

2022 - 2023

Puerto Rico Project

ALTERNATIVE BREAKS PROGRAM REPORT



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Program Summary

About the Alternative Breaks Program:

The Center for Social Change and Community Involvement held its second immersive service learning trip as a part of the Alternative Breaks Program where program leaders and participants traveled to Puerto Rico to support community partners in projects focused on conservation and community resilience.

During the 2023 spring break, student participants and trip leaders spent a week working with community partners on volunteer-based projects. Service work consisted of home-repair and construction, trail maintenance, and environmental conservation projects. In the months leading up to the trip, staff and trained student leaders led a series of pre-trip meetings to prepare participants for service through an integrated curriculum of critical discussions, project training, and student-led fundraising goals. This experience was designed to be a hands-on opportunity for students to learn more about themselves, others, and the world around them through direct engagement with community partners.

Program Goals and Learning Objectives:

- **Supporting Partner Projects**
 - Support local community impact projects directly guided by nonprofits, organizations, and coalitions in Puerto Rico.
 - Identify areas for continued involvement and sustainable partnerships as volunteers and through the Alternative Breaks Program.
- **Service Learning through Civic Engagement**
 - Connect students with immersive opportunities for direct service through community engagement, social change, and global learning.
 - Strengthen social justice through community collaboration while cultivating active citizenship, self-awareness, and critical consciousness.
 - Expand participants' understanding of critical social issues and possibilities for positive social change through immersive involvement with diverse social environments.
 - Advance cultural competency, humility, and sensitivity through engagement with diverse communities integrated with dialogue and reflection.
 - Foster personal growth and leadership development through team-building exercises and educational workshops and discussions.

