
**STOCKTON UNIVERSITY
ANNUAL REPORT FOR
FY24 COMPASS FUND PROJECT**

PROJECT LEADER(S):	Ana Edmondson
PROJECT TITLE:	Cultural Engagement Operations (CEO) Project
DATE:	June 14, 2024

- *The boxes below expand as needed to accommodate your notes. You may also include/submit appendices or attachments, if needed.*
- *Email a copy of this completed form to the Compass Fund Review Board: CompassFund@stockton.edu.*
- ***This form must be completed and submitted to be considered for a second year of funding, if applicable, or for any future Compass Fund support.***

Please provide a summary of the project and your experience.

The Cultural Engagement Operations (CEO) Project transformed into something greater than imagined in the second year of the project. The project created job opportunities for 10 new Cultural Engagement Osprey (CEO) interns (20 interns over 2 years) which sharpened their career readiness skills to prepare them for their next professional development opportunity. They underwent a competitive interview process, competing against 26 candidates. The interview process was facilitated by a committee of volunteer staff in different units including Career Education & Development, Educational Opportunity Fund Program, Student Conduct, and Academic Achievement Programs. Ten CEO Interns committed their time for two academic semesters. This year all interns remained apart of the internship for the full year. They participated in weekly professional development workshops including topics on assessment, marketing, social capital, leadership, and professionalism. The different workshops were facilitated by Stockton’s Faculty and Staff across different divisions as the CEO Interns prepared and planned for the Inclusive Leadership Conference, a culminating project where they were able to publicly display the fruits of their labor. The interns also met weekly with an internship coordinator for regular supervision meeting to receive and implement constructive feedback. The CEO Interns created an exhilarating, immersive, and influential conference experience which included keynote speeches and entertainment from EOF students and alum, campus resources, and professional clothing which was donated by faculty and staff across campus. The duration of the CEO project was from September 26, 2023 to April 26, 2024.

The CEO Project is a High Impact Practice given the internship experience, the ongoing feedback they received throughout the internship, and the culminating project which also was social justice related. Lastly, the CEO project aligns with two key areas of focus within Stockton University's Strategic Plan, which are: Inclusive Student Success, and 2) Diversity and Inclusion. The CEO project provided high-level thinking, co-curricular experiences to equip students for the workplace, and professional success. According to the assessment results, the Inclusive Leadership Conference accomplished its intended outcomes which were to increase students’ sense of belonging, engagement, and development, and foster post-graduate success for the interns and the attendees.

We had 118 students and staff, and external guests from 3 post-secondary institutions and 4 high schools who checked into the conference at some point, although not everyone who attended may have been checked in. Some major highlights from the second year of the conference include:

- Board of Trustees (BOT) Fellows showcased their social justice projects to inspire others to apply to the BOT fellowship opportunity.
- TALONS (Transition Activity Leaders of New Students) showcased their Cajita Projects increasing sense of community and identity
- New partnership with the Political Science program offered 4 academic credits for the internship for 4 CEO Interns, which also allowed for them to showcase their academic posters during the check-in process of the conference
- Community colleges were represented (i.e. Middlesex Community College, Rutgers University - Camden's Future Scholars, Rowan University's CHAMP Program, Deptford High School, Eastern Regional High School, Atlantic City High School, Cedar Creek High School, Princeton High School)
- Stockton University Alumni attended.
- Various stakeholders facilitated professional development workshops in the fall semester in preparation for the spring semester.
- Organizations, faculty, staff, and students were recognized during the Awards Ceremony for their inclusive contributions across campus (sponsored by Los Latinos Unidos)

See program booklet attached for photos of the CEO Interns and workshop details.

Please describe the results of your project and compare them to your original expectations. Elaborate on how well your objectives were met and how they might have changed. Note any particular obstacles that may have prevented your achieving full satisfaction on desired outcomes.

When assessing the Cultural Engagement Operations (CEO) Project, we chose to administer survey instruments to learn about the overall experiences of the Cultural Engagement Osprey (CEO) Interns and the overall experience of the participants who attended the Inclusive Leadership Conference (ILC) which was implemented by the CEO Interns. The assessment that was administered at the end of the Inclusive Leadership Conference captured the following results among the attendees, which demonstrate the impact of the event:

- Of the 57 respondents, 98.15% stated that after attending the conference, they have a more clear understanding of their role in promoting social justice.
- Of the 57 respondents, 100% indicated, after attending the conference, they gained a sense that Stockton University is a community where diversity is appreciated and valued. Additionally, 94.44%, agreed to some level that the conference increased their overall sense of belonging while at Stockton University.

