



2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CARNEGIE FOUNDATION RE-CLASSIFICATION
AS A COMMUNITY ENGAGED UNIVERSITY**

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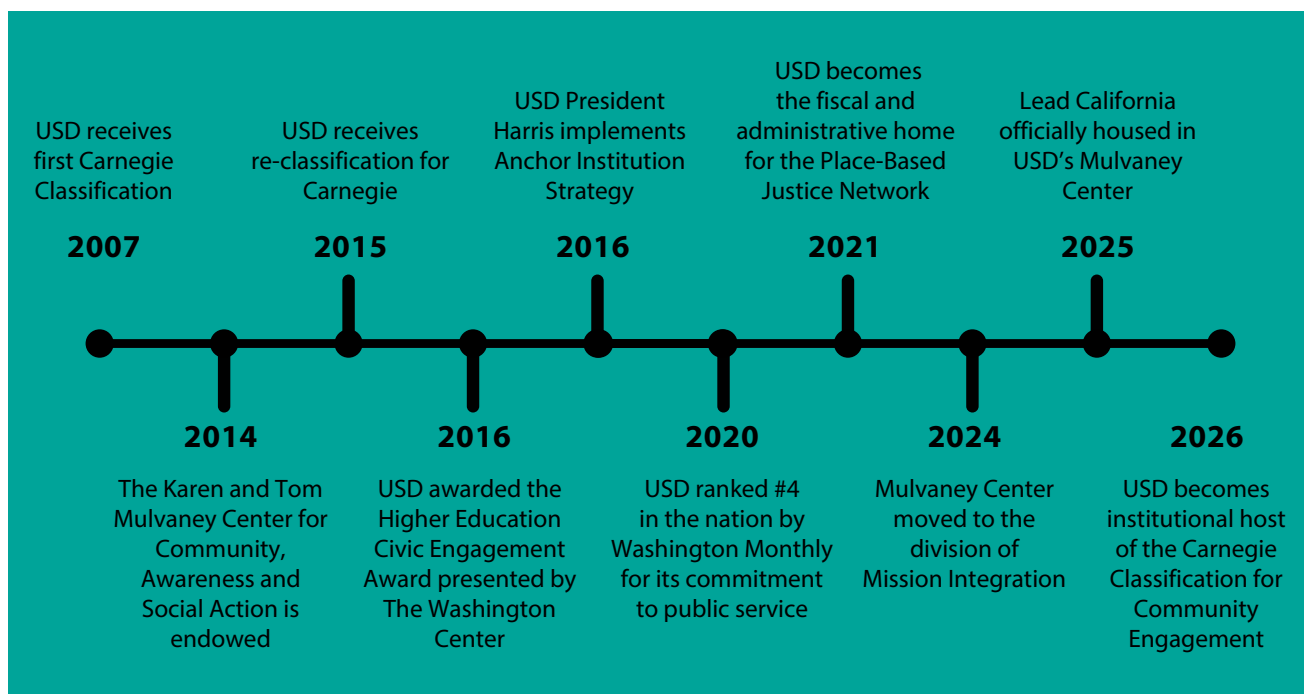
OVERVIEW



#CALIFORNIANSFORALL
COLLEGE CORPS FELLOWS

Community engagement is one of the University of San Diego's (USD) core values, aligning with our Catholic Social Justice mission and institutional strategic initiatives. As a Hispanic Serving Institution and one of the original 76 institutions awarded the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement in 2007 - and reclassified in 2015 and 2026 - the Carnegie Community Engaged University Classification process serves as a university-wide self-study that audits, assesses, and advances USD's community engagement policies, practices, and infrastructure while identifying opportunities for continued growth. This designation provides a framework for reflection and for strengthening partnerships across campus, locally, and internationally.

HISTORY OF CARNEGIE CLASSIFIED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT USD



KEY FINDINGS

* MULVANEY CENTER HUB

USD's Karen and Tom Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness, and Social Action continues to serve as the campus-wide hub for community engagement. Staffing has grown by approximately 100% and funding has increased by 400% since 2015. These increases are fueled by institutional prioritization and support of community engagement through funding, endowments, and major grants like the CaliforniansForAll College Corps program which has brought over \$8 million to the university and supported the development of 50+ new community partnerships since 2022.

100%

Increase in staffing since 2015



400%

Increase in funding since 2015



The Mulvaney Center now operates in the division of Mission Integration, and the director of the center is now the Associate Vice President for Community Engagement and sits on the President's senior cabinet - demonstrating the university-wide prioritization of community engagement work and the university's commitment to becoming an Anchor Institution in the local community.

* STRATEGIC VISION

Over the past decade, and two strategic planning cycles, community engagement has evolved from a component of broader goals to a distinct pillar in USD's strategic vision. This positioning formalizes its centrality to the university's identity and mission. The university's leaders now champion community engagement on agendas throughout the institution, influencing hiring, recruitment, and retention of both academic and executive leadership.



