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Asian Pacific Graduate Celebration 2015
Director’s Letter

July 1, 2015

It has been another incredible year, but also a year of challenges at Asian Pacific American Student Services.

The Asian Pacific American student community continues to be a strong and present voice at USC. The mentoring, educational, social justice and service learning programs continue to thrive with new student leaders shaping them into their own. A new pilot program, #APA Real Talk was launched with a mission to create dialogue on critical issues in the Asian Pacific American community. This past year, the program tackled critical topics on mental health and trans* identity.

Collaborations with the Center for Women and Men, Office of Religious Life and Kaya Press continue to be central to the success of the DESI Project program. Staff counselors from the Student Counseling Services continues to be a resource by serving as facilitators for supervision sessions and serving as a resource for mentors and mentees in the PEER mentoring program. This year’s PEER program had a strong focus on mental health. The Asian Pacific Alumni Association (APASS) continues to serve as an important partner in the Connections! alumni mentoring program.

This academic year was not without its challenges. This year would also be defined as a transitional year. Jeymi Choi, who served as the Program Coordinator for 8 years took a position in Marshall School of Business. She left a memorable impact at APASS through the care and support she provided to the students. Kevin Nguyen Chastain came in to fill the position as a fixed-term staff and offered incredible support to the office and students in his short time in APASS.

The Program Coordinator position was eliminated due to shifting of resources in the Division of Student Affairs. My role as director came to an end in July when I transitioned into a new position at USC as the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Strategic Initiatives. The next academic year will bring personnel transitional changes but the APASS staff will continue to be put students at the center.

Even through these changes and challenges, the core mission and programs of APASS continue to hold strong. Our main goal is, and forever will be, to be a source of support for our APA student community.

Sincerely,

Mary Ho
Director, 2012-2015
Note from the Interim Director

September 15, 2015

Dear APASS Family,

As we welcome in a new class and new academic year, APASS continues to grow as a source of support for our Asian Pacific American student community.

I am excited to start the 2015-2016 academic year and have great hopes for the future of our cherished department. Our strength as a cultural center is rooted in our students, alums, and community members being part of this APASS Family.

As we celebrate our 33rd year since our founding, I hope that you will continue to support the work that we do to make USC a home for everyone.

Thank you!

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Wang
Interim Director

APA Student Welcome 2014
USC Asian Pacific American Student Services (APASS) is a multifaceted department focused on the **education**, **engagement**, and **empowerment** of students.

APASS has a two-fold mission:
- to facilitate Asian Pacific American participation, dialogue, community-building, and empowerment,
- while at the same time, to serve as a source of cross-cultural educational programming for the entire campus.

APASS programs include orientation, leadership development, service-learning and community immersion, career and peer mentoring, cross-cultural and educational programs, academic collaborations, and individual and collective advocacy.

We understand the distinctive needs among the different ethnicities within our Asian Pacific American community, and we succeed in deriving strength from our diversity. We believe in a pan-Asian Pacific American identity that is rooted in the Civil Rights Movement, and continues to grow in the transnational sphere.

For more information on the history of APASS, please visit: [http://sait.usc.edu/apass/inner.asp?ItemID=8](http://sait.usc.edu/apass/inner.asp?ItemID=8)
For more information on USC Student Affairs new strategic plan, please visit: http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/strategic-plan/
Student Affairs Goals & APASS

**Support**
- #APARealTalk
- AP Grad
- PEER
- Student Welcome

**Educate**
- CIRCLE
- DESI Project
- PULE

**Engage**
- ASB Hawai’i
- ASB Manzanar
- Connections!
- Project Remix
- TIE
Division Initiatives

A critical component to the USC Student Affairs Strategic Plan is the development of 24 Strategic Initiatives. Each department has been tasked with aligning to these initiatives and striving to create an environment of excellence.

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT**
1. Expand coordination and collaboration with all career services operations throughout the university.
2. Engage academic advisors through the USC Career Center Certification Program.
3. Collect and analyze post-graduation outcomes for undergraduates.
4. Integrate graduate and professional school resources into the Provost’s initiative for the Undergraduate Plan for a Career.

**OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**
1. Establish departmental excellence across the board.
2. Increase professional competencies efficiency for 21st century Student Affairs leadership.
3. Implement a virtual portfolio of Student Affairs programs and services.
4. Integrate scholarship and innovation into Student Affairs programs, services and business operations.

**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**
1. Build a best-practice based student leadership development curriculum.
2. Cultivate a culture of High-Impact Practices.
3. Ensure that ALL student populations have access to the USC experience.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**
1. Increase the use of physical activity as a response to health challenges.
2. Expand programs and services that encourage delayed consumption and low-risk alcohol use.
3. Implement national best practices in health and wellness programs.
4. Cultivate a community of mental health awareness.
5. Implement comprehensive programs on sexual misconduct prevention.
6. Build an effective and comprehensive communication network to encourage students to engage in health and wellness programs.
7. Increase access to recreational opportunities across campus.

**RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION**
1. Align the residential college experience with national best practices.
2. Expand programs and services that connect with Residential Education, the Division of Student Affairs, and USC’s core mission and values.
3. Design and implement plans for the University Village Honors College.

**SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY**
1. Foster a community where students are valued, supported and receive the assistance they need to be successful.
2. Develop a community where students are aware of and enabled to utilize campus resources.
3. Cultivate an environment of inclusivity and respect in which all students can access opportunities that offer a holistic and complete USC experience.
APASS continues to work to fulfill the three strategic initiatives under the Support & Advocacy cluster. In our first year, we aligned our programming to the initiatives of:

1. **Foster a community where students are valued, supported and receive the assistance they need to be successful.**

   Through a culture of care, students experience a sense of belonging which contributes to overall well-being. APASS continues to support underrepresented Asian Pacific American groups, including our Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander students, first-generation college students, and other groups. In 2014-2015, APASS created specific programming and conducted assessment and research on the experiences of these student groups. Recommendations from these assessments are being implemented in future programming and outreach.

2. **Develop a community where students are aware of and enabled to utilize campus resources.**

   There is evidence of a knowledge gap between support services and programs in place and students’ awareness of the existing resources. APASS has begun targeted marketing to the 21% of students who self-identify as APA. This includes mailing homes, direct email correspondence, in-person presentations and meetings, and a more robust social media campaign (i.e., Facebook and Twitter). In 2014-2015, APASS recorded a 19.8% year-to-year increase in program participation, and an average of 25% more visits to the APASS office.

3. **Cultivate an environment of inclusivity and respect in which all students can access opportunities that offer a holistic and complete USC experience.**

   It is important to ensure that underrepresented student populations are included and valued throughout the campus community. APASS advocated for students of all backgrounds through the education of critical social justice issues affecting the USC college student population. Through increasing a shared understanding of community, APASS developed a series of community discussion and dialogues on APA mental health needs, APA trans* rights and issues, #BlackLivesMatter discussion, and issues of affirmative action and educational equity.
Demographics

Estimate of total Number of APA undergraduates (Fall 2014): 5167

2014 APA Undergraduate Students - by Ethnicity
Transfer Students
- Yes: 36%
- No: 64%

First Generation College Student
- Yes: 28%
- No: 72%

Sex
- Female: 53%
- Male: 47%
APASS Operating and Student Wage Budget

Student Wages
$23,567.16
47%

Programs & Operations
$26,124.30
53%
FY 15 Programming Budget, by %

Core Programs 67%

Office Development 15%
Office Events 8%
Office 10%

Student Welcome 13%
AP Grad 13%
TIE 11%
ASB Hawaii 10%
CIRCLE 7%
APA Real Talk 3%
ASB Manzanar 3%
Connections 3%
PEER 2%
PULE 1%
DESI Project 1%
Project Remix 1%
Highlights

APASS continues to engage the largest racial and ethnic student groups on campus.

In 2014-2015, APASS recorded a **19.8% year-to-year increase in program participation**, and an average of **25% more visits** to the APASS office. This increase coincides with a more robust marketing and outreach effort to engage with APA community.

