



**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
& SERVICE-LEARNING**

FY 2024

*Annual Report*

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Executive Director's Message	1
Mission and Vision, Who We Are	2
Advisory Council	2
2024 Goals and Accomplishments Towards Goals	3
Budget and Resources	5
SCCESL Programs, Events, and Collaborations	6
Homegrown Community Programs	6
Homework Completion Program at Stanley Holmes Village	6
Homework Completion Program at Brigantine Homes	6
Homework Completion Program at the Pleasantville Public Library	7
Naturalization Class	7
Computer and Technology Workshop	8
Social Hour	8
A Selection of FY24 Events, Projects, and Programs	8
The 20 <sup>th</sup> Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service	9
Community Engaged Scholarship Activity of Faculty and Staff	10
Stockton University Engagement in the News	11
Student Leaders	11
Selected Activities of the Engagement Leadership Team Members	12
Student Leader Graduates	14
Staff Activities	14
Service-Learning	15
SCCESL Goals for 2024 - 2025	17
Appendix	19
Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Students	20
Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Community	26
Partners Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Faculty	36
Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Staff	42
Assessment of Service-Learning Activities	48
Programmatic Assessment	51

## Executive Director's Message

Dear Stockton Community,

I am pleased to share the Annual Report for FY 2024 with you. Among our successes, the Service-Learning program expanded and welcomed a new coordinator to fill our vacancy. We supported 58 courses in FY24, increased Civic Engagement micro-grants for students from 10 to 14, and saw a rise in student participation at the Celebration of Service events, with students presenting 23 projects. 1,200 students enrolled in Service-Learning courses, an increase of 73 from FY23, and we secured ten new community partnerships.

According to assessment findings from the Service-Learning Pre- and Post-Tests for AY 24, which measure students' understanding and application of five ELO-related concepts before and after their Service-Learning experiences, students' self-ratings on mastering these concepts significantly improved. 999 students completed the Pre- and Post-Tests.

Qualitative analysis of the students' reflections showed a recurrent theme of what they learned from their Service-Learning experiences: skill development, learning to overcome challenges, and gaining empathy and understanding.

Year after year, most of the faculty, students, staff, and community partners surveyed about the Impact of Community Engagement agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'Stockton contributes to the well-being of the community.' This important finding motivates us to remain vigilant in our efforts to continue adding value to our community.

We launched the Engagement Leadership Team Program (ELT). This program combined the Bonner students and Fellows into one team. We created a professional development curriculum based on NACE Career Readiness Resources. In FY 24, the Center employed 29 ELTs. This team supports our Homework Completion Program, Naturalization, Computer and Internet, English classes, and the Social Hour. The ELTs also provide support in the office and at university-wide community events.

Data collection and evaluation improved, and the Impact of Community Engagement on Students survey achieved an 85.6% increase in response rates over FY23. Assessment efforts will remain crucial for the Center's Five-Year Review in Fall 2025. They will also provide evidence of engagement if the institution applies for the Carnegie Community Engaged elective classification in FY29.

I am thankful for the outstanding SCCESL team, our campus colleagues, and community partners whose collaboration and support have been instrumental in achieving our shared goals.

## Mission

The mission of the SCCESL is two-fold:

- Community Engagement co-sponsors programs in the community, opens doors and creates connections for new and improved collaborations, maximizes resources to maintain and establish mutually beneficial relationships with the community, and assists our internal and external partners with research activities to deepen the scholarship of engagement.
- Service-Learning is a pathway for social change through community-based learning via curricular/co-curricular opportunities, sustaining civic engagement, enhancing reciprocal community partnerships, fostering civic and social agency, and exploring experiences through critical reflection.

## Vision

The Stockton Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning promotes the ideals of public service and social responsibility and serves the public good.

## Who We Are

SCCESL's leadership includes Executive Director **Dr. Merydawilda Colón**, Community Engagement Liaison and Site Supervisor **Trish Collins**, Supervisor of Community Projects and Community Engagement Assessment **Heather Swenson Brilla**, Coordinator of Service-Learning Coordinator **Taylor Coyne**, and Project Coordinator for Community Programs & Leadership **Shawn Cooper**. In addition to this full-time staff, the SCCESL was supported this year by TES staff members **Christine Whaley**, **Kerstin Maguire**, **Enrique Calixtro**, **Bao Wu**, and **Feliberto Silva**.

We are pleased that our team grew to 26 Engagement Leadership Team members, undergraduate student leaders who support the initiatives of the SCCESL. The SCCESL receives support from the Office of the Provost, the Offices of Sponsored Research, Event Services, and University Relations and Marketing, as well as invaluable support and guidance from its Advisory Council.

## Advisory Council

The members of our 2023-2024 Advisory Council are:

- **Dr. Chelsea P. Tracy-Bronson**, *Associate Professor of Teacher Education*
- **Dr. Christine Ferri**, *Professor of Psychology*
- **Dr. Merydawilda Colón**, *Executive Director, SCCESL, Associate Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Tenured Professor of Social Work*
- **Emari DiGiorgio**, *Professor of Writing & First-Year Studies*
- **Christina Birchler**, *Director, Hammonton Instructional Site*
- **John Emge**, *Community Member-at-Large*
- **Dr. Mary Lou Galantino**, *Distinguished Professor of Physical Therapy*
- **Dr. Ian Marshall**, *Dean, School of Arts and Humanities and Professor of Literature*
- **Dr. Daniel Tulino**, *Assistant Professor of Education*
- **Dr. Christina Jackson**, *Program Coordinator of Africana Studies, Associate Professor of Sociology at Rutgers University (Camden)*
- **Brian K. Jackson**, *Vice President for Community Engagement*
- **Dr. Claudine Keenan**, *Vice Provost and Tenured Professor of Instructional Technology*
- **Dr. Tara Luke**, *Professor of Biology*
- **Alexander Marino**, *Director of Academic Operations, Atlantic City Campus*

- **Dr. Michael Rodriguez**, Professor of Political Science
- **Dr. Joseph Rubenstein**, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology
- **Shilon Sowell**, Human Resources Manager
- **Dr. Carla Cabarle**, Associate Professor of Business Studies, Accounting
- **Dr. Connie Tang**, Professor of Psychology
- **Jane Bokunewicz**, Professor of Hospitality and Tourism Management Studies

#### AFFILIATED MEMBERS

- **Cassandra Shellhorn**, Director of Community Programs, Center for Family Services
- **Fran Wise**, Director of Development, AVANZAR
- **Lieutenant Wilbur Santiago**, Atlantic City Police Department
- **Sergeant Mohammed Kaiser**, Atlantic City Police Department (alternate for Lt. Santiago)

#### FY 2024 Goals and Accomplishments Towards Goals

Goal	Action/Activity to Accomplish Goal (Objective)	Results
1. To strengthen the implementation of Service-Learning, we will collaborate with Service-Learning faculty to implement check-in sessions throughout the semester. Visit the class in person or via Zoom to provide periodic updates to faculty and students.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mrs. Coyne provided faculty with emails on updates and information important to Service-Learning. She followed through with communicating student requests to the faculty and answering questions regarding Service-Learning for their course.</li> <li>2. Mrs. Coyne offered faculty the opportunity for her to visit their classrooms.</li> <li>3. Mrs. Coyne sent Service-Learning faculty the mid-semester feedback survey and received positive feedback.</li> <li>4. Mrs. Coyne hosted faculty check-in sessions on Zoom throughout the Spring 2024 semester, which provided a space for Service-Learning faculty to connect and share updates throughout the semester.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mrs. Coyne emailed the faculty monthly, offering support and information.</li> <li>2. Mrs. Coyne visited 66% of Service-Learning classrooms to introduce the Service-Learning modality and was invited to return to two classes for follow-up.</li> <li>3. The mid-semester feedback survey was sent to 22 faculty members, and 2 responded.</li> <li>4. Three virtual faculty check-in sessions were hosted, and 7 faculty members attended overall.</li> </ol>
2. To increase student participation in a High-Impact Practice we will remove barriers to faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Dr. Anthony Disen</b> created two instructional videos for the faculty on Service-Learning.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “How to Create a Service-Learning Course” has been viewed 66 times, and “How to Establish a Community</li> </ol>

<p>participation in the Service-Learning modality. In response to the Service-Learning Survey for Faculty findings, share the two on-demand videos that were created to show faculty how to create a Service-Learning course and establish a community partnership. The videos will be posted on the SCCESL and Center for Teaching and Learning Design (CTLD) websites.</p>	<p>2. Mrs. Coyne completed affiliation agreements with community partners to create more sites for students to engage in the community.</p>	<p>Partnership” has been viewed 46 times.</p> <p>The videos and the information on how to create a Service-Learning course are posted to the SCCESL and the CTLD website in several places, including under their “High Impact Practices” tab.</p> <p>2. 10 new affiliation agreements were executed.</p>
<p>3. Provide the faculty with tools to develop their Scholarship of Engagement and continue to promote it through our current practices (15-Minute Splash of Community Engagement presentations and sessions during the CTLD orientation offerings for new faculty and CTLD Week of Teaching).</p>	<p>Two education sessions were provided to faculty, staff, and community members.</p>	<p>Mrs. Coyne, <b>Drs. Arnaldo Cordero Román, Patricia Suppes,</b> and <b>Merydawilda Colón</b> presented on November 6, 2024, <i>High Impact Practices: Community Engagement, Service-Learning &amp; Global Engagement</i> at the Fall Faculty Academy sponsored by CTLD.</p> <p>Mrs. Coyne and Dr. Colón presented on April 25, 2024, <i>Empowering Education through Service-Learning: Are You on the Fence about It?</i> at the Scholarship, Teaching, and Research event sponsored by CTLD.</p>
<p>4. Expand the number of SCCESL Advisory Council members to include more diverse identities that are representative of our community. Avail diverse members of the SCCESL Diversity Council to collaborate with the Task Force as deemed appropriate.</p>	<p>Recruit a member of the Neighborhood Coordination Officer Unit of the Atlantic City Police Department.</p>	<p>Lt. Wilbur Santiago of the Atlantic City Police Department has agreed to join the SCCESL Advisory Council.</p>

<p>5. Collaborate with on-campus offices and centers, which already provide supportive services, as well as external community resources to increase students' access to those services that would allow them to persist in their education. Collaborate with on-campus offices and centers, which already provide supportive services, as well as external community resources to increase students' access to those services that would allow them to persist in their education.</p>	<p>The SCCESL held one networking event in the fall of 2023 for off-campus community partners to meet their on-campus counterparts. This event was intended to provide human service information to Stockton students, faculty, and staff and to strengthen the relationship between on- and off-campus support providers.</p> <p>The SCCESL collaborated with the Office of Veterans and Military Services to hold a spring 2024 community information fair, once again bringing community partners on campus for the benefit of the on- and off-campus community.</p> <p>The SCCESL continues to facilitate the quarterly Atlantic County Community Roundtable meetings. These meetings bring 40 human service agencies and organizations together to share resources available to South Jersey community members. Several Stockton offices and centers participate in the roundtable meetings.</p>	<p>Two community resource fairs were held, and four Community Resource Roundtable meetings were held.</p>
---	---	---

### **Budget and Resources**

For the fifth year in a row, the Center secured a grant from the TD Bank Foundation for \$10,000 to fund ELT members in the Homework Completion Programs. It continued its relationship with the Creed Schwartz Foundation, which funds the drivers that transport Stockton volunteers to the Stanley Holmes Village Homework Completion Program. The SCCESL also partnered with the Office of Financial Aid to hire 19 ELT members who were eligible for Federal Work Study funding. The SCCESL van saw heavier use this year as it took Stockton student volunteers to the Westminster Food Distribution and other community engagement events.

This year, an important resource was reinstated with the hiring of a new Coordinator for Service-Learning. The SCCESL values its campus partners, including the Office of Event Services, University Relations and Marketing, the Budget Office, and the Office of Research and Sponsored

Programs. They also thank the CTLD and Provost's Office staff for their ongoing support and collaboration.

## **SCCESL Programs, Events, and Collaborations**

### **Homegrown Community Programs**

#### **Homework Completion Programs**

In FY 2024, the Homework Completion Programs were held at Stanley Holmes Village, Brigantine Homes, and the Pleasantville Public Library.

##### *Stanley Holmes Village*

The Homework Completion Program at Stanley S. Holmes Village began its ninth year on September 23, 2023. The primary goals of the program are to engage children in their schoolwork and offer youth a vision of the potential of post-secondary education. The program is also intended to foster trust in the children toward police officers. The program is a collaboration between SCCESL, the Atlantic City Police Department, and the Atlantic City Housing Authority and Urban Development Agency. These three organizations have partnered to offer children a period of quiet homework time between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, at the community center of the Stanley S. Holmes Village apartment complex. Onsite, Stockton University students and Atlantic City Police Officers monitor homework time and assist children ages 5-18 with their questions.

This year, the program was overseen by SCCESL Engagement Leadership Team members **Brian Scott, Damaris Spring, Ashley Ramirez, Tiffani Keen, Andrea Sandoval, Olivia Lovett, Lauren Whaley, Mackenzie Tierney, Madelyn Sacco, and Alyssia Marshall**. Several other Engagement Leadership Team members, as well as 170 Stockton student volunteers, participated at Stanley Holmes Village.

The findings of a satisfaction survey taken by 35 children (N=35) mirror tutors' impressions. (Please refer to the appendix for the survey.)

Responses to the survey revealed the following:

- "Happy" was chosen most frequently as the youth's response to "How do you feel when you see a police officer?"
- "Helping" and "Serving" were chosen most often when youth were asked, "What does a police officer do?"
- Most participants felt that completing homework and playing with their friends were the best part of the homework completion program.
- Most participants agreed with the statement that they love coming to the community room at Stanley S. Holmes Village.

Please refer to the appendix for additional information regarding the homework completion program at Stanley S. Holmes Village.

##### *Brigantine Homes*

The Homework Completion Program at Brigantine Homes returned on September 23, 2023. The primary goals of the program are to engage children in their schoolwork and offer youth a vision of



the potential of post-secondary education. The program is also intended to foster trust in the children toward police officers. The program is a collaboration between SCCESL, the Atlantic City Police Department, and the Michaels Organization. These three organizations have partnered to offer children a period of quiet homework time between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Mondays and Tuesdays, at the community center of the Brigantine Homes apartment complex. Onsite, Stockton University students and Atlantic City Police Officers monitor homework time and assist children ages 5-18 with their questions.

This year, SCCESL Engagement Leadership Team members **Solé Prewitt-Spain, Mackenzie Tierney, and Cristina Jimenez** led the program, supported by SCCESL 72 Stockton student volunteers, participated at Brigantine Homes. Community youth participation was a challenge this year, both for the Homework Program and the community programs held by Better Tomorrows in the same room; hence, it was decided not to continue the program at that site for FY25. Spring assessment was not conducted at the Homework Program at Brigantine Homes due to low enrollment.

#### *Pleasantville Public Library*

The Homework Completion Program at the Pleasantville Public Library began its seventh year on September 23, 2023. The primary goals of the program are to engage children in their schoolwork and offer youth a vision of the potential of post-secondary education. The program is also intended to foster trust in the children toward police officers. The program is a collaboration between SCCESL, the Pleasantville Police Department, and the City of Pleasantville. These three organizations have partnered to offer children a period of quiet homework time between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, in the community room within the Pleasantville Public Library. Onsite, Stockton University students and Pleasantville Police Officers monitor homework time and assist children ages 5-18 with their questions.

This year, SCCESL Engagement Leadership Team members **Kiara Cisneros, Lina Garrido, Kristine Garcia, Nathalie Valladares, Greg Rothschild, Aury Franco-Lopez, Rocio Lucero, Laura Mayfield, and James Kheir** led the program. Several other Student Fellows, as well as 108 Stockton student volunteers, participated in the Homework Completion Program at the Pleasantville Public Library.

Tutors noted that the students seemed engaged in their homework and that they appeared to have a positive relationship with police officers. The findings of a satisfaction survey taken by nine children (N=9) mirror tutors' impressions. (Please refer to the appendix for the survey.)

Responses to the survey revealed the following:

- Most respondents have a positive response when they see a police officer.
- Most participants would go to a police officer if they needed help.
- Most participants felt that completing homework was the best part of the homework completion program.

Please refer to the appendix for additional information regarding the homework completion program at the Pleasantville Public Library.

#### **Naturalization Class**

To date, the Naturalization Class has helped 43 participants become naturalized citizens. The classes meet at the Scarpa Academic Center in Atlantic City on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The SCCESL held 25 sessions, and 37 community members participated from one to 14 times over the year. Sessions were facilitated by **Enrique Calixtro**, a Stockton Temporary Seasonal Employee (TES), **Olivia Lovett**, **Nathalie Valladares**, **Azra Mahisa**, **Shayna Achamizo**, **Jaclyn Johnstone** and **Ariana Ramirez**. Virtual workshops, in addition to the in-person sessions, continue to be useful, specifically for people who are preparing for their imminent interview dates.

### Computer and Internet Workshops

The Computer and Internet Workshops were held every other Wednesday at the Scarpa Academic Center in Atlantic City from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Twenty community members participated regularly. Participants stated that the classes improved their access to information in several life domains and that they taught members of their community what they learned. This program was led by Heather Swenson Brilla and supported by Dr. Colón, Engagement Leadership Team members **Lauren Whaley**, **Ashley Ramirez**, **Alyssia Marshall**, **Shayna Achamizo**, **Jamal Rivera-Hands**, and **Olivia Lovett**, and four Stockton student volunteers. The SCCESL wishes to thank **Dan Hickson** for his technical support during these workshops.

### Social Hour

This year, the Social Hour programs were held at two of the Atlantic City Housing Authority and Urban Development Agency high-rises, Altman Terrace and Shore Park, and at the Pleasantville Housing Authority High Rise in Pleasantville. Programs were also held in the community rooms of Atlantic Marina and Community Haven. The program was supervised by **Trish Collins** and supported by Engagement Leadership Team members and Stockton volunteers. 12 sessions of Social Hour were held and attended by a total of 109 residents across all programs.

### FY 24 Selection of Events, Projects, and Programs

FY 24 Selection of Events, Projects, and Programs		
Event or Activity	Date	Notable Outcomes
Westminister Food Distribution in Atlantic City	Ongoing	Eight Stockton students volunteered over the six events this year
Social Hour Events in Atlantic City	Ongoing	57 Community members participated over the 11 sessions this year.
Engagement Leadership Team Member Orientation in Galloway	August 2023	A two-day orientation session where the staff debuted the new ELT program and competency program
New Student Day of Service in Galloway	September 2023	48 incoming students learned about global engagement from Dr. Rob Barney and participated in packing rice meals for communities overseas
Coast Day at Scarpa Academic Center in Atlantic City	October 2023	Six ELT members and three staff members supported NAMS in the operation of the event, and the SCCESL hosted youth from the Homework Completion Program at Stanley Holmes Village.

