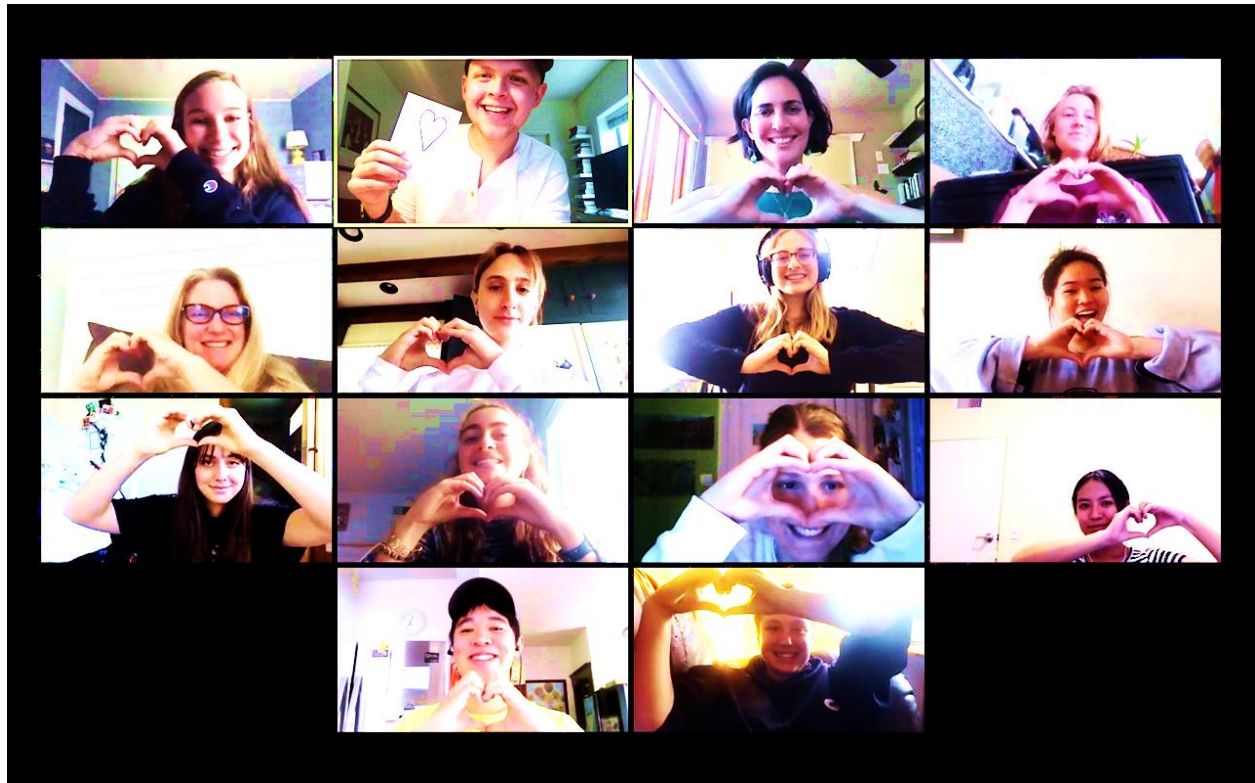


CASA PITZER



ANNUAL REPORT 2019 -2020

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Letter from the Director

Dear Friends of CASA,

I write on a sweltering summer day (nearly 100*!), which seems fitting as the heat has been turned up lately on all levels (racial, economic, academic, medical, and social) as our world faces new realities of the global COVID-19 pandemic and global uprisings against racial injustice and police brutality. It is hard to recall all that we did before this, since the present moment is all-consuming. Yet, here at CASA, we have actually been engaging in these same critical topics of community health and justice since the founding of our work 22 years ago. While widespread attention to these topics is now trending, our community partners, students and faculty have been trudging away, often quietly and behind the scenes, to collaboratively investigate and organize social change around community health, wellbeing and civil rights. Our action research projects



are longitudinal and community-led, spanning environmental and food justice, criminal justice, immigrant justice, worker's rights, critical mentoring/anti-racist education, and arts and culture in our region. These are issues that are important to our local community members and the CASA community partner organizations that work with them. They are also the issues that draw students to Pitzer College and the ones that are critical to the wellbeing and success of our country.

