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### Project Rebound

CSUSB Project Rebound

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# Project Rebound

## Background

Project Rebound is a program assisting formerly incarcerated individuals as they enter and proceed through California State University, San Bernardino. The program is an alternative to the revolving door policy of the criminal justice system. By offering a program which encourages students to excel in a course of study, Project Rebound encourages positive life efforts. The program offers admission for men and women who might not normally qualify for university acceptance because of application deadlines and/or minor academic deficiencies.

Project Rebound was started in 1967 at San Francisco State University by the late Professor John Irwin. However, The CSU Chancellor's office supported the development of Project Rebound programs at all CSU campuses, and CSUSB is one of seven pilot efforts. The program is staffed by one full-time coordinator, who has had prior incarceration experiences. The program coordinator acts as a liaison with campus services and programs, as well as with community organizations in order to serve as an advocate for people on campus and in the community.

## Successes

There have been several great successes at California State University, San Bernardino. One of which is the overwhelming support that the CSUSB community has expressed, from the University President to the Deans of several colleges. Not only has there been support coming from the upper echelon of the university, but numerous faculty, staff, and students have expressed interest in Project Rebound. We have established relationships with community colleges, three reentry centers, and are in the process of providing outreach efforts to students who are currently incarcerated at Chino Institute for Women and Chino Institute for Men. We have developed several promotional materials to continue our outreach efforts and are currently developing collaborative events with other programs, a website, a peer mentorship program, and seeking IRB approval to conduct research on the program. Additionally, we are working with The Department of Criminology, Law & Society (CLS) at the University of California, Irvine to have our students attend their Social Justice Research Symposium. All of the successes at CSUSB, thus far, is indicative of the necessity for such a program in the Inland Empire region.

*As of the Winter 2017 quarter:*

- *17 current students are enrolled in our program.*
- *1 individual applied for Fall 2017 and is in applicant status*
- *10 students are completing courses at the community colleges, required for transfer into the university.*
- *8 inmates have written us letters, in preparation to join our program upon their release.*

## **Challenges**

Although we have received a generous grant from the Opportunity Institute, one of the biggest hurdles is explaining to current and incoming students that the expansion of Project Rebound is in its infancy and that currently we do not have funding to immediately help them with all of their financial needs. However, we have made arrangements with the Coyote bookstore so that each student can purchase textbooks using project rebound funds. The Project Rebound staff is in the process of exploring avenues to secure additional funds to keep the program running and aid our students beyond what is currently available. We are working closely with the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences' Director of Development, to identify internal and external opportunities for funding, along with engaging in our own efforts to pinpoint sources of funding. Moreover, we are exploring other programs on campus that assist students monetarily (e.g. EOP, ASI, and OARC) so that we can advise our students of other opportunities at CSUSB.

| <b>Events Held</b>   | <b>Dates</b> |
|--|--------------|
| Project Rebound Orientation  | 9/17/2016    |
| Current Student Meeting  | 11/9/2016    |
| <b>Events Attended</b>   |              |
| Disability Awareness Fair, Chaffey College   | 10/20/2016   |
| PINTO Club Special Event   | 11/3/2016    |
| American Society of Criminology-Roundtable: College in Prison:<br>Creating Successful Programs | 11/17/2016   |
| CSRI   | 11/17/2016   |
| Fair Chance Hiring   | 11/18/2016   |
| Formerly Incarcerated Student Regional Meeting   | 11/19/2016   |
| Teach-in CSUSB   | 12/1/2016    |
| Workforce Development Meeting  | 12/13/2016   |
| SB County Reentry Collaborative  | 12/13/2016   |
| Regional Occupational Program  | 12/14/2016   |
| ASI Board Meeting  | 1/10/2017    |
| College Development Council Meeting  | 1/30/2017    |
| Faculty Senate Meeting   | 3/7/2017     |
| <b>Upcoming Events</b>   |              |
| Brainstorming Session  | 2/8/2017     |
| Guest Lecture – Social Work Class  | 2/20/2017    |
| Chino Institute for Men  | 3/3/2017     |
| Yotie Talks  | 4/6/2017     |
| Adult Reentry Center Collaboration   | 4/25/2017    |

## Project Rebound: More than a Dream

***The best way to prevent former inmate recidivism is a college education. And we have the numbers to prove it.***

In the next two years, approximately 50,000 California inmates will be released from prison. According to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's most recent statistics, more than 61 percent—approximately 30,500 men and women—will return to prison within three years.

