President Weber takes the charge of allocating the resources of The President's Leadership Fund very seriously and focuses on emerging opportunities to pursue innovation and reward excellence. Each request for funding is assessed based on how it will advance SDSU's mission of providing a superior education, cutting-edge research and service to the community, thereby enhancing SDSU's visibility as a premier urban university.

We want to share with you the impact The President’s Leadership Fund is having on San Diego State by showcasing the diverse initiatives the program has funded thus far. Please take a moment to learn about recent investments and review a portfolio of the initiatives supported by The President's Leadership Fund over the past academic year.

Thank you to our current partners for enabling President Weber to invest in these exceptional opportunities.

View our most recent Annual Report to Partners.

SDSU faculty, staff and students interested in requesting funds from The President's Leadership Fund may access our application by clicking here. (View the application guidelines.)

THE INVESTMENT HIGHLIGHT

Alternative Spring Break – South Africa

Winston Churchill said “You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give.” Never was this more apparent than when SDSU and Crawford High's School of Law and Business' students chose to spend a week in South Africa over spring break funded, in part, by The PLF. During their “vacation,” they assisted 1,000 orphans of the Ithuteng Trust, all of whom were victims of abuse, and some whose lives have been disrupted by AIDS. The objective of the donation-funded center is to help its youth obtain a high school education.

Founded by SDSU Africana Studies' professor Dr. Shirley Weber, the “Alternative Spring Break” provides students with a unique opportunity to learn about African culture and apartheid. South Africa serves as a living laboratory for examining race relations; students can observe the impact race policies have on South Africans, and they begin to understand that we all bear some
responsibility in creating a world free of racial, sexual and religious intolerance.

According to Dr. Shirley Weber, who makes the trip each year, their work focuses on “education and AIDS prevention.” Over the years, her student volunteers have assisted the Trust with construction and beautification projects, tutoring and providing shoes and school supplies for its students [collected pre-trip through charity drives]. MTV was so impressed with the group’s efforts that this year’s trip was one of five highlighted on their program Amazing Breaks last spring.

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

Other recent investments made by The President's Leadership Fund include:

Camp Able
Coronado-based Camp Able was developed in 1980 by SDSU faculty in the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism to provide challenging recreational and educational activities for disabled children. A water front camp that operates for 10 weeks each summer, Camp Able offers an untraditional mix of aquatic-oriented activities including sailing and swimming with typical camp activities such as crafts and singing around a campfire. In its 25 years of service, Camp Able has provided more than 8,500 disabled children from 25 agencies nation-wide with day camp and waterfront activities at Silver Strand State Beach. The PLF provided on-going programmatic support to ensure the Camp's continued operation.

SDSU Prison Tour
With assistance from The PLF, SDSU’s 23rd annual Prison Tour provided 24 criminal justice majors with a unique opportunity to visit several state prisons. Students came face-to-face with inmates and prison staff in cell blocks and exercise yards, documenting their interaction along the way. Each learned life-altering lessons in tolerance and humanity which will prove invaluable in their careers. Conducted in partnership with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (the world's largest law enforcement agency), SDSU’s Prison Tour is the first of its kind in the world for college students.

Mixtec Outreach
SDSU’s Center of Latin American Studies is an internationally renowned resource (the only one in the U.S.) for learning about the Mixtec people and their language. (Mixtecs are a Native American people centered in the Mexican state of Oaxaca.) In collaboration with other organizations, PLF funding provided services for San Diego’s Mixtec community including developing a Saturday-school program that offers a series of workshops on language and culture.

Step Up
Step Up, a City Heights-based program operated out of the Consensus Organizing Center, funded, in part, by The PLF, the program is designed to address the disparity between the number of students from low income neighborhoods who qualify for higher education, but fail to enroll in college.

Eleventh grade students from San Diego's inner city schools complete “Introduction to Social Work,” an undergraduate course at SDSU that addresses community problems from a social and political context. as well as 40 hours to community service work in their neighborhood. Upon finishing these two components of the Step Up program, these students receive assistance in the college application process, in areas ranging from essay writing to completing financial aid documents.

This year, The President's Leadership Fund invested $75,000, payable over a three-year period, in the Step Up program. After three years of operation, 97% of Step Up's graduates have enrolled in college.

Learn more about additional investments made over the past academic year.