You can see examples of how we have tackled these issues in real time through the pages of this report. For example, last Fall, students compiled a popular education curriculum for workshops used in labor organizing with Warehouse Worker Resource Center, they helped organize an advocacy campaign for in-person prison visitation rights with Starting Over, Inc., and they helped launch Census outreach organizing with the local Tongan community through MALO. We celebrated these and other successes of our community-based research and action projects with our biggest year-end party yet, complete with delicious catering from our local street vendors, collaborative art-

making and poster presentations from our CASA student researchers ([see page 15](#)). In early Spring, the next cohort of CASA students participated in a 6-hour long meeting of the board of supervisors of Los Angeles County and provided public comment on the “Alternatives to Incarceration” vote, which then won! ([see page 18](#)) And, just prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, we hosted “Traumas of Injustice: Support for those on the Frontlines,” a workshop with all of our community partner organizations and trauma-informed therapist and community activist, Hala Khouri. This served as the launch for our new CASA-facilitated Healing Justice and Transformative Movement Organizing community-based action research project ([see page 16](#)).

While the rest of our Spring semester was fractured by the sudden shelter-in-place mandate, we were able to continue a robust digital classroom and research lab from our respective homes via the new-zoom-normal. And, while we have been devastated by the innumerable losses as a result of both COVID-19 and police brutality, we are buoyed by the fact that we are able to collaborate and co-conspire with CASA’s unstoppable community organizers and change makers at the frontlines of these issues. In this time of real despair, we cultivate hope knowing that the steady work of CASA is to continue the work needed to change ourselves, our communities, our institutions, our policies and practices to create the world we want instead. We are steadfast in our belief that we can do so through community building, community-based research, education and organizing, in our classrooms and on the streets. We invite you to reflect on the journey we’ve shared this past year and look towards that which we can create together in 2020-21.

Ever Onward,

Tessa Hicks Peterson

CASA Faculty Director



THE PROGRAM

Critical Action & Social Advocacy (CASA) Pitzer advances critical analysis and community partnerships around the most pressing issues in the Inland Empire. The CASA Pitzer space brings local residents, organizers, activists, artists, and nonprofits together with Pitzer College faculty and students to build community and enact change. The CASA Pitzer academic program facilitates student internships and community-based participatory research on issues of regional equity and justice pertaining to incarceration, immigration, education, environment, labor, art, culture, and health.

PRINCIPLES

- Interconnection: both the diminishing and healing of our humanity is locked in a "network of mutuality" (Martin Luther King, Jr). We see that our liberations are bound together.
- Disrupting and affirming: We aim to disrupt injustice and oppression while affirming equity, wellbeing, peace, joy, security, and connection within ourselves and with our communities
- Imagining and Creativity: We are imagining the just world we want and creatively cultivating it together through embodied justice and radical healing

- Place-based: We respect and affirm local knowledge, culture, assets, and power
- Relational: We create and sustain long-term, meaningful community partnerships that follow the lead of those most directly impacted by injustice in the community
- Personal and Political: We prioritize collaborations that are critically reflexive and generate greater personal and systemic transformation

GOALS

- Work collaboratively with community partners on research, service, organizing, and action projects that confront injustice and work towards justice, equity, rights, care, wellbeing, and community building.
- Ensure work is accountable to the community, makes a positive impact, achieves long and short-term goals, and cares for those involved.
- Listen and respond to needs and assets of our local community and justice-oriented organizations
- Support, mentor, and critically teach our students, while respecting and learning from their knowledge and visions.
- Create a space that is inclusive, welcoming, and supportive for community-building, justice work, participatory action research, personal and organizational development

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Outcome	Skills Gained
Apply Theory to Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a sophisticated notion of praxis that blends academic work with community engagement
Community Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of community strengths & the social construction of knowledge. • Ability to assess and critically examine community needs as determined collectively by community members. • Possesses leadership/teamwork skills within the community.
Self-Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of one's skills & can evaluate one's experience. • Demonstrated awareness of own perceptions, biases,

	assumptions; issues of power, privilege, positionality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits development in sense of self, capacity, and moral reasoning.
Methodological Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a nuanced understanding and use of methods appropriate to sensitive community-based settings in the service of social change.
Analysis of Inequality & Power Relationships in Academic Literature & In the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to provide in-depth analysis of inequality and power relationships at all scales, from local to global, and can apply this understanding to community-based projects.