610

Total Hours of
Direct Community
Service

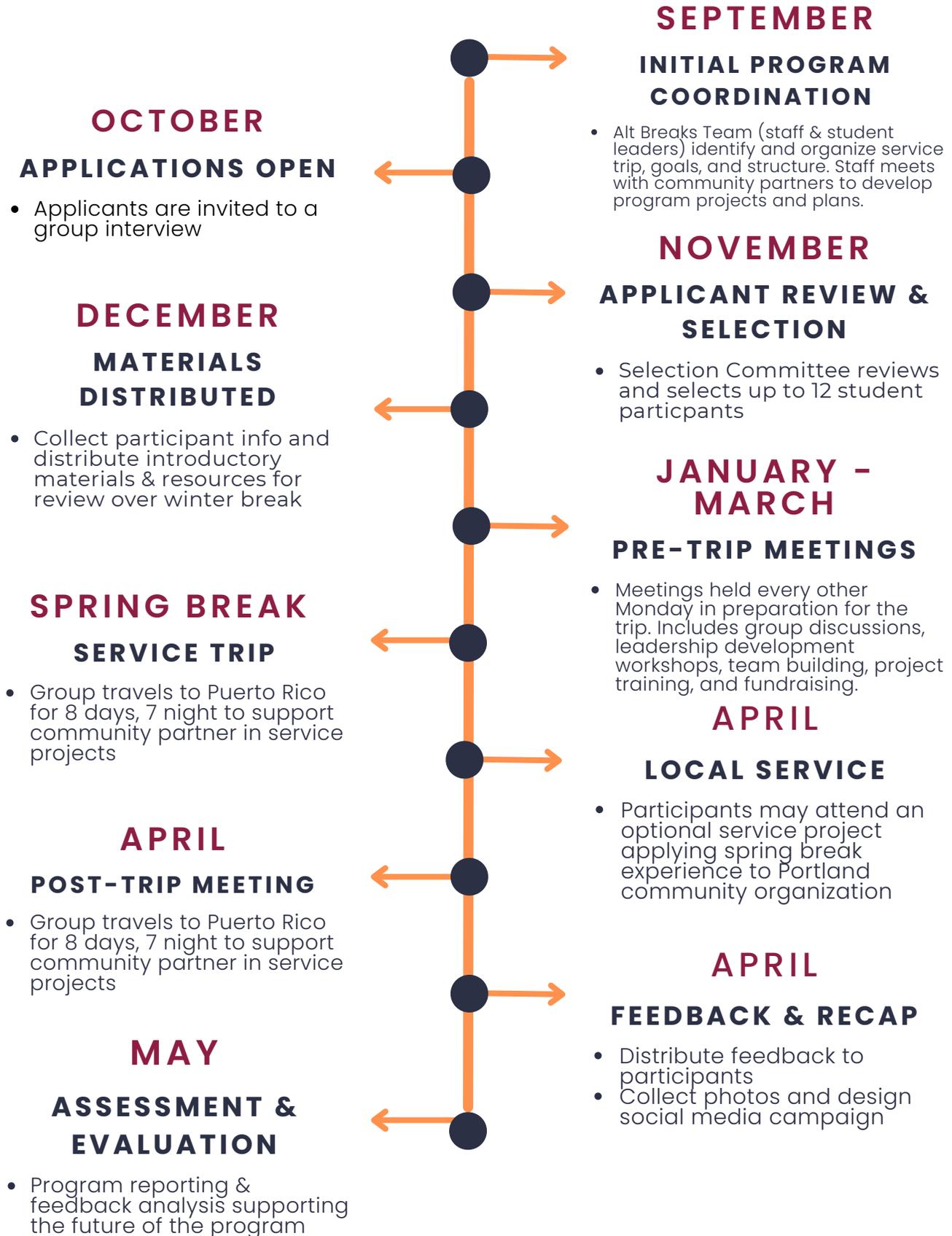
285

Total Hours of
Education, Training
& Additional
Engagement

952

Total Hours of
Program
Coordination by
Trip Leaders

2022-2023 Timeline



Alt Breaks At A Glance:

Group Composition

11

Student Participants

engaged in pre-trip program training, fundraising, and volunteer projects with community partners.

The program is available to L&C undergraduate students in any major and year in school. Selected applicants have prior community service/volunteer experience and exhibit strong leadership and collaboration skills.

▶ **3** First year students

4 Second year students

3 Third year students

4 Fourth year students

▶ **5**

International Students

Majors including:

- Psychology
- Biochemistry
- International Affairs,
- Rhetoric & Media studies
- French
- Environmental Science
- World Languages & Literature
- Political Science
- Sociology & Anthropology



15 Group Members



4

Trip Leaders

Staff and student trip leaders supported the development and facilitation of service learning curriculum at pre-trip meetings including group discussions, reflections, training materials, additional resources, and logistics coordination.

▶ **2**

Student trip leaders

Undergraduate student employees at the Center for Social Change.

▶ **2**

Staff trip leaders

From the Center for Social Change and Campus Living

Alt Breaks At A Glance

Community Engagement & Impact

4

Community Partner Projects

Alt Breaks team supported Puerto Rico-based community organizations, nonprofits, LLCs, and coalitions in a variety of volunteer-based projects as guided by site leads.

Community Collaborations International

Connects volunteer teams to ongoing environmental, disaster relief, and human service projects led by local community partners in Puerto Rico.

16

Bunk Beds Built
for volunteer
facility



SBP

A nonprofit disaster recovery organization that helps to repair infrastructure and increase community resilience in response to damage from hurricanes María (2015) & Fiona (2022).

2

Houses Repaired
& Revitalized

Love In Motion

In the aftermath of Hurricane María, Love in Motion helps rebuild a stronger, more sustainable region. The Volunteers Trails Program supports Forest Service Staff in maintaining routes and heritage sites in El Yunque National Rainforest.

1

Trail Maintained
& Reinforced
Structurally



Project YUCAE

Promotes sustainability and conservation through the protection of green infrastructures, nature reserves, agricultural land, and cultural heritage sites. Volunteers support agroecological projects on community gardens and farms, which promotes food security and sovereignty.