* INSTITUTION-WIDE DEFINITION AND RUBRIC

In 2021 a group of researchers from the Mulvaney Center created an institutional definition and rubric outlining the criteria and expectations of how USD encapsulates community engagement. This gives the university essential tools to clearly and consistently assess its community engagement efforts, courses, and programs. The definition we agreed to center our development of criteria for identification and assessment tools was based on the Carnegie definition:



Community engagement describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. (Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement)

FOUR PRIMARY AREAS ESTABLISHED AS CRITERIA FOR THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT RUBRIC:



DEMOCRATIC, RECIPROCAL, AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS



SOCIETAL ISSUES AND THE COMMON GOOD



CRITICAL REFLECTION



CIVIC LEARNING, CITIZENSHIP, AND DEMOCRATIC VALUES

* CIVIC ACTION PLAN

Created in 2017 and revised in 2021, USD's Civic Action Plan (CAP) serves as a university-wide framework to embed community engagement into teaching, research, partnerships, and institutional action. The CAP emphasizes USD's public-serving mission by promoting democratic, reciprocal partnerships and preparing students for lives of engaged citizenship.



CIVIC ACTION PLAN GOALS

- GOAL 1** CREATING AND SUSTAINING DEMOCRATIC, EQUITABLE, RECIPROCAL PARTNERSHIPS
- GOAL 2** EXPANDING AND ENHANCING STUDENT, FACULTY, AND STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
- GOAL 3** STRENGTHENING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COLLABORATION AMONG UNITS ACROSS CAMPUS

* PARTNERS AS CO-EDUCATORS AND CO-CREATORS

USD deepened its commitment to community partnership by recognizing partners as co-educators and co-creators, offering formal roles as “professors of practice,” professional development, shared governance, and access to campus resources, including space, funding, and fiscal sponsorship. With the decentralization of community engagement work on campus - including Changemaker Hub, Jacobs Institute, etc. - we have extended our connections to more partnerships in the community.



Impact Linda Vista Initiative

Bringing USD faculty and students together with community partners for the co-creation and development of innovative and sustainable course-based collaborations in Linda Vista.



Via International

Via International is a local nonprofit organization USD is proud to partner with in their work of building community from the inside out and strengthening the human connections that cross every border.



USD College Corps

#CaliforniansForAll College Corps is a historic state-level investment in service that creates debt-free pathways for students who commit to serving 450+ hours in their communities for an academic year.



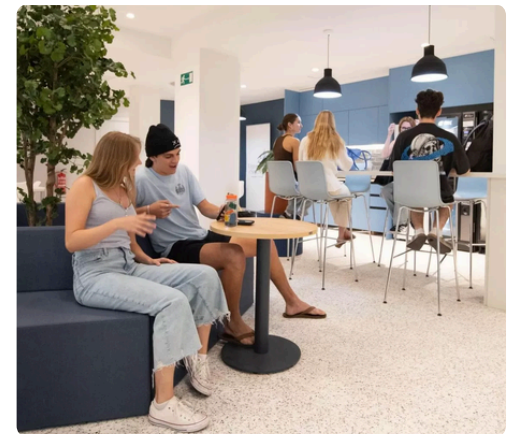
USD's Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education

Powering innovation and leadership in education by providing learners of all ages the opportunity to be creators, builders, designers, producers and makers.



USD's Changemaker HUB

USD students, faculty, staff and community partners address humanity's most urgent challenges through meaningful, sustainable, and innovative collaborations in order to advance USD's mission.



USD's Madrid Center

European Partners and alumni of USD use the Madrid Center as a hub to connect and build global relationships.



200+

Community Partners Campus-Wide

* EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CAMPUS-WIDE

Community engagement has become more expansive, decentralized, accessible, and integrated across campus, representing all schools, disciplines, and areas of focus as seen through the creation and expansion of the Changemaker Hub, Faculty Council on Community Engagement, Environment Integration Lab, the Engineering Exchange for Social Justice, the Jacob's Center, and The Brink. USD recently launched two additional centers – the Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education which focuses on advancing equity and innovation in education through research, technology development, and cross-sector collaboration, and the Center for Restorative Justice which prepares the next generation of restorative justice leaders and provides research, training, and consultation across education, justice, and community sectors. These centers have added dozens of full-time staff, mobilized new funding, and fostered numerous community partnerships across a wide range of sectors.

