites to interact with one another and build stronger networks.



Social Justice Leadership Academy 2023-24

During the 203-24 school year, The Social Justice Leadership Academy (SJLA) in Chicago brought on eleven new students. Seven students were recognized at the July 2024 graduation ceremony for having completed the requirements of SJLA. A master's in counseling psychology student delivered a presentation on “The Mental Health Impacts of Financial Insecurity and Medical Trauma on Children & Families” as her SJLA project. Temyia outlined ways that clinicians can help families heal by providing Trauma-Informed Care and Family Centered Care. She also identified Safety Net Programming that supports families both personally and financially during this challenging time. She shared her report with Ronald McDonald House Charities.

An Industrial Organization student developed “Folding the Map: To Heal Where You’re At” leadership project with her mentor, Dr. Mike Crawford, Dean of the Chicago campus. The student created a project map for other students to learn how to compare and contrast different communities in Chicago. “The Folded Map Project stands as a beacon of awareness and understanding in the heart of our city. By bringing together the stories of residents from opposite ends of the city’s segregated streets, it paints a vivid picture of the disparities ingrained within our neighborhoods. Through the lens of this powerful initiative, we confront the uncomfortable truths of our past and present, acknowledging how systemic barriers have perpetuated inequality.

The Chicago School also increased our collaboration with the Chicago Cultural Alliance this past school year providing volunteers for several of their events including, but not limited to; the Activating Heritage Conference, Peruvian Arts Center event, and the Annual World Dumpling Fest. These events allowed students to explore the rich cultural history of these communities.

Finally, the Chicago School is a proud member of the All-In Democracy Challenge. The All In Campus Democracy Challenge “empowers colleges and universities to achieve excellence in nonpartisan student democratic engagement.” The school has received numerous recognitions from the All-In Democracy Challenge. One of our students in the Organizational Leadership Program, Deondre Rutues, was recognized in the 2023 Student Voting Honor Roll for his work to promote on-campus student voting. In addition, we received over 700+ signatures from students committing to vote in the 2022 election and had the highest percentage of students registered to vote from any Chicago campus for 2022. We received the silver campus award for our voting rate for 2022.



Student and Campus Dean exploring the southside of Chicago for her SJLA project.



Cathy Sasscer, International Psychology Ph.D. Candidate receiving the Mentor of the Year award from partner site, ISTC 2024

Significant Community Work – Southern California

The Southern California Community Partnerships department was able to host the 1st Out of the Darkness Walk to Prevent Suicide through the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention (AFSP). This time the three SoCal campuses (Los Angeles, San Diego, and Anaheim) collaborated to have the walks coordinated with the support of faculty and staff in each campus along with Dr. Jones, Associate Director of Community Partnerships. The Anaheim Walk had 9 people and raised \$175. The San Diego Campus had 51 people and raised \$520. The LA campus had 62 people and raised \$1,718. The MFT department on the 3 campuses has adopted the activity as their signature

Service-Learning assignment for the MM545 Law and Ethics class. All the programs, faculty and staff are invited to join the walk.



AN Out of the Darkness Walk 2023



SD Out of the Darkness Walk 2023



LA Out of the Darkness Walk 2023

Social Justice Leadership Academy 2023-2024 Work

Our SJLA Students have done wonderful things in the community to graduate with honors, here are some of their projects described below:

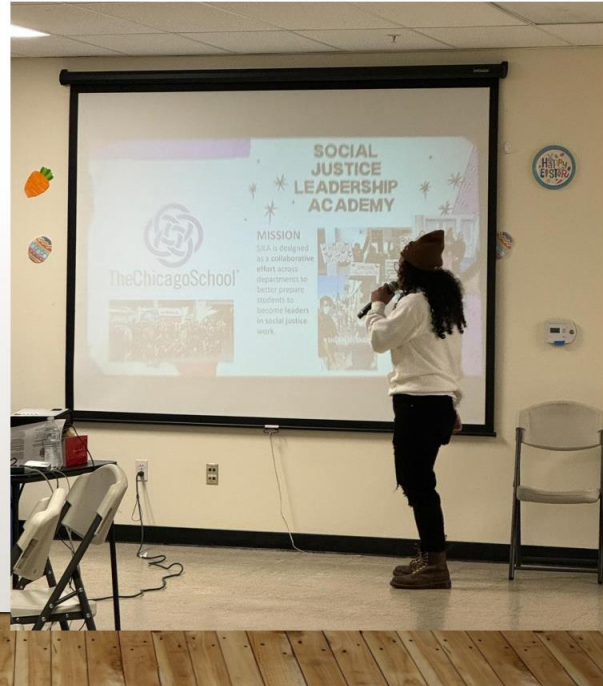
Jacquelyn Gordon: The EmpowerHER Trust Group was a weekly psychoeducation group that focused on self-confidence and self-esteem of women attending in order to improve quality of life and prevent poverty. Women learned effective communication skills to improve relationships with others, as well as shared experiences, challenges, and success stories in a confidential space. This group was exponentially important because it promoted mental and emotional well-being so that they can refrain from entering poverty levels.

Oscar Sanchez and Kathleen Martinez: Transition to High School and Mental Health Workshop for 8th Graders: This workshop provided a safe space for 30 8th graders so they could understand mental health as it relates to their developmental stage. Defining mental health, common disorders such as anxiety, and providing general coping strategies to normalize their feelings and deal with the challenges of high school were the main themes.

Heidi Garay: Wellness Fair. Provided a safe space to members of a faith congregation that included 6 differing topics throughout the year to learn more on mental health, 4 different topics to cover information on anxiety, depression, grief, and co-dependency, a space for the person to include any other topics of interest, and a space to include anything they are dealing with and

would like to cover. These were done in English and Spanish with the support of the pastors and 4 church community members.

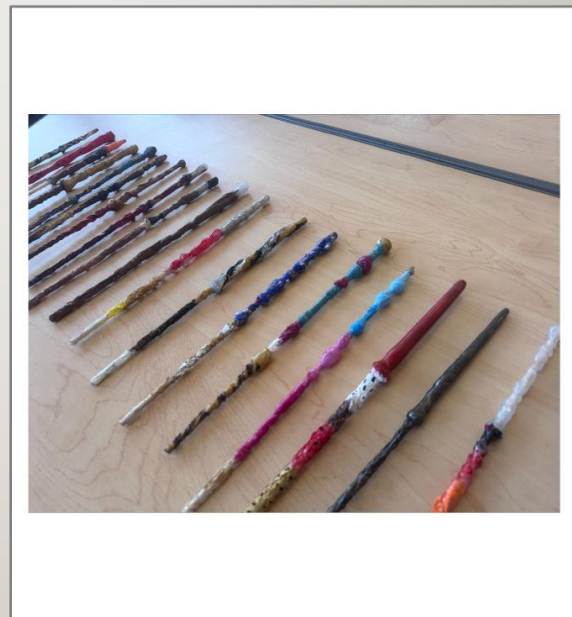
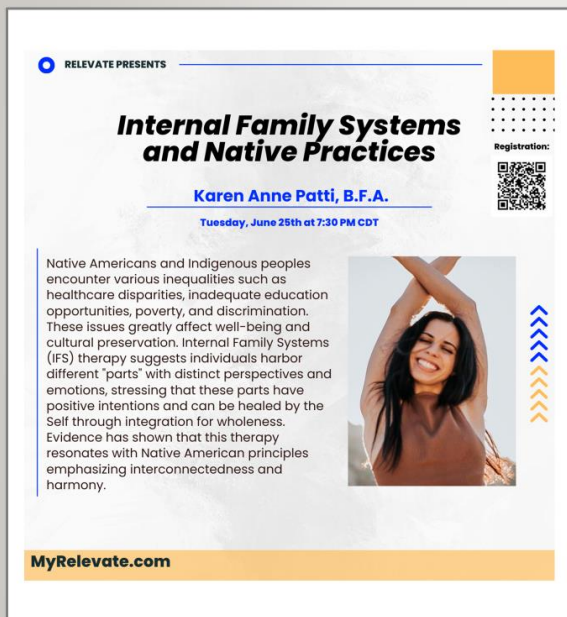
Vina Vanessa Napoles: "Next Generation 2024: Northeast Los Angeles Leadership Teen Summit by The Chicago School x Social Justice Leadership Academy" was a huge success. You provided hope, in a fun and safe environment as well as a platform for meaningful discussions and activities related to mental health, mindfulness, and leadership with at risk youth in an exemplary way.



