

SOLES4SOULS (S4S)

CSU DOMINGUEZ HILLS PILOT PROJECT

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Dominguez Hills conducted a pilot Soles4Souls collection campaign during the 2016 spring semester. The program was carried out from approximately April 1st to June 1st and resulted in the donation of 2,568 pairs of shoes. The following report summarizes the lessons learned from this pilot project.

Initiation: Due to various factors, not the least of which was a threatened system-wide faculty strike the DH pilot Soles4Souls shoe drive was not initiated until mid-semester of spring, 2016. As a result, several key offices were already committed to other major projects. Our major campus partner, the Center for Student Learning, Internships & Civic Engagement (SLICE), was in the process of planning and implementing three major projects as well as a number of other less demanding efforts. Despite that, SLICE devoted much time and effort and provided invaluable assistance in terms of placing the collection boxes, emptying them each Friday, counting (and if necessary, pairing) the shoes, as well as delivering them to the storage area. SLICE was invaluable and would have helped even more if we had been able to get them involved earlier.

Because of our late start, we were unable to get the ASI, Faculty Senate, administrators and other important campus constituencies fully on board. In addition, it was too late in the semester to have faculty integrate it into classroom projects and/or internships. For example, media classes

could be called upon to develop the Internet promo, art classes could create posters, flyers, etc., social work classes could design and implement methods of reaching out into the community, all as part of their service-learning component.

Duration: Our pilot was conducted during the last half of the semester. S4S recommends a 4-6 weeks intensive shoe drive. It should probably be held in the middle of the term to provide time for organization and promotion and prior to the hectic end of term period.

Participation:

Campus and community involvement should be as widespread as possible. Our experience suggested that it can equal or surpass the on-campus participation. DH reached out into community organizations such as the Riviera Garden Club, the Redondo Beach Women's Club, the Boys and Girls Club as well as local school districts. A number of schools collected shoes during the last few weeks of the academic year. The most impressive example was a middle school in Torrance. They worked with their Model United Nations Club students who collected 301 pairs of shoes and \$195 in two weeks. Given the fact that S4S distributes shoes to 127 countries, this is an ideal project for this organization that has programs throughout the State.

Collection

Collection box location is critical. At DH there were a number of boxes in various locations such as the student union, the administration building, dean's and department offices. The locations should be in high-traffic, easily

accessible areas, and thus need to be carefully chosen and approved by the appropriate campus divisions. Since this process can be time-consuming, it should be initiated as soon as possible.

Each S4S box holds about 30 pairs of shoes. The number of boxes needed depends on the size of the campus. At CSUDH SLICE staff and volunteers emptied, paired if necessary, counted and transferred them to the storage area using the golf cart to which SLICE had access each Friday.

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS AGAIN! DONORS MUST BE URGED TO PAIR THE SHOES!! Non-paired shoes are of little use. DH received many bags of shoes that were not tied, laced or rubber-banded together. The SLICE staff and volunteers spent many hours pairing them. (Blischke also spent many hours in his garage pairing shoes from community organizations and schools.)

Storage

One of the major problems encountered at Dominguez Hills was insufficient storage space. S4S stipulates that a campus has to collect 10,000 pairs of shoes before they will provide an 18-wheel trailer to be parked on campus as a central storage location.

Shipment

At the end of the shoe drive the shoes can be transported to the S4S warehouse in Montgomery, Alabama via the 18-wheeler. However, if fewer than 10,000 pairs are collected, the campus must be prepared to bear the cost of shipping to that site. S4S

has an agreement with a shipping company for reduced transit fees.

Costs

The major costs include the S4S boxes, plastic bags, posters, mailings, storage if not available on campus, staffing if volunteers are not sufficient, and transportation of the shoes at the conclusion of the drive. DH did not set up an electronic donation process though we should have done so.

Recommendations:

- Begin organizing the shoe drive as early in the semester as possible.
- Involve as many campus groups as possible in the planning and implementation committee. Preferably, an emeritus or retired faculty member will chair the group with representatives from the senate, student government, administration, alumni, plant operations and the community.
- Plan the shoe drive for 4-6 weeks after it is organized and widely promoted throughout the campus and local communities.
- Utilize the Soles4Souls website that has very valuable guidelines, media drafts and other information. S4S will provide staff assistant to each participating campus.