STAND OUT ADDITIONS TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACROSS CAMPUS OVER THE PAST DECADE

Athletics

- *USD Women's Basketball year-round tutoring in Linda Vista K-12 classrooms*
- *USD Men's and Women's Basketball Halloween Hoopla Event*
- *Linda Vista Local Community Discount*
- *Jamaica Immersion Program with Student Athletes*

College of Arts and Sciences

- *Humanities Center*
- *I am A Scientist Program - STEM Outreach*
- *Math Mentors at Ocean Discovery Institute*
- *USD Vote*

Mission Integration

- *Community Engagement (C) and Public Service (PS) Course Designations*
- *Changemaking Minor*
- *The Urgent Challenges Homelessness Initiative*
- *Expansion of the Impact Linda Vista Initiative*

School of Business

- *Faculty-led economic development assistance and marketing training for small business owners in Linda Vista and throughout San Diego*
- *USD's Small Business Development Center - The Brink*
- *Access-USD Micro-enterprise Collaboration (AUMEC)*
- *Linda Vista Farmer's Market*

School of Engineering

- *Engineering Exchange for Social Justice*
- *Blind Community Center, Braille Institute and The San Diego Center for the Blind*
- *Center for Digital Civil Society*
- *Changemaking Engineers*

School of Law

- *No-cost Legal Clinics for the Community*
- *Law Experiential Advocacy Practicum*
- *Children's Advocacy Institute*
- *California Innocence Project*

School of Leadership and Education Sciences

- *Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education*
- *Nonprofit Institute*
- *Black Ingenious Initiative (BiGI)*
- *Tele-Mental Health Training Clinic*

School of Nursing

- *Community Health Clinics*
- *Geriatric Research Project*
- *Community Health and Wellness Fair*
- *Master's Entry Program in Nursing (MEPN) Clinic at the Monarch School*

School of Peace Studies

- *Social Fabric Peace-Building Initiative*
- *Kroc Border Fellows Program in Tijuana, Mexico*
- *Restorative Justice Institute*
- *The Violence, Inequality and Power Lab*

Student Affairs

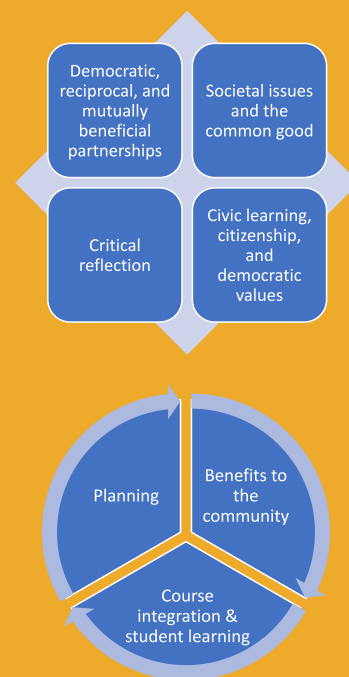
- *Civil Discourse Initiative*
- *Torero Renaissance Scholars*
- *Thriving Staff Model: Community Wellness and Engagement*
- *Partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to provide summer housing for asylum seeking families*

* CURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR CHANGES AND GROWTH

DESIGNATED COURSES FOR PUBLIC SERVICE + COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2021, USD implemented Public Service (PS) and Community Engagement (C) course designations, reviewed and approved by the Faculty Council on Community Engagement (FCCE), to bring consistency, clarity, and accountability to community-based learning.

- Searchable designations help students identify relevant courses
- Acknowledge faculty contributions
- Enable institutional tracking and assessment of community-engaged teaching
- Promote a shared understanding of reciprocal, equity-centered practices across disciplines



CO-CURRICULAR LEARNING OUTCOMES

In 2016, USD and its Student Affairs division developed co-curricular learning outcomes (CCLOs) which included several outcomes relating to community engagement (CE) under the "Identities and Community" theme. These included: 1) Cultural Self Awareness: An internal examination of one's social and personal identities, acknowledging the identities of others and the implications of various identities within cultures. 2) Engagement with our Diverse Communities: A willingness to interact locally and globally with individuals who experience life differently as a result of their identities. 3) Social Empathy: The ability to more deeply understand people by perceiving or experiencing their life situations and as a result gain insight into structural inequalities and disparities.