COMMUNITY BASED PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (CBPAR)

Community-based participatory action research is a methodology that equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and researchers. All partners participate in the process: contributing expertise, decision-making, and sharing ownership of what is produced. The aim of CBPR is to increase knowledge and understanding but also to integrate knowledge gained with interventions for policy or social change to benefit community members.

There are various CBPR approaches that can be used to engage community members from initial engagement of the public to empowering communities that can lead to collective goals and social change. There may also be different levels of engagement for different stakeholders though the emphasis on collective decision-making and ownership is paramount to this process.

CASA students explore current movements, theories and narratives centered around critical social justice issues in our local communities and effective means for making social change. Courses highlight frameworks and practices of community-based participatory action research, transformative movement organizing, and healing justice, which work on building peace, wellbeing and liberation from the inside out. Students apply theory to practice through interdisciplinary scholarship, in-class dialogues, writing assignments utilizing self-reflection and critical analysis, experiential learning, creative art activities, and direct engagement with local change-making organizations and movements through community-based participatory action research. Our theoretical frameworks are grounded in a cross section of disciplines, including contributions from cultural studies, psychology, sociology, education, community health and political

studies. Course praxis (theory + action +critical reflection) plays out in large part through the program's intensive practicum (125-hour internship), class field-trips and interactive workshops that exemplify that which we study. Students engage in hands-on applications of community-based education and develop greater awareness of their own positionalities and values, as well as local knowledge, assets, and approaches to social change.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Students must take these two courses simultaneously which include:

Critical Community Studies (CASA 101)

This course examines the specific political geography, history and regional equity impacts within the Inland Empire, as well as critical approaches and theories of social change and community engagement. It highlights in particular healing justice and racial justice, through critical texts, discussions, guest speakers and experiential activities that include liberation arts, meditation, and constructive listening dyads. It includes a direct, digital engagement with diverse scholars and practitioners that work in these areas, featuring, in particular, community co-educators from our local CASA partner organizations. These community leaders will share how their organizations address these and other justice issues in this particular moment of crisis through grassroots organizing, policy advocacy, service providing, and community-building work.

Research Methods for Community Change (CASA 105)

This course explores diverse approaches to critical inquiry and community-based research, focusing on participatory action and project-based research. Students cultivate a "toolkit" approach to research needed to address the social problems of this moment, utilizing a variety of relevant methods such as interviews, focus groups, archival research, surveys, GIS and more. Students are partnered with our CASA community partner organizations, and support them in research and direct-impact projects to address issues that directly affect communities in the Inland Empire on topics ranging from immigration, education, incarceration, environmental justice, community health, and labor rights. In collaboration with a partner organization, students design and complete project- and community-based action research as well as study theoretical frameworks and ethics involved in critical research practice.

INTERNSHIP

Students are required to complete a 125-hour internship with one of our core eight-community partner organizations to produce rigorous community-based research or praxis, and to integrate classroom theory into practice through change-oriented work

MAJORS CREDITED

CASA is designed for sophomores and juniors and it satisfies the following majors:

- Sociology
- Environmental Analysis
- Organizational Studies
- International Intercultural Studies
- American Studies

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FULFILLED

- Social Responsibility Praxis
- Social Justice Theory
- Intercultural Understanding (local)

FACULTY & STAFF

CASA STAFF

The following person(s) listed are Faculty, staff, and student workers that manage the CASA Pitzer space and facilitated programming.

