

Stockton Center for Community Engagement Impact of Service for Students Report*

Purpose: to assess the impact of students' experiences with community engagement and service learning partnerships over the past year.

Response rate: 396 surveys were completed.

Survey method: online via Qualtrics survey.*

Data collection period: April through May of 2017

Sampling method: non-probability sampling

Findings

Sample Characteristics

- Among the 396 participants who answered the number of semesters they have been involved in Service-Learning (including the current semester), the majority (58.33%, $n = 231$) indicated "one to two semesters," 18.43% ($n = 73$) indicated "zero," 17.17% ($n = 68$) indicated "three to four semesters," and 6.06% ($n = 24$) indicated "five or more semesters."
- Among the 396 participants who answered the number of hours in total they contributed to community engagement this academic year (Fall 2016 and Spring 2017), 154 (38.39%) participants indicated having contributed fewer than 10 hours, 134 (33.84%) contributed 11 to 30 hours, 53 (13.38%) participants contributed 31 to 50 hours, 36 (9.09%) contributed more than 70 hours, and 19 (4.80%) contributed 51 to 70 hours.

Ways to Access Community Engagement Projects

- Respondents had the following choices to select from: "The Office of Service Learning," "honor societies," "fraternity or sorority," "Stockton clubs," "internship," "The Stockton Center for Community Engagement," "Athletics," "I have never participated in community engagement while at Stockton," and "other."
 - 25.51% ($n = 101$) chose "Stockton clubs," 23.74% ($n = 94$) chose "the Office of Service Learning," 12.88% ($n = 51$) chose "I have never participated in community engagement at Stockton University," 9.60% ($n = 38$) chose "fraternity or sorority," 7.32% ($n = 29$) chose "other," 6.57% ($n = 26$) chose "athletics," 5.81% ($n = 23$) chose "honor societies," 5.05% ($n = 20$) chose "the Stockton Center for Community Engagement," and 3.54% ($n = 14$) chose "internships."

*The survey was originally created by Dr. Sonia Gonsalves and revised by the Stockton Center for Community Engagement with the support of the Office of Institutional Research.

- The following is a sample of responses for “other.”
 - “New transfer student”
 - “Graduate PT Club”
 - “Office of Global Engagement”
 - “MLK Day”
 - “Day of Service”
 - “Anthropology Class Day of Service”
 - “Local Volunteer fire fighter”
 - “Care Program”
 - “Myself, friends outside of school, hospitals, etc.”
 - “Alternative Spring Break”
 - “Alumni Office”
 - “My work”
 - “Nursing Program”
 - “Professor”
 - “Both Clubs (Active Minds) and Internships
 - “Independent Studies”
 - “Class”

Types of Sites at Which Students Have Worked in Community Partnerships

- Respondents had the following choices to select all that apply: “homework completion programs in Atlantic City,” “campus kitchen,” “afternoon tea with older adults,” campus food drive,” “community gardens,” hunger related projects,” education related projects,” healthcare related projects,” “business/marketing related projects,” “arts and culture related projects,” disability/elder care related projects,” “environmental sustainability related projects,” “homelessness and poverty related projects,” “recreation/sports/fitness related projects,” and “other.”
 - All types of sites were selected, however; “education related projects” and “other” were chosen the most.
 - 23.74% ($n = 94$) of respondents selected “education related projects”
 - 18.94% ($n = 75$) of respondents selected “other”
 - 17.42% ($n = 69$) of respondents selected “homelessness and poverty related projects”
 - 17.17% ($n = 68$) of respondents selected “campus food drive”
 - 16.92% ($n = 67$) of respondent selected “healthcare related projects”
 - 12.88% ($n = 51$) of respondents selected “environmental sustainability related projects”

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- 12.37% ($n = 49$) of respondents selected “disability/elder care related projects”
- 11.87% ($n = 47$) of respondents selected “arts and culture related projects”
- 11.36% ($n = 45$) of respondents selected “hunger related projects”
- 10.61% ($n = 42$) of respondents selected “recreation/sports/fitness related projects”
- 10.10% ($n = 40$) of respondents selected “homework completion programs in Atlantic City”
- 5.05% ($n = 20$) of respondents selected “campus kitchen”
- 5.05% ($n = 20$) of respondents selected “business and/or marketing related projects”
- 4.04% ($n = 16$) of respondents selected “community gardens”
- 2.02% ($n = 8$) of respondents selected “afternoon tea with older adults”
 - The following is a sample of responses for “other.”
 - “billiard sport coach”
 - “church youth group”
 - “helping victims of sexual assault and domestic violence”
 - “habitat improvement”
 - “science workshops”
 - “I never knew any of these existed on campus”
 - “LGBTQA related projects”
 - Stockton Speech Hearing Clinic”
 - “book drives and horse farm”
 - “mental health related organizations on and off campus”
 - “political and civic engagement”
 - “children with illness”
 - “Relay for Life”

Value of Students’ Service to the Community

- Respondents were presented the following statement: “Please consider the community engagement work that you have done over the past year and answer the following questions to reflect your overall positions, attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs. What value did your service have to the community? Choose all that apply.”
 - The top three responses selected were “developed a positive relationship with the community” (56.06%, $n = 222$), “increased their knowledge” (51.01%, $n = 202$), and “provided a service that they valued” (50%, $n = 198$).