Himaya Rajapakse: "Scholarships/Student Loans Health Insurance Brochure for Undocumented & International Students" along with all the resources provided is very inspiring. I will make sure it gets delivered to financial aid and see if we can encourage them to use it with prospective and current students.

Sheena Salonga: Social justice embraces individuals who have layers of background history. With continued research and applying my social justice learning in my therapeutic work, I can provide sheer validation to the individuals I serve and can foster a stepping-stone to destigmatizing the negative perception of mental health services. Being a part of the Social Justice Leadership Academy has allowed me to instill hope by magnifying the quality of interventions, creating individualized treatment plans, advocating for patients, and understanding barriers that culture can have when providing therapeutic interventions.

Nine students from the SoCal campuses were recipients of the Creative Fellowships this year. Some of them have already completed their projects and others are engaging in them currently. We created a partnership with the YMCA in Long Beach that allowed us to send our students to do their creative projects there. One of those students, Karen Ann Patti, created a magic wand workshop for children. The children completed a questionnaire that helped them decide what their wand is powered by, what powers their wands have, and questions to explore their own unique individuality. Aleks Slijepcevic created a mindfulness 4-day workshop for teenagers. Liza Fisher created a writing workshop for teenage girls in middle school that are about to transition to high school and Bonnie Badillo created two workshops for self-care for single mothers.



Karen Ann Patti, one of our creative fellows, also spoke at the Relevate Conference about Internal Family Systems and native Practices.

Our partnership with the Illinois Science and Technology Institute continues to go strong and among all our campuses we have placed a total of 23 mentors for that program, some of them are recurring mentors from prior years.

SoCal Campuses organized the Walk to Feed the Children in OC as September is [hashtag#HungerActionMonth](#). Special thanks to the 25+ students, faculty, and staff who joined together with Orange County's Walk to Feed event and raised over \$1,500 to aid in their efforts within communities close to our Southern California Campuses. Click [HERE](#) for pictures.

**EMPOWERING
LATINA LEADERS**

**Navigating Mental Health
Challenges in Public Office**

 **TUESDAY, JUNE 18**
3:15 – 4:45 PM

Nadia Rojas Jones, Ed.D., LMFT
Professor, Department of Marriage and Family Therapy
The Chicago School, Los Angeles Campus

 **TheChicagoSchool®**

*For more than 40 years, The Chicago School
has been a leading nonprofit university dedicated
to training professionals for careers that improve
the health of individuals, organizations,
and communities.*

Scan this QR code for
Dr. Jones' recommended mental
health resources & coping skills



Dr. Nadia Rojas Jones served on a panel at the NALEO (National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials) conference in Las Vegas. This event is the largest annual gathering of Latino public officials, and Dr. Jones contributed significantly to the discussion on "**Empowering Latina Leaders: Navigating Mental Health Challenges in Public Office.**"

Dr. Christine Nazarian has been busy with the following training and presentations this summer:
YMCA Long Beach training for trainees and associates-

- **Therapeutic Art Training- Mindfulness Group Training**
- **Mindful Yoga Training**
- **Body Image and Therapy** through the Chicago School Office of Continuing Education for a Mental Health Agency in Maryland.

Dr. Erica Rodriguez

Dr. Rodriguez traveled to Sacramento to advocate for **SB 26: Mental Health Professions: CARE Scholarship Program** before the Committee on Health. Her efforts were successful as the committee voted to advance the bill. This program aims to provide annual scholarships to students pursuing degrees in fields that lead to licensure as marriage and family therapists, with a goal to increase the number of culturally competent mental health professionals.



Additionally, on Friday, June 14th, **Dr. Rodriguez** presented at the Pride Month Lecture Series

Dr. Ben Toubia led two presentations in Germany as part of the Faculty Internationalization Grant this summer. Dr. Toubia was selected to receive this award as part of The Chicago School's commitment to support faculty with international research aspirations. These experiences help support the University's global engagement initiatives.