Voter Registration in Galloway	October 2023	Seven ELT members supported Dr. Claire Abernathy's voter registration event for Stockton students.
Fall Celebration of Service in Galloway	November 2023	Five micro-grants were awarded, and seven Service-Learning projects were presented.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service in all Campuses	January 2024	There were 742 participants, including 177 students, and there were 31 service projects.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Panel Discussion at Scarpa in Atlantic City	February 2024	115 high school students attended from seven high schools
Bangladeshi Consulate Day at Scarpa Academic Center in Atlantic City	April 2024	Over 650 community members were helped with things like passport renewals, birth certificates, and dual citizenship applications.
Youth from Stanley Holmes Village Campus Visit to Galloway Campus	April 2024	Four youth from Stanley Holmes Village visited with Stockton students in the Multicultural Center on campus.
Youth from Brigantine Homes Galloway Campus Visit	April 2024	13 youth from Brigantine Homes and Atlantic Marina visited the Esports facility and met with Admissions to learn about Stockton
Spring Celebration of Service as a part of the CTLD (Scholarship, Research, and Teaching Symposium) STARS week in Galloway	April 2024	Nine micro-grants were awarded, and 15 Service-Learning projects were presented.
Spring Day of Service in Galloway	April 2024	27 students and five faculty and staff participated, and 80 greeting cards were made
Engagement Leadership Team Member Reflection Banquet in Galloway Campus	April 2024	20 members of the Engagement Leadership Team and their families came together to reflect on their work and growth over the year.
Service-Learning Faculty Reflection Breakfast in Galloway Campus	May 2024	Four faculty members joined the SCCESL staff to give feedback on their Service-Learning teaching experiences.
Naturalization Ceremony in Galloway Campus	May 2024	In collaboration with the USCIS, 26 South Jersey residents became American citizens at the annual ceremony.
Atlantic Community School Charter Visit to Galloway Campus	May 2024	Two ELT members and two staff members supported NAMS in the planning or operation of the event, which provided educational activities for 30 students.

**The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Celebration**

On January 15, 2024, Stockton held its 20th Annual MLK Day of Service. The event was held at the Galloway, Atlantic City, Hammonton, and Woodbine campuses. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service brings together over 500 students, community members, and community partners with projects both on- and off-campus. The goals of Days of Service are to provide an intensive, community-wide experience for students and to introduce them to partners where they can serve long-term and develop an ongoing relationship.

This year's event featured 31 projects across all campuses. It included community partners such as Stories of AC, Church by the Bay, Pine Barrens Birding Club, Our Lady Star of the Sea, MudGirls Studio, Allies in Caring, and The Branches.

742 people participated in the day, including students from six local public schools.

Mrs. Collins and Mrs. Cooper served on the committee of Stockton University's 8th Annual High School Discussion that was held on February 22, 2024, at the John F. Scarpa Academic Building in Atlantic City. Six local high schools (Absegami, Atlantic City, Egg Harbor Township, Hammonton, Oakcrest, and Pleasantville); over 115 high school students attended. The discussion theme was "Come and Discuss the Importance of Developing Strong Leaders of Tomorrow, Today." High school administrators, teachers, Stockton students, staff, faculty, and community members also attended.



### **Community Engaged Scholarship Activity of Faculty and Staff**

Amadio, M. and Goodnight, C. (2024, June). Smart aviation advisory committee report and entrepreneurial research summary: Report for Atlantic City in Atlantic County, New Jersey. *Prepared for the Atlantic County Economic Alliance as part of the Statewide Planning Grant from US EDA.*

Mastrangelo, M. A., Crowell, T., Kientz, M., Perks. J., Ortiz, A., France, H., and Taylor, S. (2024). Are public spaces accessible for all? Assessing public and coastal spaces for individuals with disabilities. *Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise*, 56(9S), 610.  
DOI: 10.1249/01.mss.0001057872.81589.26

- Prakash, S. (2024, June). *Community based participatory research and prevention: Strategic prevention framework (SPF)*. [Conference Session]. Presented at the 12th Edition Nursing Education and Practice Conference, Prague, Czech Republic.
- McLaughlin, K., Davis, J., Gonzales, M., Koh, C., Taylor, L., & Crowell, T. L. (2024). Engage, educate, escape: The New Jersey Department of Health Project Firstline Escape Room. *Health Education Journal*, 83(2), 205-214. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00178969241228945>
- McKenna, K.K., Hafner, S., Robine, C., Pimpinelli, H., Deibert, M., D'Ambrosio, E., Richards, J., and Diebert, F. (2023). 2022 NJBPN Annual Report on Shoreline Changes in New Jersey in the Four Coastal Counties Raritan Bay to Delaware Bay. *Annual Report to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Construction and Engineering*.
- Evert, S., Gannon, K., Nagiewicz, S., Pfeiffer-Herbert, A., Straub, P., Sullivan, M., & Wnek, J. (2023, December) *10 years of DFG removal in New Jersey coastal bays; the keys to success depend of fisher involvement* [Presented as invited speaker]. Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean's Mid Atlantic Marine Debris Summit, Ocean City, MD.
- Tang, C. M., Colon, M., & Swenson Brilla, H. (2023). Homework completion program in Atlantic County, NJ: The first five years. *The Police Journal*, 96(2), 197-211. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032258X211066033>

### **Stockton University Engagement in the News**

“\$100,000 grant to benefit Stockton's Noyes Arts Garage, Stories of Atlantic City.” Staff, Press of Atlantic City, July 24, 2023

“Student documentary highlights sustainability project at Egg Harbor Township farm.” Shannon King, Press of Atlantic City, November 29, 2023

“Stockton honors Dr. King with Day of Service.” Lynda Cohen, BreakingAC.com, January 25, 2024

“Community Day volunteers give back to Atlantic City.” Lynda Cohen, BreakingAC.com, April 27, 2024

“Naturalization ceremony at Stockton University.” John O'Connor, Press of Atlantic City, May 17, 2024

“Live Work Learn program boosts students' careers.” Stockton News, July 25, 2024

“Shellfish farmers foster oysters for conservation.” Stockton News, September 12, 2024

### **Student Leaders**

In the fall of 2023, the SCCESL launched its new student leadership program, the Engagement Leadership Team (ELT). This program brings together former Bonner Leaders and Student Fellows into one team of leaders who support all the activities of the SCCESL, using the best practices of

both programs. The new program is focused on developing leadership skills and engaging in the reciprocal experiences of applying what they learn in their classes to community activities and bringing what they learn into the community back to the university. The staff created a professional development curriculum based on NACE Career Readiness Resources. In FY24, 29 Stockton students worked for the Center in various capacities.

### **Selected Activities of Engagement Leadership Team Members**

#### *The EngageNJ Thrive Conference at Middlesex College*



*L to R: Azra Mahisa, Nathalie Valladares, Olivia Lovett (back), Shayna Achamizo (front), Greg Rothschild, and Madelyn Sacco*

On Saturday, February 24, 2024, student leaders from the Stockton Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning (SCCESL) attended the EngageNJ 5th Annual THRIVE Student Conference and Opportunity Fair at Middlesex College in Edison, New Jersey.

Engagement Leadership Team (ELT) members **Azra Mahisa, Olivia Lovett,** and

**Madelyn Sacco**, supported by **Greg Rothschild, Shayna Achamizo,** and **Azra Mahisa**, hosted a panel discussion on how community engagement can further students' professional and career development and impact personal growth. After their presentation, the ELTs held a question-and-answer session where the attendees could ask more questions about the presentation. The panel discussion was informative and gave attendees a new outlook on the importance of community engagement.

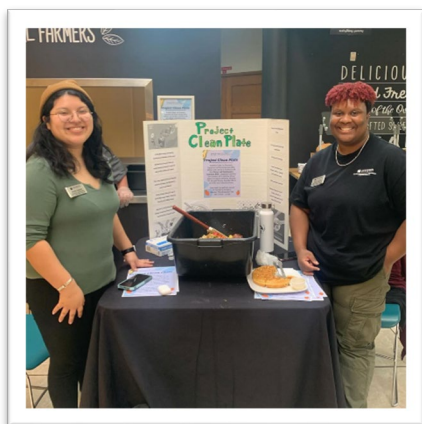
#### *The Kesselman Student Research Fellowship*

Three Engagement Leadership Team members, **Lauren Whaley, Olivia Lovett,** and **Andrea Sandoval**, were the inaugural recipients of the EngageNJ Kesselman Student Research Fellowship. The students collaborated with **Monica Viani** to study the Asprey Pantry at Stockton.

#### *Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week*

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, a national week of service and educational activities, took place from November 13 to 17, 2023. The National Coalition sponsors it for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. Stockton University has held events for over 7 years, and this year, the Engagement Leadership Team of the SCCESL chose three projects: a SNAP Challenge, Project Clean Plate, and a birthday cake kit food drive. The events were led by ELTs **Lauren Whaley, Madelyn Sacco, Damaris Spring, and Andrea Sandoval** and were supported by the entire team.

Project Clean Plate was a partnership between Chartwells Dining Services and the SCCESL. The project is intended to create awareness of the amount of food that is wasted in the N-Wing Dining Hall, the all-you-care-to-eat dining facility on campus.



*SCCESL ELTs Andrea Sandoval and Damaris Spring*

ELTs Damaris Spring and Andrea Sandoval oversaw the implementation of Project Clean Plate, and this is their reflection.

“We started this project by scraping food on November 14th and 16th. We laid out a plan to see who would be collecting the measurements on the scale for each day. Each member was assigned a task. We all collaborated as a team to have a successful outcome. We made a poster with facts about food waste and the purpose of this project. As every student came up to scrape their plates, they would take a moment to stop and read. At first, we did not see many students scraping food off

their plate. As lunch got busier, almost all the students who were walking by were scraping their food. By the end of lunch, we noticed how the bin was almost full of food. We were able to see how many people were throwing a lot of food away. Some individuals just took one bite and threw away their food. At the beginning of lunch on Tuesday the 14th, the scale showed 22 pounds. When the calculations were finished, it was found that on Tuesday, 1.74 ounces were wasted per person. On Thursday, November 16, the total food waste was 63 pounds, which means that 4.22 ounces were wasted per person. We expected the second day to have less waste, but there were numerous high school campus visits going on that day, and they all came to our dining hall to use a meal ticket. We think that those students may have been excited to eat in a real dining hall, so they took more food than they could eat, which skewed our data. Overall, we learned that food waste is a real problem on campus and that we have a chance to reduce it when we work together.”

The Engagement Leadership Team members on this project took boxes to all the academic school offices to collect donations of cake mix and frosting. Another donor supplied cake pans, birthday candles, and cans of cream soda so that the student leaders could make birthday cake kits. Not everyone knows that you can substitute the eggs and oil in a boxed cake recipe with a can of soda. As ELT **Madelyn Sacco** described the project, “It can be difficult for people to have access to cake

ingredients because they can be costly, and even cake mix requires fresh ingredients. Because of this, people sometimes can't even participate in traditional birthday events and celebrate a day that is meant for them. This drive was an opportunity to change that."

### Student Leader Graduates



*L-R: Azra Mahisa, Ariana Ramirez, Lauren Whaley, Olivia Lovett, Madelyn Sacco, and Nathalie Valladares  
(Missing from the photo are Lina Garrido, Kristine Garcia, Frank Arce, and Annika Luz)*

A special congratulatory toast to all the Engagement Leadership Team members of the Stockton Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning who graduated this year. We thank each of our Student Leaders for their commitment and for utilizing their skills in service to communities on and off campus, and we wish all of them the best in their future endeavors.

### Staff Activities



The Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities held its annual conference from October 15 to October 18, 2023, at the Westin Downtown D.C. Hotel and Conference Center, and four of the SCCESL staff were able to attend. This year's conference, titled "Resilient Campuses, Resilient Cities," was attended by over 450 leaders in higher education from around the world. SCCESL staff attended sessions on community-engaged data collection and assessment, social mobility,

*L to R: Taylor Coyne, Shawn Cooper, Heather Swenson Brilla and Trish Collins*



fundraising, and meeting students' basic needs, among others. The staff is excited to bring best practices and innovative ideas back to Stockton to continue developing reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships with our community partners.

<b>Staff and Student Professional Development</b>		
<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
SCCESL Summer Planning Retreat in Galloway	July 2023	SCCESL staff spent two days reflecting on the findings from the FY23 assessment and selecting actionable items for FY24.
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities Conference in Washington, DC	October 2023	Four staff members attended development sessions on anchor institutions, assessment, and community engagement best practices over two days in Washington, D.C.
2024 Birth Equity and Beyond Conference in Scarpa in Atlantic City	June 2024	All SCCESL staff attended this conference to learn about issues that impact the youth in our programs.
American Council on Education's Collaboratory Webinar Series on the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement - Online	Ongoing	Dr. Colón, SCCESL Executive Director, Associate Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Tenured Professor of Social Work, and Mrs. Swenson Brilla, Supervisor for Community Programs and Community Engagement Assessment, attended four webinar sessions on best practices for completing the reclassification document for the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification for 2026.
Jersey Civic Engage Initiative Meeting - Online	Ongoing	Dr. Colón collaborates with the State of New Jersey's "Jersey Civic Engage" initiative, which "is aimed at facilitating and encouraging collaborative civic engagement throughout the state, with a particular focus on our youth."

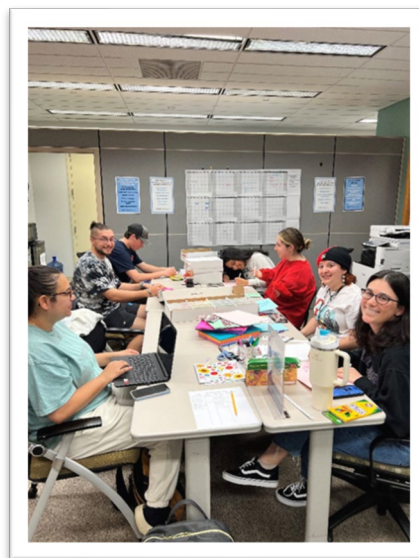
### **Service-Learning**



*Students Simar Janjua, Chloe D'Aloisio, Jissel Perez Manzano, Heather Blanchard, Amanda Khalil, Kailah Caplan partnered with the non-profit Flow Forward and they created feminine personal care kits for women who experience period poverty.*

In partnership with Military & Veteran Services and Jewish Family Services, on Tuesday, April 16th, 27 students participated in the **Spring Day of Service** on the Galloway campus. Students collated a distribution mailing for Jewish Family Services and created over 80 cards to be distributed to Jewish Family Services older community members and deployed military personnel.

This year, there were 58 Service-Learning courses taught by 30 professors. Examples of Service-Learning classes include Documentary Production, Women, Gender & Sexuality, Ethics & Teamwork in Healthcare, Community Schools: Urban Change Agents, Ecology & Saltwater Fishing, The Sixties, Social Determinants of Health, Medical Informatics, and Gender Equity in Sports.



Over the 2023-2024 academic year, 58 courses were designated as Service-Learning, and 1,200 Stockton students were enrolled in a Service-Learning course. The Fall 2023 semester had 26 courses, 539 students enrolled in a Service-Learning course, and 471 completed all Service-Learning requirements. The Spring 2024 semester had 29 courses, 626 students enrolled in a Service-Learning course, and 539 completed all Service-Learning requirements. The Summer I session hosted three service-learning courses, and 35 students and 31 completed all the requirements.

14 microgrants were distributed this year with a total grant of \$3,503. Some of the micro-grant-funded projects were feminine care products and resources, cleaning supplies, cooking materials, games, baby supplies, indoor garden kits, and arts & crafts supplies.

On April 23, 2024, the **Spring Celebration of Service** was hosted during the Center for Teaching and Learning Design's Scholarship, Teaching, and Research Symposium Week (STARS). This semester, nine students received a **Civic Engagement Micro-grant**, a grant given to fund a student project within a Service-Learning course, and in total, fifteen Service-Learning projects were displayed for attendees to learn more about their service.

During the Fall and Spring semesters, the Celebration of Service was hosted for students to highlight their Service projects. Each semester, students have the opportunity to apply for a Civic Engagement Micro-Grant. In the Fall 2023 semester, 5 micro-grants were awarded, and 8 presentations were hosted at the Celebration of Service. In the Spring 2024 semester, 9 micro-grants were awarded, and 15 projects were presented.

For the first time, Service-Learning pre- and post-semester Blackboard qualitative and quantitative assessment was analyzed. Results indicate that most students appreciated their service in the community, understood its relevance to their coursework, and completed successful service projects. Students gave crucial feedback to help the SCCESL increase awareness of and improve the quality-of-service opportunities and programs. The full report can be found in the appendix.