We continue to have dedicated partnerships with multiple entities on and off campus, including, but not limited to:

- Asian Pacific Alumni Association (APAA)
- Asian Pacific American Student Assembly (APASA)
- Office of Religious Life
- Kaya Press
- Undergraduate Programs
- USC Career Center
- Office for Residential Education
- Fraternity and Sorority Leadership Development
- Rossier School of Education
- Center for Women and Men
- Vision & Voices
- Leadership Education for Asian Pacific (LEAP)
- Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON)

Along with these partnerships, APASS has sponsored and cosponsored multiple opportunities to engage our community in dialogue, discussion, and celebrating our culture of inclusivity.

Highlighted programs and events this year include:

- Diversity and Inclusion Trainings for Fraternities and Sororities
- “Creating a Culture of Inclusion for Native College Students”
- “Being the First to Go To College: Conversations with APA Parents”
- “#APARealTalk: APA Mental Health”
- White House Initiative on AAPIs: Mental Health Engagement
- AAPI Centers and Program Southern California Roundtable
- API Queer Story featuring D’Lo: South Asians and Trans* Identities

2014-2015 became a banner year for engaging thousands of students, staff, faculty, and community members on critical APA issues. These partnerships and collaborations create a true sense of belonging for our community.
Overview of Programs

**FALL PROGRAMS**

**CIRCLE** / circle@usc.edu
APA Social Justice & Leadership Development Program
Engage in critical discussions on race, class, gender, sexuality, and more. Take action on issues you care about and learn how to be a better student leader.

**Connections!** / connect@usc.edu
APA Career Mentoring Program
Get matched up with an APA alumnus for career exploration and life mentoring. Also includes skill-building workshops and networking opportunities.

**PEER** / uscpeer@usc.edu
APA First-Year Peer Mentoring Program
Get paired up with a trained peer mentor for first-year success! Upperclassmen can train to be mentors.

**APA Student Welcome** / apass@usc.edu
The annual Asian Pacific American Student Welcome is a half-day event to introduce the incoming class to what the university has to offer for our APA students. Enjoy a free brunch, exciting workshops, and the largest APA student involvement fair!

**Recommended for**
- First-year APA students
- Continuing APA students
- Transfer APA students
- Open to all

**ONGOING INITIATIVES**

**DESI Project** / apass@usc.edu
Defining & Exploring South Asian Issues
Explore the South Asian diaspora through events on culture, identity, and politics.

**PULE** / apass@usc.edu
Promoting Unity, Liberation, & Education
Connect to the Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander (NHP) community. Initiatives include high school outreach, cultural empowerment, and community dialogue.

**Project REMIX** / apass@usc.edu
In Collaboration with CBSCA, El Centro Chicano, & LGTTRC
Events and workshops focused on social justice, cross-cultural and multiracial dialogue, and community-building.

**RESOURCES & SUPPORT**

In addition to programs, APASS also offers:
- Drop-in Student Support
- Drop-in Program Advising
- Workshops
- Collaborative Programming
- Undergraduate/Graduate Internships
- Weekly Newsletter & more!

Email apass@usc.edu for more information

**SPRING PROGRAMS**

**ASB Hawai’i** / apass@usc.edu
Alternative Spring Break
Learn about Native Hawaiian sovereignty and culture, explore the history of Hawai’i and its peoples, and complete service-learning projects.

**ASB Manzanar** / apass@usc.edu
Alternative Spring Break
Explore the Manzanar National Historical site, learn about Japanese American WWII internment, and complete an on-site service project.

**TIE** / apass@usc.edu
Community-Based Internship Program
Build skill sets in fundraising, policy/advocacy, or outreach/organizing through a paid internship with Los Angeles-based organizations.

**PEER** / uscpeer@usc.edu
APA First-Year Peer Mentoring Program
For our APA Spring Admits, participate in the PEER Mentoring Program to help you adjust, succeed, and thrive at USC.