Tessa Hicks Peterson, CASA Director & Professor (core course teacher, community partnership and program oversight)

Jessica J. Chairez, CASA Program Administrator (course, student & partner support; CASA space use)

Jack Contreras, CEC Operations Manager (general information, student awards and reimbursements)

Christian Cabunag, CASA Work Study Student

Nicholas Ayala, CASA Work Study Student

GUEST FACULTY

Different faculty from across the disciplines rotate in teaching core courses in the CASA program each year. These are the faculty we had the honor of joining us in 2019-2020:

Barbara Junisbai, Professor of Organizational Studies

Erich Steinman, Professor of Sociology

Jemma Lorenat, Assistant Professor of Mathematics



THE SPACE

CASA Pitzer is housed in the heart of downtown Ontario, California in the historic Frankish building, overseen by the San Bernardino Housing department, with specific use for low-income residents of Ontario. CASA takes over the first floor and basement of this space, with high ceilings and a lot of light. Our facilities are equipped with a smart television, projector and is ready to use for meetings, presentations and workshops. CASA furniture is also easily movable in order to organize the space to fit diverse needs of students, community partners, trainings, events and classes.

LOCATION

200 S. Euclid, Suite B, Ontario, CA 91762

HOURS

Monday through Saturday, 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

SPACE USAGE

The space is open to all of our community partners and organizations within the Inland Empire, at no cost as long as there is a community benefit or social justice-oriented goal behind the event, for any and all programming such as:

- Informational Forums
- Meetings
- Focus Groups
- Retreats
- Cultural Performances
- Social Justice Organizing
- Movie Nights
- Art Workshops
- Education
- Office Space
- Theatrical Performances
- Community-based Participatory Research Labs

HOUSED PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

CASA currently houses four local non-profit organizations:

- Huerta del Valle Community Garden (HDV)
- Riverside All of Us or None (RAOUON) and Starting Over Inc. (SOI)
- Youth Mentoring Action Network (YMAN)
- Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity (MALO)



CASA PARTNERS

ARTS AREA

The Arts Area provides professional development, civic advocacy, resource support, and fiscal sponsorship for the creative industries of the Inland Empire of Southern California, including the areas of San Bernardino, Riverside, and east Los Angeles Counties.

HUERTA DEL VALLE (HDV)

Huerta del Valle is an urban farm and community garden that serves 62 families, who each maintain a 20 foot by 10-foot plot of land for just \$10 a year, giving them access to fresh food at low cost. Through growing food, they work toward sustainable community empowerment and health: creating meaningful work, building lasting skills and developing strong relationships within the city of Ontario.

INLAND COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE (IC4IJ)

The [Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice](#), is composed of 35 organizations that serve the immigrant community in the Inland Empire. The IC4IJ currently focuses on advocacy, changing the narrative, and capacity building. Our coalition engages

in policy advocacy, community organizing and education, and rapid response to ICE and border patrol operations. We are collectively changing the narrative of the one million immigrants who live, thrive, and are a foundational part of the fabric of the IE. We are building organizational capacity through leadership development, cooperation, support networks, and shared regional strategies. Lastly, the IC4IJ provides resources such as training, technical support, and grants to coalition partners to further support their efforts and mission in the region.

INLAND EMPIRE IMMIGRANT YOUTH COLLECTIVE (IEIYC)

The Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective is an undocumented youth-led grassroots organization in the Inland Empire. They are committed to creating a safe space for immigrant youth regardless of legal status, sexuality or other intersections that are crucial to the undocumented identity.

RIVERISDE ALL OF US OR NONE

A local chapter of All of Us or None, is part of a national organizing initiative of prisoners, formerly incarcerated people, organized to action to end mass incarceration and the discrimination faced by formerly incarcerated people.

STARTING OVER, INC.

Starting Over, Inc. specializes in providing transitional housing and reentry services for formerly incarcerated individuals while helping to build strong communities through recovery, civic engagement, and leadership development.

WAREHOUSE WORKERS RESOURCE CENTER (WWRC)

A local nonprofit, 501(c)(3), organization founded in 2011 dedicated to improving working conditions in the warehouse industry in Southern California. They focus on education, advocacy and action to change poor working conditions in the largest hub of warehousing in the country.