### SCCESL Goals for 2024-2025

Goal	Action/Activity to Accomplish Goal (Objective)
1. To strengthen Service-Learning implementation, we will collaborate with Service-Learning faculty to increase classroom visits from 66% to 75% and overall faculty participation in feedback sessions by 5%.	1.1 We will visit the classes in person or via Zoom to provide periodic updates to faculty and students.  1.2 As part of our efforts to increase overall faculty participation, we will host an additional in-person faculty feedback session. This session will serve as a valuable platform for faculty members to share their insights, experiences, and suggestions, thereby contributing to the continuous improvement of our Service-Learning program.
2. To increase student participation in a High-Impact Practice (Service-Learning) and remove barriers to faculty and student participation in the Service-Learning modality, the number of completed Service-Learning Affiliation Agreements with organizations willing to	2.1 Connect with additional organizations and introduce them to the Service-Learning Affiliation Agreement document. Complete the document and record it using the Exxat software.  2.2

<p>have Service-Learning students will increase from 10 to 20.</p>	<p>Create an additional Service-Learning project in the fall and spring semesters so that all Stockton students, faculty, and staff can engage with the community more.</p>
<p>3. To promote the scholarship of engagement, implement during the academic year a once-per-semester open session via Zoom and in person for faculty and staff interested in developing their scholarship of engagement.</p>	<p>3.1 Continue to promote the Scholarship of Engagement through our current practices (15-Minute Splash of Community Engagement presentations and sessions during the CTLD orientation offerings for new faculty and CTLD Week of Teaching).</p>
<p>4. To increase students' access to those services that would allow them to persist in their education, organize two community resources fairs per academic year in collaboration with on-campus offices and centers, which already provide supportive services, connecting them to external community resources to strengthen the students' support network overall.</p>	<p>4.1 Organize two community resource fairs and manage four Atlantic County Community Resource Roundtable meetings per academic year.</p>

## Appendix

### Fiscal Year 2024 SCCESL Assessment Matrix

<b>FY24 SCCESL Assessment Matrix</b>	
<b>Student Leader Assessment</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Engagement Leadership Team Competency Self-Assessment	Mid-April
Engagement Leadership Team Exit Interview	Mid-April
<b>Stockton Student Assessment</b>	
<b>Stockton Student Assessment</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Impact of Engagement on Students	Mid-March
Homework Completion Program Volunteer Surveys	Mid-April
Fall Day of Service Impact Survey	Early September
MLK Day of Service Impact Survey	MLK Day
EOF Student Summer Impact Survey	Late July
Service-Learning students' pre- and post-test attitudes towards engagement and agency	Mid-December and Mid-June
Longitudinal impact of community engagement activities and participation in a Service-Learning course on Stockton students	Ongoing
Participation frequencies and demographics of Stockton students who volunteer in all homegrown community engagement programs	Ongoing
<b>Stockton Faculty and Staff Assessment</b>	
<b>Stockton Faculty and Staff Assessment</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Impact of Engagement on Staff	Mid-April
Impact of Engagement on Faculty	Mid-February
Mid-Semester Service-Learning Check	Mid-March
Service-Learning Faculty Breakfast	Mid-May
MLK Day of Service Impact Survey	MLK Day
<b>Community Member/Partner Assessment</b>	
<b>Community Member/Partner Assessment</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Impact of Engagement on Community Partners	Late-May
Naturalization Class Participant Feedback	Early May
English Learner Class Participant Feedback	Early May
Computer Class Participant Feedback	Early May
MLK Day of Service Impact Survey	MLK Day
Focus Group Breakfast with Community Partners	Mid-August
Survey of the impact of the Homework Completion Program on the parents of the youth	Late-April
Survey of the youth who participate in the Homework Completion Programs	Late-April
Participation frequencies and demographics for all homegrown community engagement programs	Ongoing

## **Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Students**

**Purpose:** to assess the impact of students' experiences with community engagement and Service-Learning over the past year.

**Response rate:** 371 surveys were completed

**Survey method:** In-person during tabling and online via Qualtrics

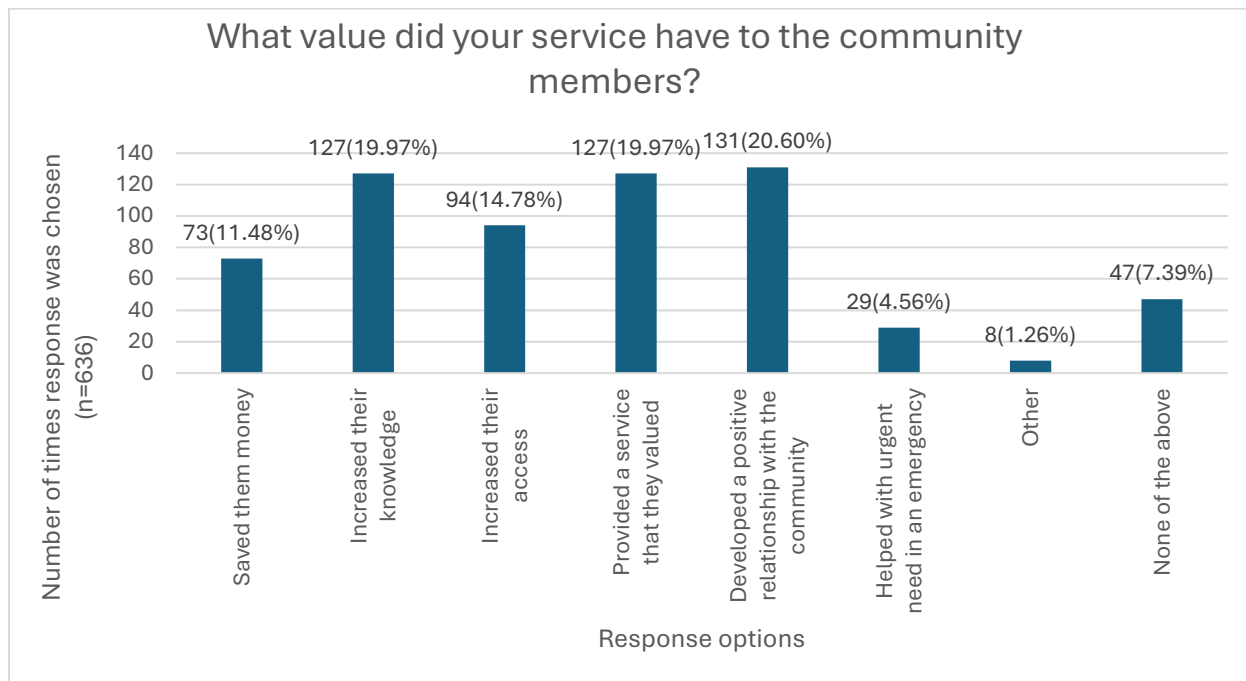
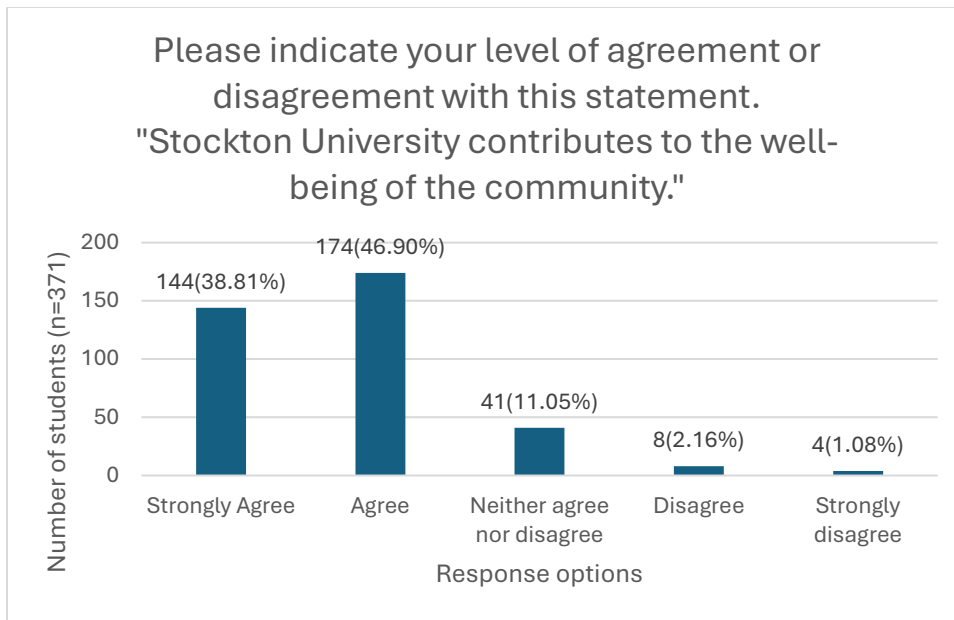
**Data collection period:** April through May of 2024

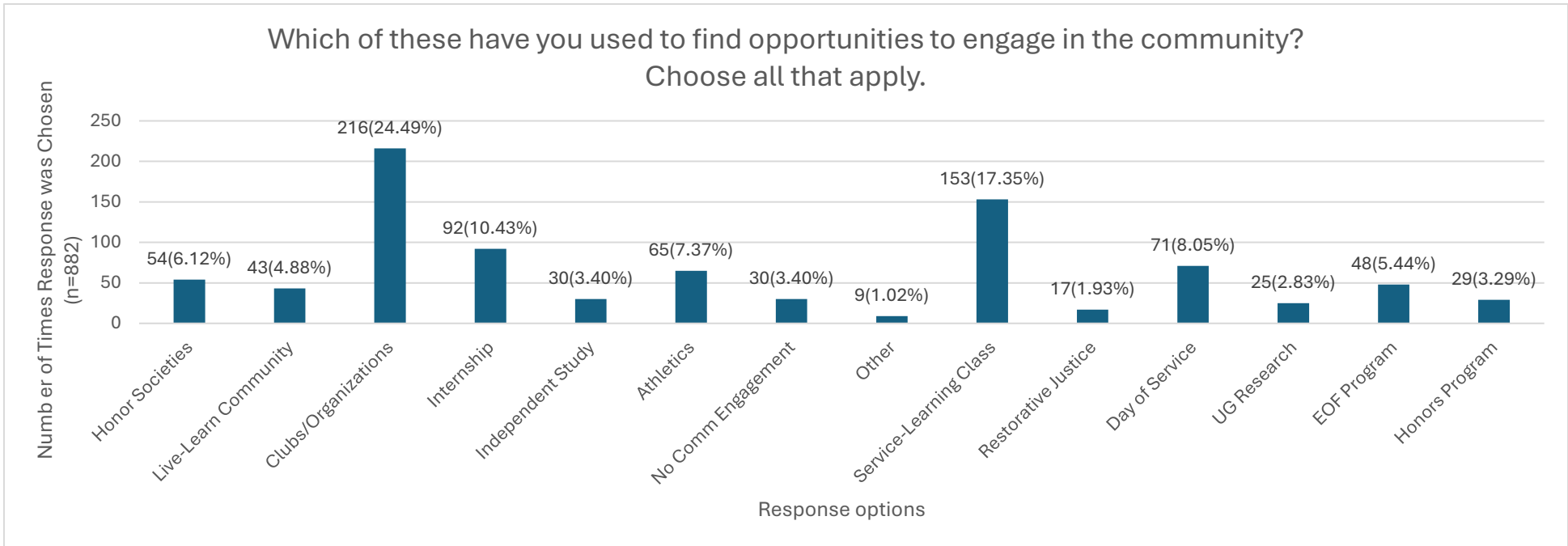
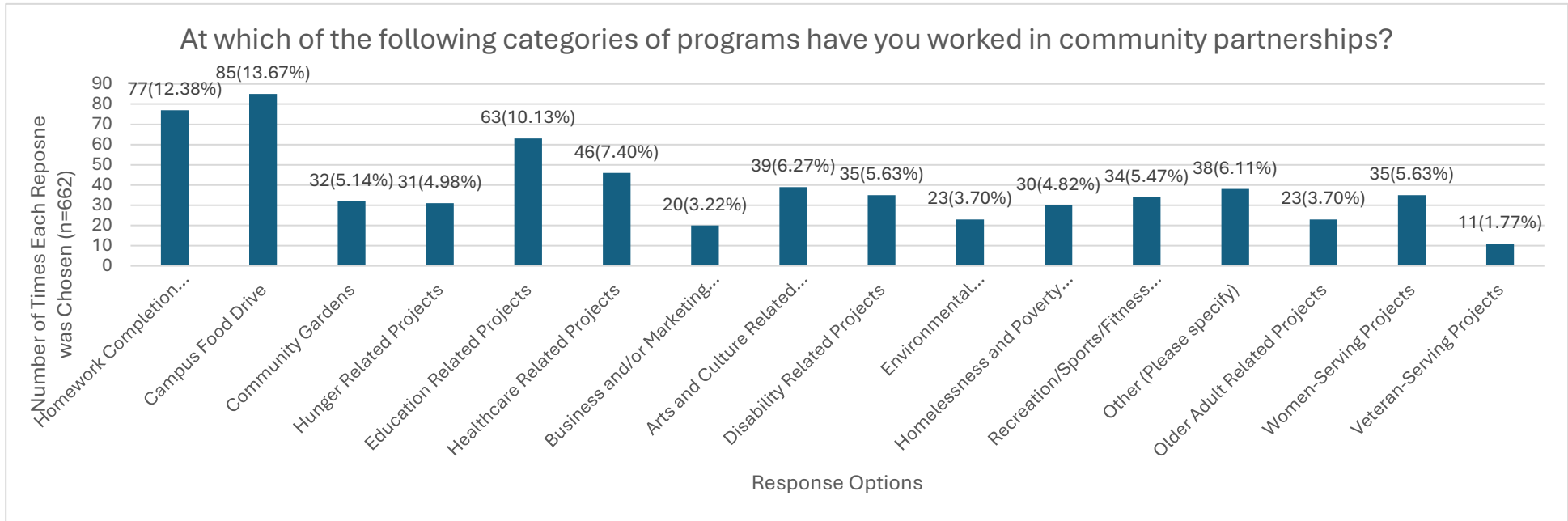
**Sampling method:** Non-probability sampling

The 2024 Impact of Community Engagement on Students survey was distributed using a new methodology designed to increase the survey response rate from FY23. Engagement Leadership Team members of the SCCESL tabled at all instructional sites and collected the surveys on tablets and through a QR code that students could scan with their cell phones. Students spun a virtual prize wheel to win a snack or a Wawa gift card for completing the survey. The results are displayed in the charts below.

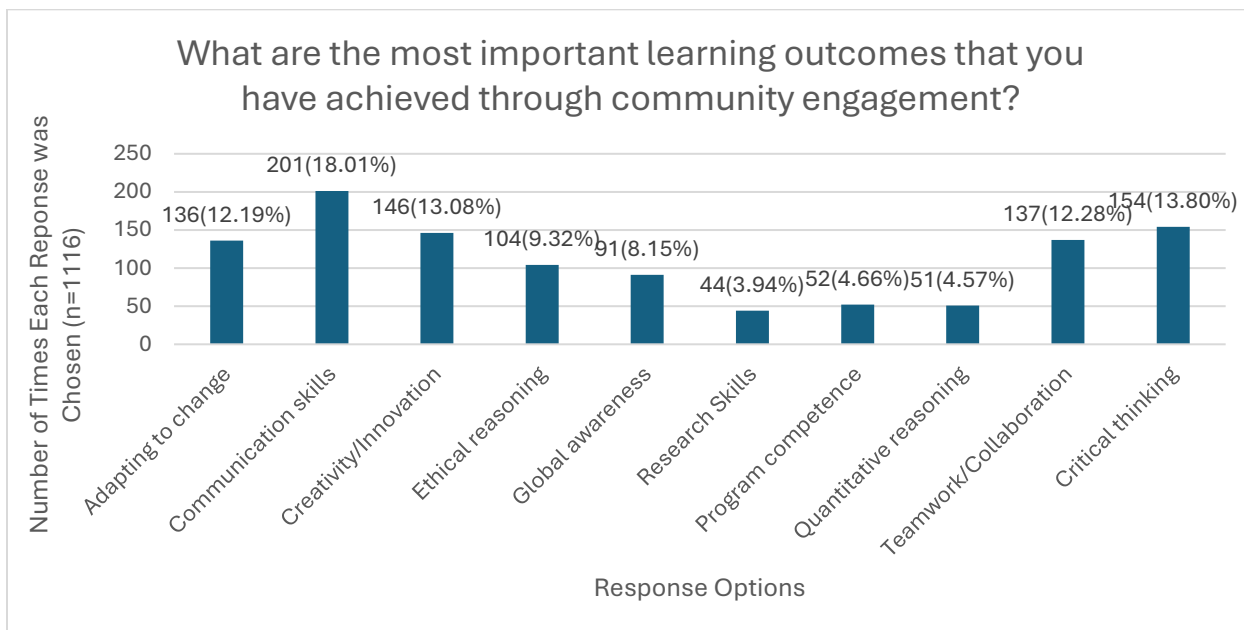
### **Presentation of Findings**

The sample size for the 2024 Impact of Community Engagement survey increased from 201 to 371. Demographic data for the students responding to the survey show that the average age of students who completed the survey was 21.35 years old. There was an even distribution of the classes of students who completed the survey. 82.48% of students who responded (n=306) reported having a full-time or part-time job or a combination of the two. The following charts and tables present the data on the pathways to engagement and the perceived impact of community engagement activities on students, including their impressions of the impact on their learning.









**Table 1. Frequency distribution of students' self-assessment of the impact of community engagement**

Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your Community Engagement Work

	Mean	n	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It has increased my ability to effect change.	4.13	319	117(36.68%)	141(44.20%)	52(16.30%)	5(1.57%)	4(1.25%)
I have a much better understanding of important issues in society.	4.12	319	118(36.99%)	143(44.83%)	43(13.48%)	8(2.51%)	7(2.19%)
I am better able to understand perspectives other than my own.	4.09	319	113(35.42%)	135(42.32%)	61(19.12%)	7(2.19%)	3(0.94%)
I have learned a lot about myself.	4.08	319	113(35.42%)	134(42.01%)	60(18.81%)	10(3.13%)	2(0.63%)
My work was meaningful to the community.	4.08	319	107(33.54%)	149(46.71%)	51(15.99%)	7(2.19%)	5(1.57%)
I am more likely to contribute to public projects.	4.06	319	111(34.80%)	127(39.81%)	72(22.57%)	7(2.19%)	2(0.63%)
I am more likely to get involved with many types of community projects.	4.05	319	103(32.29%)	139(43.57%)	70(21.94%)	5(1.57%)	2(0.63%)
I made changes in the communities in which I served.	4.03	319	106(33.23%)	130(40.75%)	72(22.57%)	9(2.82%)	2(0.63%)
My values in democratic principles have been strengthened.	4.02	319	106(33.23%)	123(38.56%)	81(25.39%)	8(2.51%)	1(0.31%)
I know more about off campus communities.	3.98	319	103(32.29%)	127(39.81%)	72(22.57%)	15(4.70%)	2(0.63%)
I have conversations with friends about my community work.	3.97	319	104(32.60%)	123(38.56%)	75(23.51%)	13(4.08%)	4(1.25%)
I am better able to participate in discussions about civic and political issues in the communities.	3.97	319	98(30.72%)	129(40.44%)	80(25.08%)	10(3.13%)	2(0.63%)
My participation in acts of activism has increased.	3.96	319	103(32.29%)	121(37.93%)	78(24.45%)	14(4.39%)	3(0.94%)
I have engaged in research as a result of my community engagement activity.	3.92	319	101(31.66%)	124(38.87%)	67(21.00%)	23(7.21%)	4(1.25%)
I have not been changed by my community activities.	3.41	319	75(23.51%)	83(26.02%)	84(26.33%)	51(15.99%)	26(8.15%)

## Conclusion

The new methodology for the Impact of Engagement on Students Survey increased the response rate by 46%. Results of the assessment this year revealed that:

- "Critical Thinking," "Creativity/Innovation," and "Communication Skills" were three of Stockton University's 10 Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) students selected most often as the most important learning outcomes they have achieved through community engagement.
- When asked what value their service had to the community, "Increased their knowledge," "Provided a service they valued," and "Developed a positive relationship with the community" were selected most often.

As Table One outlines, when students were asked to rate the impact of their engagement on themselves, 81.7% (n=258) agreed or strongly agreed that their engagement activities increased their ability to effect change. This represents a 9% increase from 2023. 75% (n=238) agreed or strongly agreed that they are more likely to get involved with many types of community projects. This represents a 3% increase from 2023.