**AP Grad** / apass@usc.edu
Join APASS, APASA, and the APA in our annual recognition and celebration of our graduating APA students! Open to all graduating undergraduate and graduate students, family, and friends!
APA Student Welcome

Number of participants: 220
(+37.5% from 2013-2014)

APA Student Welcome welcomed our new APA freshmen and transfer students to USC. Our keynote was given by Dr. Jane Junn, professor of political science, who highlighted her path as a first-generation college student. The event included workshops, time for students to meet others, and an involvement fair with 35 student & community organizations.

PEER

Number of Mentors: 53 (+18%)
Number of Mentees: 88 (+10%)

The intentional recruitment of student leaders created mentors that were knowledgeable about diversity opportunities on campus. Mental health in the APA community was a central focus both in mentor training and in the community workshops. The visibility on mental health helped to create more mental health dialogue. Increased mentor training on LGBTQ education equipped the mentors with the tools to support students.

“My mentor was very supportive the entire year and became one of my best friends! Coming into college was scary and intimidating, but she taught me how to handle a lot of things and introduced me to new ideas & events.” – PEER Mentee
The CIRCLE program re-developed core components of the program to match the evolving discussion on social issues. With the structural changes, CIRCLE partnered with an expanded list of community partners to highlight the work of various organizations. An emphasis of a culturally conscious leadership development model was developed for the retreat and will continue to be developed.

“I actually plan on running for Senate for next year and I think being in CIRCLE has given me the confidence to run to be a leader. As an Asian American, I felt like I would not be likely to have a chance in running, but after CIRCLE, I’ve learned that there are so many issues that APAs have to deal with at USC that need to be addressed and I am hoping that if I do run, people will see these values of mine come across to help the APA community at USC.” – CIRCLE Participant

Number of Mentees Matched: 59 (+34%)
This year we saw a growth in new mentors in such fields as communications, business and human resources. The growth in new mentors and deliberate matches of mentors and mentee contributed to the success of the program. In addition, a Spring Mixer was coordinated this year to create boarder networking of mentors and mentees across the program.
Alternative Spring Break: Hawai‘i

Number of participants: 19
(no change from previous year)

ASB Hawai‘i continues to be a very popular program and comprises of a variety of students from various backgrounds. This year the group completed three service-learning projects, attended a discussion at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and explored various cultural and historical sites around O‘ahu.

“I want to think more critically about the way history is taught and how little most people know about the history of Hawai‘i and its people. I want to start more conversations and think more about what I can do. I also want to reflect more about my multicultural identity and how I want to hold onto both cultures I grew up with.” – ASB Hawaii Participant

DESI Project

DESI Project explored issues of diversity in the South Asian community, media representation and sexual orientation and gender identity in such programs as “Indian, American panel”, “Lunar New Read with Andrew Lam & Amarnarth Ravva”, “South Asians in the Media” and “APA Real Talk: D’Lo”. The success of DESI Project was due to the strong collaboration American Studies and Ethnicity Club, Kaya Press and the Office of Religious Life.
Alternative Spring Break (ASB): Manzanar

Number of Participants: 9 (+125%)

This year the participants had the opportunity to paint railings for three new exhibits. The change in the service project was an exciting new opportunity for the students to make a long-lasting contribution. The students had an opportunity to dialogue about the Japanese American internment campus and what impact this experience had on them.

“Manzanar was an eye-opening experience for me to learn about the history, what actually happened, and how different people react to the issues, I realized a lot has been done to preserve the shocking history, yet, a lot more issues are not being addressed due to various reasons.”

– ASB Manzanar Participant

PULE

PULE continues to build a community for one of our smallest ethnic populations on campus. This year we hosted a workshop on how staff and faculty can better support our Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander student population, through highlighting student stories and experiences. The 4th annual Youth Summit was hosted in the Spring focusing on developing college and high school leadership and empwoerment. APASS continues to partner with EPIC in their PILOT (Pacific Islanders Leaders of Tomorrow) leadership development program.
TIE

Number of internships: 7
This year we placed 8 interns in 8 different CBO's. Chinatown Business Improvement and the Korean American Family Service were new to the program this year. TIE is crucial in not only giving the students an internship experience at a CBO but also by fostering and enriching their personal growth.