Introduction to Narrative Techniques for Counseling Professionals Working in Systemic Therapies, KAHA School of Social Work, Freiburg, final lecture in a yearlong lecture series on Contemporary Therapeutic Techniques.

Collaborative Long-term Recovery Support through Coordinated Professional Care for Older Adults experiencing Addiction Recovery, KHSB Nursing School, Berlin

Dr. Melody Bacon

On Tuesday, May 21st **Dr. Bacon** presented an integrative approach to treatment. Based on the ideas of Bowen Family Systems therapy and the principles of the 12-step movement, the Family Matters program offers a model that addresses the needs of families struggling with addiction while at the same time creating a relational environment that supports recovery.

MFT Faculty Attend the Academic Assembly

In June, faculty members from the MFT department joined colleagues from all Community Solution partner colleges and universities at the 2024 Academic Assembly. This year's theme, "Preparing Students for Success," focused on innovative topics in higher education and strategies for implementation. Key discussions included Universal Design for Learning strategies and course development, cultivating Emotional Intelligence in a post-AI world, and leveraging AI and EdTech to enhance student engagement through effective assignment design. Our department faculty engaged with peers from across the community, fostering collaborations to bring cutting-edge educational developments and cross-institutional opportunities to your institution. Stay tuned for more updates!



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Mission Statement

The Community Partnerships Department creates a bridge between The Chicago School, as well as local and global communities in which it resides. This bridge supports students, faculty, staff, and community partners in their quest to create reciprocal learning, inspiration, engagement, and service; the result is a transformational experience for all.

Community Partnerships Team

The Community Partnerships Department acts as the “community engagement hub” and initial point of contact for our faculty, staff, and students and majority of partner community organizations. The Community Partnerships team includes Jill Glenn, LCSW (Executive Director), Dr. Nadia Rojas-Jones (Associate Director), an AmeriCorps VISTA, and three Graduate Assistants. The team supports faculty in the following ways: develops service-learning opportunities, places students in mutually beneficial community-based volunteer, College Work Study (CWS), Federal Work Study (FWS), and Fellowship positions; designs novel, sustainable, impactful, and meaningful community-based experiences.

2023-2024 PARTNER SURVEY

In order to evaluate partner sites experiences with our students, the Community Partnerships Department administered a survey to collect data on partner’s views regarding students learning outcomes focused on diversity and professional behavior. This is the third year that this survey was administered.

Participants

The survey was completed by The Chicago School partner sites. The survey was administered online and an email with the survey link was sent to all partner sites that had students serving with them through Community Partnerships for the 2023-24 school year. A total of 21 partner sites completed the survey. 94 total surveys were completed.

Table 1. Sites that Participated in the Survey

Names of the Sites
Above & Beyond Recovery Center
Become Center
Breakthrough
Chicago HOPES
CIMH
The Community Builders Inc.
Cook County DOC
Cool Classics
Erie Neighborhood House
Illinois Psychological Association
ISTC Mentor Matching Engine
Kipp Academy One
Kids Rank
NAMI Cook County North Suburban
Oak Park OWL
Options for College Success
PAWS Chicago
Stryv365
Sue Duncan Children’s Center
White Crane Center
Young Center

Partner sites were asked questions regarding the students’ performance while at their site. The questions were based on professional behavior and diversity. The results of the survey are summarized in Figures 1, 2 and 3.

Figure Q2 (1 & 2) Distribution of scores based on level of agreement for questions on diversity

Q2. Thinking about definition of diversity you just read, please provide the response that best indicates your level of agreement for each statement below.

Field	n	mean	SD	Top Box
Student showed respect to staff and participants.	84	4.762	0.590	0.976
Student portrayed comfort working with people from different cultural backgrounds (e.g., age, disabilities, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, nationality, gender, etc.).	84	4.690	0.672	0.964
Student strives to create a genuine connection with people from different cultural backgrounds.	83	4.651	0.751	0.916
Student asked questions to site supervisor and/or staff to gain a better understanding of the culture of the site and its participants.	83	4.639	0.785	0.928
Student acknowledged any cultural biases and how this may affect their behavior.	76	4.618	0.827	0.908
Student acknowledged any cultural biases and how this may affect the behavior of others.	78	4.603	0.837	0.897

Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
Student showed respect to staff and participants.	1.2%	0.0%	1.2%	16.7%	81.0%
Student asked questions to site supervisor and/or staff to gain a better understanding of the culture of the site and its participants.	2.4%	0.0%	4.8%	16.9%	75.9%
Student acknowledged any cultural biases and how this may affect their behavior.	2.6%	0.0%	6.6%	14.5%	76.3%
Student acknowledged any cultural biases and how this may affect the behavior of others.	2.6%	0.0%	7.7%	14.1%	75.6%
Student strives to create a genuine connection with people from different cultural backgrounds.	1.2%	1.2%	6.0%	14.5%	77.1%
Student portrayed comfort working with people from different cultural backgrounds (e.g., age, disabilities, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, nationality, gender, etc.).	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	20.2%	76.2%

Q2. Thinking about definition of diversity you just read, please provide the response that best indicates your level of agreement for each statement below.

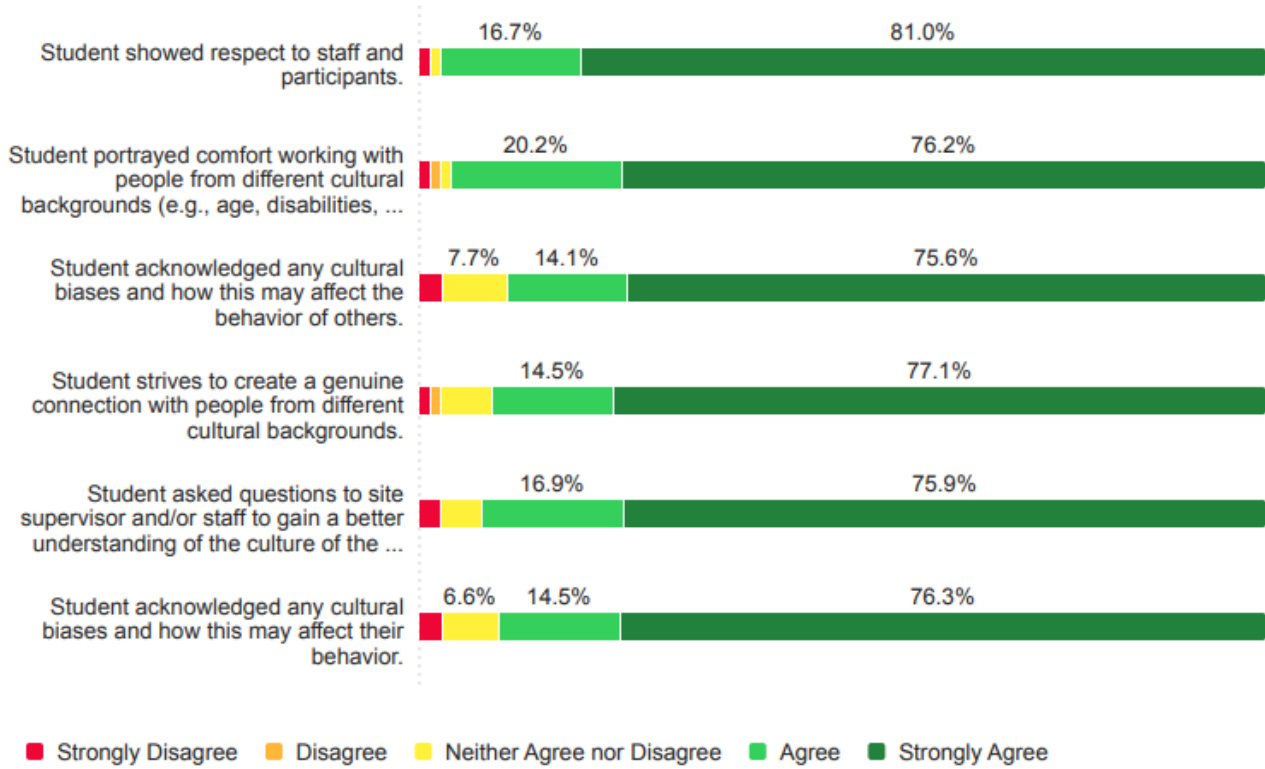
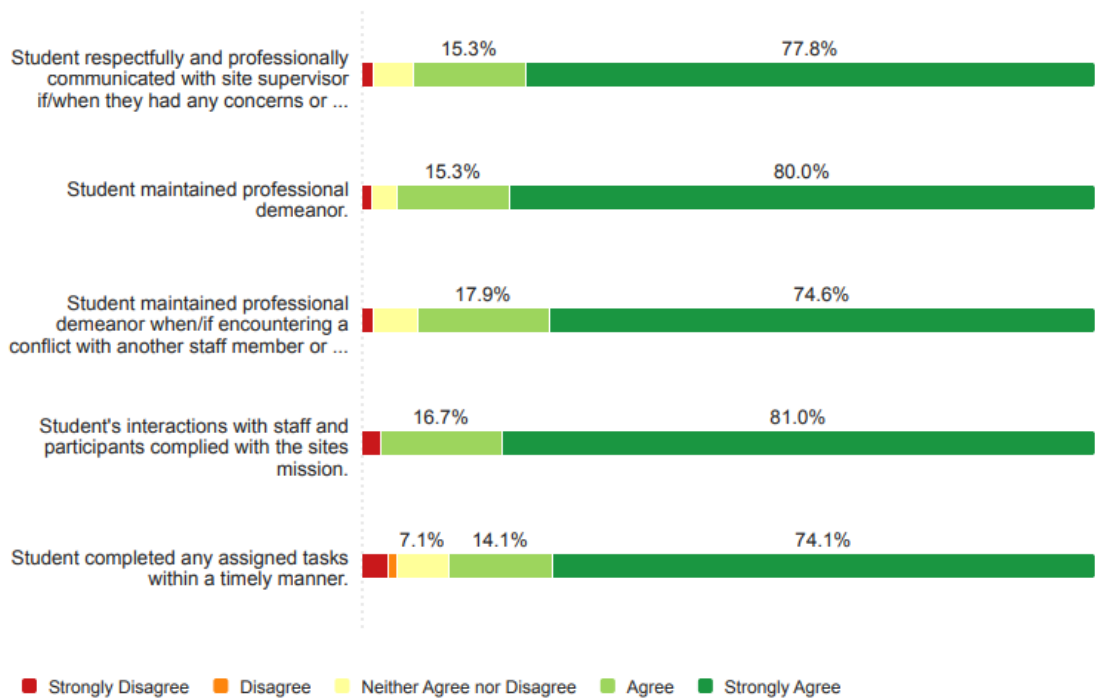