The SCCESL looks forward to increasing the sample size for the FY 25 Impact of Engagement on Students survey to include more voices in the findings.

## Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Community Partners

**Purpose:** to assess the impact of Community Partners' experiences with community engagement over the past year.

**Response rate:** 21 surveys were completed

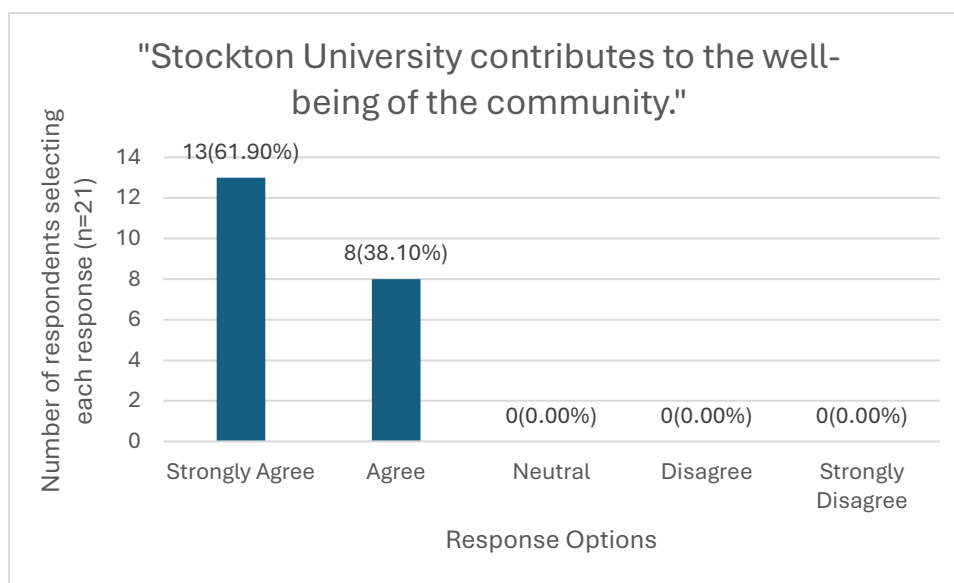
**Survey method:** Online via Qualtrics

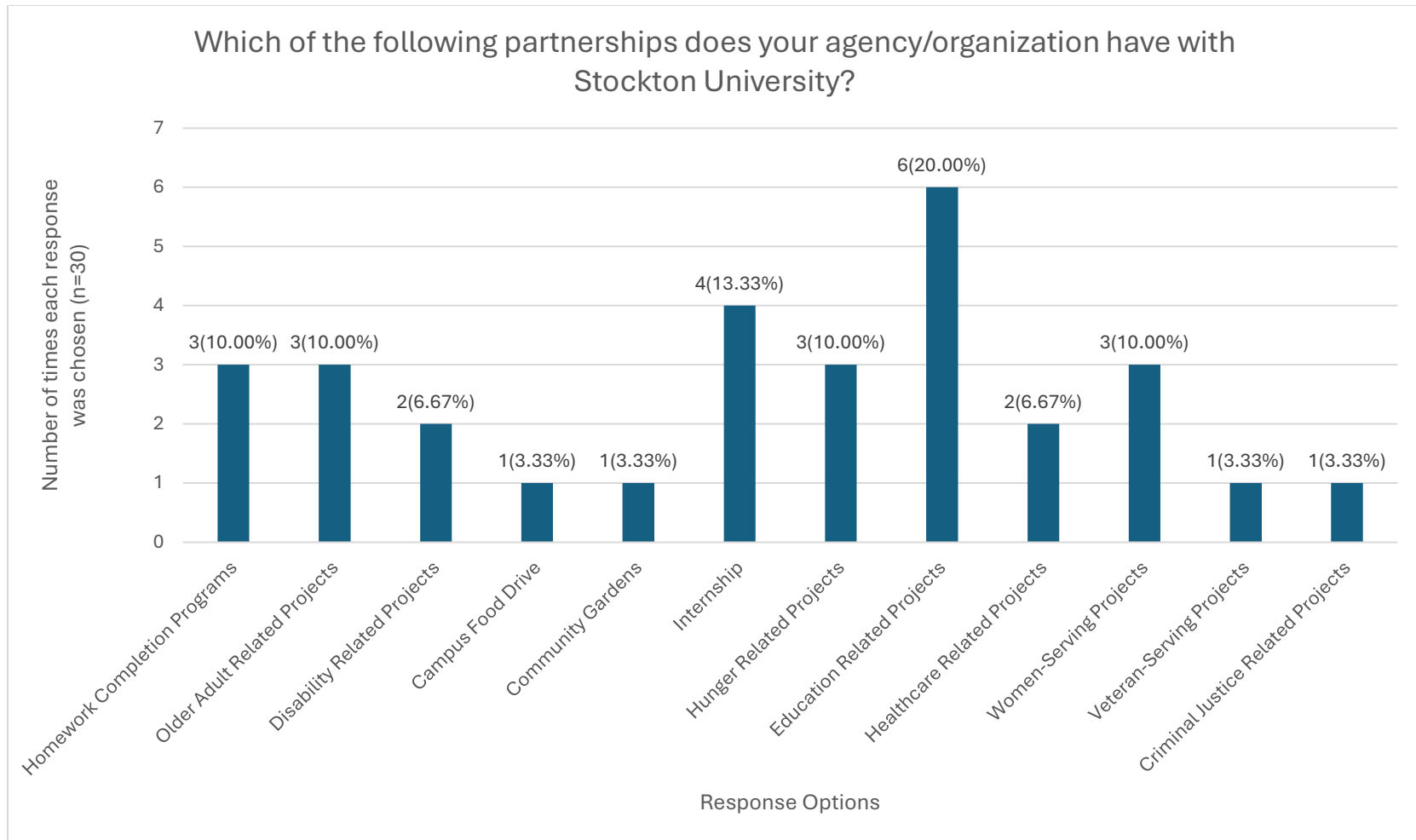
**Data collection period:** April through May of 2024

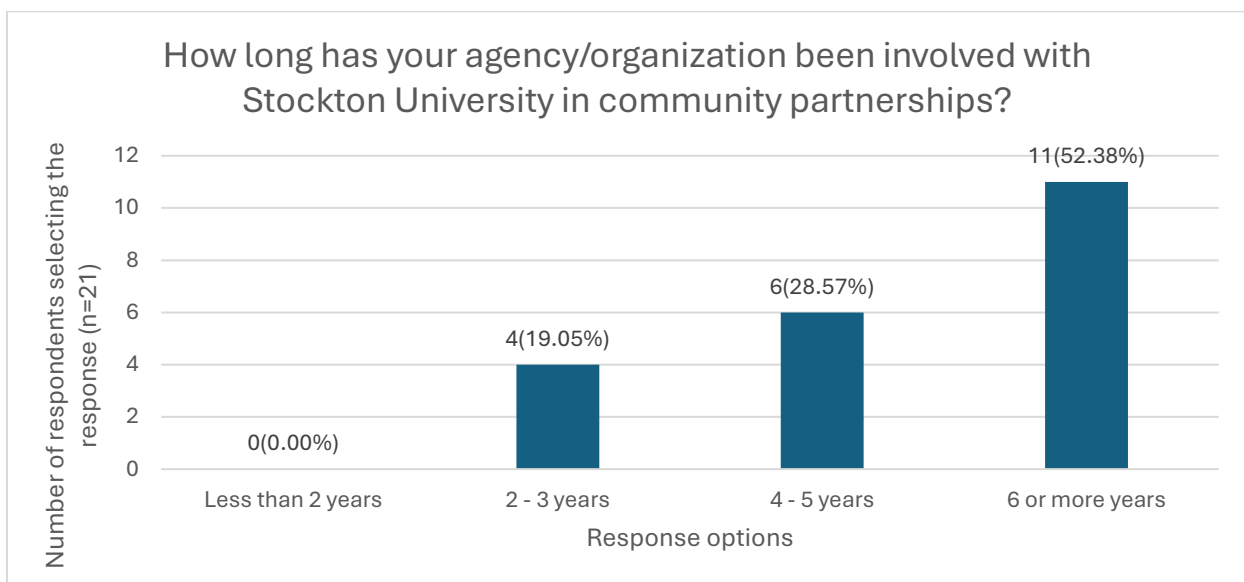
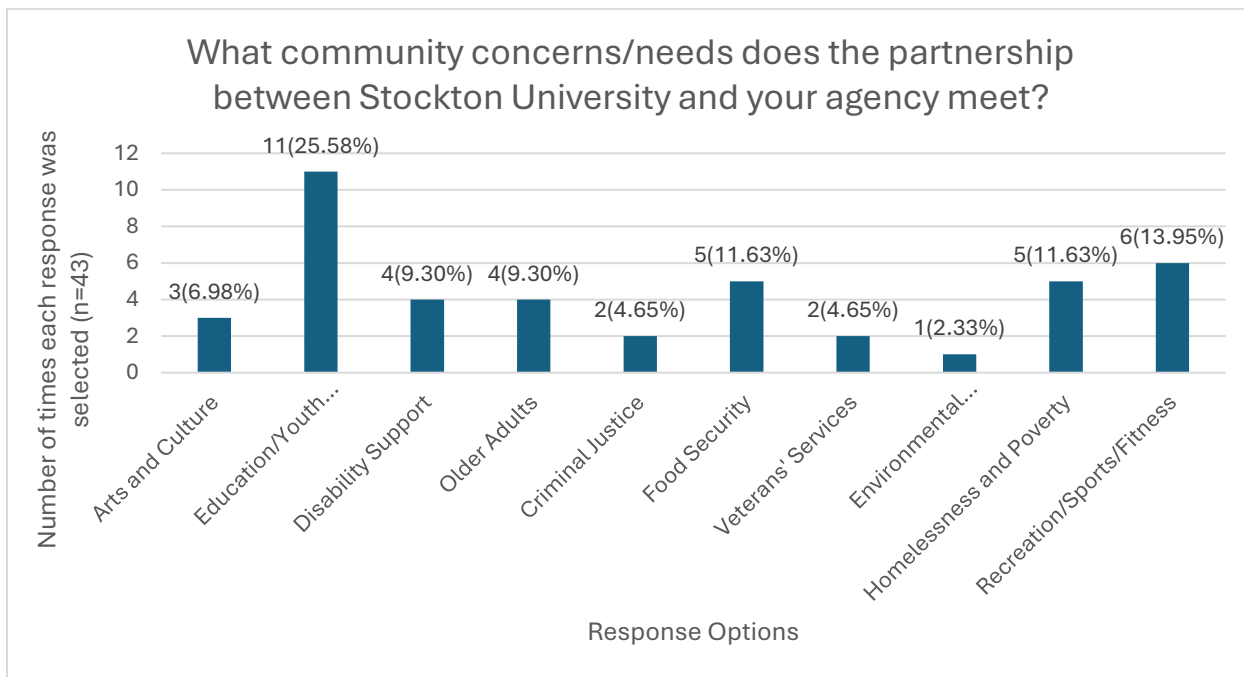
**Sampling method:** Non-probability sampling

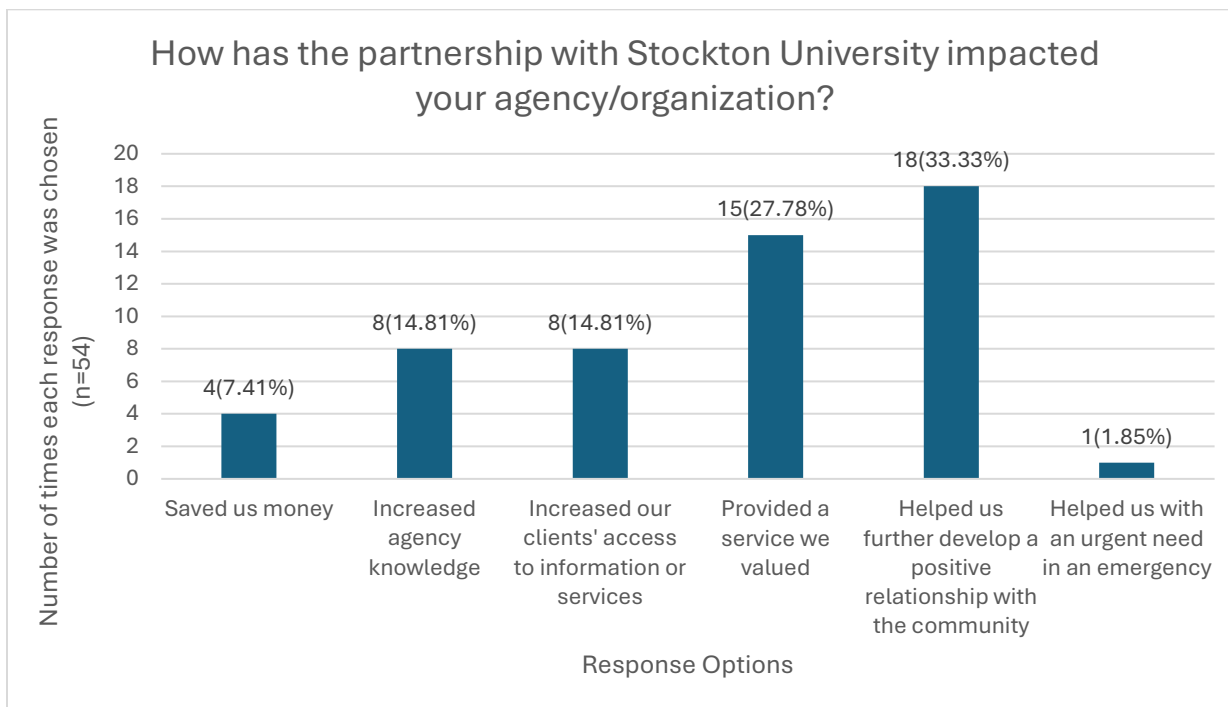
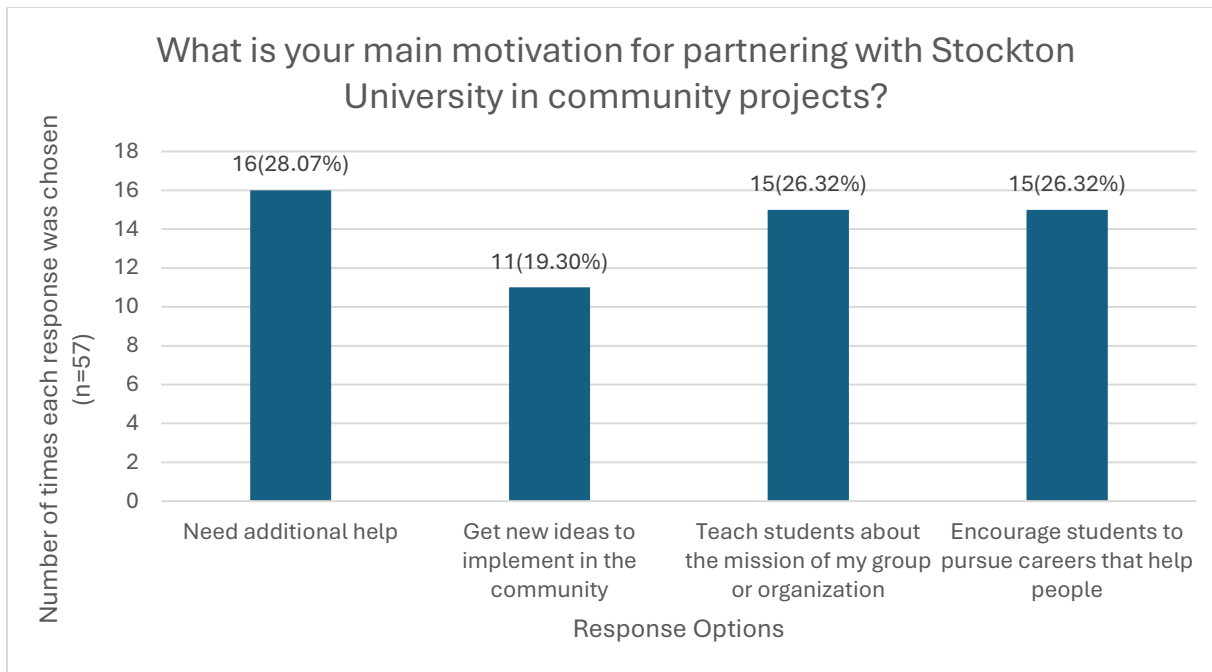
The 2024 Impact of Engagement on Community Partners survey was distributed using email and text message. The survey asked community partners about the nature of their relationship with the university and their perceptions and impact of their partnership. The results are displayed in the charts below. The results are displayed in the charts below.