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- The following is the list of additional choices and responses:
 - “Increased their access” (26.77%, $n = 106$)
 - “Saved them money” (17.42%, $n = 69$)
 - “Other” (9.34%, $n = 37$)
 - “Helped with urgent need in an emergency” (8.59%, $n = 34$)
- The following is a sample of responses for “other”
 - “Preserve cultural heritage”
 - “I have never been given the opportunity”
 - “Raised funds”
 - “Hard to say”
 - “Nothing”
 - “Challenge and provoke critical and swift thinking”
 - “Brighten the people we impacted”

Level of Agreement with Statements about Students’ Community Engagement Work

Respondents were presented a five-point Likert scale comprising 15 statements about their community engagement work. The lower end of the scale was “strongly agree” and the higher end of the scale was “strongly disagree.” The following table shows the responses.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total of Respondents
It has increased my ability to effect change.	33.84% ($n = 134$)	36.34% ($n = 153$)	21.97% ($n = 87$)	2.53% ($n = 10$)	3.03% ($n = 12$)	396
I have learned a lot about myself.	29.04% ($n = 115$)	38.13% ($n = 151$)	24.75% ($n = 98$)	4.55% ($n = 18$)	3.54% ($n = 14$)	396
I have a much better understanding of important issues in society.	35.86% ($n = 142$)	36.11% ($n = 143$)	21.21% ($n = 84$)	3.54% ($n = 14$)	3.28% ($n = 13$)	396
I am more likely to contribute to public projects.	35.10% ($n = 139$)	37.88% ($n = 150$)	20.20% ($n = 80$)	3.03% ($n = 12$)	3.79% ($n = 15$)	396
My values in democratic principles have been strengthened.	24.24% ($n = 96$)	28.28% ($n = 112$)	37.88% ($n = 150$)	4.29% ($n = 17$)	5.30% ($n = 21$)	396
I have engaged in research as a result of my community engagement activity.	22.47% ($n = 89$)	23.99% ($n = 95$)	29.80% ($n = 118$)	15.40% ($n = 61$)	8.33% ($n = 33$)	396
My participated acts of activism has increased.	23.23% ($n = 92$)	29.55% ($n = 117$)	31.31% ($n = 124$)	10.35% ($n = 41$)	5.56% ($n = 22$)	396

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I am better able to understand perspectives other than my own.	32.58% (n = 129)	40.66% (n = 161)	18.94% (n = 75)	4.29% (n = 17)	3.54% (n = 14)	396
My work was meaningful to the community.	40.66% (n = 161)	39.14% (n = 155)	14.90% (n = 59)	1.77% (n = 7)	3.54% (n = 14)	396
I made changes in the communities in which I served.	30.56% (n = 121)	37.63% (n = 149)	24.75% (n = 98)	3.54% (n = 14)	3.54% (n = 14)	396
I know more about off campus communities.	28.28% (n = 112)	36.36% (n = 144)	23.23% (n = 92)	7.83% (n = 31)	4.29% (n = 17)	396
I have conversations with friends about my community work.	27.02% (n = 107)	38.13% (n = 151)	22.47% (n = 89)	8.08% (n = 32)	4.29% (n = 17)	396
I am more likely to get involved with many types of community projects.	30.05% (n = 119)	35.61% (n = 141)	27.02% (n = 107)	3.79% (n = 15)	3.54% (n = 14)	396
I am better able to participate in discussions about civic and political issues in the communities.	24.24% (n = 96)	29.80% (n = 118)	31.06% (n = 123)	7.83% (n = 31)	7.07% (n = 28)	396
I have not been changed by my community activities.	12.37% (n = 49)	10.61% (n = 42)	23.23% (n = 92)	23.99 (n = 95)	29.80 (n = 118)	396

Conclusion

The results of this survey show that at least one-third of the students sampled engaged in community work voluntarily as opposed to service hours that are required by a service-learning course, honor society, or Greek organization. Most students believed that their community work was valuable because it helped them to develop a positive relationship with the community and increased the community's knowledge. This finding may contribute to the finding that most students surveyed felt that their community engagement work increased their sense of agency and that they would be more likely to contribute to public projects in the future. Most importantly in our current climate, almost 75% of the students surveyed felt that their community engagement work helped them to understand other people's perspectives.

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