

Grant Final Report Form

Principal Investigators (PIs) are required to submit final reports within **60 days** of their EIA grant end date. A delinquent report may jeopardize or delay future Network funding. The information you provide helps us improve and justify the continuation of this grant program. The Network may also contact PIs for longer-term impact reporting and may request permission to use elements of these reports in Network activities (Conference sessions, Academy sessions, etc.) and communication both within the CSU system and to external stake-holders.

Summary Grant Information	
Grant Title:	Unidos Leadership Program (Equity in Action)
PI Name:	Jackelin Villalobos
PI Campus:	California State University San Marcos
Grant Start Date (month/YYYY):	June 2022
Grant End Date (month/YYYY):	June 2024
Final Report Submission Date:	July 31, 2024

Major Outcomes

1. Summarize your project's outcomes against the original goals proposed for advancing equitable student learning, engagement, progression, and completion.

In summary, the CSUSM Unidos Leadership Certificate Program successfully completed its intended purposes as stipulated in the original grant proposal to advance equitable student learning, engagement, and progression. Outcomes for each of the following areas are covered as follows: Curriculum Design and Program Participation.

Curriculum Design Outcomes

"Curriculum for the Unidos certificate program was designed with an asset-based framework, applying "Familismo" practices, Community Cultural Wealth Concepts, and Latinx Critical Race Theory to empower and reinforce leadership qualities among Latinx/e students". This was done through applying the following learning outcomes: 1) Students can articulate multicultural/ inclusive leadership competencies. 2) Students increase their sense of belonging levels leading to an increase in academic and professional confidence. 3) Students connect with leaders within and outside of the CSU, San Marcos community to create familiarity and connections specific to their major interests. 4) Students generate innovative solutions to deficit issues impacting the Latinx community.

In implementation, the cohort(s) of students interacted on a bi-weekly basis with each other as well as with Latine professionals in their fields. Facilitation was done by the Unidos Leadership Ambassador under the guidance of the PI as well as the Latinx Center Graduate Assistant. Staff prepared presenters from students' respective fields of study to visit either in person or virtually. During these bi-weekly sessions, presenters shared their personal and academic journey in a casual setting which encouraged relationship building. In addition, staff lead professional development workshops (resume, CV, cover letters etc.) allowed students to grow their professional skills. Also, with the requirements of: attending a professional conference, conducting an informal interview (with reflection) and writing a reflective paper at the end of the program, students were able to reflect on their own journeys and how their identities have shaped their life. Additionally, creating relationships with professionals from similar backgrounds created new spaces for these students as well as increased their social capital.

Program Participation

The grant proposal aimed for a cohort of up to 20 students to partake in the Unidos Leadership Program. The last cohort included 15 students who's academic standing ranged from first years to seniors (including transfers). Majors represented in the cohort include Child and Adolescent Development, Criminology, Spanish, Biology, Chemistry, Psychological Science, Psychology, Communications, Computer Science, and an Undeclared cohort member.

2. Comment on additional outcomes not directly associated with the project (partnerships formed, additional funding support gained)

Some of the additional outcomes not directly associated with the project included the following:

- Students in the cohort were able to build strong and meaningful relationships with CSUSM Latinx Center staff
- Because most professionals that presented were either CSUSM Alum or current CSUSM staff, students were able to connect with professional members directly in their academic community and thus allowed for stronger partnerships between their respective spaces and the Latinx Center to further support student journeys past the Unidos leadership Program.

3. Specify any unanticipated project developments (i.e. unanticipated barriers or unexpected wins)

Challenges were observed in the following areas:

- Change in Latinx Center leadership
- Cohort size.

Because the grant lived in the Latinx Center, PI's changed 2 times making it difficult to track grant progress. Leadership shifted from a Director to an Interim from Nov 2022-Nov 2023 and an Assistant Director from Jan 2024-June 2024. These changes made it difficult to track logistics of the program as the new PI needed to familiarize themselves with the structure of the program while it concluded simultaneously. Luckily, the Latinx Center Graduate Assistant and Unidos Leadership Ambassador led the efforts in the program's completion and success for the last cohort. In terms of cohort size, while the grant aimed for 20 participants, 15 students in total participated in the 23-24 cohort. Recruitment efforts were made by the team but ultimately provided us with fewer than expected participants. An unexpected win to highlight includes the potential collaboration that the Latinx Center and the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community/ APIDA Initiative on campus had to put on an event that celebrated and uplifted marginalized communities in the fall of 2023 with the framework of "Familismo". Both equity grants helped amplify the mission to elevate awareness and create actionable items for transformation in all the communities represented. Additionally, having students build strong relationships with Latinx Center staff allowed for continued connections past the program, encouraging students to regularly use the Latinx Center and all its resources.

4. If applicable comment on any longer-term outcomes, you anticipate from your Equity in Action Grant funded project. Also, please estimate anticipated achievement dates (month and year.)

In general, I believe a longer-term outcome of this project is the retention and graduation of those cohort members who may have joined earlier on in their academic careers (first years-second years). Being that each student is on their own timeline, there is no general anticipated achievement dates. The Latinx Center will work on its mission now while supporting these students simultaneously with the rest of its student reach.

Assessment and Communication

5. Describe efforts to communicate and disseminate project outcomes with your campus.

To disseminate our outcomes with our campus, the current PI communicated with direct supervisors (who are also new to campus) on their understanding of the program and its completion. Additionally, student testimonials were provided to our Director of Strategic Initiatives for use in the Seal of Excelencia application this year, demonstrating its direct impact of students' journey's.

6. Provide a summary of your assessment activities and results, where available.

Assessment activities for the program primarily occurred through student reflections, capstone projects, and shared pieces of their interviews with professionals. Some of the students' testimonies can be noted below in addition to those from the progress report:

"I'm proud of my identity, culture, and where I come from. These attributes will help me in spaces that need more voices and people like me. I offer two unique lenses. My career goals are to become a researcher and use my identities to bring more attention to Afro-Latinx individuals. I know it will take a lot of work and research. However, the outcome will be very fulfilling not only to myself but also to anyone else out there that is struggling with embracing their identity. Unidos plays a significant role in attaining my career goals because I'm learning about how everyone has unique skills and stories about how they got to where they are now. I will take the information and apply it to everything I do."

"I am also learning and understanding myself, my culture, and my strength by having discussions during our meetings from last semester. I've realized how strong and brave Latinx people are especially my peers in the Unidos Cohort who have navigated this life and facing similar issues that I have."

"I've been able to stay on track with my goals because of the Unidos certificate. Additionally, the speakers I've had the wonderful opportunity to hear have given me the chance to learn from their experiences and feel empowered. I've also created new relationships with students from similar backgrounds. I'm glad to have been able to express my goals and aspirations with my group because I feel a lot more empowered, supported, and connected to my cohort."

"The Unidos Program has helped me feel like a part of a community and has instilled a belief in myself. It has also changed my perspective and helped me be more compassionate with myself, understanding that there are many sources available and that there is no such thing as a one correct pathway. The program has instilled in me a sense of resilience, encouraging me to view challenges as opportunities for growth."

"I've gotta say that Unidos it's been such a game changer. You know, sometimes it can feel like you're the only one going through certain struggles, but being part of this community has shown me that's far from the truth. Hearing everyone's stories and experiences has been incredibly validating. It's like this reminder that we're all in this together, navigating our own journeys but never alone. The guest speakers have been such a source of motivation for me. Hearing from people who've been through their own ups and downs but still found their way to happiness and success it's inspiring, to say the least. It's like they're saying, 'Hey, don't give up. Keep searching, keep exploring, and you'll eventually find what lights you up.' It's reassuring to know that it's okay to be on a different timeline than others when it comes to discovering what truly sets your soul on fire. Unidos has been a constant source of encouragement. It's been a gentle reminder that the path to discovering our passions isn't always straightforward. It's not just about reaching the end goal; it's about embracing the journey and all the twists and turns that come with it."

From the 23-24 cohort, 20% (3) were seniors who graduated, 1.3% (2) were retained seniors on track to graduate Fall 2024, and 66.7% (10) were first-year – junior level students retained and enrolled for Fall 2024.

Lesson Learned

7. As you reflect on the strategies and activities implemented during this grant, which were successful?

I believe the overall outline and design of the program is effective as in my short time here, I have heard multiple students anecdotally talk about how much they enjoyed being part of the program as well as how valuable they see it post participation. While I am unsure of team bonding that was done with the 22-23 cohort, one area I sought to improve in Spring 2024 was to create a deeper relationship between cohort members through a final celebration and team bonding dinner. This was incredibly successful and was shown to me through their continued use of the Unidos GroupMe post-program completion. Additionally, having CSUSM alum and current staff also proved to be a great strategy, providing students with familiar faces in different departments across campus, thus making them feel more comfortable about seeking different resources.

8. By comparison, what strategies did you find were unsuccessful?

One strategy I believe could be improved is how presenters are asked to participate. Typically, presenters would come in either with or without a powerpoint and lead a casual conversation in hopes of engaging students. If we could improve this, I think it would be helpful for staff to lead some type of ice breaker/energizer that would allow for bonding with the presenter prior to their presentation.

9. Given your experience with the Equity in Action Grant Program, what changes would you recommend to better support you toward your goals?

To be frank, I did not have any direct experience with the Equity in Action Grant Program or the Student Success Network so I don't believe I can answer this justifiably.

10. What can the CSU Student Success Network do to help our campus in its efforts to identify, understand and disrupt inequities in our system?

Again, given my very limited experience I had with this grant, I am not too familiar with the network, but I would love to have similar funding opportunities to craft new programs for student success. As a new professional, any help understanding systemic inequities within the CSU would also help as our space crafts its new identity and mission.