The CEO interns were expected to develop skills in eight career readiness competencies, endorsed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, given their engagement in a high impact practice. My intentions were that the CEO interns would have been impacted at greater lengths than participants of the conference given their level of commitment to the initiative and ongoing opportunities to receive and implement feedback. Across their eight-month internship experience beginning with their interview in September to the implementation of the Inclusive Leadership Conference in April, CEO Interns should have developed skills in 1) Career & Self-Development, 2) Communication, 3) Critical Thinking, 4) Equity & Inclusion, 5) Leadership, 6) Professionalism, 7) Teamwork, & 8) Technology. The following skills are defined below and supported by comments directly from the CEO interns to demonstrate the success of the initiative.

1. **Career and self-development** was defined as continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization. The comments noted below capture two perspectives on this respective competency developed as a result of the internship,

“The internship has been a wonderful opportunity for my career and self-development. I have learned so much as a freshman, I was very inexperienced with the basic skill sets that I would need for college. I have met so many people, if it wasn't for this internship I don't believe that I would have built any of the relationships I currently have. Although when I applied, I was a little thrown off by supervision, accountability, & assessment committee position because I was afraid that I would do a terrible job. I was actually encouraged by Yesi, Dr. E, Rebecca, and all of the other CEO's and it helped me excel and be more confident and take more pride with the work that I do.”

“The CEO internship was my first proper look into the professional world, with weekly meetings, weekly objectives, and with all of those consistent efforts being put toward a tangible goal: to create a place where students can belong. This internship has not only developed my skills in regard to my future career within the business world, such as time management, prioritization, and collaboration, but it has also allowed me to discover aspects of myself that would not have otherwise been realized. It was through the CEO internship that I realized that I truly am a leader at my core; and that though I want to pursue a career within the realm of marketing, I realized I can utilize my career to foster diversity, equity, access, and inclusion for all individuals in the realm of business.”

2. **Communication** was defined as clearly and effectively exchanging information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with people inside and outside of an organization. Again, two perspectives are captured below from the CEO interns regarding this respective competency,

“I had poor communication skills prior to joining CEO. I was not big on working with others, I'd rather do things alone to get them done just the way I wanted them. I soon realized that working with others is not a bad thing because it actually makes you see things from other people's perspectives. I've learned how to go up to someone that I've never met before and start up amazing conversations and to not only listen to other's but to understand what they're saying.”

“With any team endeavor, communication is crucial to one's success, especially when one is creating a conference that is meant to represent the diversity of the world around us. While the way I usually communicate can be a bit different compared to the majority, I was able to find more of a voice within the CEO internship by communicating in such a fashion that not only was true to who I am, but also allowed me to articulate my intentions and reasoning effectively. Not only did I develop the confidence to voice my opinions, but I was also able to assist others in clarifying their communication, and I was able to bring pertinent information that was essential to the success of this year's inclusive leadership conference, such as during times when one's ideas were not fully communicated. Furthermore, given that this internship was hybrid, in a sense, I was also able to improve my communication virtually, despite certain messages or intentions often being lost in translation within a digital environment.”

“This internship has helped me be a better communicator in a sense of mentioning what I may need from others, respectfully stating how I feel, etc.”

3. **Critical thinking** was defined as Identifying and responding to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information. The two

following comments strongly illustrate this respective competency being exercised during the internship,

“As an individual who played an active role in the decision-making process regarding this internship, I had the responsibility of navigating complex situations in order to make the ILC a success. It was through the development of my critical thinking via the CEO internship that I was able to find the solution of asking other programs, clubs, and organizations for assistance in the form of funding certain aspects of the ILC (i.e. pens, shirts, etc.) in exchange for being featured on our booklet that would be handed out during the ILC. It was also through the CEO internship that I was able to navigate complex issues that would not only recognize the lived experience of those involved but also the diverse perspectives of said individuals, especially individuals with identities that weren’t present within the CEO interns prior, such as international and non-traditional students.”

“I definitely made me think about how to persevere and stay positive even when things aren’t going my way or looking how I want them too.”

4. **Equity and inclusion** was defined as demonstrating the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures as well as engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism. Some notable comments that demonstrate interns acquiring the aforementioned competency are included below,

“When it comes to Equity & Inclusion it's a never-ending pool of knowledge which I am constantly swimming in everyday and learning something new. I am a lover of people from all walks of life and have developed a very diverse friend group. I learned a lot this school year regarding sexual identity and preferences which I respect whole heartedly before going CEO I did understand the importance of pronouns and how much they meant to others until meeting [REDACTED]. I had never heard of the pronouns they/them, so it was pretty cool to learn about it from the people I worked with and befriended. I also had the pleasure of working with international students like [REDACTED] it was really amazing to learn about their backgrounds, cultures, and achievements. I have definitely become more open minded.

‘I have been in the CEO internship program for two years as of writing this, and though I have developed in a variety of ways through this program, my ability to equitably engage my team and all who come in contact with this program has truly flourished. This year, not only did we have three international students, but we also had non-traditional students, as well as a variety of interns across a variety of different races, gender identities, sexualities, and abilities. Though I already maintained an above-average level of competency regarding how to best advocate for justice and equitable practices for marginalized communities, as well as eliminate barriers and identify resources for said communities; there is always room for growth, and there is always more to learn. This was my first time navigating the inclusion of not just one, but three international students with various identities and backgrounds which required not only research regarding said identities on my own time in order to better understand their unique perspectives but also being brave enough to ask them clarifying questions so that I could better understand the perspectives of international students, and how they would want to be represented when making decisions in regards to the ILC.”

5. **Leadership** was defined as recognizing and capitalizing on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals, notable comments by the CEO interns are included below,

“Last year, I was honored to become the CEO internship’s first Assistant Coordinator, which not only instilled me with pride and awe that I would be, for lack of a better term, “worthy” of a leadership role but such a significant one that I would be essentially deemed a leader of the leaders. Since then, I have had the irreplicable honor of being the CEO internship second Chief CEO. While I will never be able to replicate the unique and impactful leadership style of the former Chief CEO, Alicia Jenkins, I was able to fully realize the leader that I truly am, in my own unique way. I was also able to utilize my unique identity as a neurodivergent woman to not only relate to my fellow CEO’s, but also provide a safe space and resource for understanding neurodivergent individuals.”

“I was always fine with being in the background and controlling things that happened without being in the spotlight, but I have learned to be a dominant but also effective leader that both knows how to take charge but also is adaptable and know when to step down and to listen to others.”

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6. **Professionalism** was defined as knowing work environments differ greatly, understanding and demonstrating effective work habits, and acting in the interest of the larger community and workplace, some notable comments among the CEOs included the following,

“I have learned professional decorum. The importance of your body language when interacting with others and being in meetings. I have learned to carry a notebook or computer with me to take notes. I have learned to become more precise with any projects or assignments I submit. I have learned the importance of organization and honesty. I have learned to be prepared for anything and adapt to any obstacle that may come along the way. I've also learned that actions speak louder than words and how your work ethic speaks a lot about your character.”

“I have learned proper Professional etiquette, time management, the importance of keeping a paper trail, how to build solid work connections, etc.”

“Given the fact that this is my second year as a CEO, most of my development in regard to my professionalism occurred during my first year. However, this year, rather than developing those skills, I was able to further fine-tune those skills, especially after assuming a higher position within the CEO internship program. I was able to improve my prioritization skills and attention to detail, of which I had already developed further within my first year. I had also improved in regard to becoming more dependable, as CEO interns were able to take advantage of my office hours for assistance with their academic papers, as well as consulting me on how to handle certain situations throughout this internship.

7. **Teamwork** was defined as building and maintaining collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities, some CEOs stated the following,

“Given the many facets of our internship, teamwork is essential both within and between departments and interns alike. Not only did the CEO internship facilitate teamwork within a working environment, it also facilitated teamwork outside of the more traditional aspects. During the SPACES retreat, I had the opportunity to not only get to know my fellow interns better during the more teamwork-based exercises, but we also were able to support each other emotionally, as the SPACES retreat was an event where it was a safe space to be emotionally vulnerable regarding the unique struggles we faced as a result of the

intersectionality of our marginalized and privileged identities. This brought me closer to my fellow CEOs, thus strengthening our teamwork as a result.”

“I have had to work with my team the entire year, which meant delegating tasks, effectively listening, bouncing back and forth ideas, etc..”

8. **Technology** was defined as understanding and leveraging technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals, some notable comments are stated below,

“I've learned about email etiquette to check emails frequently. I learned how to create email signatures. I have become more familiar with Microsoft and google technologies.”

“I have already known how to work most technology, but I have gotten to learn how to add files to a drive, and how to work an excel sheet.”

“While this wasn't a primary aspect to the program, I was able to fully utilize and integrate new technologies that weren't utilized in the previous year, such as a hand radio.”

Overall Feedback:

When asked to write about their feedback on the CEO Internship experience, the interns stated the following:

“This internship has given me the opportunity to discover my true potential as a scholar and a leader. I hope to see this internship continue so that other students may have the opportunity to have the same life-altering experiences that I've had, even if the compass funding has ended. I can say with absolute certainty that regardless of what happens next, I will be here to support this project both as a graduate student, and well after I graduate, in any way that I can.”

“The experience was definitely an experience! I felt all of the emotions while going through it. I have had a wonderful time meeting others while developing myself. It helped in pretty much everything aspect of my life. It's a very amazing opportunity like I've stated countless times before. I recommend my peers to sign up and gain new experiences!

“The CEO internship has molded me personally, professionally, and academically. I am forever grateful for the opportunity. I highly recommend for my peers to get involved with the internship whether it's becoming a CEO, showing support to CEO's or just volunteering.”

“I had a great experience. I learned a lot about leadership, teamwork, mentoring, social capitol, resume writing, team building, DEI, and much more.”

“I enjoyed this internship and all the amazing opportunities that I have gotten from it. I think this internship is great for any and every one regardless of their credit/year level. You will leave the internship being fulfilled, being knowledgeable on all things D.E.I and more, and you will be developed professional.”

“I believe that the Cultural Engagement Ospreys Internship should be prioritized by Stockton University, and the ILC should become an event that everyone knows about. I gained so much experience and growth from this internship, and I cannot wait to see how this internship progresses in the future.”

Please explain and provide any University Relations & Marketing (URM) coverage of your project (social media posts, press releases, photos, videos, etc.) Include these items as attachments or paste them at the bottom of this document.

First, University Relations & Marketing (URM) supported by providing updates to the conference webpage, and the branding/marketing materials on the University's website to recruit CEO Interns and educate the community on the compass fund project and the Inclusive Leadership Conference.

- Website - Inclusive Leadership Conference [link here](#)

Next, URM was supportive in capturing the second cohort of the (CEO) Interns during their photoshoot and headshots. These photos were used for promotional material that helped to market the conference and strategically placed across the institution.

Thirdly, URM featured major highlights from the conference through a video and article which will be used to promote future conferences. The content could be used for additional marketing initiatives for the university.

- Video - Inclusive Leadership Conference Highlights [link here](#)

Lastly, URM wrote and posted an article summarizing the conference and highlighting the new enhancements to this year's conference.

- Article "On-Campus Conference Expands, Full of Opportunities" [link here](#)

Please list any follow-up actions (publications, presentation venues, etc.)

We have and will continue to highlight our experience with the CEO Project in various spaces and platforms while acknowledging the compass fund initiative as the original sponsor to increase awareness and interest among others to pursue external funding opportunities as seed money for impactful initiatives and leave room for others to ask questions. Many of the meetings where we have shared our experience with the CEO project are centered around conversations related to increasing career readiness among students at Stockton University. Most recently we were able to share highlights from the CEO project at Student Affairs Leadership Council meetings as well as division wide meetings. Our goal is to also present the CEO project at a future conference such as NASPA National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and/or NCORE National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education to share best practices and challenges for integrating career readiness competencies in high impact practices.

Are you recommending the continuation of this project? If so:

- **What are the next action steps you foresee or recommend?**
- **What are the expected budget requirements going forward?**
- **Please identify the program, department, or division you should be working with to secure continuation of funding for your project.**

[Note: continuation proposals must be approved and incorporated into the appropriate budget process. This report will not constitute as a request for permanent funding.]

We recommend the continuation of this project despite it being the last year of funding from the Compass Fund. To ensure the project's sustainability, we will collaborate with various departments under

the Student Transitions, Access, and Retention (STAR) area along with student organizations with similar missions to secure the necessary funding for all conference expenses. The respective departments include Student Transition Programs, Career Education and Development, Educational Opportunity Fund, Academic Achievement Programs, and Military and Veteran Services. Additionally, we will explore collaborative funding opportunities with Stockton clubs and organizations that align with the mission of the conference. This multi-faceted approach will help us maintain the project's momentum and the impact it has on internal and external stakeholders.

FINANCES: Based on your proposal, please outline below how the award has been spent.		
	Amount	Notes/Comments
Beginning Budget Balance as of:	\$ 21580.00	
Salary Expenditures		
• TES salaries (613340)	\$	
• Student worker (613345)	\$ 9448.11	(budget distributed across 10 interns)
• Grad student worker (613350)	\$	
Total Salary Expenditures	\$ 9448.11	
Non-Salary Expenditures (<i>supplies, travel, etc.</i>)		
• printing	\$ 90	Purchase of name tags, and promotional materials, flyers, posters, etc..
• honorarium and speaker	\$ 2500	Morning Keynote
• Artist/Performer	\$ 1360	Live band during lunch
• Official Reception & Entertainment	\$ 6584.43	Meals for Breakfast and lunch
• Other supplies	\$ 850.70	Bookstore expenses pending in banner
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
Total Non-Salary Expenditures	\$ 11385.13	
Total Salary + Non-Salary Expenditures	\$ 20833.24	
Ending Budget Balance as of:	\$ 746.76	

If your project was approved for multiple fiscal years, please itemize future expenditures.
IMPORTANT: Unused funds revert to the general Compass Fund at the end of the fiscal year (June 30th). Compass funds DO NOT rollover to the next FY.

Item Description	Expected Amount	Expected Timing for Payment