Project Remix

In collaboration with CBCSA, El Centro Chicano, and LGBT Resource Center.

With the purposeful inclusion of the LGBT Resource Center, this years Project Remix programming focused on the intersections of identities in our society. We continued with our Student and Faculty of Color Meet & Greet and Open Mic Night programs, and hosted programs on Police Brutality, Protesting 101, and educational equity. Project Remix has developed a set of trainings and workshops for community groups to access.
#APARealTalk

In our inaugural year, #APARealTalk hosted two larger-scale community speakers to engage in dialogue on mental health in the APA community (with community activist Emily Wu Troung of the Asian Coalition) and trans* rights & experiences in the South Asian community (with artist and activist D’Lo). Each was developed with co-sponsorships from various community and campus organizations. #APARealTalk will continue purposeful and critical discussion of APA social issues through thought-provoking dialogue.

AP Grad

Number of Graduate: 130

In our 8th year, AP Grad continues to attract a growing number of undergraduate, graduate, and international students. We continue to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates with the Asian Pacific Alumni Association (APAA) and the Asian Pacific American Student Assembly (APASA). This year we launched the AP Outstanding Graduating Student Award, honoring two amazing student leaders: Anh Cao & Jonathan Nguyen.
Future

The future of APASS is bright, strong, and resilient. It is through the support of our founders, alums, and, most importantly, our students that we can do the work we do.

Our strength from the 2014-2015 school year has positioned APASS to continue to make inroads within the APA, USC, and Los Angeles communities.

Specifically, APASS will focus on:

- Further alignment to Division wide Strategic Initiatives
- Continued advocacy for more disaggregated data on the APA student population
- Strategic and intentional focus on first generation college students and Spring Admit students
- Developing a purposeful mission in community sustainability
  - Supporting local community organizations, businesses, and causes through engagement, outreach, and purchasing
- Maintain our strong presence at USC and in the APA community while in a staff and department transition phase

Increasingly, APASS is experiencing more demand for advising, counseling, and support for students of all backgrounds. Meeting these needs, while continuing our rich history of programs, will be a continuing challenge for the department.

Again, we are excited to have a strong and growing presence at USC. With the support of our students, alums, and community members, APASS is positioned to be a recognized leader locally, regionally, and nationally.
Dedication

As always, the annual report is dedicated to the amazing work of our students. Without them, there would not be a reason for APASS to exist.

Individually, APASS would like to thank:

Rod Nakamoto
For his generous ongoing contribution of $2,500 for the TIE Internship program

Jace Hieda
For his continued support and contributions

Grace Shiba, Alex Chang, & Angela Teng
For their valued partnership

Dean Varun Soni
For his guidance and support for our South Asian students

With much love and appreciation,

Mary, Jonathan, & the APASS Family
CIRCLE DASHBOARD 2014-2015

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 100% of participants are able to identify at least 3 historical moments that have shaped the Asian American experience
- 96% of participants agree or strongly agree that CIRCLE has helped them critically analyze issues of identity, class and Asian American and Pacific Islander history

“I definitely feel as though CIRCLE encouraged me to think more deeply about all the issues above. I am more determined than ever to critically engage with the APA community on campus, as well as the broader LA area.”

- 68% of participants strongly agreed that their CIRCLE discussion group was a safe place where they felt comfortable sharing

ETNICITIES OF CIRCLE PARTICIPANTS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
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TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET

Budget: $2,609.48

AREA OF IMPROVEMENT

- Increase Pacific Islander and South Asian student participation
- Involve other organizations/departments within the university and the greater LA community (Student Affairs department, student & community organizations)

NEW DIRECTIONS

- Develop more impactful retreat activities on topics of gender and leadership development
**Connections! Dashboard 2014-2015**

**Program Highlights**
- **75%** of mentees can better articulate career goals as a result of their participation in Connections!
  