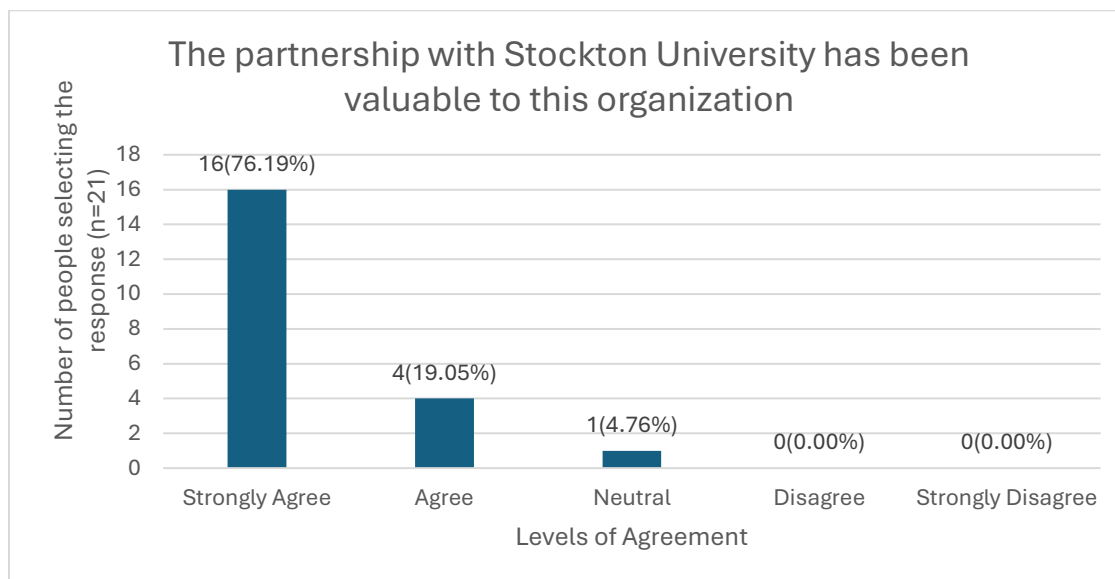
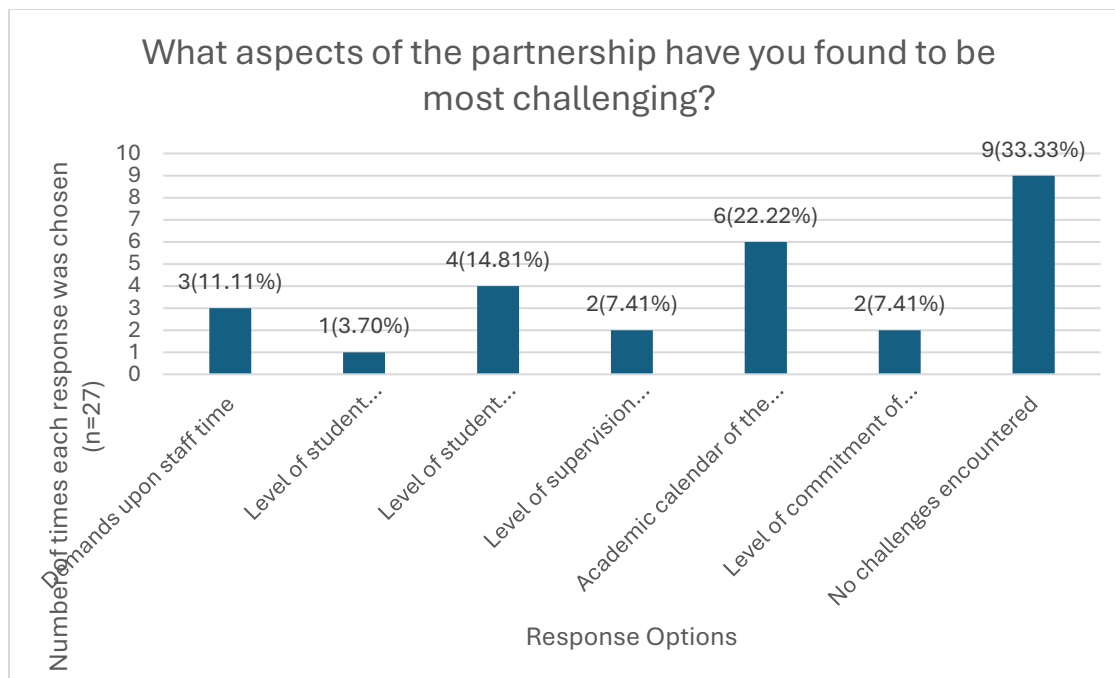
### Presentation of Findings



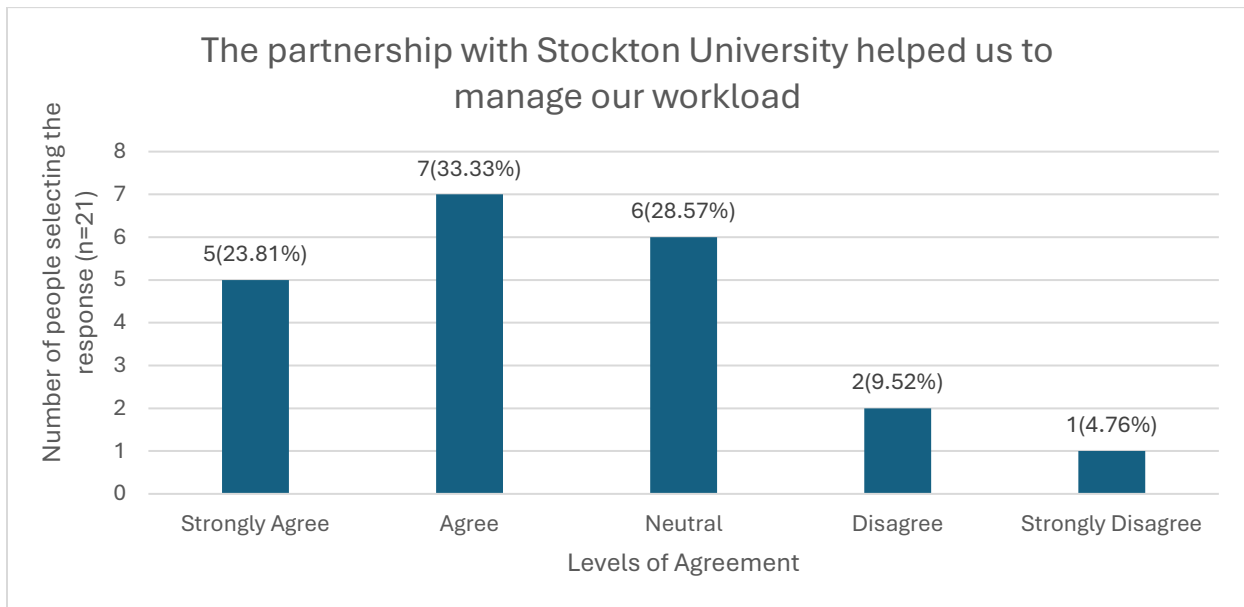
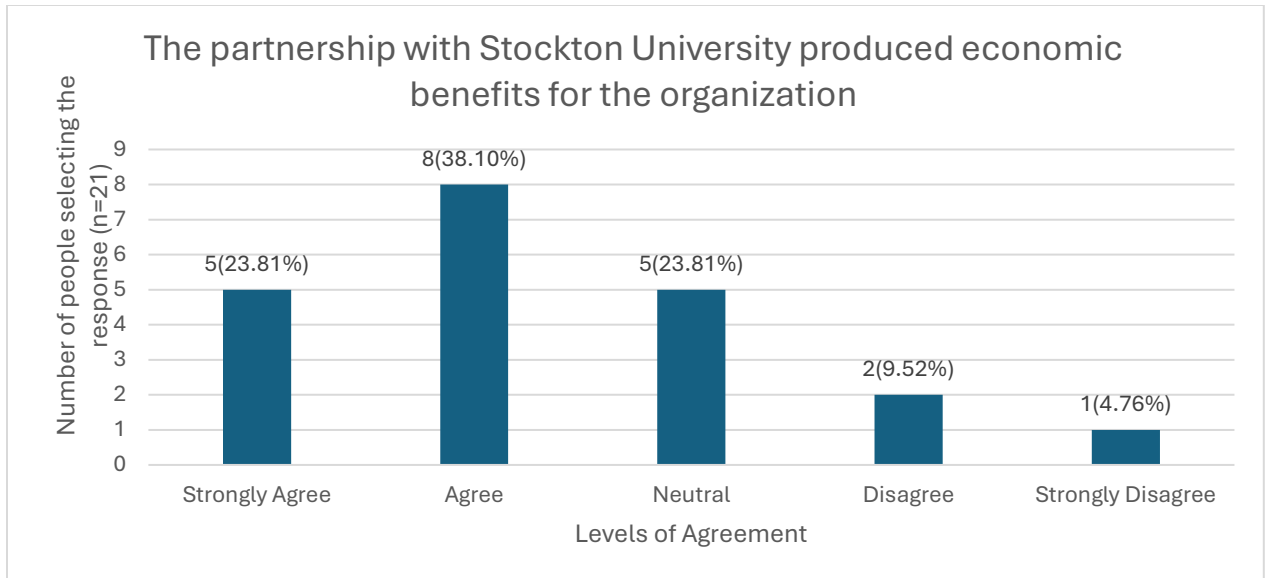


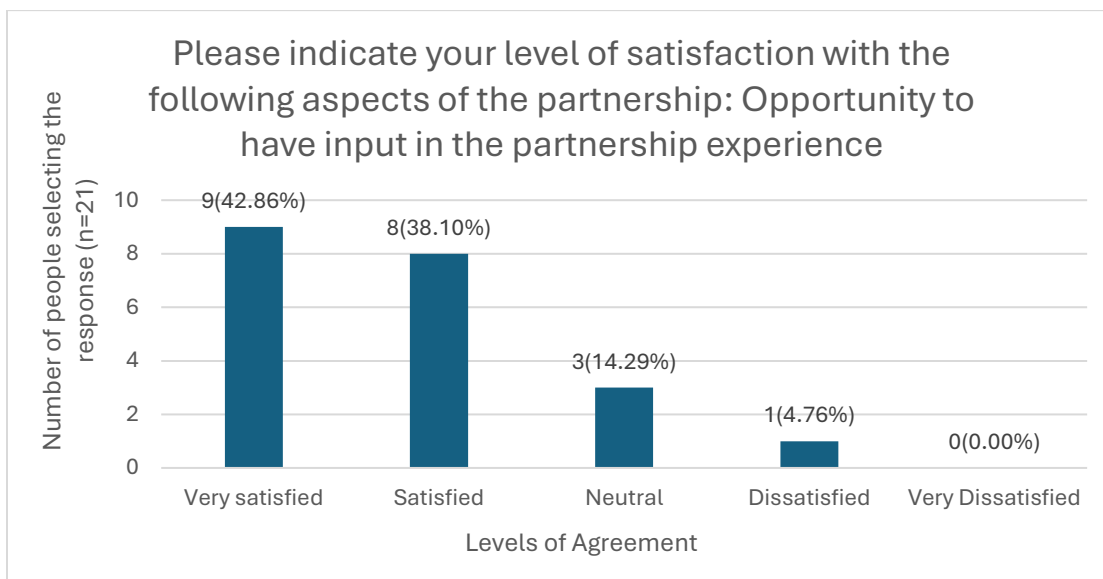
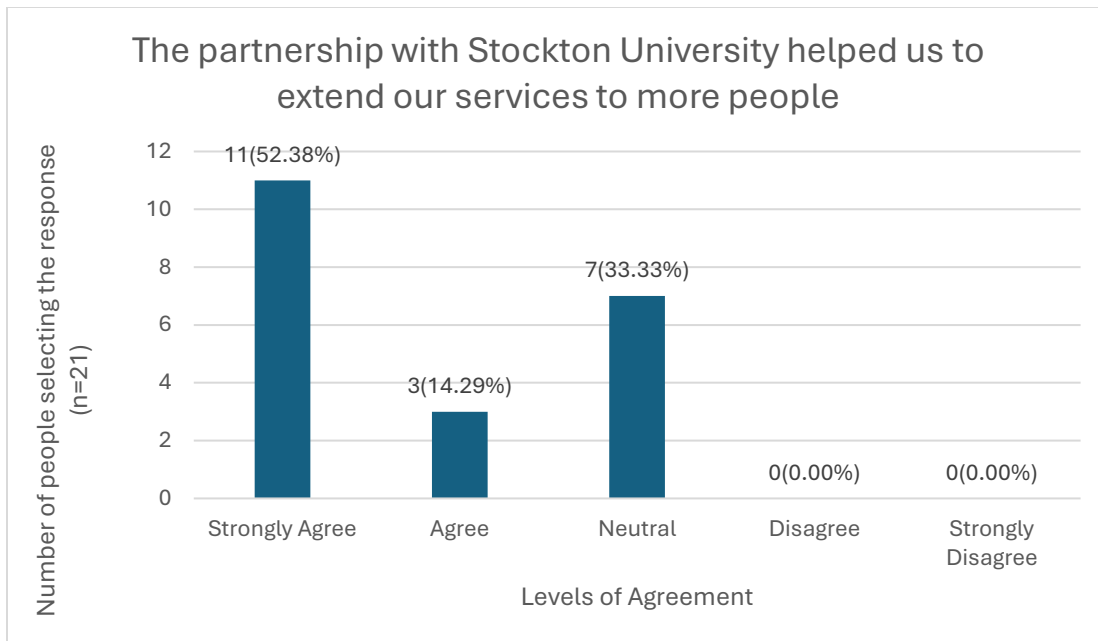


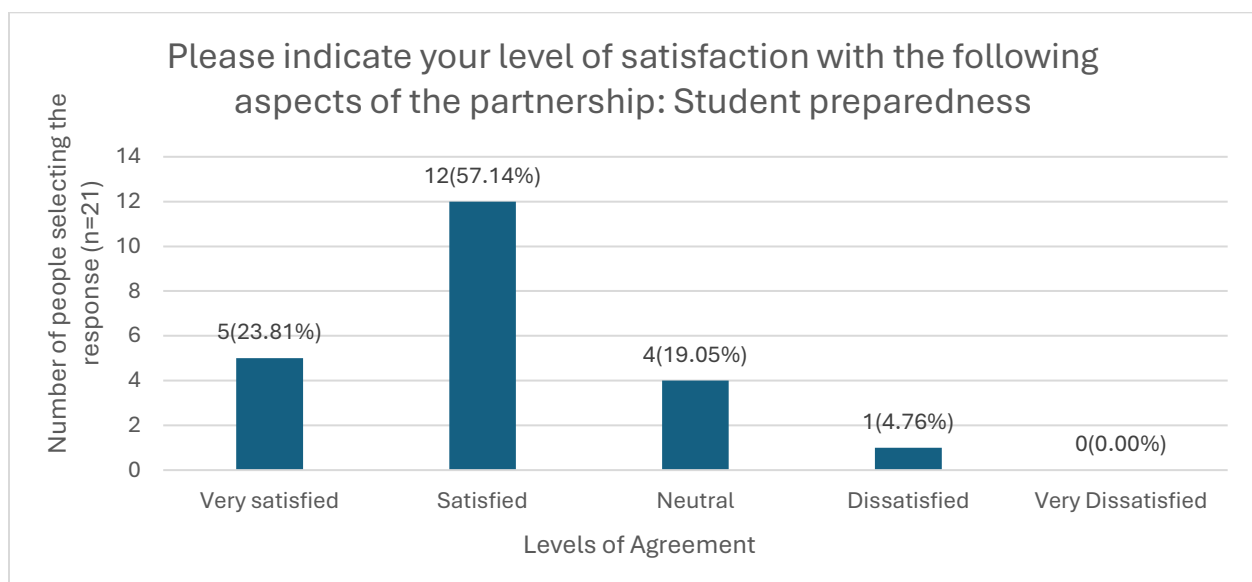


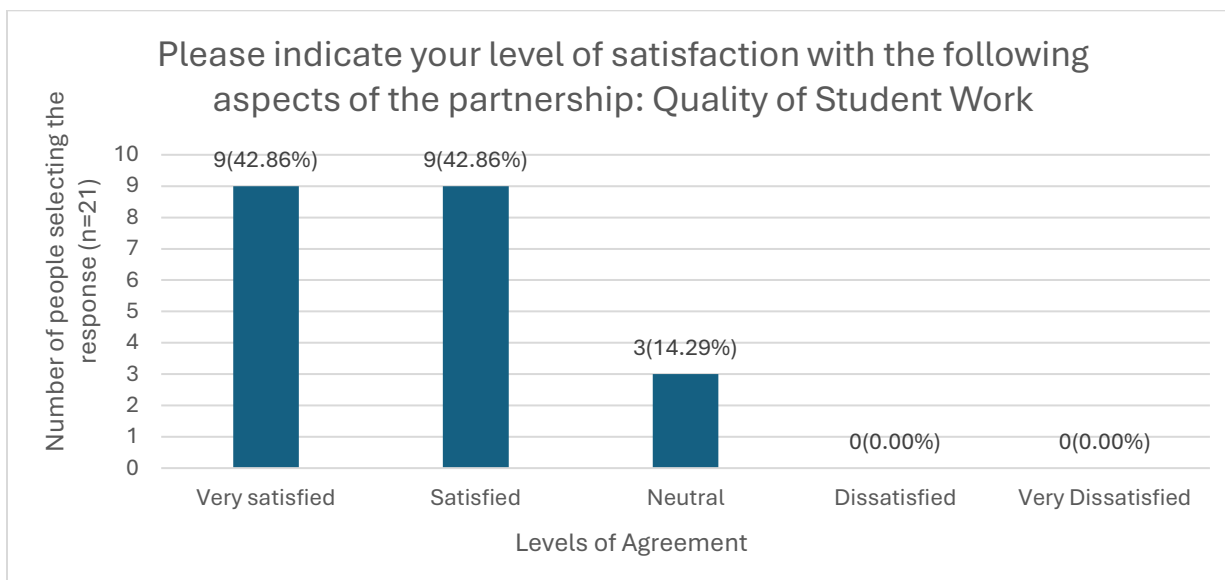
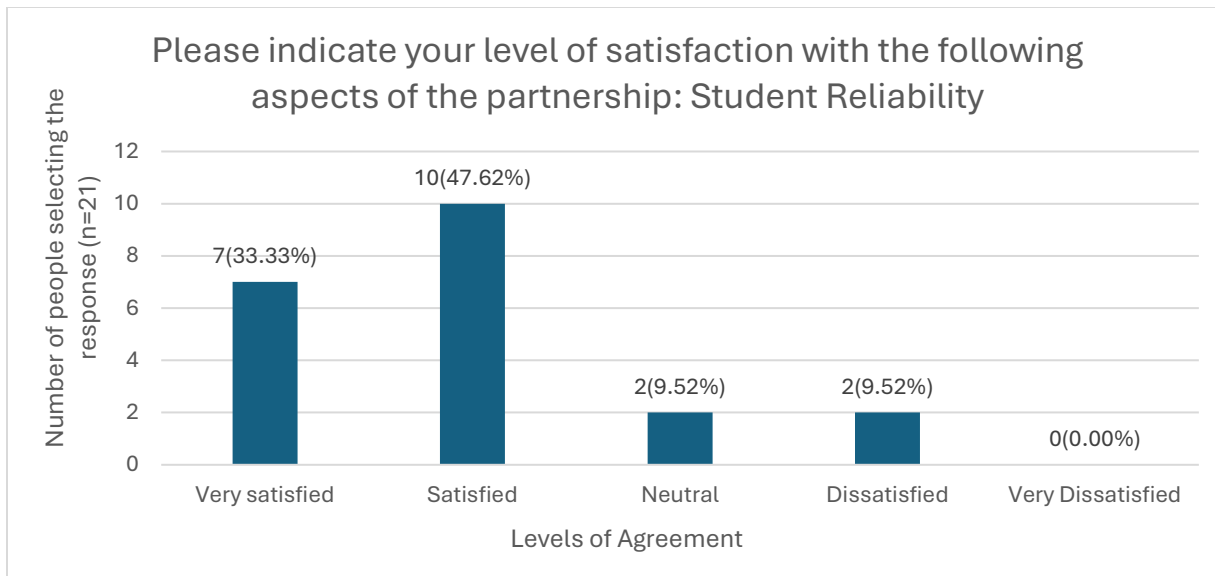












### Conclusion

Of the community partners who completed the survey (n=21), most felt that their collaboration with Stockton University provided them with new ideas for the community and increased their ability to serve the community. All the respondents (n=21) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Stockton University contributes to the well-being of the community."

