Mission, Goals, and Values

The MISSION of Project Rebound is to support the higher education and successful reintegration of students with an incarceration experience. We are dedicated to reducing recidivism and empowering formerly incarcerated individuals through the transformative power of higher education, advocacy, and leadership. By making higher education more accessible and supporting formerly incarcerated students to excel in a course of study, Project Rebound constructs an alternative to the revolving door policy of mass incarceration in order to break the intergenerational cycles of poverty, abuse, addiction, under-education, unemployment, and incarceration; strengthen the health of the state’s most marginalized communities; and foster the leadership necessary to build a more just and democratic society.

The GOALS of Project Rebound are to enable students to:

- cultivate skills in critical thinking and writing, oral communication, quantitative and ethical reasoning
- enhance their capacity for civic engagement and community leadership
- secure meaningful and gratifying employment
- empower themselves, their families, and their communities
- reduce their participation in behavior that is harmful to self, family, and community, including drug abuse and violence
- humanize public attitudes towards currently and formerly incarcerated people in order to facilitate reintegration and eliminate collateral consequences of criminal conviction related to social stigmatization and marginalization

Three core VALUES guide the work of Project Rebound:

- Every person has inherent value and holds the power of possibility and transformation within them.
- Public resources are better invested in education and other opportunities for transformation than prisons and punishment.
- The integration and leadership of formerly incarcerated people is essential to the work of creating solutions to the social crisis of mass incarceration.
To realize our mission and achieve our goals, Project Rebound provides students who have an incarceration experience with the following STUDENT SUPPORTS:

- We help students navigate the university and provide or connect students to the resources and support services they need to succeed
- We help students secure employment & internship opportunities on- and off-campus
- We build and foster community and a safe space for all
- We advocate for students on campus and in the community
- We offer academic tutoring, career and other "soft skills" training workshops
- We provide students with opportunities to cultivate leadership skills

Rebound Scholars are more than Cal State Fullerton Titans. Rebound Scholars are individuals who work tenaciously on campus and in their communities, overcoming the challenges and stigma of incarceration, and blazing trails to assist others who follow in their footsteps. As a Rebound Scholar, you have earned the opportunity to reach higher! Make the most of your time at Cal State University Fullerton.

Cultivating Student Potential

Project Rebound fosters the growth of Rebound Scholars across three major areas: Education, Leadership, and Outreach.

EDUCATION – A successful university education leads to enhanced self-efficacy, civic engagement, and social and global awareness; it also enlarges the moral imagination and instills skills and habits that assist people in securing gainful employment and living meaningful, responsible lives. By supporting students with an incarceration experience to excel in a course of study, Project Rebound aims to help students cultivate skills in critical thinking and writing, oral communication, quantitative and ethical reasoning, as well as life skills like time management, persistence, punctuality, self-motivation, and responsibility.

LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY – Project Rebound encourages and provides formerly incarcerated students with opportunities to serve as ambassadors for the program by engaging in community outreach, social justice advocacy and activism, media and public relations, contributing to public discourse on criminal justice and higher education, and contributing to the local, state, and national movement to advance the civil and human rights of currently and formerly incarcerated people. Rebound Scholars who seize these opportunities will enhance
their capacity for civic engagement and community leadership, empower themselves and their communities, expand their social and professional networks, and contribute to humanizing public attitudes towards currently and formerly incarcerated people that will in turn reduce the social stigma and collateral consequences of criminal conviction.

OUTREACH & MENTORSHIP – Project Rebound is guided by the principle of “each one, teach one.” We are all about formerly incarcerated students and graduates reaching back to support and mentor returning citizens who aspire to reach their potential through higher education. We offer students opportunities to reach other students (and prospective students) with incarceration histories through university recruitment strategies, outreach on campus and in the community, and peer-to-peer mentoring.

Education means emancipation. It means light and liberty. It means the uplifting of the soul into the glorious light of truth, the light by which men can only be made free. To deny education to any people is one of the greatest crimes against human nature.

-Frederick Douglass