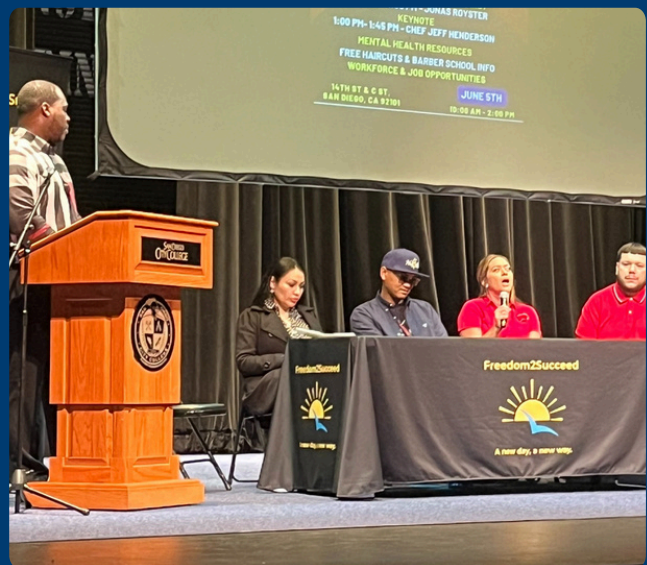
* FACULTY DEVELOPMENT + SCHOLARSHIP

PROMOTION + TENURE

Promotion and tenure at USD are guided by institution-wide, college, and departmental criteria focused on teaching, scholarship, service, and mission. Community-engaged teaching and research are increasingly recognized as high-impact practices with many departments. While recognition varies by school and department, there is growing institutional support for incorporating community engagement into promotion policies.

SCHOLARSHIP

We invite you to explore the [Community Engagement Scholarship and Publications](#) page on the Mulvaney Center website, which offers an overview of USD's community-engaged scholarship and publications, reflecting the range of collaborative work and contributions emerging from our academic and community partnerships.



QUESTIONS RAISED

AS WITH ANY SELF-EVALUATION, THE CARNEGIE APPLICATION PROCESS RAISED SOME QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE FURTHER DISCUSSION:

1. How do we best gather information about departmental/college engagement with community partners? While significant community engagement already occurs, it is not well documented, coordinated and assessed even though the university has made great strides to coordinate assessment efforts in other areas. How can we build bridges across the university to gather the information needed for better tracking of community engagement courses, scholarship and partnerships.
2. How can USD systematically assess the community's perceptions of the university's engagement with and impact on the community?
3. How can we best utilize the assessment data related to community engagement to improve, add or eliminate programs, adjust financial and personnel resources, etc.? Are such changes documented?
4. Where and how is community engagement rewarded in the tenure and promotion process in a transparent and clear way? Are faculty highlighting their community work in their dossiers and how is this being rewarded?
5. How can we better collaborate with the Communication/Marketing department for improving the messaging language and outreach to share the impact with both community partners and onboarding of leadership?
How might we better institutionalize community engagement language into the culture of USD?



STEPS TAKEN

THE FOLLOWING ARE STEPS TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE QUESTIONS THAT WERE RAISED DURING OUR APPLICATION PROCESS:

- We have developed a strategic onboarding plan for Give Pulse to increase participation and buy-in across campus. One key step will be to automatically include all courses that receive the C designation via the curriculum review.
- The Mulvaney staff has developed a number of tools to measure community partner outcomes and experiences. Developing a plan to make sure these tools are used consistently and the data is used to close the loop between experiences and improvements in the future will be a goal.
- We have instituted a new Undergraduate Certificate in Community Engagement which includes concrete learning outcomes to assess student learning. Since we do not have institutional learning outcomes for CE, the certificate program outcomes will be evaluated as a part of the program assessment process and an institutional measure of learning effectiveness.
- A major goal of the faculty council of community engagement for the 2025 - 2026 academic year is to research and develop recommendations for how USD can expand our current rank and tenure processes to better reward CE work in teaching, scholarship and service. Discussions on how we can better track how CE is being included in faculty files will also be a focus.
- USD's University Advancement and Marketing and Communication team has been proactive and strategic by having quarterly meetings to profile and storyboard stories of impact for print media, invitations to key events, donor development, web stories, marketing materials, and more.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



The role of higher education in supporting both local and international communities in times of turmoil and reduced resources has never been clearer. As we look to the future, we are committed to strengthening USD's community engagement - expanding its reach, increasing its intensity, and measuring its impact. We look forward to working with schools and departments to better incentivize CE in the rank and tenure process. Additionally, as we continue to be both national and international leaders in the field as the hub for both the Place-based Justice Network and LEAD California, we look forward to helping support community engagement as a profession and core value at USD and other institutions. Finally, to maintain trust and ensure our efforts remain responsive and relevant in an evolving landscape, improving our messaging with better assessment and collaboration with our marketing team for sustaining meaningful relationships will be foundational.

Special Thanks to the Carnegie Crew Writing Team:

Sandra Sgoutas-Emch, Professor of Neuroscience, Cognition and Behavior
Chris Nayve, Associate Vice President and Endowed Chair for Community Engagement
John Loggins, Director of Community Engaged Learning
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Brenna Hughes, Consultant

We would also like to thank these groups for their assistance in helping us gather the information needed for the application:

Faculty Council for Community Engagement
Deans and Associate Deans of All of the Schools and the College of Arts and Sciences
Student Affairs
Mission Integration
The University Assessment Committee
Changemaker Hub
Jacobs Institute
Athletics
Community Partners