50

Native fruit
trees planted

Peer Mentorship Opportunity with the Posse Foundation

Connects diverse groups of students with partnering colleges to provide mentorship and leadership opportunities supporting the next generation of leaders. Since Fall 2021, L&C has welcomed two posse cohorts from the Washington, DC Chapter. In Fall 2023, L&C will welcome another D.C. cohort, and the first Posse cohort from Puerto Rico.

6

Posse Scholars

from the incoming Puerto Rico Cohort met up with Alt Breaks students, 4 of whom are Posse Scholars from the D.C. Chapter

Student Engagement & Experience



Student Participant:

I loved getting to know the community partners, who were very willing to chat with us. I also liked that we did what community partners thought was most important, rather than us deciding for them what was needed.

Student Participant:

I learned a lot about myself, the work I want to go into, how to work as a team, and it motivated me to do more community work in my immediate community.

Student Participant:

Getting to know everybody on the trip and grow closer to them was one of the most meaningful parts of the trip. I absolutely loved everyone, and everyone was willing to get to know one another. We all had such a positive attitude! I certainly felt like I was part of the group, and that I belonged.

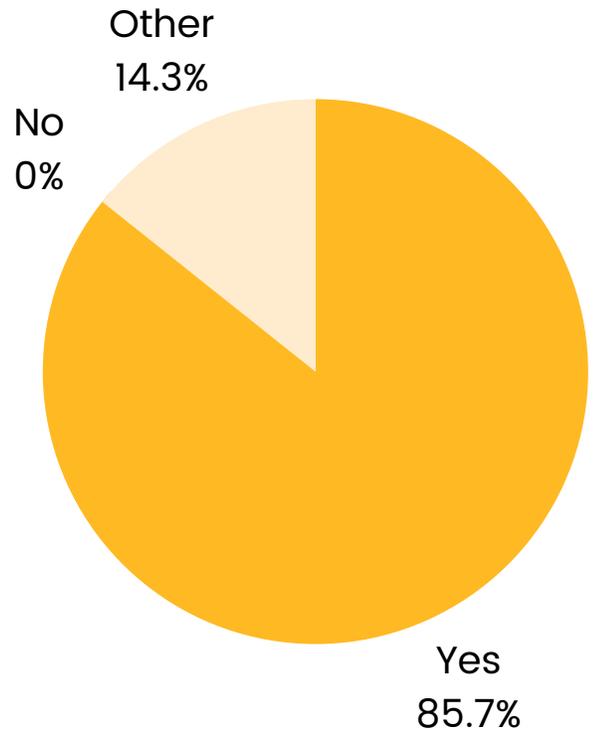
Key Student Takeaways

- Participants expressed that the trip improved their sense of belonging at L&C College
- Pre-trip meetings should emphasize team-building activities that explore group dynamics and communications styles.
- Specific skills training and project techniques would support the effectivity of volunteer work with community partners on the trip.
- Participants generally feel encouraged and inspired to engage in more community service work
- Participants would recommend future program opportunities to others and would like to see variety of projects in different regions and during other times of year.

Summary of Student Feedback

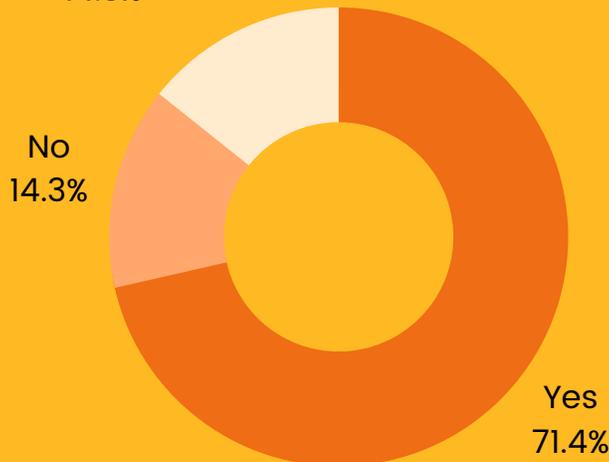


Student participant responses when asked if Alt Breaks should work with the same community partners again in Puerto Rico:



