# UC San Diego Strengthening community bonds: a case study of catalyzing a donation drive to enhance the impact of the UCSD Street Outreach Team School of Medicine

# Aims

This study aims to describe the process of forging new community partnerships to address supply shortages and augment the efficacy of the UCSD Street Outreach Team in providing essential supplies to unhoused individuals in a local suburban community. We intend for these insights to serve as a model for enhancing the impact of street outreach efforts in similar communities and to offer guidance for future initiatives.

### Introduction

The UCSD Street Outreach Team was first established in the spring of 2022. Our involvement as managers began on January 1, 2024 along with the help of our dedicated street outreach team members. The current team, composed of 19 UCSD medical students, 3 faculty members, and 1 social worker has been tirelessly distributing basic necessities to the unsheltered population in Pacific Beach, San Diego. Through regular "Glows & Grows" reflections conducted after each outreach endeavor, we actively sought avenues for improvement to better serve the evolving needs of this demographic. Notably, a recurring request for backpacks emerged from the individuals we engaged with during our weekly rounds, prompting us to initiate a targeted donation drive to directly address this pressing need. Concurrently, our team endeavored to foster a sense of community among this vulnerable population while facilitating access to medical care through referrals to our free clinic located in Pacific Beach.

Please edit the Canva flyer using this link with the following:	
NAME OF YOUR INSTITUTION	
DATE/DURATION OF THE DRIVE	Name of your institution *
LOCATION	Name of your institution
	Your answer
YOUR INSTITUTION & UCSD SOM Street Outreach Team Backpack	Name of the club/interest group * Your answer
<b>Drive</b> <b>Date</b> <b>LOCATION</b> Please donate new and gently used backpacks for our unsheltered neighbors!	Do you need a donation bin? * Yes No, we can store the donations until UCSD can a
Our aim is to support unhoused individuals with essential supplies like food, blankets, water, jackets, and backpacks. While our drive's focus is on backpacks, we welcome donations of any kind. Thank you for your support!	O Other:
UCSD SOM Street Outreach Team	If you answered <b>YES *</b> We will reach out to you with additional details regard
Clothing Drive	<ul> <li>I can pick up the donation bin from UCSD SOM (</li> <li>I need the bin delivered</li> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
MET Student Lounge	
until April 19th, 2024	
Please donate new and gently used items for our unsheltered neighbors!	Our institution/club can: (Check all that apply)
Most requested items:         Men's clothing, socks,         long sleeves, jackets         Follow us @ucsdfc         Thank you! Any Questions?         Contact Sami at	<ul> <li>Collect the donated items</li> <li>Keep track of the quantity and type of items don</li> <li>Deliver the donated items to UCSD SOM (address)</li> </ul>

**Image 1:** A preview of the Google form and flyer sent to interested organizations

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# Methods

Street outreach managers reached out to 10 student-led organizations in local undergraduate institutions in both San Diego and Los Angeles. Additionally, one high school in Los Angeles was recruited to participate. The Free Clinic's street outreach coordinator crafted a compelling letter detailing the objectives of the backpack donation drive, logistical details for participation, and the mutually beneficial impact of community involvement in addressing local needs. After the initial communication, two follow-up emails were sent.

To the organizations that expressed interest, the team distributed a Google Form. This form was designed to coordinate the drive, collecting details such as the need for donation boxes, the possible duration of the drive, preferred advertising methods, and whether additional support was required from the outreach team (see Image 1). Furthermore, our form included a link to a flyer that was customized for joint initiatives.

The UCSD School of Medicine sent out an email announcement to all classes and utilized social media platforms such as the Free Clinic's Instagram to advertise and reshare the posts. However, different organizations employed their own methods of organizing and executing the drive. It was crucial that each organization conducted its drive based on its specific student population and its own means of achieving the highest possible exposure.

# Results

Out of the 11 organizations we initially reached out to, 5 responded and donation drives were planned. The following student organizations are actively participating in the drive:

- UCSD School of Medicine (UCSD SOM)
- Students for Public Health at San Diego State University (SDSU)
- UCSD Medics in Armenia (UCSD MIA)
- Ferrahian High School

200

Armenian Student Association at UCLA

Data currently presented is from UCSD SOM, SDSU, and UCSD MIA, with a total donation count at 213 items as of 4/24/2024. 79% of items received were from the UCSD SOM donation drive, which is expected given that it is the host organization of the event (Fig. 1). 50% of items were Men's/unisex sizes, while 40% and 10% were Women's and Children's sizes respectively (Fig. 1).

# 150 100 50 Women's UCSD SOM Children's Men's/Unisex

### Fig. 1: Donations by Intended Recipient and Partnering School







Fig. 2. Donations by category; miscellaneous items include undergarments, gloves, and sunglasses.

# Conclusion

Our case study highlights the importance of community collaboration in bolstering the efficacy and success of street outreach initiatives. Utilizing tools like Google Forms and social media as well as local institutions, we made a significant impact in our community by meeting the identified needs of our clients.

Establishing community partnerships has equipped the outreach team with additional resources, enabling us to better assist our clients. Four of the collaborating organizations will sustain their donation initiatives until the start of summer, aiming to establish a recurring pattern of donation drives biannually.

Additionally, ideas of partnering with local businesses such as Bombas and West Side Clothing offer exciting opportunities to further engage our community and increase our fundraising efforts (1, 2). By fostering collaboration and innovation, we are well-positioned to surpass our goals and leave a lasting legacy of compassion and generosity.

# Acknowledgements

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### References

[1] <u>https://shop.bombas.com/pages/giving-back</u> 2) <u>https://westsidelove.us/pages/about-us</u>



# UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic