

**SAN JOAQUIN DELTA COLLEGE**

**EMPOWERING POWERFUL INITIATIVES FOR CHANGE (EPIC)**

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## San Joaquin Delta College – Stockton, California

### Empowering Positive Initiatives for Change (EPIC) Program

#### I. NEED FOR PROJECT: CONTEXTS and MAGNITUDE

##### *The Community*

California is home to the largest Asian American (AA) population in the United States with 6,799,259 residents, 15% of the state's total population. It is also home to the second largest Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NHPI) population with 332,371 residents. While 59% of California's Asian Americans hold Bachelor's degrees (or higher), only 22% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Californians have achieved the same levels of education. These disparities illustrate the differences within an aggregated group in access to and success in post-secondary education, especially for East and South Asian Americans (Campaign for College Opportunity, 2022).

Nestled between the Sierra Nevada to the east and the Coast Ranges to the west, California's Central Valley is a broad, elongated flat valley that ranges from 40 to 60 miles wide, and approximately 450 miles long from north-northwest to south-southeast inland from and parallel to the state's Pacific coast, serving a diverse population across several counties including Alameda, Amador, San Joaquin, and Calaveras. It is one of the world's most productive agricultural regions, providing more than half of the fruit, vegetables and nuts grown in the United States. Reservoirs and canals irrigate the valley's 7,000,000 acres, as agriculture remains the dominant industry in the region's economy despite proximity to Sacramento, the state capital, the San Francisco Bay area and Silicon Valley.

*The College* - San Joaquin Delta College (aka, Delta College or SJDC) is a community college district in California's Central Valley with the main campus situated in the City of

Stockton, and three smaller, satellite campuses located throughout the region in both urban and rural areas.

Delta currently enrolls more than 16,000 students each semester ranging in age from 16 (approximately 28% of enrollment in early college programs) to more mature students over the age of 50 (5%). The vast majority (69.3%) are between the ages of 18-34 of which 48% have declared their intent to pursue Bachelor's Degrees after completing their Associate's at Delta.

Almost 70% of students are low-income and are either PELL Grant recipients, or receiving financial aid in the way of full tuition waivers as part of "California's Promise" program, thereby reflecting the high rates of poverty in the region as likewise reported by local schools (e.g., 74% of local K-12 students qualify for Free and Reduced Meals – FARM). These numbers exceed census reports of 16.7% of Central Valley residents living below federal poverty levels compared to 11.3% statewide. Further evidence of these income gaps is the differences in median income for the region which is \$54,614 for the County compared to \$75,325 statewide.

With a combined Asian American, Native American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population of 21.5%, Delta is designated by the U.S. Department of Education as an Asian American/Native American/Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI). The vast diversity of our AANAPISI students is evident in Table 1 below. Of the 3,429 AANHPI students enrolled, 18% identified as Southeast Asian (Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Vietnamese). Table 1 provides a disaggregation of our AANHPI students. Filipino (29%) students make up the largest group, followed by both Asian Other (19%) and Asian Indian (19%).

**TABLE 1 | Fall 2021 San Joaquin Delta College AAPI Students Disaggregated by Subgroup (Unduplicated)**

AAPI Subgroup	Count of Students	Percent of Total AAPI Students	Percent of Fall 2021 Students (Total: 17,261)
Cambodian	196	6%	1%
Chinese	120	3%	1%
Filipino	979	29%	6%
Hmong	126	4%	1%
Indian	655	19%	4%
Japanese	8	0%	0%
Korean	22	1%	0%
Laotian	41	1%	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	105	3%	1%
Two or More AAPI	652	19%	4%
Vietnamese	235	7%	1%
Other - Asian	290	8%	2%
Total	3,429	92%	18%

*Data Source:* San Joaquin Delta College, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Headquartered in the County Seat of Stockton, Delta serves students from 19 distinct school districts throughout San Joaquin County, and another 89 independent school districts from the surrounding counties that constitute much of the northern half of California’s Central Valley.

**A. NEED FOR PROJECT** - Named the most racially diverse city in the United States in 2018 by *US News and World Report*, Stockton serves an Asian-American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) population of 22% with a long-standing history of Asian immigration followed by the discrimination, violence, hate and trauma experienced by many immigrant groups. Like all minoritized groups in the U.S., Stockton’s Asian American community is vastly diverse. It includes over 50 different ethnic groups, more than a hundred different languages and dialects (Hsu, 2021), and contends with a competing dual identity as both “perpetual foreigners” and “model minorities” (Wu, 2021).

This conflicting dual identity is best exemplified in a 2012 report by Pew Research Center that stated:

“Asian Americans are the highest-income, best-educated and fastest-growing racial group in the United States... A century ago, most Asian Americans were low-skilled, low-wage laborers crowded into ethnic enclaves and targets of official discrimination. Today they are the most likely of any major racial or ethnic group in America to live in mixed neighborhoods and to marry across racial lines. These milestones of economic success and social assimilation have come to a group that is still majority immigrant. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of Asian-American adults were born abroad.”

Pew Research Center, 2012.

These conflicting dual identities can be stressors on anyone’s mental health, but particularly so for that of Asian American students (Huynh et al., 2011) who report experiencing pressure to meet parental expectations for high academic achievement, while balancing two different cultures amidst family obligations (Augsberger et al., 2015).

History of Stockton’s Asian American community begins with Chinese immigrants who began settling in the city around 1850, with peaks in Asian immigration from multiple countries in the 1920s and again in the 1970s as Chinese, Japanese, South Asian/Indian, and Filipino immigrants sought to escape poverty, war and genocide in their native countries (Magagnini, 2013). Despite its name, Stockton’s “Chinatown” dates back to its establishment in the late 1880s and is home to several different AANHPI communities (Bennett, 2000).

Likewise, “Little Manila” serves multiple Asian American communities in addition to being a safe haven for one of the largest Filipino communities outside of the Philippines (<https://www.littlemanila.org/>). It also serves as a reminder of the resilient tenacity of the *Manongs* (e.g., respected, single elder brothers) who built their own businesses and organizations

to meet community needs denied them as a result of the racist policies and miscegenation laws that existed through the mid-1960s.

While civil rights legislation and the “model minority myth” have positively influenced many social practices that once prohibited Americans of Asian ancestry from pursuing the American dream (e.g., quality education and upward mobility), violence and discrimination against AANHPI community members persist. One of the most publicized tragic events in AANHPI history, a mass school shooting in 1989 ten years before Columbine and more than 30 years before Uvalde, was headlined in the Prescott Courier as “Gunman Hated Vietnamese” but was never officially reported as a hate crime. The shooter, a young white man, opened fire at Stockton’s Cleveland Elementary School because it was attended primarily by students of Southeast Asian descent. He killed five schoolchildren ages 6, 8, and 9 of Vietnamese or Cambodian descent, and wounded 32 others. One of the 32 wounded eventually attended Delta College and now serves the community as a police officer.

<https://www.abc10.com/article/news/local/stockton/uvalde-massacre-stockton-1989-shooting/103-c4e16844-aa49-4b0c-86e7-210bc55df6e4>

Such violence against the AANHPI community has only increased since the onset of COVID-19 in 2020 as reported in multiple news outlets (CNN, 2021; NPR, 2020). From March 2020 through December 2021, a total of 10,905 hate incidents against AANHPI persons were reported to Stop AANHPI Hate (National Report, March, 2022). From New York to California, hate crimes against Asian Americans increased by an average of 149% nationally, with an increase of 107% in the state of California alone and 409% on school campuses where increased diversity purports higher levels of cross-cultural understanding (CA Department of Justice, 2022). For many, this kind of violence is often coupled with the generational trauma experienced

and shared by family who fled their home countries' political and economic violence (e.g., war, genocide, etc.).

Despite these traumas, the AANHPI community has the lowest rates of mental health service utilization of all American populations, and few studies have specifically focused on the mental health needs of the AANHPI community (Office of the Surgeon General, 2001). As COVID variants continue to emerge and serve to incite anti-Asian crimes, campus supports for AANHPI students take on increased urgency.

**B. SPECIFIC GAPS AND/OR WEAKNESSES:** AANHPI student success is predicated on meeting the needs referenced above AND on meeting hidden academic and social needs that go unnoticed due to “model minority” stereotypes (Chou and Fagan, 2014). Strategies to address these needs include: 1) meeting students' basic needs, the precarious and ubiquitous nature of which was intensified and expanded by the pandemic; 2) ensuring universal access and utilization of mental health supports; 3) fomenting and safeguarding an inclusive and nurturing campus culture and climate to confirm students' sense of belonging and worth through shared experiences, peer mentoring and first-year experiences; and 4) providing early interventions and ongoing academic supports to facilitate persistence, retention and program completion.