Figure Q4.1 & Q4.2 Distribution of scores based on level of agreement for questions on professional behavior.

Q4.2 Thinking about definition of professional behavior you just read, please provide the response that best indicates your level of agreement for each statement below.

Field	n	mean	SD	Top Box
Student's interactions with staff and participants complied with the sites mission.	84	4.738	0.692	0.976
Student maintained professional demeanor.	85	4.729	0.640	0.953
Student respectfully and professionally communicated with site supervisor if/when they had any concerns or questions about site participants or staff members.	72	4.681	0.704	0.931
Student maintained professional demeanor when/if encountering a conflict with another staff member or participant.	67	4.642	0.727	0.925
Student completed any assigned tasks within a timely manner.	85	4.541	0.940	0.882

Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
Student's interactions with staff and participants complied with the sites mission.	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	81.0%
Student completed any assigned tasks within a timely manner.	3.5%	1.2%	7.1%	14.1%	74.1%
Student maintained professional demeanor.	1.2%	0.0%	3.5%	15.3%	80.0%
Student maintained professional demeanor when/if encountering a conflict with another staff member or participant.	1.5%	0.0%	6.0%	17.9%	74.6%
Student respectfully and professionally communicated with site supervisor if/when they had any concerns or questions about site participants or staff members.	1.4%	0.0%	5.6%	15.3%	77.8%



Q5. Please use the space below to elaborate on your experience with our student including what we can do to better prepare our students.

87 Responses

Elaborate on your experience with our student

XXXX was wonderful to work with. Her passion for this work is clear. She was organized and timely with her work. She did commit to more than she was able to take on. Rather than completing two projects, she completed one. The one she did complete, she excelled at. Time management would be an area of improvement.