Community partners' responses align with the students' responses on similar questions. When asked what value their service had to the community, "Increased their knowledge," "Provided a service they valued," and "Developed a positive relationship with the community" were selected

most often. Community partners' top three responses matched the students' although "Increased agency knowledge" was selected as many times as "Increased our clients' access to information or services."

While not all partnerships are intended to provide an economic benefit to the community partners, 61.91% (n=13) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "The partnership with Stockton University produced economic benefits for the organization." Finally, 80.96% (n=17) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their opportunity to have input into the partnership experience.

## Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Faculty

**Purpose:** to assess the impact of faculty members' experiences with community engagement and Service-Learning partnerships over the past year.

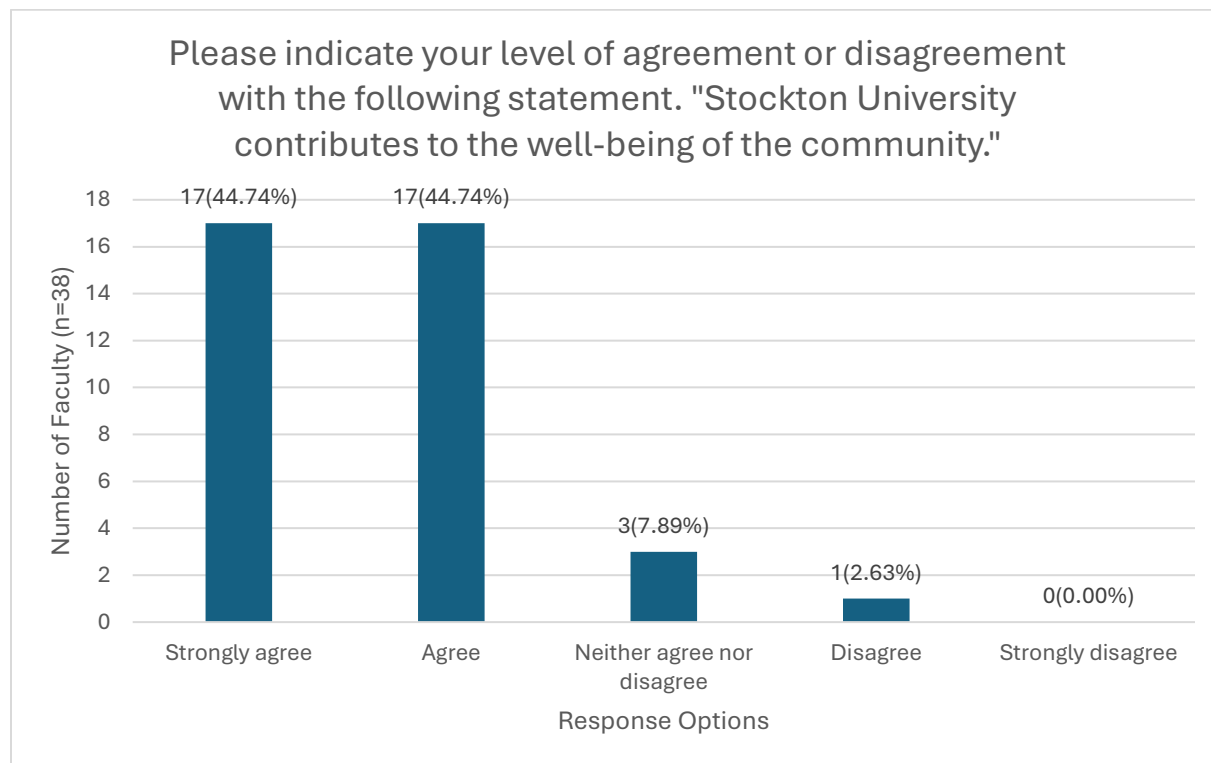
**Response rate:** 38 surveys were completed

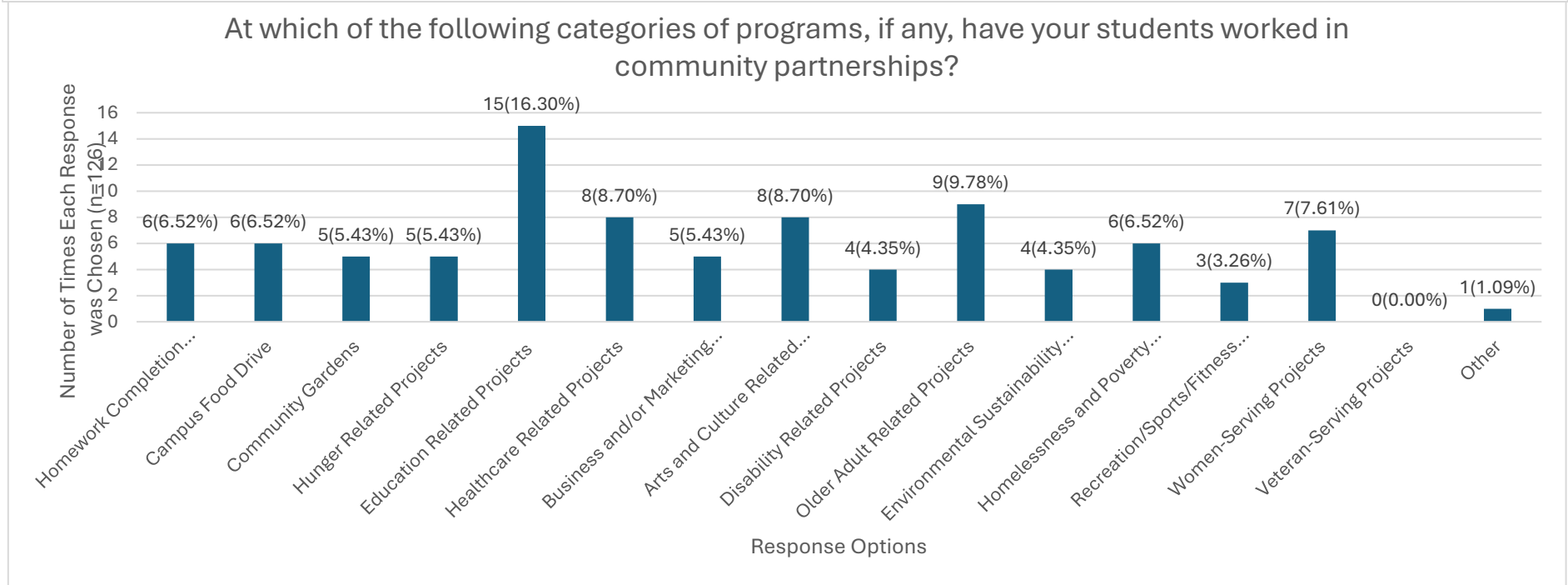
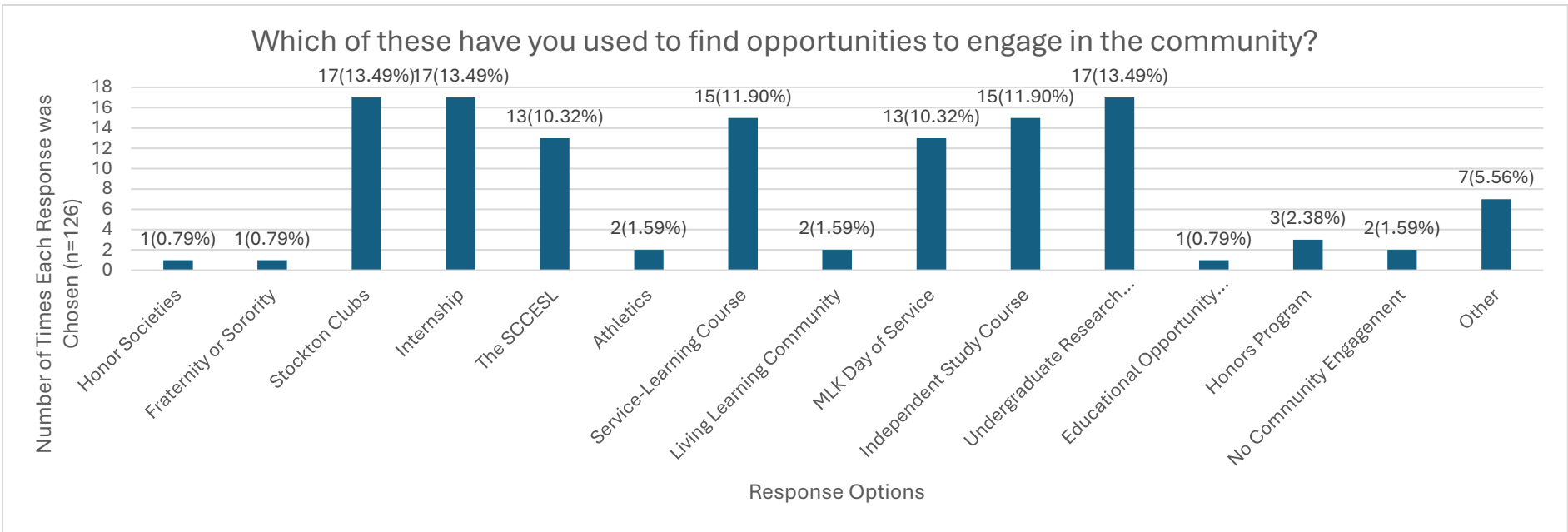
**Survey method:** online via Qualtrics survey.

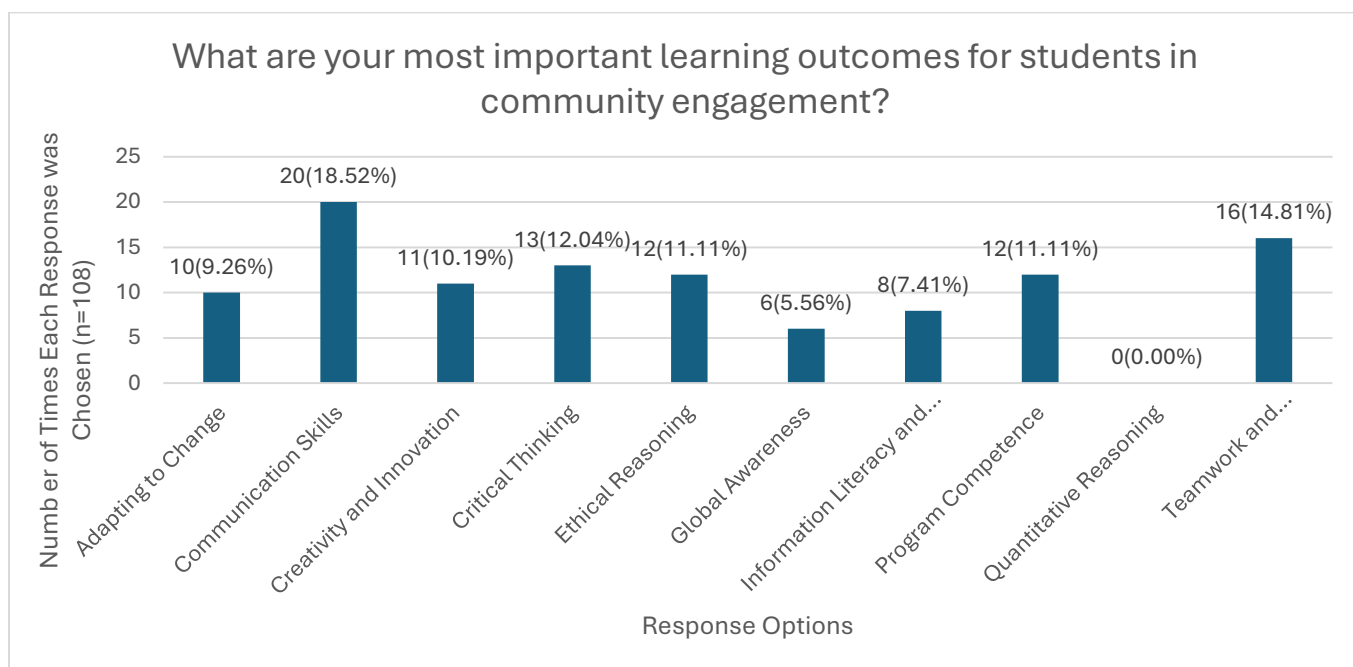
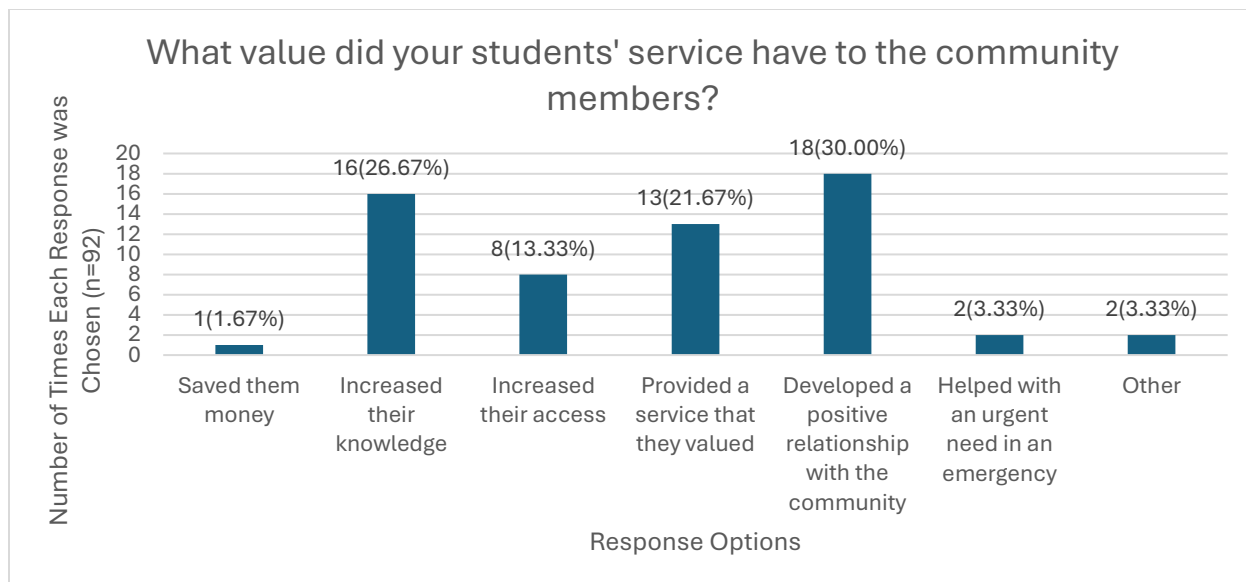
**Data collection period:** April through May of 2024

**Sampling method:** Non-probability sampling

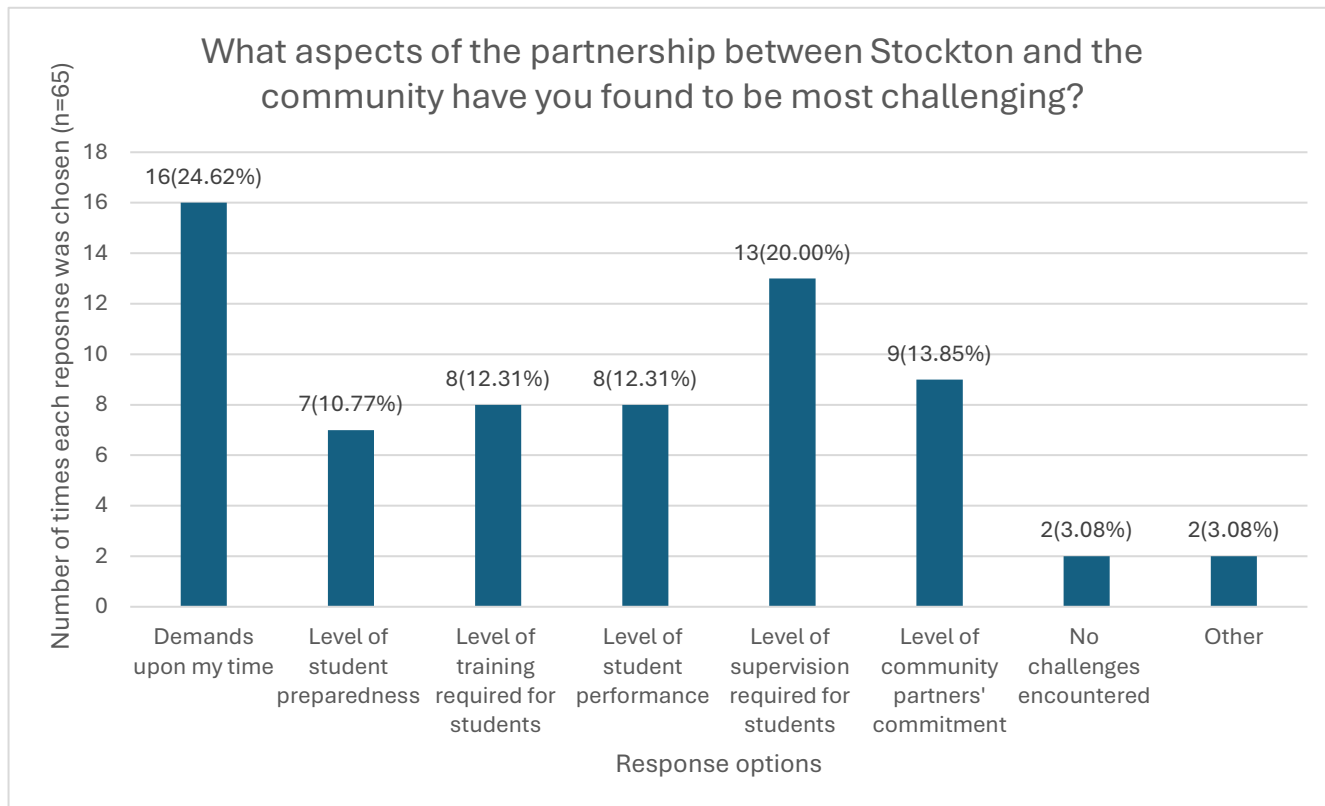
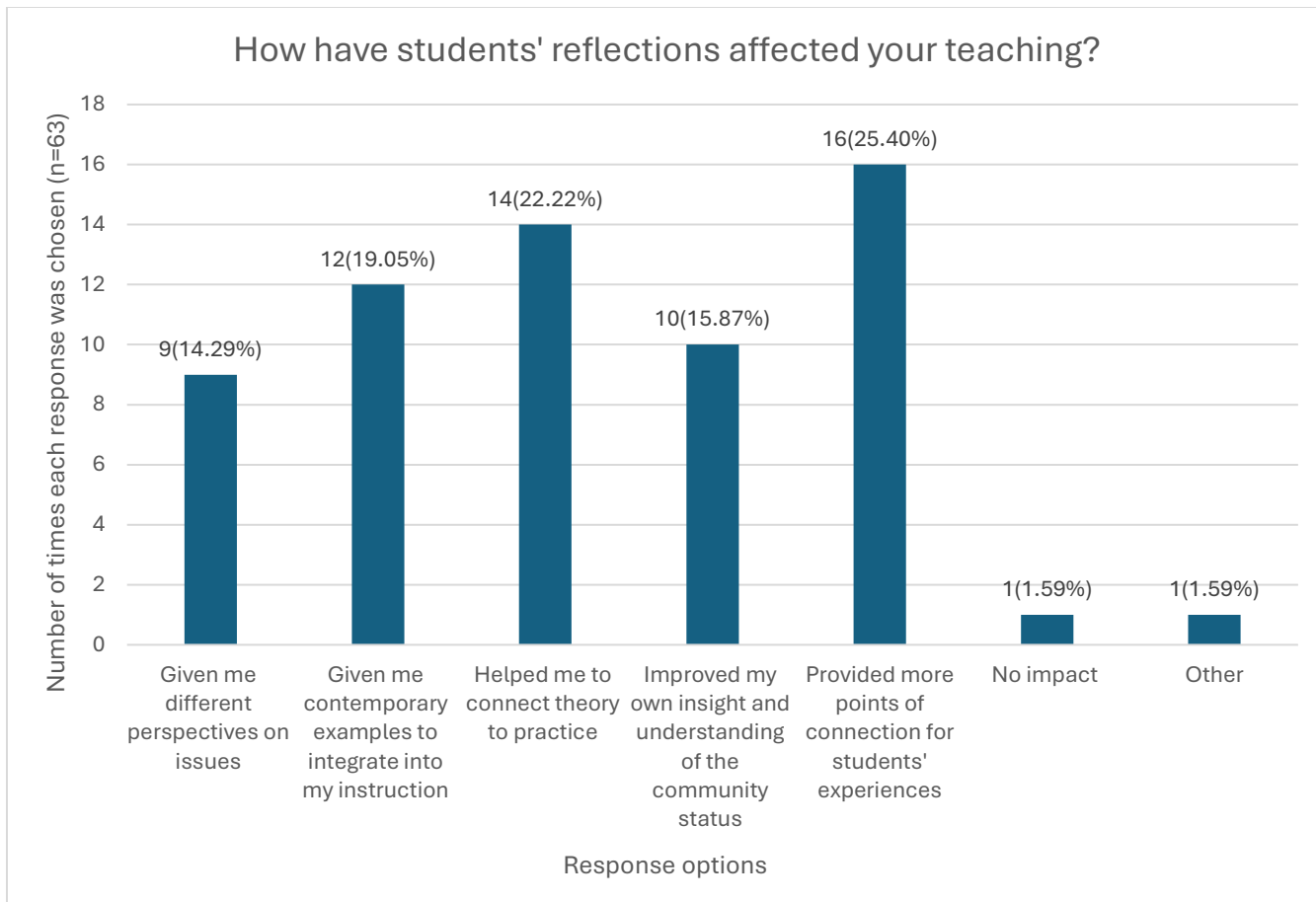
The 2024 Impact of Community Engagement on Faculty survey was distributed via the StockTalk listserv at Stockton University. The survey asked faculty about their participation in community engagement activities and the experiences that they had in FY 24. The results are displayed in the charts below.

