

Adams State Adventure Program

Adams State University Financial Plan of Action

Introduction

The Adams State Adventure Program (ASAP) is a highly successful outdoor recreation program that is divided into 5 main areas of programming; the Leadership Development program, the Climbing Wall, the Rental Center, the Challenge Course, and the Trip Program. ASAP is designed as a co-curricular program that works directly with the minor of Adventure Leadership & Programming, and the competitive sister program, Adventure Sports. Together these 3 areas have helped bring recognition to Adams State University as a leader in outdoor recreation and the title of “Top Adventure School” in 2016 by Elevation Outdoors Magazine. The Adventure Program is centered around what is called “ALP Apprenticeship.” This is a student leadership development program that builds off the skills learned in the ALP minor and upon completion of the apprenticeship students are eligible to receive Adam’s only certificate of leadership. As you will see below, the Adventure Program is a highly effective program that brings lots of attention and renown to Adams State University, while operating on a shoe-string budget.

Mission Criticality & Essentiality

In the ASU 2020 Plan, Adams State Adventure Program is specifically called upon to help achieve some of their goals, and is actively contributing to others.

- Action 5.5.1: Expand Adams State Adventure Program to offer consulting, trips, and classes to the community. Offer five opportunities per year exclusive to community members.
 - For 2016-17 Adams State Adventure Program hosted 8 events in conjunction with ALMA’s Weekends on the Rio. This included free stand up paddle-boarding and mountain biking lessons for the community. ASAP also hosted their first ever Summer Adventure Camp which included 3 week-long day camps for local youth. In total, there were 23 days of programming available to the community for the last school year. For the 2017-18 school year we are on track to exceed that. In addition to the programming mentioned above, which we will continue, ASAP has partnered with the local cub scouts group to run trips and trainings for them, and will also lead 3 3-day trips for the local after school program Alpine Achievers Initiative, based out of Saguache.
- Action 5.5.3 Service projects related to natural resources and outdoor recreation across SLV. Identify five service projects throughout the valley for student placement.
 - In May of 2017 the Adventure Programs successfully completed their service project to build a new river take-out on the Rio Grande near the State line. This event was coordinated by ASAP, funded by the SLV Community & Conservation Initiative, and partnered with the SLV Bureau of Land Management field office and the Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado. Over 50 volunteers showed up to help with the 2-day project.
- Action 5.1.3 Host events that represent long-standing and recently integrated cultures of the SLV (Cultures in the broad sense – ethnic, farming/ agriculture, athletic)

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- This April Adams State Adventure Program, in collaboration with San Luis Valley Great Outdoors, and the Salazar Center will be hosting the first ever San Luis Valley Conference for Outdoor Recreation & Economy. We hope to bring in over 100 people to discuss the economic impact of outdoor recreation and how we can grow it.
- Action 5.2 Stimulate economic development opportunities for the San Luis Valley.
 - The coordinator of ASAP has worked directly on creating new economic opportunities for outdoor recreation in the valley. The coordinator has helped fund raise over 1.9 million for the San Luis Valley, which includes many full-time jobs and internships.
- Action 5.2.1 Invite business leaders to campus
 - This April Adams State Adventure Program, in collaboration with San Luis Valley Great Outdoors, and the Salazar Center will be hosting the first ever San Luis Valley Conference for Outdoor Recreation & Economy. Within this conference we will bring community leaders from local businesses and non-profits from across Colorado and Washington D.C. to present and join in the conversations.
- Action 5.3.3 ASU students/ staff participate in local government and non-profit organizations
 - The coordinator of the Adventure Programs serves as the Vice President for the Rio Grande Farm Park in Alamosa. He also works with numerous non-profits across the valley.
- Action 5.4.1 Broaden students' experience in the San Luis Valley
 - The Adventure Programs currently is running trips in almost every county of the San Luis Valley. Students can get to experience a wide array of activities in the outdoors to experience their local surroundings, from sledding on wolf creek pass, to hiking the sand dunes.
- Action 5.4.2 Make the San Luis Valley a classroom
 - The Adventure Program subsidizes the Adventure Leadership and Programming minor. Within the ALP we utilize the entire valley as our classroom. This is the only program designed specifically for this purpose as our students spend over 50 days learning outside in the program.
- Action 5.6.2 Provide opportunities for life-long learning
 - The Adventure Program offers programs for the community to learn about the outdoors. ASAP has offered multiple trips and clinics for community members to learn about various aspects of spending time outdoors and recreating. By design ALP Apprentices develop teamwork, problem-solving, communication, leadership, empathy, and many other essential life skills as the program culture and expectations support holistic human development.

ASAP, over the previous few years, has become a leader in the community and a leader at Adams State for community partnerships. The program has active ties with: the BLM, Forest Service, Great Sand Dunes National Park, the Boys & Girls Club, Rio Grande Farm Park, City of Alamosa, SLV Great Outdoors, Rio Grande Watershed Conservation & Education Initiative, Rio

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Grande Headwaters Land Trust, Great Outdoors Colorado, the Colorado Health Foundation, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Colorado Mountain Club, Trinchera Ranch, Zapata Ranch, the local Cub & Boy Scouts, Alamosa Search and Rescue, and many local businesses.