YOUTH MENTORING ACTION NETWORK (YMAN)

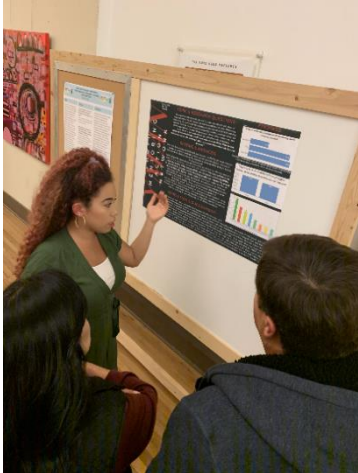
The Youth Mentoring Action Network was founded in 2007 with the mission of leveraging the power of mentoring to create a more equitable and just society for young people. Founded by two veteran educators who understood the importance of making solid connections with young people, they recognized that young people were at their best when their voices were heard and they felt fully supported.



CASA EVENTS

CASA Research Symposium (Fall 2019)





Navigating the Traumas of Injustice with Hala Khouri

Navigating the Traumas of Injustice: Effective Approaches for Those on the Frontlines

Join this intimate workshop designed exclusively for CASA core community partners working with trauma-informed therapist and justice nonprofit executive director, Hala Khouri, to equip yourself with knowledge, tools and resources around trauma and healing-informed practices for community work. Most justice-oriented organizations work with people who are confronted with the traumas of injustice and the subsequent symptoms of depression, anxiety, isolation and physical health issues that result when one's safety, security and sense of value is threatened due to discrimination, housing, food or documentation insecurity and other factors of oppression. Those working in justice-oriented organizations often want more knowledge, tools, and resources to effectively address all of this, as well as the vicarious trauma or triggering impact these things can have on employees who themselves may also suffer from these traumas of injustice. This introductory workshop will explore these issues and offer greater awareness and practices that practitioners at the frontlines can employ for themselves and the folks they work with.

CASA Pitzer
February 28, 2020
8:30am Breakfast & Partner
Quarterly Meeting
9:30am-11:30am Workshop





STUDENT EXCURSIONS & ACTIVISM







STUDENT IMPACT

BY THE NUMBERS

The following information outlines community and internship work done by CASA Pitzer students in collaboration with CASA community partners. Students are required to spend a total of 125 hours in the community as a requirement for the Ontario-ONT 105 Research Methods for Community Change course.

FALL SEMESTER	SPRING SEMESTER	TOTAL
9	14	23

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Students provided nearly 3,000 hours of volunteer time to our community partners!

QUALITATIVE PROJECTS

- Brown, K. (2019). Current Community Needs and Potential Response Strategies at Huerta del Valle – Ontario.

- Ortiz and Young (2019). Legalization of Street Vending: Examining the Effects on Vendors in the Inland Empire.
- Radecki, C. (2019). Youth Engagement in the Immigrant Community and the 2020 Census.
- Brashear, C. (2019). Weaving Histories: Indigenous Representations & Reproductions.
- Cerit, A. (2019). Effects and Re-imagining of In-Person Visitation: Support for AB964.
- Greenberg and Meadows (2019). Promoting Financial Stability for Street Vendors in the Inland Empire and Greater California.
- Chourreau-Lyon and De Troy (2019). A Ticking Time Bomb: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Incarceration System.
- Cook and Martin (2019). Can CSA Boxes Fight Food Insecurity?

QUANTITATIVE PROJECTS

- Nguyen, K. (2019) Equity for Undocumented High School Immigrant Students & the Effects of COVID-19
- Hui, J. (2019) Art Counts: A Quantitative Analysis of Arts Education in the Ontario, CA Area.
- Grief et al. (2019). Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Online Organizing and Outreach.





COMMUNITY PROJECTS

PLACE Collaborative Grant

Partnerships for Listening and Action by Communities and Educators Bringing Theory to Practice



The PLACE Collaboratory was launched in Fall 2018 with aims to bring together a group of academic-community partnerships, involving approximately ten academic institutions from diverse sectors and regions, in a civic engagement initiative sponsored by Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP). The collaboratory aims to distill best practices for such partnerships, to model the role of the humanities and public-cultural work in sustaining them, and to

pursue a strategy of networked collaboration in disseminating them across higher education. Pitzer College, because of the work of the CEC and CASA Pitzer programs and centers, was invited to be involved in this national PLACE Collaboratory and was generously awarded \$30,000 for the next two years.

Pitzer's PLACE team consists of undergraduate student, Ray Hill-Cristol; graduate student, Christian Cabunag, professor, Tessa Hicks Peterson alongside community partners from Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice (Lyzbeth Mendoza, community engagement and policy director; Jessica Hernandez, digital media coordinator, Ramon Morales, community leader) and from the Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective,



Najayra Valdovinosoto. This group met weekly throughout 2019-20 and tri-weekly during the summer. They launched a collaborative community photography art project April 14, 2020 with ten community artist participants from ICIJ and IEIYC (primarily undocumented immigrants, from teenagers to grandmothers, brand new artists to seasoned ones, community activists to street vendors). The PLACE team and community artists engaged weekly check-in digital gatherings where participants and team leaders continued conversations to build community, discuss how the photo-taking process was going, shared photography tips and suggested themes, and demonstrated our support for this budding community. At the close of June, we formally ended the photo-taking portion and engaged in a process for collective editing and curation of photos. Each participant curated their own selection of top ten photos, provided descriptions of each and a biography about themselves. We met to look at and provide feedback on the photos and debrief about the process of taking them, writing and reflecting on them, and thinking together what shape the public exhibit should take.

This final conversation resulted in a number of ideas, including using the photos online in photo galleries of our participating organizations' websites, creating our own website to highlight all photos and the artists, and eventually printing them on large banners so they can be used for in-person events, advocacy efforts, gallery viewing, and perhaps eventually translating them into a digital or print book or zine to be used for educational, promotional and personal uses. The group also hoped to host both a digital launch party, inviting friends, families, participants, team leaders and the public to view the photos and discuss with the artists the process and what it meant to them in meaning-making around their lived experiences of immigration in our region.

We are working on building the website now hope and to launch the website publicly in Fall 2020, and later into other modalities and platforms.

Claremont Graduate University-Education 574: Community Based Participatory Action Research



In both summer 2019 and 2020, CASA Academic Director taught a graduate Community Based Participatory Action Research course which took place with 6 CASA partners (Huerta del Valle, Inland Coalition 4 Immigrant Justice, Starting Over Inc., the Youth Mentoring Action Network, the Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective, and the Arts Area. The course took place over 5 weeks with and the scope, form and

content of the final research was determined collaboratively by the community partners and student teams to address the needs expressed by the community. This also aimed to carry on the CASA research partnerships through the summer and with the assistance of graduate students. Typical action research projects have included such things as a story map or other mapping project, white paper, event planning, grant writing, social media graphics, curriculum, interview series, research template, zine, design project, and other action research creative endeavor. Some summer action projects included:

- Annual report and Youth Intern program curriculum for Huerta del Valle
- 3 one-page research outcome infographics for ICIJ
- Justice Table Infographic and GIS for SOI
- Interviewing Black and Brown mentors and mentees for YMAN

Additionally, students wrote a 20+ page paper that describes the research, including participant observation, focus groups, and interviews as well as the project, and its process and outcome. The entire course culminated in a final presentation at the CASA Pitzer Space where food was provided and all of the involved community partners, including Claremont Colleges staff and community members came together to discuss these projects. The final papers and presentations are kept secure with Dr. Tessa Hicks Peterson, and can be viewed at any time with her approval.

Transformative Movement Organizing and Healing Justice Collaboration

Centering *wellness in justice* work and *justice in wellness* work is both a timeless and timely issue. The impacts of COVID-19 and police brutality only magnify pre-existing conditions of inequity as they relate to wellbeing and to the fragility of wellness of those



working at the frontlines. This project aims to highlight and examine this, find and put to use tools and trainings to address it, and provide models for others to use to effectively change our justice organizations and movements to be more trauma- and healing-informed in analysis and practice. This is the moment to build the support, resilience and tools for wellness that will help us not only *survive* the injustices of today, but actually *thrive* as we dismantle injustice and build the world we want.

Project Process:

Based on informal discussions throughout 2019 between CASA faculty director and members of each of CASA's community partners and students, interests in the topics of healing justice emerged, with requests for more information and support in this vein. This led to focus in the CASA academic program on transformative movement organizing and healing justice in CASA 101 Critical Community Studies in 2019 and 2020 as well as CASA hosting a 2-hour workshop, "Navigating the Traumas of Injustice," exclusively for CASA community partners and interns (in which 30 individuals, representing all 8 core community partners, participated). The evaluations from this session further indicated

an interest and need in this topic and a formal community-based action research project was launched June, 2020 with CASA faculty director, Tessa Hicks Peterson, trauma-therapist and community leader, Hala Khouri, and Justice Hub office manager, Scarlett Duarte, as the primary leads, alongside 2 Pitzer students, Keely Nguyen and Dalia Paris-Saper and 3 Claremont Graduate University students, Vanessa Reyes, Cindy Gaytan and Therese Julia Uy.

The launch of the community-based action research project first focused on exploring self/organizational reflections on if/how/where/why and where/why not wellness, healing, trauma- informed practices and transformative organizing exist in daily operations and strategic vision of organizations (on personal, interpersonal, institutional, structural/systemic levels). This reflection allowed people to name what is and isn't and inform next steps/ what's needed/ what to build on. This took place through digital surveys, focus groups and interviews with staff of CASA organizations. 26 surveys and 7 focus groups were recorded, transcribed, coded and thematically analyzed, producing a full and executive report of these findings (July, 2020).

The next step of this project (Fall/Spring, 2020-21) involves assessing the main issues that emerged in this study and seeking trainings, tools, workshops, curriculum and programs that address them. It will also involve raising funds so that staff from each organization can attend trainings and then train the rest of their staff. The research team aims to create a training and resource manual that can be used in the creation of strategic plans that integrate wellbeing practices and justice values into organizational structure and daily practice, climate and culture, programs and organizing. Future plans (2021-22) include another assessment to see impact after 6-12 months of implementation, then make alterations to training and practitioner's manual accordingly. The main goal is making this scalable, helpful to those on the ground, impacting community-based organizations and movements so that other organizations can use to follow this same process into the future, thus contributing to gap in existing justice work that does not center or sustainably practice wellness, healing and transformative movement organizing in the work.

CASA SUPPORT

CATEGORY	2019-2020
Space Operating Costs	\$24,436.81
Office Supplies	\$2,230.34
Staff Transportation	\$80.04
Meeting Expenses	\$1,201.99
CASA Events	\$1,111.69
Student Transportation	\$3,875.74
Student Excursions	\$1,000.37
Project Expenses	\$293.89
Community Support	\$1,118.89
TOTAL SPACE & PROGRAM COSTS	\$35,349.66

CASA Pitzer and Community Engagement Center COVID Partner Donation Collections

During the nascent months of the COVID-19 outbreak in California, CASA reached out to local community partners to see how we could support those most at risk and reached out to our Pitzer students, staff, faculty and alumni to seek support to match those needs. As a result, we received, cleaned, sanitized and process donations of clothes, backpacks, books and movies, art supplies, food and masks. In total, we processed and dispersed nearly 1,700 donations.

CATEGORY	Number	Partners Supported
Food Donations- donated by Pepo Melo	25 boxes of vegetables and fruits	PEOC, MALO, Starting Over, Inc.
Clothing Donations	540 (Men, Women and Children's clothing)	Prototypes, PEOC, Starting Over, Inc.
Books and Media	Books 731 / CD&DVDS 44	Prototypes
Masks	134	PEOC, Prototypes, MALO, Huerta del Valle
Art and School Supplies	Art 27 / School 162	Prototypes
Backpacks- donated by MALO	25 backpacks filled with school supplies	PEOC

CONTACT INFORMATION

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