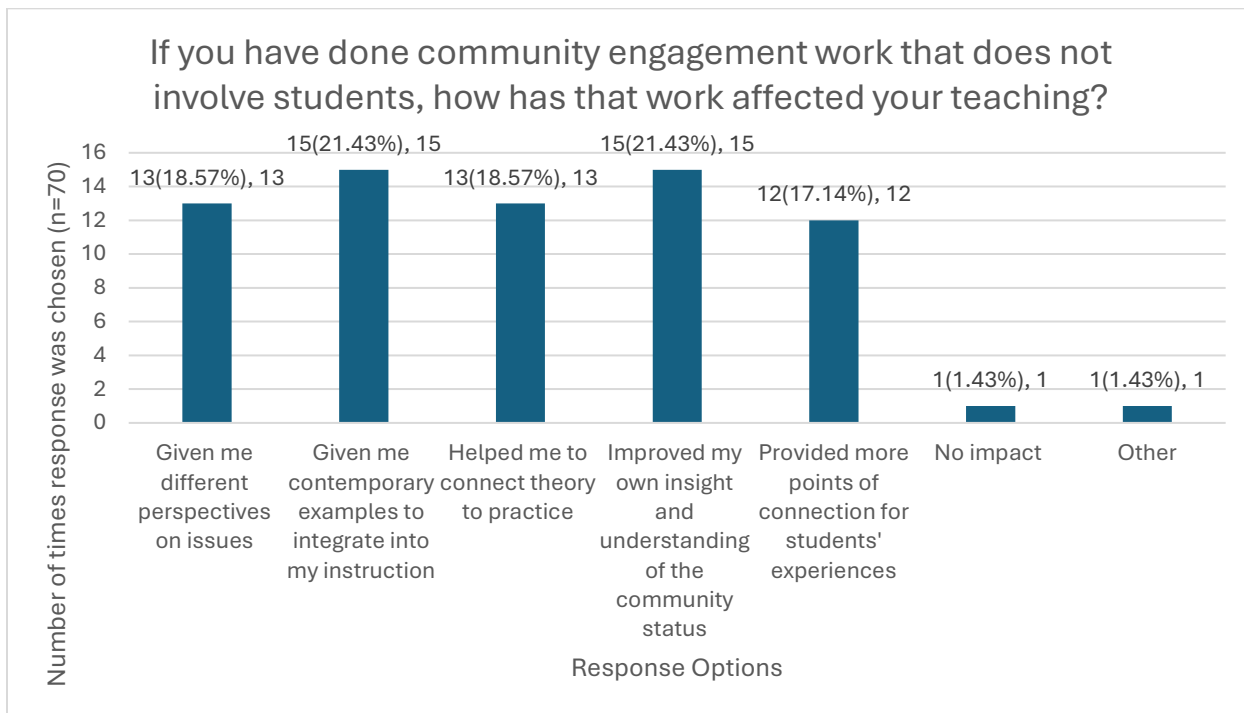
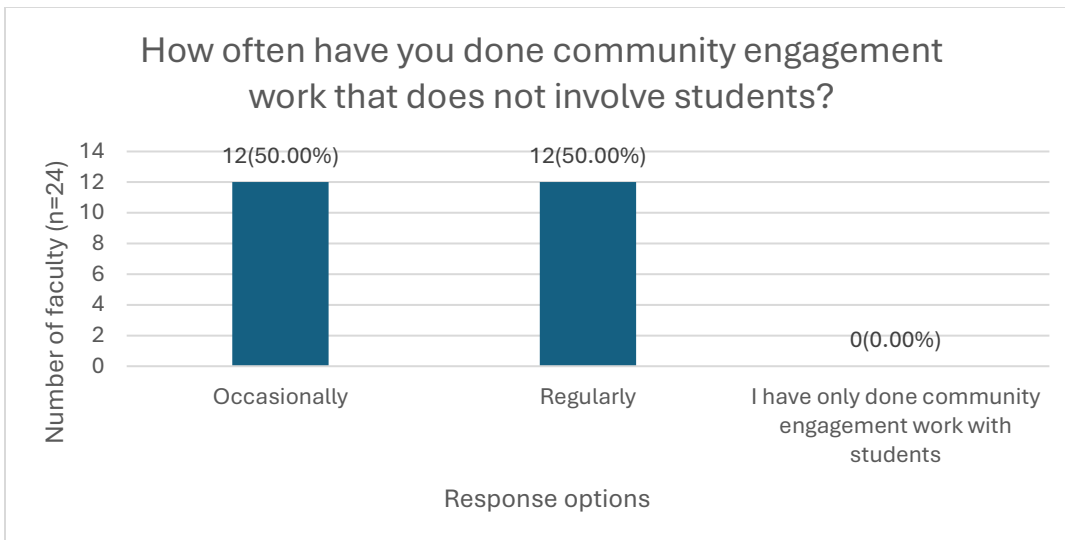












### Conclusion

The results of the faculty surveys indicate that 89.48% of the respondents (n=34) agree or strongly agree that Stockton University contributes to the well-being of the community. When asked how faculty access community engagement opportunities, Stockton clubs, internships, and undergraduate research were chosen most often (n=17 each). When asked what value their students' service had to the community, "increased the community's knowledge" was chosen 18 times (30.0%), and "students developed a positive relationship with the community" was chosen 16 times (26.67%). Communication (n=20, 18.52%) and Teamwork and Collaboration (n=16,

14.81%) were the ELOs chosen most often as the most important learning outcomes for their students.

### Assessment of the Impact of Community Engagement on Staff

**Purpose:** to assess the impact of faculty members' experiences with community engagement and Service-Learning partnerships over the past year.

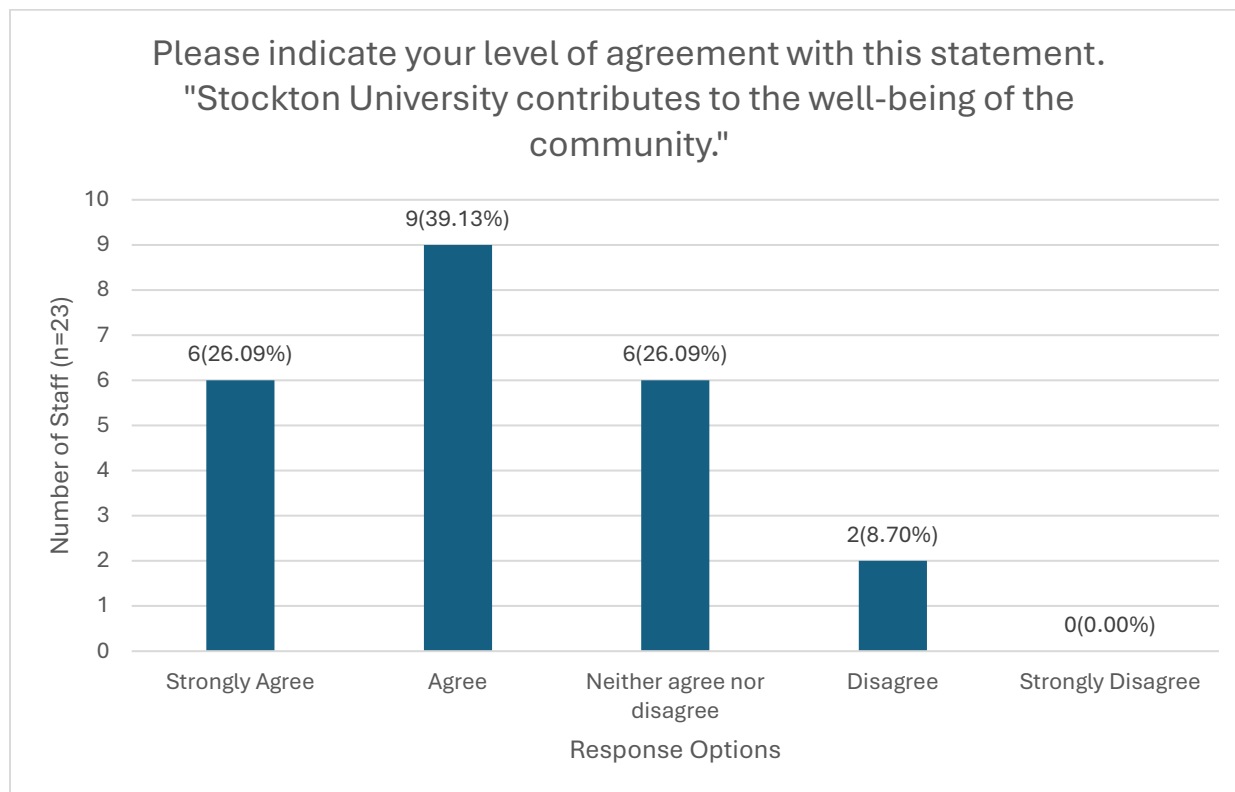
**Response rate:** 23 surveys were completed

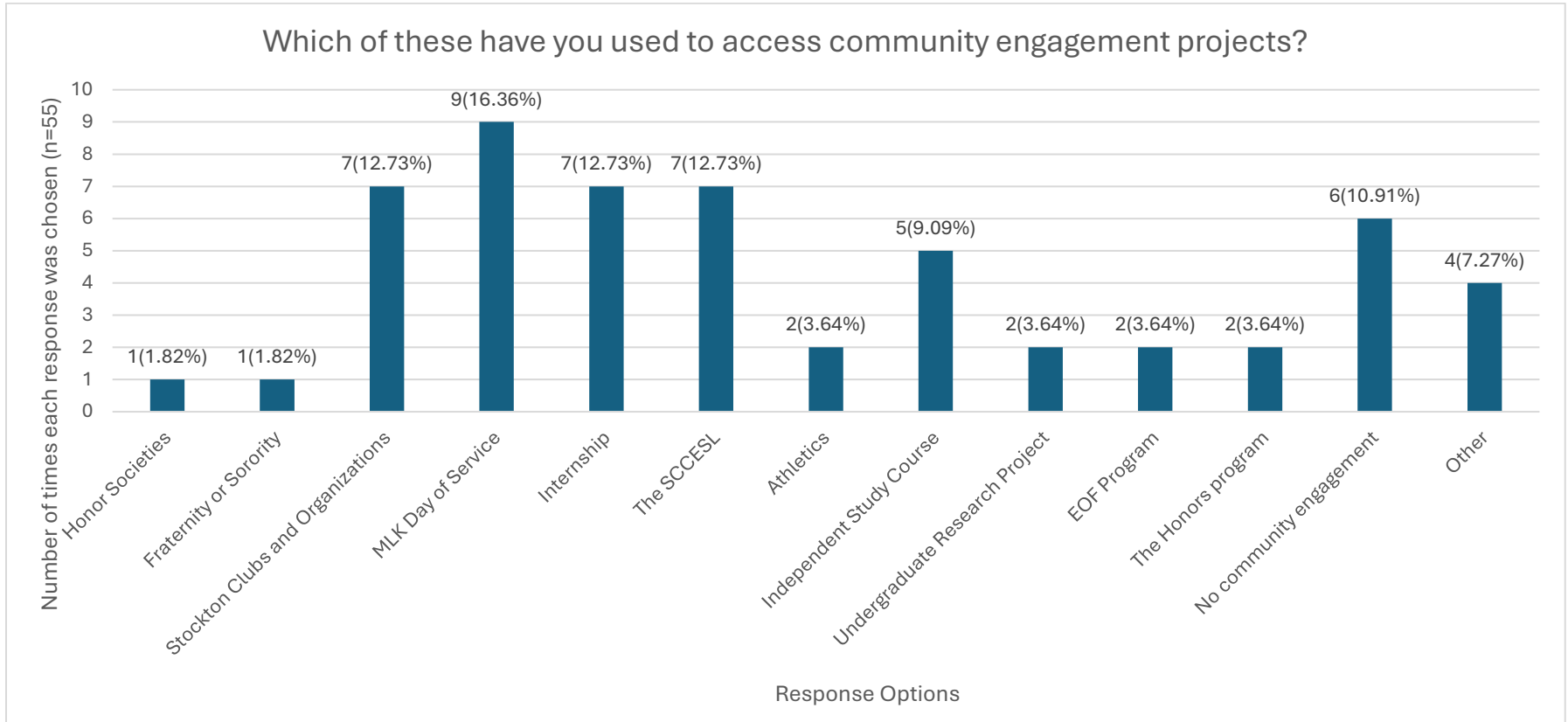
**Survey method:** online via Qualtrics survey.

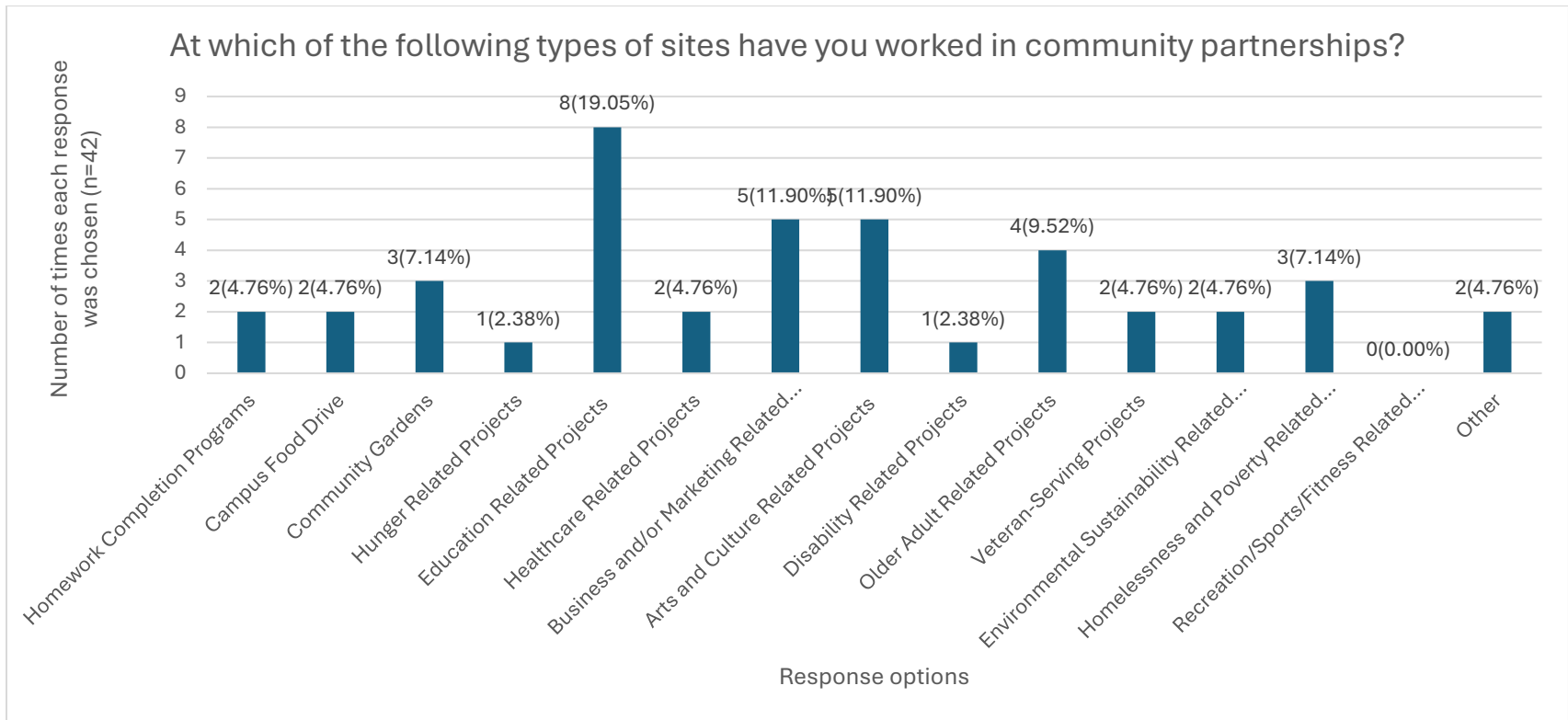
**Data collection period:** April through May of 2024

**Sampling method:** Non-probability sampling

The 2024 Impact of Community Engagement on Staff survey was distributed via the StockTalk listserv at Stockton University. The survey asked staff about their participation in community engagement activities and the experiences that they had in FY 24. The results are displayed in the charts below.