### **Need 1: The Basics – Food and Housing Insecurities**

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Offices (CCCCO) and the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group) administered a statewide survey in the spring of 2020 to assess the impact of the pandemic on students' transition to remote learning, including questions about basic needs and overall well-being. Given the alarming data from extant studies on food and housing insecurities among college students (Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Broton and Goldrick-Rab, 2018), this study sought to identify state- and

institution-specific needs at a time when access to on-campus supports was limited. Data from Delta's respondents to this survey (n=1,650) found that 42% of our students had at least one basic need insecurity, much higher than national pre-pandemic levels of 20% food insecurity and 33% housing insecurity (Broton and Goldrick-Rab, 2018). When disaggregated demographically, data revealed that 71% of Delta's AANHPI students were experiencing basic needs insecurity, the highest reported of all subgroups. Support from this grant as we return to in-person learning opens an opportunity for quicker and more aggressive identification of students struggling with these needs through the addition of counselors and resource specialists who will advise students of on-campus services, including but not limited to a food pantry and affordable housing options through local agencies.

## **Need 2: Mental Health Support Services**

Despite the 71% of AANHPI respondents reporting basic needs insecurity, a greater proportion reported never or "zero days in the past week" to the survey question of frequency for "feeling nervous, anxious or on edge". These disparate findings are inconsistent with data from other studies in which feelings of depression and anxiety correlate directly with basic needs insecurities (Coakley, et.al., 2022; Cappelletti, et. al., 2015). Concurrently, these incongruent data from our AANHPI students support other studies that report feelings of stigma and shame around mental health issues are pervasive in AANHPI communities, therefore leading to under-reporting and subsequent lack of treatment (Office of the Surgeon General, 2001; Augsberger, 2015; Huynh, et al., 2011).

The pandemic has put additional strains on all students' overall mental well-being (Aucejo et. el., 2020), but the additional stress among AANHPI students who are already struggling to live up to the "model minority" myth under the ongoing threat of violence due to



misinformation about the origins of COVID is palpable, especially as this is a population less likely than other groups to seek medical attention and services (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015). Given these challenges, there is an even greater need to focus specifically on mental health for this population.

### Need 3: Inclusive and Nurturing Campus Climate – Sense of Belonging

While Delta’s student demographics reflect the community we serve, the employee profiles do not (Table 2). This disproportionality does not provide AANHPI students with ample role models who can connect with them on a cultural level. It also limits ways the campus community can connect to and understand the AANHPI experience.

**TABLE 2 | Fall 2021 Race/Ethnicity Comparison: Students, College Employee Types and San Joaquin County**

	Students	Administrators	Tenured Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified	San Joaquin County <sup>^</sup>
<b>Asian</b>	18.35%	5.71%	7.58%	8.56%	12.15%	17.88%
<b>Filipino</b>	2.19%	(included under Asian)	(included under Asian)	(included under Asian)	(included under Asian)	(included under Asian)
<b>Pacific Islander</b>	0.64%	0.00%	0.51%	0.68%	0.35%	0.71%
<b>Black/African American</b>	6.53%	5.71%	7.58%	3.42%	8.33%	7.74%
<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native</b>	0.29%	0.00%	0.51%	1.37%	1.04%	1.55%
<b>Latinx/Hispanic (of any race)</b>	48.40%	34.29%	16.16%	11.30%	30.21%	41.80%
<b>White/Non-Hispanic</b>	16.80%	37.14%	47.47%	49.32%	30.56%	27.66%
<b>Some Other Race Alone</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	23.32%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	5.57%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	14.48%

<b>Unknown</b>	1.23%	17.14%	20.20%	25.34%	17.36%	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	16,898	35	198	292	288	779,233

*Data Sources:* California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Data Mart (<https://datamart.cccco.edu/datamart.aspx>); ^Census Data 2020 (<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?g=0500000US06077>)

The lack of AANHPI representation in the employee ranks, especially in key leadership positions across the institution, could be one reason that AANHPI students report lower overall ratings of perceiving faculty and staff interest in their development at the college. Based on results from a spring 2016 campus-wide survey, AANHPI students reported lower agreement ratings to items that asked: “at least one faculty/staff member has taken an interest in my development” (San Joaquin Delta College, 2016).

In addition to low representation among employees, there are limited resources prioritized primarily for the AANHPI student body. Delta has a long history of providing funding and supporting culturally-centered programs such as Puente (Hispanic/LatinX students) and Affirm (African American students). Unfortunately, there have not been the same types of focused resources and support for Delta’s AANHPI students. Noting this need and the absence of such targeted supports, a group of AANHPI faculty and staff secured a small grant from one of the college’s categorical programs to create a learning community with courses taught through the lens of the AANHPI experience, *Empowering Positive Initiatives for Change* (EPIC). It was first offered in the spring of 2016 and continues because the College’s administrators recognized the program’s early successes in: (1) increasing awareness of the different cultures and their customs across the campus community, including variations within Asian and Pacific Islander cultures; and (2) better academic outcomes for AANHPI students who participate in EPIC relative to their AANHPI peers who do not participate. Consequently, Delta’s leadership allocated operating space, now known as the EPICENTER.

Despite the project’s positive outcomes, EPIC currently serves an average of only 30 AANHPI students every year (less than 1% of total AANHPI enrollment) and is staffed by faculty and staff who volunteer their time to provide the intensive, wrap-around services students need and deserve (e.g., joint events for AANHPI students and employees, community engagement and civic learning opportunities).

**NEED 4: Improved Transfer and Completion Outcomes**

Students’ completion rates of transfer-level math and English courses have historically been low at the college (Table 3). Consistent with state averages, less than half of all first-time students complete transfer-level English within their first year and only 1 out of 10 completes transfer-level math within their first year. While AANHPI students have slightly higher rates than other groups, these rates are still low. More than 60% of all enrollees, including AANHPI students, do not complete transfer-level English within their first year, and the vast majority (90% for all students and approximately 84% of AANHPI students) do not complete a transfer-level math course within the same timeframe.

Cohort	English				Math			
	Overall	Asian	Filipino	Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native	Overall	Asian	Filipino	Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native
<b>2016-2017</b>	22.60%	22.41%	31.05%	*	7.29%	13.95%	14.44%	*
<b>2017-2018</b>	27.91%	32.01%	36.09%	*	8.01%	12.92%	14.90%	*
<b>2018-2019</b>	29.99%	30.88%	45.36%	*	7.54%	11.96%	15.23%	*
<b>2019-2020</b>	29.75%	34.37%	38.41%	32.08%	9.49%	14.62%	19.11%	*
<b>2020-2021</b>	25.44%	30.74%	29.44%	37.04%	9.73%	15.27%	12.15%	*

\*Suppressed data due to small count (<10 students); *Data Source:* California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Scorecard Metrics (<https://www.calpassplus.org/Launchboard/Student-Success-Metrics-Cohort-View>)

Student transfer rates to 4-year institutions within a six-year timeframe are equally disappointing (Table 4), and almost 10 percentage points lower than state averages (Campaign for College Opportunity, 2022). In short, 70% of all students and 65% of all AANHPI students who begin at Delta do not successfully transfer to a university within six years.

**TABLE 4 | Rates of Transfer to a University within Six Years for First-Time Students**

Cohort of First-time Students	Overall	Asian	Filipino	Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native
2013-2014	26.19%	29.82%	33.33%	*
2014-2015	25.41%	33.24%	31.75%	*
2015-2016	23.04%	29.22%	23.86%	*

\*Suppressed data due to small count (<10 students); *Data Source:* California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Scorecard Metrics ([calpassplur.org/Launchboard/Student-Success-Metrics-Cohort-View](http://calpassplur.org/Launchboard/Student-Success-Metrics-Cohort-View))

## II. PROJECT DESIGN

Given the historically low outcomes, Delta proposes an exponential expansion of its EPIC program currently serving approximately 30 students successfully each year, to an expanded and enriched version: EPIC LC (EPIC Learning Community) to serve as a structured cohort for 120-140 additional students each year (totaling 150-170), and a resource option for up to 500 AANHPI students annually. EPIC LC will: build a stronger sense of community around the AANHPI experience; create a solid foundation of support with wrap-around social, emotional and academic services; provide a bridge for AANHPI students to 4-year institutions while developing their leadership and career skills; and mitigate COVID-19 imposed anti-Asian bias. While the EPIC LC Program is focused specifically on the AANHPI experience and students, project activities will benefit non-AANHPI students campus-wide regardless of race and/or ethnicity.

Grant funding for Delta’s EPIC LC expansion will enable us to implement the following high-impact strategies: (1) build a greater sense of community among AANHPI students and

faculty, staff, administrators and alumni; (2) assist students in meeting basic needs so they can focus on academic goals; (3) reduce the social stigma around mental health-related issues; and (4) improve retention and completion rates for AANHPI students.

Building on evidence found on the utility of learning communities (Engle and Tinto, 2008; Tinto, 2003; Visher, Wiss, etl al., 2012; Weiss, Visher, et.al., 2015), this project will leverage existing EPIC components to foster academic and social engagement among students as a way to improve persistence and completion through a more structured cohort approach. EPIC currently serves about 30 AANHPI students each year, but funding from this grant would support the institution with increasing the numbers of students served while scaling up key components to ensure we “prepare today’s students to become tomorrow’s AANHPI leaders” through classes and activities that foster educational achievement, personal empowerment, and civic engagement (i.e., EPIC LC).

Table 5 summarizes current EPIC activities with their aligned purpose and rationale (columns I and II), before presenting the expanded, proposed program (column III): EPIC LC.

**Table 5. From extant EPIC to Proposed EPIC LC**

<b>Original EPIC</b>	<b>Component Purpose and Rationale</b>	<b>Proposed activities for Expanded EPIC LC</b>
One-year, first-year learning experience (FYE) providing wrap-around services, including career counseling, physical and mental health services, basic needs resources, tutoring and study groups for up to 30 students annually	Provide essential wrap-around academic, emotional and basic needs support services to help students connect with their AANHPI identities and foster their success	Extend services and cohort model to 2 <sup>nd</sup> (sophomore) year with the addition of Adjunct Counselor/Professor and full-time Resource Specialist to continue providing wrap-around support services for a cohort of 150-170, and approximately 500 non-cohort students

Peer (and occasionally professional) mentors for EPIC students	Foster students' academic and professional success as protegees, and develop their mentorship and leadership skills as peer mentors	Formalize peer and professional mentorship opportunities and pairings for EPIC and non-EPIC AANHPI and low-income students
Co-planning of AANHPI cultural events and celebrations with Delta's APIASA (Asian and Pacific Islander Staff Association) and Faculty Caucus for Asian Pacific Equity (FCAPE)	Connect students with their AANHPI identities and build a sense of community among them, raise awareness and presence of AANHPI experience at the college, and build students' planning, coordination, and collaboration skills	APIASA, FCAPE & EPIC Joint cultural events and celebrations with community partners, including Little Manila Rising, Central Valley Asian American Chamber of Commerce, Mountain House Asian American Assoc., Lao Family Community Development of Stockton, among others
Field trips to industry sites; Leadership workshops; civic engagement opportunities	Build a sense of community among students and provide work-based learning opportunities	In addition to field trips and workshops, integrate coordinated work-based learning opportunities (paid internships) with key community and industry partners, including internships with: City of Stockton, Little Manila Rising, Asian Pacific American Public Affairs (APAPA), Lawrence Livermore Labs; Sandia; Tesla; Amazon; Target; Association of Asian Farmers, and others.
Mental health topic covered as one of many topics in an EPIC First Year Experience course (See Sample Core Courses in Table 8)	Provide resources and skills for recognizing and managing stress and other mental health-related issues	Coordinate multiple mental health workshops (in addition to integrating in coursework and advising) with community partners such as Little Manila Rising Healing Circles facilitated by critical

		partners and students to normalize mental health and promote healing
Potential number of AANHPI students impacted by current EPIC LC annually = ~ 30 students		Potential number of AANHPI students impacted with grant annually = ~ 500 students

**A. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES**

Table 6 illustrates multiple objectives aligned to each goal and summarizes the anticipated outcomes that are further discussed in the Logic Model (Figure 1) and the Evaluation Plan in Section VII.

**Table 6. Goals, Objectives and Anticipated Outcomes**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>
Goal 1: Improve AANHPI representation and community-building at the institution.	Objective 1a. Each year, EPIC LC will host at least 10 workshops/events with internal and external partners in the EPICENTER to raise awareness and presence of AANHPI-focused topics and resources for students, Delta College community at large, and the City of Stockton.	Outcome 1a: By the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year and annually thereafter, there will be a greater sense of community among AANHPI students and the overall Delta College community as measured by culture and climate surveys.
	Objective 1b. By the end of the 5th year, at least 10% of all incoming AANHPI students will have attended at least one information session about EPIC to learn about the learning community, EPICENTER, and other related resources.	Outcome 1b. By the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year, AANHPI students who participated in at least 50% of EPIC LC will report a sense of belonging and self-efficacy as measured on end of First Year Experience surveys.
	Objective 1c. By the end of the 5th year, at least 500 AANHPI students will be formally matched with a peer or professional mentor to support	Objective 1c. By the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year, AANHPI students who participated in at least 80% of EPIC LC activities will have experienced at least one work-

	their academic and professional success	based learning experience as reported in CTE Work-based Learning annual reports and/or end of internship report/survey/focus group.
Needs addressed for Goal 1: 1, 3, and 4		
Goal 2: Reduce the social stigma around mental health to improve access and utilization of services to address those needs.	<p>Objective 2a. Each term, at least one (1) mental health-related workshop/event will be hosted to raise awareness of mental health-related issues and the resources available to support those needs.</p> <p>Objective 2b. Each term, at least two (2) student-led discussion groups (i.e., healing circles) will be conducted to create safe and brave spaces for students to openly discuss mental health-related issues and concerns.</p>	<p>Outcome 2a: By the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and annually thereafter, there will be a reduction in the social stigma around mental health issues felt by EPIC PC student participants as measured in annual climate surveys</p> <p>Outcome 2b: Students who need mental health resources and services will have access to and be willing to access resources and services to support</p>
Needs addressed for Goal 2: 1, 2 and 3		
Goal 3: Improve AANHPI completion and transfer rates	<p>Objective 3a. By the end of the 5th year, at least 175 AANHPI students will have completed the one-year EPIC LC Scope &amp; Sequence of courses designed to help students meet core transfer and degree course requirements.</p> <p>Objective 3b. By the end of the 5th year, the EPICENTER will serve at least 15% of all AANHPI students</p> <p>Objective 3c. Each year, there will be at least 50 AANHPI students who will apply for internships that will provide work-based / leadership skills.</p>	<p>Outcome 3a. Each year, at least 10% of all AANHPI students who apply will successfully receive internships to support their academic and professional goals</p> <p>Outcome 3b. By the 5th year, there will be a 10% increase in the first-year course completion rates for incoming AANHPI students.</p> <p>Outcome 3c. There will be a 10% increase in the fall-to-fall retention rates for incoming AANHPI students.</p> <p>Outcome 3d. There will be a 50% increase in the three-year</p>



		graduation rate (e.g., degree or transfer) for incoming AANHPI students who participate in at least 80% of EPIC LC activities for the 2-year program period
Needs Addressed in Goal 3: 1, 2, 3 and 4		

Delta plans to scale up the EPIC Learning Community Project and build a sustainable program that focuses on:

1. Expanding a one-year, first-year learning community (LC) where LC students receive academic and non-academic supports into and through their second year. This ensures they maintain a momentum that foments completion of academic goals (Goal 1: Objectives 1a—1c; Goal 2: Objectives 2a-2b; Goal 3: Objective 3a-3d).
  - a. All EPIC LC participating students will receive intensive case management services and access to dedicated counselors and resource specialists who will support students with their academic and non-academic needs (e.g., housing referrals, mental health agency connections when appropriate, etc.) so they stay on track (Goal 3: Objective 3a-3d; Goal 1: Objectives 1a-1c).
  - b. EPIC LC participants will receive tutoring, peer mentorship and other wrap-around support services. (Goal 3: Objective 3a-3d).
2. Establishing a dedicated EPICENTER to serve as a hub and a safe haven for AANHPI students to further support their academic and social engagement with one another, faculty, staff and community members (Goal 1: Objectives 1a-1c. Goal 2: Objectives 2a-2b; Goal 3: Objectives 3a-3c).
3. Creating a solid bridge for AANHPI students to receive information about and access resources to support their academic, mental health and basic needs which includes

mitigating COVID 19 related anti-Asian bias (Goal 1: Objectives 1a-1c; Goal 2; Objectives 2a-2b; Goal 3: Objectives 3a-3c).

- a. Train and support students to facilitate conversations about mental health in “healing circles” as a way to normalize mental health topics and resources (Goal 1: Objectives 1a-1c; Goal 2: Objectives 2a-2b).
- b. Connect students to community non-profits that provide ancestral and culturally-rooted healing support services, such as Healing Pilipinx Uplifting Self and Others (Healing PUSO) from Little Manila Rising (<https://www.littlemanila.org/puso>) (Goal 1: Objectives 1a-1c; Goal 2: Objectives 2a-2b).
- c. Build community engagement and mentorship opportunities for EPIC students internally through Delta’s FCAPE and APIASA (Faculty Caucus for Asian Pacific Equity, and Asian-American and Pacific Islander Staff Association respectively), and externally through AANHPI community partnerships, such as Asian Pacific American Public Affairs (APAPA). (Goal 1: Objectives 1a-1c).