Other: Students expressed interest in working with different partners or directly with orgs not coordinated through Community Collaborations International

Maybe/Other
14.3%



Participants were asked if the program should include a local pre-trip service project:

71.4% Said "Yes"
28.6% Said "Maybe" or "No"

Participants who said "No" accredited their reasoning to time constraints and extracurricular commitments

Recommendations

These recommendations are based on student feedback and program evaluation by staff and program coordinators

1 Structural Adjustments

- Incorporate a local service project to introduce the group to relevant skills and provide an opportunity to apply program goals locally
- Establish student advisory committee (comprised of former trip leaders) to assist with trip planning and program decisions
- Participants conduct research that supports the community served and bring knowledge back to the Lewis & Clark community.

2 Trip Leadership & Training

- Mix of student-led and faculty/staff-led trips - trip leaders are paid a stipend/fees waived
- Include standardized training for all trip leaders with an emphasis on social justice, DEI, and inclusive leadership
- Schedule trip leader check-ins throughout the program to support facilitation of meetings, curriculum, discussions, and reflections.

3 Application & Selection Process

- Standardize application criteria to require that applicants demonstrate prerequisite service experience
- Students may apply or be nominated for trip leadership roles, leadership selection for all trips will occur once a year
- Simplify selection process by removing the group interview and instead have a selection committee review written applications

4 Strengthening Community Impact

- Expand program assessment that applies feedback from students and community partners to gauge impact and inform future project focuses
- Sustain partnerships by providing continuous opportunities for virtual service, educational programming, fundraising, advocacy.
- Offer students opportunities to directly apply service and leadership credits toward the IMPACT certificate

5 Fundraising & Financial Models

- Establish a standard program fee for participants (program fee may vary depending on total trip cost)
- Offer financial assistance resources (scholarships, grants, sponsorships, financial aid) to support student program fees
- Expand fundraising efforts beyond campus to reach community donors with guidance from the L&C Philanthropy Council

Alternative Program Models

Based on a national survey for Alternative Break programs during conducted by Breakaway
(Responding programs were conducted during the 2020–2021 academic year)

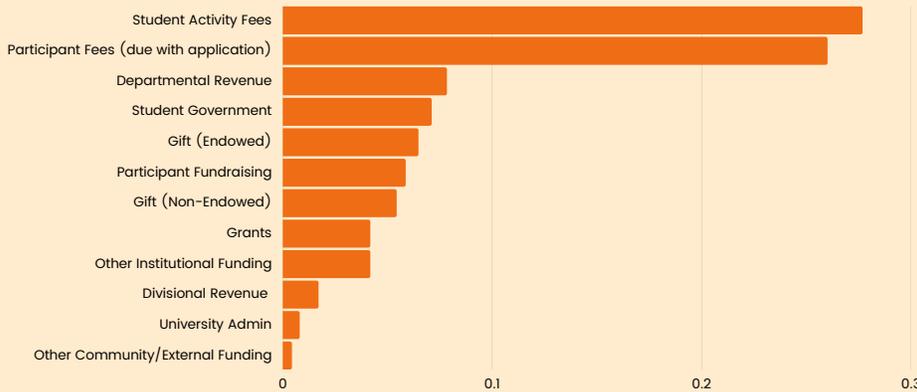
National Program Models Statistics

- 94% of programs offer scholarships or fee waivers to participants
- Programs worked with an average of 10 community partners/program
- An average of 53 student participants/program
- 36% of programs are supported by graduate assistants

