African American Student Center's

Diversity Ambassador Program:

Increasing Consciousness and Awareness in the Campus Community

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Introduction

Founded in 1999, the Diversity Ambassador Program was initially created as a retention program for African American students on the Cal Poly Pomona campus, but welcomes all students open to the experience. Today, the program facilitates a journey where students of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds apply Cal Poly Pomona's experiential "Learn by Doing" philosophy to a co-curricular experience that centers issues of social injustice in American history. Students receive four units for an academic course through the Ethnic and Women's Studies Department and travel on a spring break alternative trip to the eastern and southern regions of the United States of America to visit historical monuments, museums, black colleges, churches, and institutions related to the Underground Railroad and the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement.

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment was to explore the experience of students who participated in the Diversity Ambassador Program. The Diversity Ambassador Program is a year-round academic program organized by the African American Student Center (AASC) at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona).

Student Learning Outcomes

Social & Civic Engagement - Students who participate in Student Affairs programs and activities will demonstrate a commitment to developing awareness and addressing the social issues and needs of their various communities, including the university, through meaningful involvement

Diversity & Global Consciousness - Students who participate in Student Affairs programs and activities will develop a multicultural perspective through an understanding and appreciation of individual similarities and differences, cultural diversity, and local as well as global issues of social justice and equity

Targeted Learning Outcomes

Diversity Ambassadors Program Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Students will be able to list and define historical events involving African Americans in American History during the Civil Rights Movement

SLO 2: Students will be able to discuss historical events from diverse perspectives.

SLO 3: Students will be able to relate historical events involving African Americans to current events and social justices

SLO 4: Students will be able to develop a capstone project and group presentation that synthesizes their overall experience and the program's impact on their increased knowledge and future plans.

Participants

2 Cohorts: 2016-2017 & 2017-2018

- 2017 Cohort: 2016-2017 (18 Participants)
- 2018 Cohort: 2017-2018 (14 Participants)

Methodology

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
1. What did the student learn from their participation in the Diversity Ambassador program?	The Diversity Ambassador demonstrates learning through the completion of various assignments and their participation in the program.	• Diversity Ambassadors • AASC Coordinator (Observations) • Program Intern (Observations) • Pictorial Records • Course Exams	• Interviews • Journal Entries • Testimonials • Capstone • Campus Presentation
2. How did the Diversity Ambassador program raise the student's cultural and/or social justice awareness?	The Diversity Ambassador's participation in social justice and diversity dialogue and initiatives has increased on and off campus.	• Diversity Ambassadors • AASC Coordinator (Observations) • Program Intern (Observations) • Pictorial Records	• Intergroup Dialogue • Journal Entries • Testimonials • Capstone • Campus Presentation
3. How did the Diversity Ambassador Program activities influence the student's interest in leadership roles and engagement on and off campus?	The Diversity Ambassador is interested in more roles in leadership on and off campus since completion of the program	• Diversity Ambassadors • AASC Coordinator (Observations) • OSLCC Student Organizations Coordinator • myBAR Student Organization Directory	• Journal Entries • Capstone • Testimonials

2017 Cohort walked over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma , AL to commemorate the Selma-to-Montgomery March of 1965

2017 Cohort posed for a picture in the front of the Atlanta's Center of Civil and Human Rights Museum

Findings

Areas	Outcomes
Social & Civic Engagement	***86%*** of the participants said that they are engaged with the campus through involvement as a result of their participation in the Diversity Ambassador Program with the African American Student Center ***66%*** of participants joined an executive board position in a student club and/or organization for the following year after completion and/or got involved as a student leader in a student affairs department on campus ***100%*** of the participants are interested in civic engagement with their surrounding communities outside of Cal Poly Pomona as a result of the Diversity Ambassador Program This is evident through intergroup dialogue participation, course observations, journal entries, the individual capstone project, the campus presentation, and interviews.
Diversity & Global Consciousness	***100%*** of participants demonstrated increased learning of historical events involving African Americans in American History during the Civil Rights Movement. ***100%*** of participants successfully connected of historic events to current events This is evident through course examinations, intergroup dialogue participation, course observations, journal entries, interviews, the individual capstone project, and the campus presentation.

"Diversity Ambassadors has not only opened my eyes to experiences and history I've never learned before, but it truly helped me develop a sense of urgency and determination when it comes to learning about social justice. There are many events that happened in the Civil Rights era that mirror events happening right now, the issues and struggles remain present today and need to be addressed. DA has brought me closer to my peers and closer to a community that I hardly knew anything about. I am grateful and privileged to be welcomed into a space I did not identify with. My aim was to learn about different communities, and I feel that this trip exposed me to diverse viewpoints and opinions. This is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn about the Civil Rights movement, and I am thankful a program like this exists. This trip will forever be in my heart and memory."

-2016-2017 Diversity Ambassador

"Being a part of Diversity Ambassadors has opened my eyes to how rich and rigid my history is, and the importance of cooperation. Learning about hidden figures that contributed to the progression of Black people during enslavement, the Jim Crow Era, the Civil Rights Movement, and today's social justice movements gave me a sense of purpose. I must do something in my life to ensure the success of our people! Through the readings, lectures, discussions, and the trip, I was able to ignite a flame in my soul that motivated me to do better for me and my community. I also learned how to collaborate with others. I can say that being a Diversity Ambassador will not only help me achieve my professional goal of being a Policy Analyst, it will also help me with my life goals in helping people of color, especially Black women and children."

-2017-2018 Diversity Ambassador

2018 Cohort posed for a picture at the historic Howard Law School in Washington, D.C

Implications for Practice

- Increase participation in civic engagement programming beyond the borders of California to enhance student learning and global consciousness
- Encourage ongoing cross-cultural dialogue among students on campus
- Be proactive with the collaboration of academic colleges beyond social sciences to cultivate cultural identity and awareness among students in their classroom settings

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