We appreciate her hard work and her involvement with NAMI CCNS.

XXXX was an awesome volunteer and helped us out a lot at CCDOC.

XXXX was an amazing volunteer with us throughout the entirety of our program year. He was very reliable, punctual and always eager to help and provide feedback to our program. We hope to see XXXX back next year as our members loved seeing him and enjoyed interacting with him throughout the year.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a dedicated tutor for the youth at Oakley Square. She was flexible and willing to work with any of the students.

XXXX started the project off strong. She was motivated and reliable. Towards the beginning, she had strong communication skills. I could tell she has a huge heart for this line of work and for the people in her community. I feel XXXX may have taken on too much too quickly and I believe that time management was a challenge for her. She went through some trainings, however, chose to not participate once her trainings were complete.

XXXX s last year with our site demonstrated decreased interest and availability. But across her three years with us she was an excellent and promising individual fully committed to working across diverse populations in psychology.

XXXX regularly went above and beyond in her role as a facilitator for ExSEL. She is committed to being there for her students and showed up after a crisis in the community. She is compassionate and understanding. She holds the students accountable to a high standard and praises them for their great work.

XXXX is wonderful! He is motivated and hard working. The way he excelled with his responsibilities allowed NAMI CCNS to meet a year end goal. We had a wonderful experience working with him!

XXXX did an exceptional job as a facilitator for ExSEL. This was his second year in the program, so he had established good relationships with several students. He took on responsibility for the 6th-9th graders this year and built a strong bond with them.

XXXX completed 14.92 hours while at PAWS Chicago.

XXXX as very attentive and accommodating to our students.

XXXX XXXX assisted with working with the 14-23 year old group at Oakley Square. He was very open to learning and receiving feedback from community members. XXXX went above and beyond in his role, helping to find a guest speaker on entrepreneurship for the students.

XXXX , is a talented writer and interacted well with our clients and made them comfortable and enjoy the narrative process. He handled each client with dignity, and respect and was able to allow them to really share their story.

Thx U Thx U Thx U

XXXX 's work was good, but she fell far short of fulfilling her allotted 6 hours per week of FWS time. She averaged 1.5 hours a week, which meant the project she was on was not completed by our June deadline. She wanted to continue in the 2024-25 year, but we expressed concern about her low hours and the demands that her practicum would place on her availability. She agreed that this would be an issue.

XXXX worked primarily on the research team, went on two field trips, and worked as an assistant teacher for two days. He completed his research work with moderate accuracy but long completion time. He was attentive on the field trips but not entirely accurate in the parts of the lessons he taught. Of the six allotted FWS hours, XXXX averaged 2 hours a week, contributing to the fact that we were not able to complete our longitudinal study by our June deadline.

XXXX was with us for a couple of years and was such a great mentor! She stayed with her student for the time she was here, so she was able to create a bond with her student. Her student always talked about how great XXXX was.

XXXX was very creative with virtual engagement. She went out of her way to plan activities and remembered the youth's preferences/interests. She was professional with staff and stakeholders. We appreciate all of her support!

XXXX was such a great student! She was always willing to go above and beyond.

XXXX was profession and accountable. She provided our clients with socialization and connection. This is extremely important as many of the clients she worked with were living with depression, anxiety, and other conditions that make developing and maintaining person relationships difficult. As our Adult Day Program was closed due to the pandemic, her volunteer work at White Crane ended early. We are very much appreciative of her volunteerism.

Chicago School does an excellent job in preparing student for the responsibilities on working in the community based setting. During the pandemic, it was a tough time for organizations to function, but Chicago School has provided us with flexibility and understanding during this time.

XXXX was part of a new program at Oakley Square, working with a community leader to support a young adult group. She was very engaging with the participants and worked hard to establish positive rapport. She asked questions to her supervisor, colleagues, and the community leader to ensure that she provided the necessary support the residents of Oakley.

XXXX was outstanding as our Room Lead. Very dependable and organized.

XXXX was great to work with. She was very professional and eager to help. She added a lot of comments that were always respectful. She was highly educated and brought great perspectives to our conversations. She was incredibly respectful of differences and brought an inclusive perspective to everything she did. We would love to work with her again in the future.