These components were designed specifically to help students: feel welcome, supported, valued and more connected to the College; be more engaged with each other; and be afforded a greater sense of direction and purpose from all segments of the community. These conditions are consistent with findings by the RP Group in which researchers identified “six success factors” that contributed to students’ success inside and outside of the classroom (Booth, Cooper, et. al, 2013). Data confirmed that when support activities were integrated and embedded throughout the students’ experience at the institution and included in students’ classroom learning

experiences, it helped learners to experience the following six factors instrumental to academic success:

**DIRECTED:** students have an explicit goal and know steps necessary for achieving it

**FOCUSED:** students stay on track – keeping their eyes on the prize

**NURTURED:** students feel school officials want and help them to succeed

**ENGAGED:** students actively participate in class and extra-curricular activities

**CONNECTED:** students feel like they are part of the college community

**VALUED:** students’ skills, talents, abilities and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus and feel appreciated (Booth, et. el., 2013).

The logic model or theory of action presented in Figure 1 integrates the six success factors noted above. Specifically, the first two “inputs” and their accompanying “activities” (Delta’s enhanced learning community with wrap-around services, info sessions and workshops headquartered in the EPICENTER) lay the foundation for EPIC LC students to experience all six factors. Healing circles and related events help students feel connected, engaged, nurtured and valued, thereby enabling them to persist and ultimately complete their academic goals.

The subsequent two “inputs” recognize students’ agency and the wealth their experiences and prior knowledge bring to industry partners through internships and work-based learning opportunities which, in turn, help provide more direction, focus and early professional success. Like the enhanced Delta AANHPI community and proposed EPICENTER, students are a valuable asset for all stakeholders whose value to the broader community becomes more influential as they progress in their academic journey and serve in emerging leadership roles as peer mentors, tutors, and outreach ambassadors. The final asset listed as “input”, the program’s

ongoing evaluation, is essential to real-time program improvement and ultimate achievement of all goals.

**Figure 1. Logic Model; Theory of Action**



### III. PROJECT SERVICES

#### A. STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS & PARTICIPATION

Delta is a public, open-access institution where all students, regardless of their gender, race, national origin, color, disability or age, have access to academic courses, programs, resources and services. This includes students with special needs, disabilities and learning

differences. The College recognizes that access to all aspects of the community and programming is everyone's right and Delta is committed to ensuring that access. This is accomplished by raising public awareness of disability access by **sharing information online, working with advocacy groups to stage events, and enlisting the help of the media**, among other strategies.

For example, signage, public communication systems, and communication media are made accessible to people who cannot hear, see, or use their hands by using signs with Braille, verbal and visual announcements, sign interpretations/captions in streamed media communications, and the use of sound-amplifying headphones for in-person classes and events.

Information about all of the College's programs and services are available on our website <https://www.deltacollege.edu/student-services> to ensure full transparency and access for all community members. The EPIC LC program information and services will likewise be uploaded to our website to ensure full and open access to anyone and everyone interested in the program, and varied forms of material (e.g., Braille, audio-recordings) will be available as needed.

While the EPIC LC is focused specifically on the AANHPI experience and students, and recruitment materials will be available in multiple languages to enlist traditionally marginalized students, all proposed activities will benefit non-AANHPI students as well. For the enhanced learning community (e.g., EPIC LC), all students will have access to the enrollment codes and will be able to enroll in the linked courses should they meet the program requirements which include: a) being a new/current student who has not taken EPIC classes; attending an EPIC orientation/info session; maintaining a 2.0 GPA; making at least a two-semester commitment;

meeting with the EPIC counselor and completing a Student Education Plan (SEP); and participating in scheduled EPIC activities and classes.

**Services that Meet the Needs of the Target Population**

The EPIC LC program will be housed in the current EPICENTER, a dedicated space in Delta’s Science and Math Building where AANHPI and other traditionally marginalized students can attend workshops, receive tutoring and participate in culturally relevant events. Data on the existing EPIC outcomes for the past four years reveal that first-time AANHPI students who participate in the EPIC LC complete on average six more units in their first year than their peers, complete transfer-level English and math courses within one year at greater rates, have higher four-year degree rates than their peers, and comparable four-year transfer rates than their peers (Table 7).

**Table 7. Comparison of Key Academic Measures between EPIC LC, All AANHPI Students, and All Students (Three-Year Averages)**

Academic Measures	EPIC LC Students	All AANHPI Students	All Students
Average number of units completed in the first year	22	16	16
Completion of transfer-level English course within the first year	84%	48%	45%
Completion of transfer-level math course within the first year	28%	19%	15%

Degree completion rates	30%	15%	11%
Transfer rates	14%	19%	14%
<i>Data Source:</i> Data from the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness			

The cohort-based model in this enhanced learning community with wrap-around support and intensive advising, peer and professional mentorship, leadership-building, and civic engagement work together to produce these successes. Funding from this grant will allow EPIC LC to expand tremendously, increasing Delta’s capacity to provide dedicated career education and planning, as well as more peer mentors and tutors who provide encouragement and motivation for continuing second-and third-year EPIC students. When students see their peers become successful, then their self-efficacy or belief that their efforts can lead to success grows, leading to changes that positively affect their behaviors and attitudes (Altermatt, 2019). Additionally, the EPIC LC Program will model more effective communication and collaboration by intensifying coordination of resources and supports with key student services departments (i.e., Career Technical Education and Workforce Development, Financial Aid, Health and Wellness Resources, Basic Needs Office and Counseling Special Services) as well as with community partners (e.g., City of Stockton, Little Manila Rising, Stockton Housing Authority). These key components are designed to address the four needs identified in this proposal.

**B. APPROPRIATE SERVICES BASED ON RESEARCHED EFFECTIVE PRACTICE**

**Project Component 1. Enhanced Learning Community with an AANHPI Lens**

The Delta EPIC Learning Community is a year-long “First-Year Experience” (FYE) cohort community of learners where students complete core courses, workshops and events that:

- 1) meet Associate Degree, career certificate and/or transfer requirements;
- 2) foster cultural

identity and self-awareness; 3) manage health and wellness; 4) promote civic engagement; and 5) strengthen oral and written communications skills. Several studies have found that cohort-based learning experiences yield positive outcomes for students and that these outcomes are further enhanced when the programs include wrap-around support services (Kruglaya, 2012; Scrivener, Bloom, et al., 2008; Visher, Weiss, Et. al., 2012). This learning community is open to all students and will continue to have a specific focus on the AANHPI experience.

**CURRICULUM THAT MEETS DEGREE, TRANSFER AND WORKFORCE**

**REQUIRMENTS.** A majority of Delta’s transfer students, including AANHPI students, transfer to a California State University (CSU), rather than a University of California (UC) or private four-year institution, primarily due to the more affordable nature of the CSU schools. A core requirement for transfer to both public systems is the “Golden Four” courses: Critical Thinking, Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning, Oral Communication, and Written Communication – classes that include elements of desirable skills employers seek and expect (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006). The EPIC LC consists of all four courses to ensure students complete core requirements for transfer by the end of their first year and, in so doing, they are making steady progress towards the minimum 60 units required to complete locally offered degrees and transfer requirements. Table 8 provides an example of the curriculum for the EPIC year-long learning community.

