Progress Report - Campus Sustainability Fund

May 2023: Growing Equity-Focused Environmental leaders

Email:

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Project Manager Name:

who is submitting this project?

Stephanie Murphy

Project Name:

Growing Equity-Focused Environmental Leaders

Project Subaccount Number:

AG 23.56

Project Summary Snapshot:

Please copy and paste the "Summary Snapshot" you provided in your project application.

Response

The Bio/Diversity Project works to make the University of Arizona and greater Tucson community more environmentally sustainable and equitable by creating and implementing programs that pay and train UArizona students to be campus and community leaders working to promote both environmental sustainability and diversity, equity, and inclusion in environmental fields. UArizona student participants engage in a semester-long internship program designed to provide racially diverse, and low-income K-12 students with hands-on, culturally responsive, and place-based environmental science activities. Bio/Diversity Project interns gain career-readiness skills designed to aid them as leaders within the environmental fields.

Requested Metrics:

Please report your project's metrics and their most recent number or response in a list format.

Response

# of support staff for this program: 2 undergraduate intern support specialists; 2 UA staff members (WISE Director and Interim Program Coordinator)
# of students who apply: Spring 2023: 102; Fall 2023: 78
# of students hired: Spring 2023: 15 (9 interns; 4 lead interns; 2 support specialists); Fall 2023: pending % of students who received an offer to continue professionally with the local partner: already 1/9 from Spring 2023 first-time interns, still pending with applications circulating % of increase in BIPOC interns (Spring 2023= 53%; up from Spring 2022 = 41% were BIPOC)
hours of student work supported by the grant: Spring 2023: 1,280 hours (8 students; 10 hours per week)

Qualitative

Intern Testimonials:

"Thanks so much to all in the program! This was a really unique opportunity that helped shape me as a student and professional."
--Spring 2023 Intern

"The most important thing I learned was how to make students interested in learning about the Sonoran Desert and how important our environment is to us and other living things." --Spring 2023 Intern

"[Things I learned:] Practiced and improved communication skills, presenting skills, leadership skills, interacting with students, exposure to and collaboration with other STEM students and an incredible partner teacher, increased knowledge and application of said knowledge surrounding the importance of diversity and equity within STEM education and workforce, professional connections/development." --Spring 2023 Intern

Tactics to Tactics to attract BIPOC applicants, communication and marketing strategies and their efficacy
We have followed a similar strategy to Fall 22/Spring23 in that we are advertised the Fall 2023 internship opportunity to 21+ partnering academic departments, cultural centers, student groups with a stated interest in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Lead interns also visited courses with a focus on DEI issues to facilitate in-person recruitment of BIPOC students. We also offered the opportunity to teach in K-12 classrooms in Spanish which increased our recruitment of Latinx applicants. As a result, 42 of the 78 Fall 2023 applicants self identified as BIPOC and more likely than not, the Fall 2023 cohort will be atleast 50% BIPOC.

Project Accomplishments :

Please describe what aspects of the project have been accomplished. Be as descriptive and specific as possible. Examples of accomplishments could include: Held 4 public meetings totaling 130 attendees; Transitioned 300 square feet of dirt into usable garden space and signed on 14 community garden volunteers. Other examples of accomplishments could include sharing a confirmed schedule of events, the connections/contacts that have been established, etc.

Response

For the Spring 2023 semester, a total of 15 undergraduate student interns from 9 different crediting departments across 3 colleges at the University of Arizona participated in the Bio/Diversity Project. All Interns received passing grades and therefore were awarded course credit in one of the following: ENVS 393, MCB 493, GEOS 393, HNRS 393H, ECOL 399, NSCS 493, and ACBS 493. Interns attended 16 classroom/training sessions, which included guest speakers from Saguaro National Park, the Desert Museum, TUSD, a postdoctoral researcher from Astronomy, UA Natural Resources faculty. Student interns devoted 10 hours per week to our diversity-focused environmental science outreach program and facilitated 9 outreach lessons to approximately 600 6th-8th grade students across 4 Title 1 K-12 schools. In sum, the interns devoted 2400 paid hours to serving the local community.

The Spring 2023 internship is now ending and on May 3rd we held an end of semester celebration to honor everyone's hard work and accomplishments The lead interns and interim project coordinator oversaw the Fall 2023 application cycle, reviewed applications, and as a committee they selected students to interview for the Fall 2023 internship. In the last two weeks, we completed the interview process and have a final list of 16 candidates who we plan to offer internships to based on their competitiveness, interest, background experience, and availability.

Next Steps:

Response

1. Make final selections for Fall 2023 intern cohort
2. Begin onboarding for Fall 2023 intern cohort (internship course credit and hiring paperwork)
3. Evaluate Program through Spring 2023 Intern post-survey feedback, implement changes based on feedback
4. Confirm Fall 2023 partner teachers
5. Begin matching interns-partner teacher groups for Fall 2023 semester
6. Begin contacting existing collaborators and new collaborators to participate in Fall 2023.
7. Review existing training materials and make modifications based on student/teacher feedback

Challenges Faced:

Please identify and describe any obstacles/roadblocks you or your team have experienced, and detail how you've managed them/ will manage them. Should your project already be completed, please note what challenges you faced and what you would do differently.

Response:

We had some obstacles that arose related to individual students consistency and reliability in team work and group projects. The interim coordinator worked with the lead interns to identify issues early and create individualized plans to get students re-involved. Luckily, everyone adjusted and things went smoothly for most of the semester. The long time program coordinator who had been on leave this semester is now transitioning back to regular work and this is a huge improvement in our overall capacity. All interim and long-time staff will connect in the coming weeks to debrief the semester and create a timeline/plan for transitions. This should ensure consistency as we transition back to regular programming.

Project Support:

Can the CSF support you in addressing any roadblocks you've encountered? How else can the CSF support your project?

Response:

Honestly, CSF has been a great partner to us and I can't think of anything else we need beyond the enthusiasm and support you have already been providing.

Photo Upload:

Please upload or provide links (below) to relevant photos.

Response:

* bdp-3.jpg [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/344/bdp-3.jpg]

bdp-5.jpg [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/344/bdp-5.jpg]

bdp-12.jpg [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/344/bdp-12.jpg]

Photo Link I attached a few photos of Spring 2023 interns teaching. I have more if needed. Thank you!

Photo Link:

Please copy hyperlinks to photos here should you not be able to individually upload photos.

Response:

I attached a few photos of Spring 2023 interns teaching. I have more if needed. Thank you!

Media/Links:

Please include links to any media coverage or events information (e.g. news, social media, websites, interviews, etc.)

Response:

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