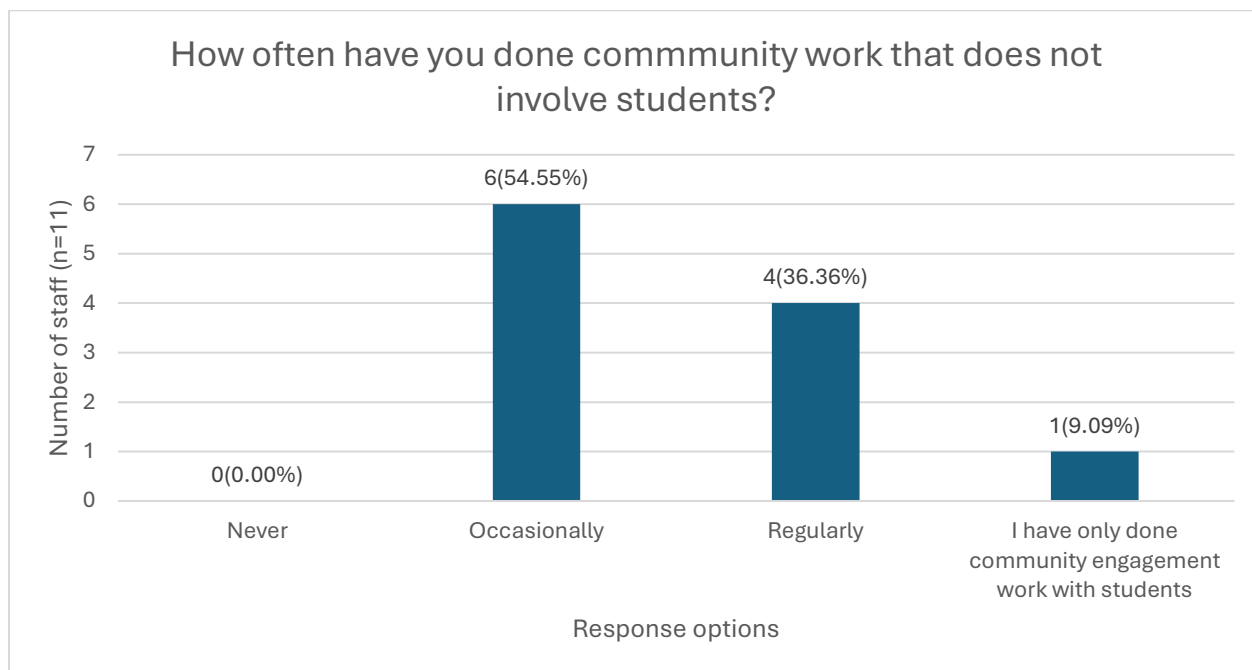
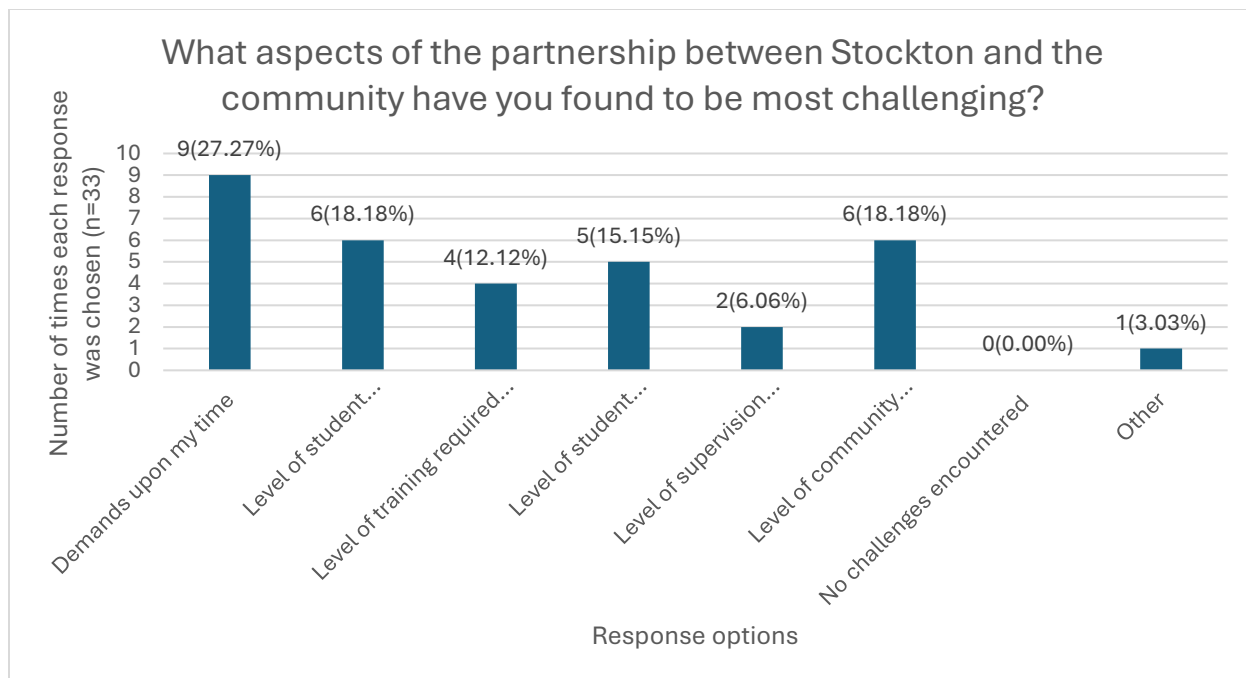




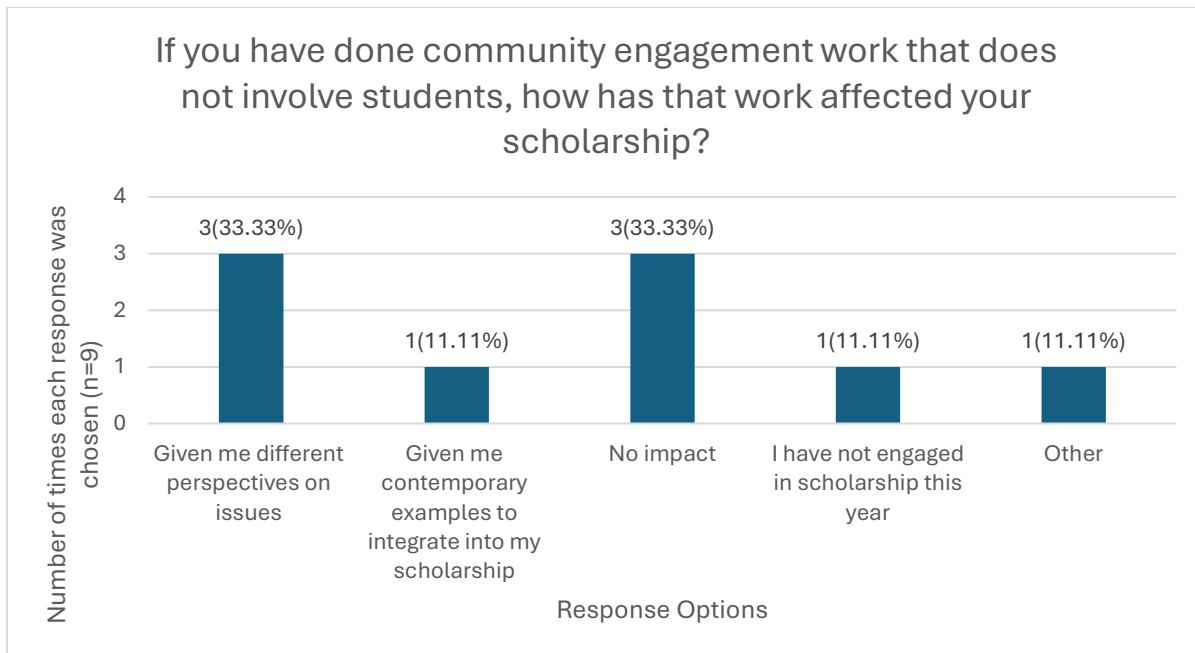
**Table 2. Frequency distribution of staff perceptions of the impact of community engagement. "My activity in the community..."**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. "My participation in community engagement work..."

	Mean	n	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Has been valuable to me	4.45	11	5(45.45%)	6(54.55%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Benefited the students I may encounter at Stockton	4.64	11	7(63.64%)	4(36.36%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Helped me to offer diversity in my role at Stockton	4.27	11	5(45.45%)	4(36.36%)	2(18.18%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Taught me new ways to address challenges	3.64	11	1(9.09%)	5(45.45%)	5(45.45%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Broadened my experiences	4.09	11	1(9.09%)	10(90.91%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Contributed to my scholarly agenda	3.36	11	2(18.18%)	4(36.36%)	2(18.18%)	2(18.18%)	1(9.09%)







**Conclusion**

Of the staff who completed the Impact of Engagement on Staff survey, 100% (n=11) felt that their experiences were valuable to them. The SCCESL looks forward to creating more opportunities for Stockton University staff to engage with the community in ways that are meaningful to them.

### Assessment of Service-Learning Activities

This year, the SCCESL expanded its assessment of the Service-Learning modality. The perception of attainment of Essential Learning Outcomes was again calculated and the responses are in Table Three below.

**Table 3. Paired pre-and post-test scores on Essential Learning Outcomes for students enrolled in a Service-Learning course in the 2023 - 2024 school year**

		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Two-Sided p</b>
<b>Pair 1</b>	Post- I can generate ideas	991	4.57	0.594	0.294	<0.001
	Pre - I can generate ideas	991	4.28	0.623		
<b>Pair 2</b>	Post - I can recognize opportunities in problem-solving, relationships, or self-expression	991	4.58	0.557	0.29	<0.001
	Pre - I can recognize opportunities in problem-solving, relationships, or self-expression	991	4.29	0.606		
<b>Pair 3</b>	Post - I can adapt to change	999	4.48	0.644	0.317	<0.001
	Pre - I can adapt to change	999	4.17	0.711		
<b>Pair 4</b>	Post - I can share ideas with diverse audiences effectively	996	4.47	0.65	0.372	<0.001
	Pre - I can share ideas with diverse audiences effectively	996	4.09	0.733		
<b>Pair 5</b>	Post - I can use various formats to share knowledge with diverse audiences effectively	992	4.41	0.692	0.333	<0.001
	Pre - I can use various formats to share knowledge with diverse audiences effectively	992	4.08	0.715		

For the first time, AI was used to conduct a qualitative analysis of the students' reflection responses (n=991). The methodology that was created for this new analysis was twofold. Results for each of the six questions that students responded to in the post-test were entered into ChatGPT in batches of 100 responses; ten sets of analyses were run for each question. The ChatGPT prompt was, "Please analyze these statements and create three themes. Cite one quote from the statements to support each theme." Once all the responses were analyzed for one question, the AI results from the ten batches were entered back into ChatGPT and it was given the same prompt. In this way, the qualitative data was analyzed 11 times into three meta-themes for each question. The results are outlined below.

**"How was your experience different than your expectations at the start of the semester about your Service-Learning experience?"**

Many students entered their Service-Learning experiences with specific expectations that often differed from the reality they encountered. This theme highlights the initial apprehension or misconceptions students had about the nature of their service tasks or the challenges they might face. Students consistently reported significant learning experiences and personal growth through their Service-Learning activities. This theme emphasizes the educational value of hands-on experiences in community settings. A central aspect of students' experiences was the enjoyment and value derived from interacting directly with community members. This theme emphasizes the importance of interpersonal connections and the positive impact of engaging with different segments of the community.

**"What was the significance of your service? What did you accomplish?"**

Students consistently highlight the development of empathy and the formation of meaningful personal connections through their service experiences. This includes understanding diverse perspectives and challenges faced by communities they engage with. Students focus on the tangible impact of their service on communities, whether through direct assistance (e.g., food distribution, educational support) or creating positive environments (e.g., cultural events, therapeutic activities). Service-Learning opportunities are seen as valuable educational experiences, providing students with practical skills, knowledge about social issues, and leadership experience. This theme underscores the educational value of service beyond traditional academic settings.

**"What did you learn from your experience? How was your work meaningful? Do you think you made a difference?"**

Students frequently mentioned acquiring practical skills such as editing, interviewing, teamwork, and time management. This skill development was pivotal in their personal and professional

growth. Challenges like managing diverse teams, navigating systemic issues, and adapting to unexpected situations were prevalent. Overcoming these challenges led to significant personal growth and resilience. Many highlighted gaining empathy and understanding through interactions with diverse individuals and communities. This included overcoming biases and developing a deeper appreciation for societal issues.

Experiences informed students' career aspirations, such as roles in non-profit management, media production, or education. They gained insights into professional teamwork, project management, and the realities of various professions. Applying classroom knowledge in real-world settings was highly valued, contributing significantly to their professional development and future career prospects.

Reflection on challenges encountered led to personal growth, adaptation, and a reevaluation of approaches. Students learned valuable lessons in resilience and problem-solving. There was reflection on the perceived impact of their efforts, with students considering the tangible difference made despite challenges in measurement or immediate feedback.

**“What did your service experience mean to you personally? What did you learn about yourself as a result of the Service-Learning experience?”**

Service-Learning was a catalyst for personal development, discovering strengths, and overcoming challenges. Many students found a motivation to contribute positively to communities and address societal issues. Service-Learning emerged as an influence on students' career choices and confirming professional aspirations. Students' experiences increased awareness of social issues and a commitment to community service. Another theme that emerged was developing empathy and meaningful connections through service experiences. Finally, many students reflected on how their service experiences helped them understand their strengths, weaknesses, and personal inclinations towards empathy, communication, and adaptability. These reflections often led to a deeper understanding of oneself and personal growth.

**“How will you use what you have learned in this experience in your future?”**

Many students emphasized how their Service-Learning experience would aid in their future careers, utilizing specific skills they learned as well as a commitment to continue engaging with the community and giving back. As stated above, many reflections highlighted personal growth, particularly in empathy and understanding diverse perspectives. Finally, some students focused on how the experience would contribute to their academic and professional portfolios.

## Programmatic Assessment

### Homework Completion Programs

The SCCESL collects data every year to understand the ways that youth participate in the Homework Completion Programs. Key findings from the data are included below.

#### *Stanley Holmes Village*

This year 54 youth participated in the program. There were 943 visits to the program over the year and an average participation of 17.46 visits per youth. There was an average of 11.79 youth in program per day and the average youth to volunteer ratio was 1.5 to 1.

#### *Pleasantville Library*

This year 25 youth participated in the program. There were 613 visits to the program over the year and an average participation of 24.52 visits per youth. There was an average of 7.57 youth in program per day and the average youth to volunteer ratio was 1.6 to 1.

Every year a survey is given to youth to understand the impact of the program. For tables four, five, and six, Stanley Holmes Village (SHV) and Pleasantville Library (Pville) are combined into tables by question and the 2024 responses are compared to the 2023 responses. Tables seven and eight contain only 2024 data.

**Table 4. How do you feel when you see a police officer?**

	SHV FY23	SHV FY24	Pville FY23	Pville FY24
Feels happy when they see a police officer	13(44.83%)	15(57.69%)	3(23.08%)	6(66.67%)
Feels calm when they see a police officer	7(24.14%)	10(38.46%)	3(23.08%)	1(11.11%)
Feels scared when they see a police officer	6(20.69%)	0(0.00%)	3(23.08%)	2(22.22%)
Feels sad when they see a police officer	0(0.00%)	1(3.85%)	3(23.08%)	0(0.00%)
Feels angry when they see a police officer	3(10.34%)	0(0.00%)	3(23.08%)	0(0.00%)

**Table 5. What does a police officer do?**

	SHV FY23	SHV FY24	Pville FY23	Pville FY24
A police officer helps people	15(42.86%)	21(61.76%)	4(30.77%)	6(66.67%)
A police officer serves people	8(22.86%)	6(17.65%)	1(7.69%)	1(11.11%)
A police officer arrests people	10(28.57%)	5(14.71%)	5(38.46%)	1(11.11%)
A police officer shoots people	0(0.00%)	1(2.94%)	1(7.69%)	1(11.11%)
A police officer kills people	2(5.71%)	1(2.94%)	2(15.38%)	0(0.00%)

**Table 6. Who would you find if you needed help?**

	SHV FY23	SHV FY24	Pville FY23	Pville FY24
I would find my parents if I needed help	12(34.29%)	15(41.67%)	2(15.38%)	0(0.00%)
I would find my friends if I needed help	4(11.43%)	4(11.11%)	3(23.08%)	1(11.11%)
I would find a police officer if I needed help	10(28.57%)	9(25.00%)	8(61.54%)	8(88.89%)
I would find my teacher if I needed help	9(25.71%)	8(22.22%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)

**Table 7. What is the best part of coming to the Homework Program?**

		Stanley Holmes Village		Pleasantville Library
The best part of coming to the Homework Program is playing with friends		11(32.35%)		0(0.00%)
The best part of coming to the Homework Program is finishing my homework		20(58.82%)		4(44.44%)
The best part of coming to the Homework Program is talking to officers		3(8.82%)		5(55.56%)

**Table 8. Do you like coming to the community room?**

		Stanley Holmes Village		Pleasantville Library
I love coming to the community room		22(70.97%)		9(100.00%)
I do not love coming to the community room		5(16.13%)		0(0.00%)
I don't know if I love coming to the community room		4(12.90%)		0(0.00%)

Parents and guardians are also surveyed to try to understand the impact of the programs on families. 15 Families living at Stanley Holmes Village responded to the survey; the surveys were not returned from the parents and guardians of youth in the program at the Pleasantville Library. The results from this survey are below.



## **Conclusion**

Results of the parents' and guardians' survey indicate that they overwhelmingly feel that the Homework Completion Programs have a positive influence on their families. Overall, the youth have a more positive attitude towards police officers than in FY23.