**Table 8. Year-long Curriculum for EPIC LC Participating Students**

Sample of First Year EPIC LC Scope & Sequence of Courses	
Fall Term	Spring Term
<i>Communication Studies 1A: Public Speaking(3 units)</i>	<i>Counseling 8: Education and Interpersonal Growth (3 units)</i>
This course is designed to explore the theory and techniques of public speaking in a	This course is designed to foster personal development, which includes self-awareness,



<p>democratic society. Criticism of ideas in public discourse will be emphasized through presentation and evaluation of various types of speeches, including informative and persuasive speeches. (Oral Communication)</p>	<p>value systems, patterns of communication, managing stress and wellness, and how these factors impact a student's education, growth, and goals.</p>
<p><i>Counseling 30 &amp; 31: Career Self-Assessment and Career Exploration (2 units)</i></p> <p>COUN 30 emphasizes self-assessment as the first major step in the career life planning process. The student identifies his/her personality, values, interests, skills and accomplishments leading to potential career choices. COUN 31 includes investigation of job duties, training, educational requirements, desired employee characteristics, salary ranges, and future employment trends.</p>	<p><i>English 1B: College Composition and Literature (3 units) (Critical Thinking)</i></p> <p>This course is designed to help the transfer student develop his/her critical thinking skills and read and write with college-level sophistication through writing analytical essays based on reading and discussing a culturally diverse literature, The analysis of literature through discussion and through writing is designed to develop the student's critical thinking skills as well as to increase his/her ways of understanding and interpreting the world.</p>
<p><i>Composition (4 units) (Written Communication)</i></p> <p>This course is a transfer-level, college freshman English composition course comparable to those courses offered by the state college and university systems. ENG 95 includes intensive instruction in writing, research and reading, and critical thinking skills to promote success</p>	<p><i>Political Science 1: American Government and Institutions (3 units)</i></p> <p>This course is an introduction to the fundamentals of government and the political processes at the national, state, and local levels. The course fulfills the Social Science (Group A) requirements for the AA degree and applies toward completion of the requirement in U.S. History and California state and local government.</p>
<p><i>History 34: Asian Pacific American History (3 units)</i></p> <p>This course is a survey lecture course that examines the social, political, economic, and cultural history of Asian immigrants and</p>	<p><i>Math or Major Prep Course TBD</i></p> <p>(Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning)</p>

Asian Americans in the United States from the 1850s to the present.	
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**EMBEDDED ACTIVITIES TO FOSTER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY-**

**BUILDING** The project will actively recruit low-income, AANHPI current and prospective students to attend information sessions about the EPIC LC resources and services to support students with their academic and professional goals. EPIC LC participants will connect and engage with one another for one-year in shared coursework, and be matched to other AANHPI students and staff (APIASA and FCAPE) as peer and professional mentors. Studies have found that mentorships provide the encouragement and affirmation students need to be successful (Castellanos, Gloria, et al, 2016; Gloria & Ho, 2003) with same race protegees experiencing better academic outcomes in subsequent years if matched with same race role models (Zirkel, 2002). In addition, EPIC LC students will be involved in community- and leadership-building opportunities to strengthen their connection to their AANHPI identities and communities at large (See Table 9 for Sample Activities). This is intended to create a “boomerang culture,” in which students give back and help subsequent cohorts. For example, the incoming class of 2024 cohort is expected to assume leadership roles as EPIC Club Officers in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year (2023-2024) and organize activities and meetings to mentor first-year cohort students arriving in the fall 2023 semester. Likewise, EPIC LC students who transfer to 4-year colleges are asked to return to campus and share their experiences and suggestions with incoming students and APIASA/FCAPE staff. And after college graduation, these same successful transfers-turned-college-graduates are encouraged to come back to their communities to continue working for equity and social justice in rectifying the ‘social, historical, and racial trauma’ experienced by

many. “Boomerang culture” learning/teaching opportunities will extend into the EPIC LC 2<sup>nd</sup> year experience so students continue to be engaged and their sense of community, strengthened.

**Table 9 Sample EPIC LC Annual Calendar of Events**

<b>Timeframe in Academic Year</b>	<b>Sample Activities</b>
June-Aug	Recruitment and information session for EPIC student cohorts Onboarding session for EPIC student cohorts Enrollment in fall learning community
Sept	EPIC Student Fun Day Bonding activity for students to get to know each other
Oct	Recognition of Filipino American History Month Documentary showing at the college's theater for the film: Forgotten Soldiers Student Panel @ Bulosan Center, UC Davis UC Davis Campus Tour and Transfer Admissions Presentation
Nov	Recognition of Hmong New Year Hmong folk dancing
Dec	Asian and Pacific Islander Staff Association (APIASA): Aloha Mentor Dinner Opportunity for APIASA staff and EPIC students to get to know one another for resources and mentoring
Jan/Feb	Recognition of Lunar New Year Vietnamese folk dancing
Mar	State Capitol Tour with Asian American and Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus Sacramento State Campus Tour and Transfer Admissions Presentation
Apr	Recognition of Thai, Lao, and Cambodian (TLC) New Year, Na Hoku Mai Kanoelani's Ho'ike Cambodian Folk Dancing and Na Hoku performances
May	Recognition Banquet for APIASA Scholarship Winners/EPIC LC Participants Outdoor bonding excursions (e.g. Yosemite National Park, Angel Island) AANHPI Graduation

EPIC LC students will be expected to attend at least two mandatory counseling and advising sessions with EPIC program personnel to ensure they are on track for meeting their academic goals. This allows early interventions for connecting students with academic and other support services. The counseling component for the learning community is critical, as it has

been found to be one of the most important services students need in order to stay connected and engaged at their institutions (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2018).

**Curriculum that embeds mental health topics.** For the upcoming 2022-2023 academic year, each of the learning community faculty has committed to teaching a unit in their course about mental health and wellness, utilizing the theme “Healing Through Cultural Knowledge”. This focus on normalizing mental health and recognizing mental health symptoms may lead to greater prevention and will encourage students to have confidence in asking for help if they, or someone they know, are experiencing symptoms. In addition, students will be encouraged to use their own stories and draw from personal experiences to help uplift themselves and each other. Extracurricular workshops on these topics may also be held to continue sharing with the Delta AANHPI and campus community.

## **PROJECT COMPONENT 2: EPICENTER – AN AANHPI CULTURAL HUB**

Located in Delta’s Science and Math Building as a centralized hub for meeting the needs of AANHPI students, the EPICENTER is a stable, welcoming and inclusive environment open to all Delta students. It is a dedicated space for resources and critical programming where AANHPI students in particular can connect during workshop sessions on transfer admissions, financial literacy, AANHPI mental health, small group tutoring sessions, and EPIC Club meetings. Staff and faculty will provide dedicated “office hours” and work with the EPIC Team to ensure the EPICENTER and activities motivate students to feel safe, knowing that they belong while participating in the programs designed to support them. In a review by Davenport (2013) on Patton’s “Cultural Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity: Theory of Practice,” the reviewer noted: “cultural centers on college campuses make a powerful difference in student learning. They foster an environment that promotes leadership development, a sense of

community, cultural identity, and a sense of mattering – all components for engagement in the learning process” (p. 409). EPIC LC Program staff will coordinate student support service departments with external, community-based organizations and agencies to host workshops and events focused on meeting AANHPI students’ needs. Bringing together Delta’s Financial Aid Department with California State University at Stockton and CSU Sacramento along with Little Manila Rising, for example, the EPIC LC team can ensure multiple options for tutoring services, transfer support services, and resources for basic needs such as food, housing and financial packages. Special attention will be made on the following two topics based on the identified needs in this proposal: *mental health* and *work-based learning opportunities (internships)* to foster completion and transfer.

### **PROJECT COMPONENT 3: Raising Mental Health Awareness and Resources**

The COVID-19 pandemic accentuated the mental health issues and anti-Asian hate across the country. As noted, the AANHPI community is the least likely to access and utilize mental health resources and services because of the social stigma and shame associated with mental health issues. To address these two challenges, the EPIC program will coordinate and host activities with students, College employees and community members to address mental health stigma, and connect students with campus and community resources to support mental health and well-being needs. As a way to empower AANHPI students and build leadership skills along the way, “healing circles” will be co-designed with project staff, community members and students to create safe spaces where members can speak openly and honestly about mental health-related topics as a way to heal. A case study by Mehl-Madrona and Mainguy (2014) found statistically significant improvements in symptoms, attendance to treatment sessions, and overall well-being among participants who attended healing circles at mental health clinics. In addition,

coordination with departments across the campus community and a new campus-based health center focused on mental health will allow the project to include information sessions about campus resources and services to support students' mental health needs. Coordinating partnerships with community members and organizations will help raise awareness and connect students with the resources and services beyond the campus walls. Among the community organizations to work with the EPIC LC team includes but is not limited to:

- The Filipino mental health initiative, Healing Pilipinx Uplifting Self and Others (Healing PUSO), supported by little Manila Rising, which focuses on bringing culturally-rooted healing programs and practices to the Filipino community in Stockton.
- The Stockton Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the oldest civil rights organization in Stockton since 1928. JACL monitors and responds to issues that enhance or threaten the civil and human rights of all Americans and implements strategies to affect positive change for all who are victimized by injustice and bigotry, just as it did in response to Executive Order 9066 which authorized the incarceration of Americans of Japanese ancestry in 1942.

These collaborative partnerships will develop and co-host workshops and events focused on: AANHPI Mental Health; Supporting Mental Health and Wellness; the Educational Pipeline: Retention and Mental Health; the Asian American Civil Rights Movement; History of Anti-AANHPI Racism; and Learning to Be a Better Bystander: How to Be an Ally to the AANHPI Community.

#### **PROJECT COMPONENT 4: Leadership and Work-based Learning Opportunities**

SJDC recognizes the invaluable opportunities available through work-based learning for students, especially in high demand sectors. Consequently, the College recently committed \$2 million to strengthen our Workforce Development Center (WDC) 's "1,000 Internship Initiative" which was further supported by a matching \$2 million grant from San Joaquin County, totaling \$4.million to support paid work-based learning opportunities. This major investment acknowledged the College's efforts in providing accelerated degrees and certifications for high demand industries in the region (e.g., automation mechatronics, healthcare/nursing, wind turbine technicians, and early child education, to bame a few). WDC engages several industry partners to co-construct paid internships in multiple sectors. In preparation for these work-based learning experiences the WDC provides job preparation workshops, career fairs, and special speakers series to ensure students explore and develop career opportunities that may go unnoticed.

The EPIC LC Program Team will work closely with the WDC to ensure AANHPI students are not only aware of these opportunities but that they receive the resources and support services needed to apply and succeed in their placements. For example, WDC hosts lunches each semester featuring speakers from intern-supporting partners including but not limited to Lawrence Livermore Labs, Target, Tesla, Amazon Distribution and Sandia, to introduce the internship program, generate student interest, and initiate informal networking for both industry and their prospective interns. In addition to aggressive social media promotion to program participants, the EPIC team will provide a pre-speaker event workshop to frontload EPIC LC participants with early information so they will know what to expect, then follow up the WDC lunch event with small group de-briefings and coached application sessions in the EPICENTER. This scaffolded "hand-holding" boosts student self-confidence as they are coached through the early networking and application process. It also models a template for future EPIC LC student

leaders who will be encouraged to serve as peer mentors and intern “alumni” in subsequent years’ industry lunches and internship application sessions. Subsequently and as part of their coursework in selected classes (and formative evaluation of the internship program), students submit structured assignments about their work-learning experiences, including digital journal entries and reports.

Delta considers leadership development for EPIC LC students to be as important as work-based learning opportunities. And our partnerships with Asian American Public Affairs (AAPA) and Central Valley Asian American Chamber of Commerce (CVAACC) ensure we incorporate that objective within our internship offerings. AAPA’s training helps potential interns gain advocacy, campaign, and policy-making experience. EPIC LC and WDC will work collaboratively with AAPA to expand extant trainings, and to bring EPIC LC/Delta-specific trainings to campus.

#### **IV. PROJECT PERSONNEL**

##### **A. SOLICITING APPLICATIONS FROM TRADITIONALLY UNDER-REPRESENTED**

**POPULATIONS** The project will comply with federal, state and local Equal Opportunity Guidelines and regulations for the recruitment and selection of key personnel for the project. The College’s administrative policy on recruitment and selection procedures (Administrative Policy 7120: Recruitment and Selection Procedures) states:

*The District is committed to providing full and fair opportunity for all qualified individuals to compete for hiring and promotion and to enjoy the benefits of employment with the District. Through cooperative participation, the Board of Trustees shares responsibility with the District’s administration, employees and students to ensure equal employment opportunity procedures are an integral part of all recruitment and hiring process and result in the hiring of the most qualified candidate. It is the policy of the District to ensure equal employment opportunity and to make employment decisions*



*that are not discriminatory based on race, religion, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation of any person, or status as a veteran, or because he/she is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or other factors which cannot lawfully be the basis for an employment decision.*

In addition, the College's Employee Diversity and Professional Development committee and human resources department have redesigned the processes to improve recruitment and interview protocols to increase applicants from traditionally underrepresented populations, with preference provided to candidates who meet all the job qualifications and are from traditionally underrepresented populations. Job recruitment notices will be posted to web-sites designed explicitly to reach traditionally underserved populations, including but not limited to [asianhires.com](http://asianhires.com), [aapip.org](http://aapip.org), [recruitdisability.org](http://recruitdisability.org), [campaigns.aarp.org](http://campaigns.aarp.org) and [military.org](http://military.org).

## **B. RELEVANT TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE OF KEY PERSONNEL**

### **1. THE PROJECT DIRECTOR OR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

The project director will be the lead manager for the project, providing day-to-day supervision of project activities, personnel and budget authority. Under the general direction of the Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction and Planning, the EPIC Project Director works closely with College staff and departments to ensure compliance with federal grant regulations, coordination of bi-annual reviews with the external evaluator and successful implementation of the grant program. The successful candidate will provide leadership and strategic direction to all stakeholders so that EPIC LC participants are successful in exploring work-based learning

opportunities and engaging in campus and community health services while completing their targeted certificate and/or transfer to a four-year university.

### C. KEY PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

The Assistant Superintendent/Vice president of Instruction will assume the role of the EPIC Project Director until the position is formally recruited for and filled. Table 10 provides the job qualifications for the project director.

**Table 10. Job Description for Project Director**

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Project Director</b>
<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>1.0 FTE Grant Funded</b>
<b>Minimum Qualifications</b>	Master's degree from an accredited college or university in a related field; and Three (3) years of experience in grant operations or managing categorically funded programs and at least one (1) year of leadership or supervisory experience.
<b>Duties &amp; Responsibilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implements planning activities to include developing and convening advisory committees; creating recruitment strategies; designing orientation; and marketing the program.</li> <li>● Coordinates with appropriate college programs, personnel and community partners appropriate to the terms of the special project grant, including schools and training programs, public agencies, business and industry.</li> <li>● Interviews, supervises, trains and evaluates staff as required.</li> <li>● Designs program according to the terms of the grant, coordinating with appropriate agencies and individuals.</li> <li>● Publicizes the project and identifies population to be served according to grant terms; designs recruitment procedures where necessary</li> <li>● Conducts meetings, present workshops and participate in other activities to facilitate program design.</li> <li>● Coordinates the operation of the project, supplying consultation, training activities, support programs; advises participants on all program offerings.</li> <li>● Administers program budget and monitors expenditures.</li> <li>● Conducts meetings and facilitates communication among clients, advisory committees, and other program participants and partners.</li> <li>● Collects and compiles data to demonstrate compliance with specific grant terms and develops recommendations to funder.</li> <li>● Prepares reports and makes presentations at local and state level workshops and conferences.</li> <li>● Performs other related duties as assigned.</li> </ul>	

Key personnel for this project includes both grant-funded and several college-funded personnel who will provide in-kind time dedicated to the project. These include: (1) ***Adjunct Counselor/Professor*** (Grant funded) (Table 11) who will provide holistic academic, career, transfer and personal counseling for students. The counselor helps students explore career options, establish personal objectives and make strategic academic decisions articulated in a Comprehensive Student Education Plan (SEP). The counselor conducts orientation sessions, connects students to work-based learning opportunities, assesses mental health needs to make appropriate referrals, and evaluates progress of each participant. ***The Resource Specialist*** (Grant funded) (Table 12), under supervision of the EPIC LC Director, will work closely with the Counselor to serve continuing students in their 2<sup>nd</sup> (and 3<sup>rd</sup>) year(s), connecting them to project events, workshops and resources. In addition to these funded positions, in-kind time will be provided by current staff to support the students and project activities. These positions include an **in-kind** Counselor assigned half-time (0.5 FTE) and an in-kind Student Programs Specialist (SPS), also assigned part-time (0.5 FTE) to the program. The SPS’s workstation will be relocated to the EPICENTER to be directly available to students and project staff. Additionally, a part-time Resource Specialist has been assigned at 0.3 FTE (In-kind) to support the project while the balance of this staff member’s time is split between other campus programs (PUENTE and AFFIRM). Given EPIC LC program’s scope of services and the size of Delta’s AANHPI student population needing services, adding this part-time (0.3 FTE) Resource Specialist is justified. Research support will be provided in-kind by the Institutional Research and Effectiveness Office (IRE) by a Research Analyst at 0.1 FTE (10%).

**Table 11. Qualifications and Job Description for Counselor/Professor**

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Counselor/Professor</b>
Funding Source	400 Hours

<p>Minimum Qualifications</p>	<p>Possess a Master's degree from an accredited institution with emphasis in counseling, rehabilitation counseling, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, guidance counseling, educational counseling, social work, career development, marriage and family therapy, or marriage, family and child counseling or the equivalent.</p> <p>Alternative qualification: A Bachelor's degree in one of the above-listed degrees and a license as a Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT).</p>
<p>Duties &amp; Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Collaborate with students to develop holistic student educational plans commensurate with vocational, associate degree, and transfer goals.</li> <li>●Provide holistic academic, career, transfer and personal counseling, and referrals to appropriate resources.</li> <li>●Maintain knowledge of current counseling techniques and student support interventions and strategies, which may include attending professional development conferences, seminars, and trainings</li> <li>●Maintain liaison duties with high schools, transfer institutions, and instructional divisions.</li> <li>●Assist students in achieving stated course objectives. Evaluate the progress of each student and notify students in need of counseling services and/or tutorial assistance. Track student learning outcomes and maintain records of student learning outcomes.</li> <li>●Participate in the departmental process of curriculum review, modification, and the assessment of student learning outcomes in order to make the program successful.</li> <li>●May instruct counseling/guidance courses including career planning, college success, and orientation.</li> <li>●Develop, maintain, and revise guidance and counseling curriculum.</li> <li>●Report to the Dean or appropriate agency any condition which might jeopardize the health or safety of students, the campus, or the public.</li> <li>●Maintain student records, files, documentation in accordance with federal, state and district policies.</li> <li>●Attend required department, division, and campus meetings.</li> <li>●Support the Dean or Director in the collection of state and campus data required for reports.</li> <li>●Perform other duties as assigned.</li> </ul>	

Desirable Qualifications

- Exemplary guidance and counseling practices.
- Extended Opportunity Program and Services; Disability Support Programs and Services.
- Teaching-learning process with special knowledge about individualizing the instructional programs.
- Effective culturally competent instructional methodologies to assist students in an identified program or special service.
- Career assessment and information instruments.
- Financial Aid programs.
- Work experience, cooperative education, and college work study laws, rules, and regulations.
- Labor market and career opportunities pertaining to students.
- Interview procedures, job applications, forms, and preparation of resumes.
- Career guidance programs and various assessments used to support career life planning.
- Vocational education and transfer requirements, admissions application issues and articulation requirements
- Technology associated with counseling, teaching, and management of online course information.
- Special grant requirements and applicable Title 5 and Education Code mandates
- Qualified to administer and provide professional interpretation of career assessment instruments such as the Strong Interest Inventory, Myers Briggs Type Indicator and Self-Directed Search.
- Ability to serve as a leader in identified programs or special services.
- Multilingual communication skills.

**Table 12. Qualifications for Resource Specialist**

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Resource Specialist</b>
<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>1.0 FTE Grant Funded</b>
<b>Minimum Qualifications</b>	Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in a related field; and  Two (2) years of related experience, preferably in a public agency
<u>Duties &amp; Responsibilities</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meet with students in the assigned program assisting in the planning of their vocational training program or student success plan.</li> <li>● Act as a liaison between the student and pertinent county and community agencies.</li> </ul>	

- Work closely with program staff to create new procedures to help better meet the needs of the students.
- Recruit and help enroll prospective students for the assigned program.
- Create and deliver promotional literature to assist with program recruitment.
- Assist with referrals to appropriate person or agencies within the college and community.
- Assist to plan, organize, and conduct workshops or other activities necessary for the success of students in the program.
- Develop and maintain working relations with community members involved with similar programs.
- Attend weekly and monthly meetings to assist with the growth of the program.
- Maintain adequate records and statistics related to the students who are served and seen.
- Monitor student success while in the program. Mentor and assist students as needed.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

Desirable Qualifications

- Rules and regulations regarding pertinent local, regional and state organizations.
- Recruitment and enrollment methods and practices.
- Conducting effective seminars and presentations to small and large groups.
- Office procedures, methods and equipment including computers, word processing software, database software, and internet.
- Working with individuals from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Plan and organize workshops.
- Think critically and problem-solve a variety of issues.
- Exhibit excellent listening skills.
- Advocate for students.
- Demonstrate patience working with students who historically have not experienced academic success.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with members of local agencies within the county, pertinent to the assigned program.
- Understand and apply the rules and regulations of the assigned program to best meet the needs of the students.
- Act as a positive role model for students in the assigned program.
- Sensitivity to and understanding of individuals from diverse academic, socio-economic, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds and disabilities.

## V. ADEQUATE RESOURCES

### A. ADEQUATE BUDGET

To adequately support the project, Delta is requesting approximately \$1.9 million over five years to support the project's goals, objectives, and outcomes in the scaling of the EPIC Learning Community infrastructure. Costs for this project are primarily for additional staff, coordination activities and immersion experiences for students (e.g., field trips to the neighboring universities). All personnel costs are based on salaries in accordance with equivalent positions at the College. The PI's responsibilities are similar to another federal grant director's position and so the cost estimates provided are based on a salary range 12, mid-step in step D for a full-time grant project director. The adjunct counselor costs are based on the college's column IV, step 3 schedule at 400 hours of their time to the project. The Resource Specialist position will be equivalent to existing positions starting at a salary range 28 in step 1. Each position's costs are based on established step increases and expected benefit costs (for full-time employees) for each year.

Two types of contractual services have been identified: (1) external evaluation services for yearly services by the RP Group, and (2) fees for AANHPI related workshops, speaker fees, etc. by partner organizations. Costs are based on estimates of planned activities for each item. Travel expenses are for attendance at conferences such as the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education conference. Supply costs are for resources and books for students in the EPICENTER, as well as field trips and are calculated based on local general services administration (GSA) rates for travel in the area. This project will not be funding any new equipment. Lastly and to support the AANAPISI grant activities, Delta will provide up to \$1.1 million of in-kind time from existing positions. This includes 0.5 FTE Counselor to support advising for students; 0.5

SPS to support administrative needs at the EPICENTER, 0.5 FTE Resource Specialist who will help connect students to resources and services; a 0.1 Research Analyst to provide data and research support to the project; and 0.05 FTE from the Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction who will provide oversight and leadership support.

## **B. REASONABLE COSTS TO MEET OBJECTIVES, DESIGN & SIGNIFICANCE**

The project budget was completed in consultation with the college's fiscal services unit to ensure accurate cost estimates for project staffing, travel, supplies and equipment. The budget for the project was based on the average costs found across similar projects the college has implemented based on the scope of activities, and number of students to be served to achieve the desired outcomes. For example, the personnel cost for project director will be the same as the college's STEM academy's Project Manager, another federally-funded grant program located at the college. With the institutional commitment provided by the College in in-kind time for staffing positions, the estimated cost on an approximate \$350,000 to \$390,000 annual grant budget for this project averages \$740 per student per year. This estimate is based on a target of 500 students to be served annually who will benefit from one or more of the project activities: participating member of the EPIC LC cohort; professional and/or peer mentoring; attendance at one or more EPIC LC workshops or events; engagement in a work-based learning opportunity connected to EPIC LC events.

## **VI. MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **Adequacy of management Plan to Achieve the Project's Objectives**

The EPIC Program has the institution's full support, with the Superintendent/President, Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction, and Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Student Services providing leadership and input throughout the planning stages for



the proposed activities. Under the leadership of the Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Instruction, the EPIC Project Director will oversee day-to-day operations and coordinate closely with staff, counselors and managers in Student Services to ensure the project is on track to meet its intended goals and objectives. Table 13 delineates project milestones which are linked to the objectives each milestone supports.

**Table 13. Milestones, Timeframe and Responsible Staff**

#	Milestone	Staff Responsible	Timeframe	Objective(s) Supported
1	Recruit and hire grant-funded key personnel (counselor and resource specialist) by the end of PY 1	EPIC PD, VPI	Oct-Jan: Recruit & Hire Project Director Feb-May: Recruit & hire Counselor & Resource staff	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3d
2	Develop and implement project tracking and monitoring systems to collect data and information to inform the planning and monitoring of the grant activities by end of PY 1	EPIC PD	Feb – May to establish; Monitoring and reporting are ongoing	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3d
3	Schedule regular check-in meetings with key project team and internal/external partners to coordinate activities by Nov of PY 2	EPIC PD	Internal partners meet monthly; External partners meet every semester	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3c
4	Schedule and coordinate key information sessions about the EPIC Program by the end of PY 1	EPIC Project Team	Mar-May each year for subsequent PY sessions	1a –1d 3a –3c

5	Identify and schedule at least 10 workshops and events each year with key campus and community partners focused on students' academic, career, and mental health needs	EPIC PD	By Apr of each subsequent PY (e.g., Apr2023 for PY 2023-2024)	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3c
6	Match EPIC participants with key peer and professional mentors by end of PY2	EPIC Project Team	Feb-Apr of each PY for summer internships; Aug for AY internships	1a-1d 3a-3c
7	Recruit and train students to facilitate healing circles for their peers by end of PY 1, and Jan of each PY thereafter	EPIC Project Team	1 <sup>st</sup> cohort is trained in summer 2023 for Circles in 2023-2024; 2 <sup>nd</sup> cohort training is summer 2024, etc.	1a-1d 2a-2c
8	Collect student administrative data, collate participation records, and conduct surveys and focus groups with students and key project staff and partners to support formative evaluation activities by end of PY 1	EPIC Project Team, IRE, External evaluator	Ongoing, beginning with annual census in Oct of each PY	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3c
9	Schedule regular check in meetings with college leadership and key governance committees to provide progress updates to the campus community by end of PY 1	EPIC PD	Meet quarterly: (e.g., Nov, Feb, June)	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3c
10	Produce materials (e.g. brochures, briefs, etc.) to disseminate information about the program and its successes to the campus community and community at large by mid-year of PY2	EPIC PD	Development begins w/recruitment & enrollment of each cohort; Oct-Apr is production for deliverables in Apr/May	1a-1d 2a-2c 3a-3c

