Bay Area Systems Impacted Consortium (BASIC)

History

California’s East Bay Area is made up of Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano Counties. The populations of these counties are diverse culturally and economically, and residents live anywhere from suburbs to big cities. These counties are also home to eleven public community colleges and two large public universities, five of which have established on-campus support programs for formerly incarcerated students, and several more of which have shown interest in developing similar programs.

Most of the region’s postsecondary campus-based support programs have only been recently established and are still in the early stages of development. In general, the programs have kept very low profiles on their campuses, and until recently there was limited awareness of—let alone any collaboration among—the programs. They shared a commitment to supporting student retention and completion of CTE certificates, AA degrees and, in the case of UC Berkeley, bachelor’s degrees. They also faced similar challenges to achieve sustainability.

The first meeting of potential consortium stakeholders took place on April 28, 2017, at Laney College in Oakland. Sixteen attendees represented four local community colleges (Laney College, Merritt College, Chabot College, and Berkeley City College) and two public universities (UC Berkeley and San Francisco State University). Also present were representatives from several prospective community partners, including Urban Strategies Council, The Opportunity Institute, and Career Ladders. At that meeting a consensus decision was made to form the Consortium. At the next meeting, held on July 12 of the same year, planning began for an event in the fall designed to widen the Consortium’s circle of stakeholders and allies. That successful three-hour-long convening was held on November 15 at Merritt College.

As of July 2019, we are working to develop a formal governance and membership structure, with the goal in mind that will be led by a majority student Board of Directors. The Consortium’s current email distribution list includes 130+ names representing a broad cross-sector base of participation by current and former students, college faculty and staff, and community partners from the public and private non-profit sectors.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the goal of BASIC?

Our goal is to provide access to information, resources and networks that empower currently and formerly incarcerated and justice systems impacted students in the East Bay Area to achieve self-determination and success in their post secondary educational and career pathways.

2. How does BASIC plan to accomplish this goal?

The initial Board of Directors (BOD) will serve until December 2021 drawn from the three counties (live, work, and/or serve in Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano counties). Meetings will be held every 1 to 3 months to accomplish the work with the support of the larger membership.

We believe that the best way to accomplish this goal is to support sustainable programs, strong inside/outside pathways, and systems change.

Sustainable programs

- To build sustainable, best-practice, campus-based program models that support student persistence, retention, transfer, and certificate and degree completion
- To promote leadership development components for all campus-based programs, including stipends for students working as peer mentors and fellows
- To develop strong, supported career pathways post graduation
- To foster student-centeredness in program, policy, and planning especially understanding student material and academic needs

Strong inside/outside pathways

- To create strong pathways from educational and vocational training programs inside local jails and prisons on to postsecondary institutions in the community
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- To resolve barriers to translating vocational training and work experience inside local jails and prisons to credits toward CTE certificates granted by the California Community Colleges

**Systems change**

- To broaden access to postsecondary programming inside local jails and prisons, thereby creating a ‘pro-education’ culture
- To foster a welcoming and affirmative culture on local campuses for formerly incarcerated and justice systems impacted students
- To seek categorical funding to aid formerly incarcerated students and their support programs (similar to that provided for former foster youths and disabled students)
- To advocate for students educational and career issues in policy, legislative, and implementation circles

3. **Who is involved?**

BASIC is made up of nonprofit, government, and community college community partners. Including but not limited to the following:

**Nonprofit Partners**

- Urban Strategies Council
- The Opportunity Institute
- Five Keys Schools and Programs
- EASTBAY Works

**Government Partners**

- Alameda County Probation Department
- Alameda County Office of Education
- Alameda County Public Defender’s Office

**Community College Partners**

- Restoring Our Communities at Laney College, Oakland, CA
- Street Scholars at Merritt College, Oakland, CA
- RISE—Open Gate at Chabot College, Hayward, CA
- NEW DREAM at College of Alameda, Alameda, CA
- SOAR—Students Overcoming Adversity and Recidivism at Solano Community College, Vallejo, CA