  “Seeing what my mentor does and looking back at the advice he gave in the beginning, I am able to see what direction I want to go”

- **80%** of the mentors agree or strongly agree that will stay in contact with their mentees after their Connections! experience

- **83%** of mentees have established an honest and open relationship with their mentors
  
  “One of the best experiences of my freshman year”

**Total Program Budget**
- Budget: $1,054.02

**Areas of Improvement**
- Increase participation of upperclassmen students (Juniors/Seniors)
- The majority of participants (mentors and mentees) attended the kick-off event, as compared the other events/activities
- Only **67%** of mentees expressed that they have gained access to professionals in a particular field of interest

**Mentee Participation by Class**

<table>
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<th># of Mentees</th>
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<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
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**Total # of Mentees: 59**

**New Directions**
- Mentees noted that they did not feel as connected with the program coordinators, requested more check-ins and communication
**Program Highlights**

**Jhalak: South Asian Art Showcase**
- 100% agree or strongly agree that the event helped them better understand the impact of art on identity
- 83% of participants agree or strongly agree that the event made them more aware of South-Asian dual identities

**Lunar New Read**
- 100% of participants are able to identify at least 3 social issues that have shaped the Asian American/PI experience
- 90% of participants strongly agree that the event help them identify overlapping aspects of Vietnamese-American and Indian-American identity

**South Asians in Pop Culture Panel**
- 100% agree or strongly agree that they learned and identified issues and solutions related to South Asian representation
- 79% of participants can identify at least 3 historical moments that have shaped the Asian American/PI experience

**Saath Saath: Understanding Domestic Violence**
- 83% agree or strongly agree that the information shared by the speaker was valuable to understanding domestic violence in the South Asian community
  
  “I found the event to be incredibly powerful and informational around the topic of domestic violence”

**Areas of Improvement**
- Continual assessment and evaluation of services and programs for South Asian students in APASS
- Increased outreach and participation of South Asian International students in DESI project

**New Directions**
- Continual assessment and evaluation of services and programs for South Asian students in APASS

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**Total Program Budget**

Budget: $372.88

- South Asians in Popular Culture
- APA Real Talk
- Jhalak
- DV Event
**Program Highlights**

**Total # of Mentors: 52**  
**Total Number of Mentees: 86**

- **48%** of the mentee/mentor partnerships communicated on a weekly basis
- **64%** of mentees attended at least one PEER workshop this past year

> “Being a PEER mentee allowed me to start off my year at USC with ease, knowing that I have someone to talk to; my mentor was welcoming and open-minded...”

- **91%** of mentees agree or strongly agree that their mentor was someone they could easily talk to as a useful resource and they could have an open, dialogue-oriented relationship

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**Ethnicity of Mentors & Mentees**

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**Total Program Budget**

**Budget: $563.27**

- **Final Packets**
- **Social**
- **Training**
- **Match Night**

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**Areas of Improvement**

- Only **43%** of mentees could identify at least 3 historical moments that shaped the Asian American/PI experience
- Increase participation of South Asian and Pacific Islanders students
- **50%** of mentors expressed that weekly supervisions were helpful

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**New Directions**

- Participants suggested more events and social activities to bring the mentors and mentees together and foster unity
**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

The mission of the Youth summit is to bring together Pacific Islander middle and high school students and their families for workshops, panels, and presentations to motivate, inspire, and inform about college opportunities and resources

- 85% of participants that attended the Youth Summit strongly agreed that the program inspired them to participate in developing their own leadership skills and helped them to understand their resources

  “It inspired me to exceed further in my education and strive for more than success”

**AROUND THE BLOCK**

- Graduates from USC have returned to take part in the PULE program

  “The fact that this space still exists after I’ve graduated makes me so proud and appreciative of my APASS family.”

- Cultural identity development is a key component of PULE, 81% of participants strongly agree that they have become empowered to think about and examine their own cultural identity

- 85% of participants strongly agreed that the Youth Summit helped develop a stronger sense of community

**TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET**

Budget: $314.07

**NEW DIRECTIONS**

- Explore new funding sources for PULE

- Continually improve the POTO program and Youth Summit by utilizing EPIC to enhance community awareness