But there is a way to reduce recidivism, increase employment, and help individuals who have been involved in the criminal-justice system earn a living. Since 1967, San Francisco State University—California State University, San Bernardino's sister university to the north—has administered a campus-based reentry program called Project Rebound. Project Rebound has helped hundreds of formerly incarcerated individuals attain undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Project Rebound at San Francisco State University has seen great success, with 90 percent of their students graduating with a university degree and ***fewer than 4 percent of them returning to prison.***

This year, California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) was one of seven CSU campuses awarded a grant to pilot a campus-based reentry program modeled on the successful San Francisco State University program. Supported by training in Project Rebound's methods by the CSU Chancellor's Office, CSUSB's Project Rebound helps formerly incarcerated students prepare, apply, enroll, and graduate with high-quality CSUSB bachelor's degrees.

### **The Program**

Once students enroll, Project Rebound staff review their progress each academic term and provide additional customized support as needed to help students stay on track to graduation. Students are connected to existing resources and campus services, as well as services provided by community organizations.

Project Rebound students can be challenged to meet deadlines, use academic technology, and feel comfortable on campus as they move through the curriculum. To help students overcome these obstacles, Project Rebound reminds students about deadlines, provide technology training and support, orients students to key campus resources, and creates a supportive community of peers and peer mentors.

Students may also experience housing emergencies, minor parole or probation violations, and other events that cause them to fall behind in their coursework. Project Rebound staff will connect students to community partners that provide resources such as transitional housing and legal counsel.

**The Potential**

Since Project Rebound’s on-campus orientation in September 2016, 17 current students and 19 prospective students have enrolled in the CSUSB program. Additionally, there are numerous inquiries from other prospective students who are in the process of enrolling in the program.

Based on state data, approximately 60% of California’s prison and jail population has completed high school or the equivalent. Given these educational attainment rates, the CSUSB Project Rebound staff estimate that 30% of the individuals currently incarcerated or under supervision in California would pursue a bachelor’s degree if provided with appropriate support and preparation.

This means that more than **17,000 current criminal-justice involved individuals** from San Bernardino and Riverside counties—the area that CSUSB serves— would be eligible to participate in Project Rebound on the CSUSB campus upon release. In fact, of the 26,977 individuals recently paroled to the Southern California region, 7,067 reside in our service area (over 25 percent). This number increases when considering those who already were on parole in the San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Project Rebound is conducting educational outreach to local correctional facilities, community-based organizations, and community colleges that currently serve the reentering population and will formalize these partnerships to create supportive student pipelines.

| <b>Outreach and Recruitment Area (by County)</b> | <b>In Jail</b> | <b>In Prison</b> | <b>Under Supervision</b> | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>CSUSB Target: 30%</b> |
|--|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Riverside, San Bernardino                        | 6,542          | 11,176           | 39,955                   | 57,673          | 17,302                   |

Many criminal-justice involved individuals encounter difficulties in financially sustaining themselves. To alleviate some of these financial strains, Project Rebound provides transportation stipends, textbook stipends, and other financial support. Staff also refer students to work-study positions, paid internships, and job opportunities. Additionally, we are working closely with the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences’ Director of Development, to identify internal and external opportunities for funding, along with engaging in our own efforts to pinpoint sources of funding. Moreover, we are exploring other programs on campus that assist students monetarily (e.g. EOP, ASI, and OARC) so that we can advise our students of other opportunities at CSUSB.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.csusb.edu/project-rebound>

