



The Cal State LA peer advocate program provides mentoring, outreach services, and workshops geared toward students' academic success. (Photo credit: J. Emilio Flores/Cal State LA)

Cal State LA receives national grant to drive student success

Grant will fund expansion of Cal State LA's partnership with East Los Angeles College through the GO East LA initiative

Recognizing the valuable but often overlooked role that community organizations play in partnering with universities to improve student success, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and Coalition of Urban Serving Universities recently announced a grant for California State University, Los Angeles, to scale-up its partnership with East Los Angeles College (ELAC).

The \$50,000 grant to Cal State LA is one of 12 awarded to public institutions across the country to advance university-community partnerships as a means to boost student success. The awards, known as Collaborative Opportunity Grants, support innovative approaches that link student success with an institution's community engagement. The grant is supported with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Through the funding, Cal State LA will create a peer advocate program to support the timely graduation of transfer students from ELAC. The program will use a non-traditional, student-centric approach, in which the concepts of kinship and critical consciousness are central, to identify practices that will foster greater success for transfer students.

"I believe that a sense of kinship — a feeling that allows students to believe that they belong at Cal State LA — is important for educational justice and it is at the heart of how our program will engage East Los Angeles Community College students to be well prepared and ready to take on their higher educational goals," said Cal State LA Professor Bianca L. Guzman, who will serve as director for the peer advocate program at Cal State LA.

Other Cal State LA faculty members involved with the program include faculty advisor Celina Benavides, faculty coordinator Claudia Kouyoumdjian, and peer advocate trainer Kortney Hernandez. The team also includes several undergraduate and graduate students who serve as peer advocates and research assistants.

The peer advocates will be trained to conduct interviews with groups of students from ELAC in order to provide mentoring, outreach services, and workshops geared toward students' academic success. These groups will include ELAC students who applied to Cal State LA and were admitted and enrolled, ELAC students who were admitted and not enrolled, ELAC students who were denied admission, and ELAC students who had incomplete applications.



Students investigate new books in the Emmaus School Library on Back to School night. From left, top row: Samuel and Sophia Jones and librarian Maralyn Malucky. Second row: Colin Lonneman, Kayley Thai, Harley Bae, and Hanna Sanchez. Bottom row: Isla Maples and Lauren Tang.

Emmaus School teacher celebrates 60 years in the teaching ministry

Emmaus Lutheran School teacher Maralyn Malucky is celebrating 60 years in the teaching ministry of the Lutheran Church this year.

In 1957, she was a "70 hour wonder" freshly minted teacher from Concordia College in Nebraska. She did practice teaching in Vacation Bible School and was called to teach first grade at First Lutheran Church in Burbank. A few years later she was called to Emmaus Lutheran School in Alhambra, where at different times she taught second through fifth grades. Mrs. Malucky went on to get her Bachelor of Science in elementary education and history plus a minor in religion. She got her California Teaching Credential and a masters degree in computer education.

Several years ago Mrs. Malucky took on the role of librarian. The library position included teaching computers to the students as well as building the library from four bare walls to what it is today — an incredible resource to the school.

All books are color coded for reading level. A third-grader who can read at sixth-

grade level might not have the maturity to handle the higher level subject matter, so Mrs. Malucky helps determine this. Every grade comes into the library once a week. Preschool 4, kindergarten, and first and second grades are read to during part of their library time. All students are tested quarterly to determine their reading level.

The library is self-funded through the Scholastic Book Fair as well as a competitive coin drive with one-third of the money raised dedicated to purchasing books for charity literacy programs outside the school. Parents, grandparents, and members of the church pitch in to help make it a yearly success. But the real success comes from the dedication of Mrs. Malucky, who as a child could not read (she thinks she was dyslexic) but now is never without a book and brings her love of the Lord and reading to generations of children.

For more information about the school, contact Principal Kit Hittinger at 626-289-3664, or visit the website at www.emmausalhambra.org.

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