Program Topics & Trip Focus



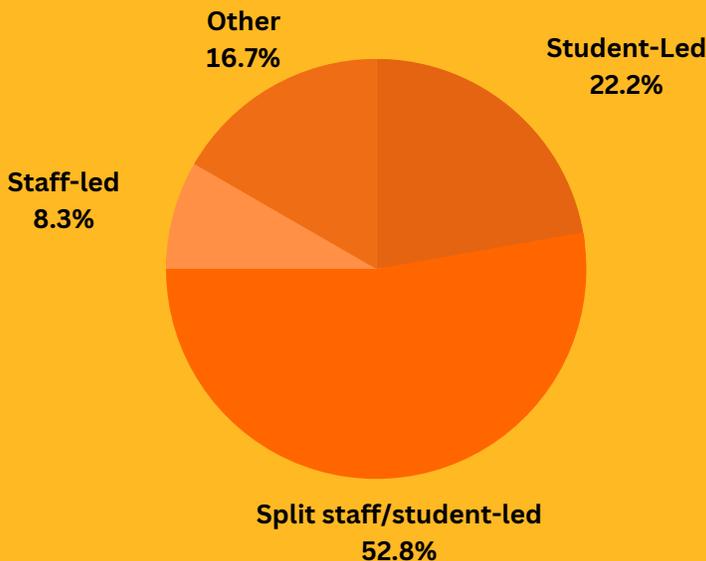
Program Financing



Program Coordinators



Trip Leadership Structure



Programs incorporating diversity + social justice curriculum by training type



Budget Report

Expense	Cost	Notes
Travel/Flights	\$15,541.22	Flights, Ground Transportation
Partner fee	\$15,760.00	Lodging, Meals, & Accommodations
Pre & Post Trip	\$920.49	Meeting supplies, supplementary materials
Total Program Cost: \$33,958.42		

Funds Raised	Cost	Notes
Participant Fee	\$1,500	\$750 fee paid by 2 participants
Fundraising Campaign	\$2,277	33 donors via GiveCampus Digital Fundraiser
Total Fundraising Amount: \$3,777.00		

Budget Summary

- Center paid for the majority of the program from with an estimated 96% from non-endowed gifts, 3% institutional funds, and 1% participant fees & fundraising sources
- The bulk of expenses were from purchasing flights late in the year and Community Collaboration International's partnership fee of \$985 per person
- Established a program fee of \$750, which some participants paid, but deposits were not required for participants who requested financial assistance
- To assist with the fee, all participants were given an individual fundraising goal of \$750, and supported by the Center and the L&C Philanthropy Council via an online fundraising campaign on GivePulse.
- Students encountered fundraising challenges when asking personal networks to contribute

See "Recommendations" page for suggested improvements to financial model

Additional Resources & Raw Data

- **Program Report Metrics: Compiled by Allison Beebe & Andrea Salyer**
 - <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1tQvQv4lOI7NkZB399XyTnly7NetJyjiKuGcWllsgljU/edit#slide=id.p>
- **About the 2023 Alternative Break Program - L&C Website**
 - https://college.lclark.edu/student_life/social_change/for_students/alternative_breaks/alternative-spring-break-2023-puerto-rico/
- **GiveCampus Fundraiser Campaign**
 - <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CgzlImfceoLupwctJkUSo3rNLAvTMkXGNekXiPVULIBQ/edit#gid=714539957>
- **Budget Spreadsheet**
 - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16wOw6vm_NtqSZC3A9cBL-9EkOMFP-5gbQZnMiCks-2A/edit#gid=0
- **Post-Program Feedback Survey**
 - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1WDK8TDczxzpFNcqZLwmi76SHhIFCH4CIOF7eKhZhqWA/edit#responses>
- **Shared Photo Dropbox**
 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_gonBz4nTMfOh9M7qbnR0xgiefWCijq3GzHqvPlias/edit
- **Breakaway National Alternative Break Survey 2020-2021**
 - http://alternativebreaks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NABS-20_21.pdf

Notes:

- Access may be restricted for some administrative or confidential documents
- These sources provided insights, information, and data used in this report



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