XXXX was assigned to a short term project. She asked a lot of questions to ensure that she understood what the needs were on the community project. She was committed to learning about the participants and inquired about the strengths of their community.

XXXX was always open to feedback and training that would best support the work she was doing at our site. She was respectful to staff and students and facilitated activities with the students they all seemed to enjoy. It was a pleasure having her join our team!

XXXX was a wonderful support to a student who had a particularly tough year. We can't thank her enough!!

XXXX was a wonderful student! He took initiative with tasks, effectively communicated, very personable, and was reliable.

XXXX was a wonderful first-year mentor. I will leave a quote from her student from the end of the year: "Thank you so much for mentoring me throughout my AP Research project! I learned so much from you and all your advice to make my paper better. You always gave me exactly what I was looking for and made so many great recommendations. I'm especially thankful for all the time you put into helping me, I really do appreciate it! I learned so much about communication throughout this process as well. "

XXXX was a star in our 2023-2024 school year program! She truly believed in our mission and prioritized her term in her life. She worked well with the entire HOPES staff, her on-site team, and the students through consistent communication, her reliability, and her warm personality. XXXX aimed to build positive relationships with our students and instill a love of reading in them. After completing her term in May, she was promoted to site coordinator this Summer. Overall, we are very grateful to have XXXX here at HOPES!

XXXX was a great volunteer and did amazing work here at CCDOC.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great tutor.

XXXX was a great person to work with. She picks things up quickly, has excellent leadership skills, takes initiative and is kind and thoughtful. We very much enjoyed getting to know her and work with her.

XXXX was a great mentor! We had a student who only spoke Spanish and XXXX was helping him understand his homework. Not only was he a great tutor but also created a connection with his mentee. We would love to have him mentor here again!

XXXX was a great mentor! She was always on time and willing to help.

XXXX was a great mentor that provided thorough feedback for his student!

XXXX was a great first time mentor who supported two projects. She provided thoughtful feedback and was able to build relationships with her students by supporting their wellbeing in addition to their academic goals.

Methods

Partner sites received a survey in June requesting that they rate students on their performance related to professional behavior and cultural humility. The completed the survey for students who served at their site for a minimum of two full months. Students, on average, were at their sites for approximately seven months. Student placement ranged from two month to three years. This is the sixth Year that we conducted this survey with our partner sites.

Survey results are illustrated through bar graphs and percentages based on a 5 point likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Results

We were deliberate in identifying a few virtual sites, such as Illinois Science & Technology Coalition's Mentor Matching Engine and the Sue Duncan Children's Center, as some students continue to want virtual opportunities. Many students; however, have returned to in-person community work. The survey results were similar for the 2023-24 school year from the 2022-23 school year. Minor increases were seen in the diversity questions with stronger results with the "strongly agree" category. When looking at the agree and strongly agree category, the results are consistent with the previous year. The 1.2% in strongly disagree represents one student who had struggled at their site and eventually left the position.

We did see some improvement in professional behavior, specifically in "student was available when needed, showed initiative and was helpful to the needs of the site". This score went from 62.8% strongly agree to 72.9% in the 2023-24 school year. We also saw a significant jump in "Student's interactions with staff and participants complied with the site mission. This was 69.9% strongly agree in the 2022-23 school year and moved to 81% in the 2023-24 school year.

Allowing the partners to provide anonymous feedback regarding their experiences with students at our partner sites is helpful to gain insight about the strengths and weaknesses. One of the challenges is that some students seem to take on too much and that cannot fulfill their commitments. We will continue to prioritize ensuring that students spend time reflecting on what type of commitments that they can truly make, especially knowing that the sites are counting on them for their work.

Some students did shine while at their partner site. One comment said that the "student was a star in our 2023-2024 school year program! She truly believed in our mission and prioritized her term in her life. She worked well with the entire HOPES staff, her on-site team, and the students through consistent communication, her reliability, and her warm personality."



Out of the Darkness Walk Chicago – September 2023

Recommendations

- Determine what partner sites would benefit from utilizing fellowship funds to bring on students to support their work.
- Look to increase the number of students, faculty, and staff that participate in the Out of the Darkness Walk across campuses
- Apply to renew Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement.