

UC Davis

Conference Presentations

Title

Expanding Student Opportunities, Deepening Regional Impact

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5cs2w15g>

Author

Muse, Stacey

Publication Date

2022-08-19

Engagement Scholarship Symposium

Expanding Student Opportunities, Deepening Regional Impact

Stacey Muse

A focus on student outcomes is paramount when considering some of the challenges faced by first-generation, low-income, and students of color. Students who are emotionally supported during college and participate in experiential learning were more likely to have a high level of well-being (Gallup 2015). In addition, among racial-ethnic minorities and first-generation students a sense of belonging predicts better persistence, engagement, and mental health (Gopalan and Brady 2019). Some studies show that opportunities increase for underrepresented students who participate in community-engaged research and learning experiences (Harden et al 2017).

This form of experiential learning is valuable to a generation of students who put a premium on transferable employment skills. Additionally, employers view the ability to apply knowledge in real-world settings, ethical decision-making, critical thinking, creative problem solving, collaborative teamwork, and communication, as vital to the future workforce (AACU 2015). However, many students face challenges when launching their careers given the lack of access to cultural capital, professional networks, and the ability to participate in internships, as many are forced to make decisions between paid and unpaid work.

The proposed panel responds to these intersectional issues by showcasing the Sacramento Valley College Corp (SVCC), a regional consortium of institutions of higher education led by UC Davis. Funded by California Volunteers, SVCC aims to engage college students in meaningful service to build leadership and civic responsibility; promote academic success and economic well-being for low-income students; and support the work of community-based organizations in K-12 education, climate action, and food insecurity. From 2022-2024, 1,000 undergraduate students will receive \$7,000 in a living stipend, and an Education Award upon completion of 450 service hours. What makes SVCC unique is its approach to building regional infrastructure in higher education community engagement, paying students for community engaged work and training, and providing access to professional development opportunities.