11	Schedule external evaluation site visits to ensure the project is on track and meetings its intended goals upon hiring of all program staff (May 2023)	EPIC PD	Beginning no later than May 2023 for regular, monthly meetings	1a –1d 2a –2c 3a –3c
12	Produce schedules for internal, external, and federal reporting requirements to ensure information and data are collected and reported in a timely and efficient manner by May 2023	EPIC PD	Ongoing, beginning in May 2023	1a –1d 2a –2c 3a –3c

**A. PROCEDURES FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT & IMPROVEMENTS IN OPERATIONS**

Procedures for providing continuous improvement mechanisms will be embedded and aligned to Delta’s continuous cycles of assessment and improvement in annual goal-setting and program review processes. Each year, college administrators develop strategic plans that identify goals, strategies, timelines and evaluations for their respective departments/areas, which are linked to the college’s strategic goals. This process will be applied to EPIC LC and will be supplemented with rigorous formative evaluation activities that will be completed in-kind by a Research Analyst from the College’s IRE office, and supported externally by an experienced evaluator affiliated with the Research and Planning Group of California Community Colleges. Both researchers affiliated with the project will coordinate with the College’s Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Equity and Achievement and the Project Director to ensure that periodic reports include formative and summative assessments. Evaluation activities will include

both qualitative and quantitative methods that include the use of surveys, focus groups and data examining a variety of process and academic outcomes for students participating in the program.

Reports summarizing findings from activities to evaluate processes and academic outcomes for EPIC student participants will be used to inform planning and implementation activities. Regular reporting will be made to shared governance committees, such as the Faculty Caucus for Asian Pacific Equity (FCAPE), a steering committee established in 2020 to support the College with redesigning its structures to address and close equity gaps for students, and to increase their inclusion across the campus community. The EPIC LC Program team will provide regular reports to this committee regarding progress, achievements and challenges in order to inform redesign efforts. In addition, regular reports will be presented to the College's Board of Trustees to provide greater accountability and visibility of the program across the college and community at large.

## **B. MECHANISMS TO ENSURE HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS and SERVICES**

Based on previous experience, Delta recognizes that federal grants relying on EDGAR accounting regulations and regular reports to the federal government need a full-time Project Director. Compliance and monitoring can take a large portion of the EPIC project director's time. When not engaged in those activities, the project director will supervise staff, work with students, coordinate with campus and external supporters on grant activities, and troubleshoot the problems that arise on a daily basis. Moreover, the case management envisioned in this grant will require the release time of a counselor who will be responsible for holding periodic meetings with students to keep them focused on their educational goals, connecting students to campus and community resources that help them to be successful, and providing the emotional and moral support that underrepresented students need.

The counselor/professor works with the students in making critical life decisions by establishing goals, defining their career path, either in individual counseling sessions or in a group setting (e.g., workshop, class presentation, etc). The counselor/professor and project director work closely together and provide the glue for the project team, bringing together : 1) EPIC faculty who teach in the learning community; 2) the student program specialist who supports the program operations and the EPICENTER; 3) the resource specialist who assists in recruitment and retention through various follow up activities that help keep students on track toward goals and objectives; and 4) the community partners who lead workshops, provide motivational presentations, serve as mentors, and sponsor internships and volunteer opportunities.

The EPIC LC project team as a whole will work together for the purpose of encouraging students to take care of themselves physically, emotionally and mentally as foundational in meeting their academic and professional goals of graduating from college and serving in their home communities after graduation. The program will ensure the team stays up to date on best practices by providing travel funds for professional development workshops and conferences. Finally, data and reports summarizing activities and findings will be used formatively to inform and improve planning and implementation throughout the cycle of the grant.

## **VII. PROJECT EVALUATION**

### **A. Thorough, feasible and appropriate methods for evaluating goals, objectives & outcomes**

The evaluation will include formative and summative evaluation activities to ensure implementation meets intended goals and objectives. The overarching goal of the evaluation will be to provide timely and relevant information to facilitate data-informed decision-making for

team members to ensure effective implementation of project activities for improving the experiences and outcomes for AANHPI students. Evaluation activities will include a combination of descriptive analyses (e.g., frequencies and means) to provide summary information about students' participation and level of engagement across the activities (e.g., learning community course enrollments, completion) as well as appropriate inferential statistics (e.g., Chi-square tests of independence, logistic regression-tests employed will be dependent on outcomes examined) to evaluate the impact of project activities on outcomes. Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected, tracked and reported using various sources: participation tracking records, student application and transcript information, surveys, and/or interviews/focus groups with participating staff/faculty and students. The IRE office will provide in-kind research support. The following table provides a summary of the methods of evaluation to track and monitor outcomes for the project. All objectives will be tracked and reported using administrative data from the college's Student Information System and from the project team's tracking sheets and data documented and reported in reports. Table 14 summarizes evaluation activities that will be conducted for each of the project's outcomes and the baseline and targets to ensure the project is on track for meeting those outcomes.

**Table 14. Evaluation Activities**

Outcomes	Baseline and Targets (if applicable)	Evaluation Activities
Outcome 1a: By the 5 <sup>th</sup> year, there will be a greater sense of community among the AANHPI community and students than in past year	Baseline will be collected in Year 1	Surveys, focus groups, and/or interviews

Objective 1b. By the end of the 5th year, at least 10% of all incoming AANHPI students will have attended at least one information session about EPIC to learn about the learning community, EPICENTER, and other related resources	Year 1 = 3% Year 2 = 5% Year 3 = 7% Year 4 = 9% Year 5 = 10%	Information sessions will record attendance so that program staff can document the number of students who attend the information sessions.
Objective 1c. By the end of the 5th year, at least 500 AANHPI students will be formally matched with a peer or professional mentor to support their academic and professional success	Average baseline = 50 students Year 1 = 50 Year 2 = 75 Year 3 = 100 Year 4 = 125 Year 5 = 150	Project staff will document peer and professional mentor matches with students
Outcome 2a: There will be a reduction in the social stigma around mental health felt by students	Baseline will be collected in Year 1	Surveys, focus groups, and/or interviews
Outcome 2b: Students who need mental health resources and services will have access to and be willing to access resources and services to support their mental health needs.	Baseline will be collected in Year 1	Surveys, focus groups, and/or interviews
Outcome 3a. Each year at least 10% of all AANHPI students who apply will successfully receive internships to support	Baseline will be collected in year 1 and targets will be based on the actual number of applicants	Project staff will coordinate with financial aid and the Career and Technical Education Center to collect and track internship

their academic and professional goals		applications and award notifications
Outcome 3b. By the 5 <sup>th</sup> year, there will be a 10% increase in the first-year course completion rates for incoming AANHPI student.	Baseline based on three-year average of 62% Year 1 – 62% Year 2 – 63% Year 3 – 65% Year 4 – 67% Year 5 – 68%	Administrative data provided by the IRE office
Outcome 3c. There will be a 10% increase in the fall-to-fall retention rates for incoming AANHPI students.	Baseline based on three-year average of 67% Year 1 – 67% Year 2 – 69% Year 3 – 70% Year 4 – 72% Year 5 – 68%	Administrative data provided by the IRE office
Outcome 3d. There will be a 50% increase in the three-year graduation rate (e.g., degree or transfer) for incoming AANHPI students.	Baseline based on three-year average of 8% Year 1 – 8% Year 2 – 9% Year 3 – 10% Year 4 – 11% Year 5 – 12%	Administrative data provided by the IRE office

**B. OBJECTIVE PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

An external evaluation will be conducted by The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (The RP Group), a nonprofit organization with extensive knowledge of and experience with California Community Colleges and evaluations of state and federal grant funded projects. An experienced evaluator from the RP Group will work with the EPIC Project Director and team to develop an evaluation plan and ensure that project activities track and meet intended goals and outcomes. The Evaluation plan will be revisited at the end of



each year to identify mechanisms for timely and accurate data collection and tracking for activities and outcomes, timelines for activities and appropriate methods for data collection and analyses of outcomes. The evaluation will focus on the following:

- Identifying the components of the EPIC LC Program that contribute to successful student outcomes, that build their leadership capacity and skills, and meet their mental health needs.
- Providing the team with formative information to assess and evaluate the project to effectively track and monitor the progress of the program's activities and outcomes.
- Providing the EPIC project team with summative information that will summarize the achievements of the project, areas of future opportunities and potential contributions to the field about AANHPI student success based on success experienced.