Together with our partners, ASAP has helped raise \$1,960,000 for the community of Alamosa, with \$115,122 going straight to the Adventure Programs for increased funding. This means for every dollar ASU has contributed to the salary and benefits of the coordinator of ASAP, he has brought in \$40 for the community.

This fundraising has been essential for the Adventure Program to remain staffed and operable at a high level despite decreasing funds from decreasing institutional enrollment. Without these additional funds primarily allocated to student wages, ASAP student staff historically sought additional jobs during the semester which increases stress on our students. Furthermore, these additional funds have provided the ability for ASAP to take on additional programming such as the Adventure Camps. I believe that the ASAP has demonstrated a need the community has for leadership within the outdoor community and the support of the population for its continued success. The ASU 2020 plan had a very strong emphasis on community relations, and the Adventure Programs is currently helping to fulfill almost all of the sub goals within goal 5.

Cost and Benefit

Currently ASAP is funded partially through student fees, but is mostly self-generated.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
College Service Fee	\$17,869	\$17,140	\$16,409	\$14,667
Self-Generated Revenue	\$30,017	\$23,601	\$30,058	\$12,582 (YTD)

Of the \$36,000 budgeted for 2017-18, these are budgeted expenses:

Administrative Salaries	\$15,404
Administrative benefits	\$4,925
Student Wages	\$10,000
Operating Expenses	\$4,821

Please note that we have seen a decline in funds over the previous years that seems likely to continue. In 2016-17, you can see we generated above average revenue from grants. Looking at this data, it is clear that ASAP is underfunded. The amount of college service fee dollars generated is not even enough to pay the half of the salary plus benefits that comes out of the ASAP budget.

For all programmatic purposes the program is self-generated. We are currently barely generating enough money to maintain our size, but the demand continues to increase for our services and

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programs continues to grow. Recently, we have been able to fund necessary infrastructure purchases through various grants in order to replace damaged or retired equipment.

The \$10,000 in student wages, used primarily to compensate students during the Spring and Summer when programming demand is highest, is not currently adequate to stay operating at full capacity through the summer time. With rising minimum wages, to avoid once again reducing services to ASU and the community, an increase in funds for compensation is necessary. Since we cannot afford to pay our students over the summertime, many of them go home or have to find other jobs. Due to shrinking budgets we have also had to cut the rental center from being staffed at all. As a result, we no longer have a main rental center area and students do not know where to go to rent gear (as evidenced by the Campus Rec survey). We currently are operating out of an abandoned room with no flooring, leaking roofs, moss growing on the wall, no electricity, no heating, and no air conditioning. As this report is being written, there are 4 inches of standing water next to our gear storage room, threatening to flood over and ruin thousands of dollars of gear.

Climbing wall Usage:

	15 -16 (2 nd semester)	16-17	17-18 (YTD)
Unique users	112	158	112
Total users	712	1,068	718
Climbing Comp:	62	53	

Trip data:

	15 - 16	16 - 17	17 - 18
# of trips	7	7	3
# of participants	52	38	22

Program data:

	15-16	16-17	17-18 (YTD)
# of programs	?	?	39
\$ of participants	?	?	565

The data above has been tracked for the previous 2-3 years via an app called Presence. The climbing wall is uniquely attended by over 100 unique students every year and between 700 and a little over 1,000 visits during the academic year. However, these numbers are most likely 30-40% underestimated due to using Presence to track participation. Presence was not designed for this and was unreliable at best, but without the budget for proper recreation management software our best option was to try to make it work. While climbing wall usage remains steady, it should be noted that these numbers do not reflect the many community members who utilize the climbing wall, as Presence does not track them. The climbing wall is open to the community for membership as it is the only climbing wall in the San Luis Valley. This is also the only form of recreation open to community members at Adams State. The numbers for community users are estimated to be about 40% below actuals.

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Revenue Generation:

Revenue is primarily generated through programming that ASAP offers, like the Trips Program, Challenge Course, and the Climbing Wall.

The trip program is designed to do two things:

- 1) engage ASU students, faculty, and staff in outdoor adventure recreation
- 2) develop ASAP staff human, outdoor, and educational skills e.g. (competence in leadership).

With this in mind, we design trips to break even, however, we usually run these trips at a financial loss to the program in order to still get the staff experience. This has the added benefit of making trips more affordable for our low-income student population, however, this is also a challenge. When we try to run a trip for more than \$20, we regularly struggle to fill it with local students and students usually report that they cannot afford it. Our higher cost trips, which give our student trip leaders greater experience, are typically filled by staff, faculty, and community members. Because of these factors, we typically have to run our trips below cost, further hurting the ASAP budget. The extra cost has proven worth it however, as many ASU students are getting to experience things they otherwise never would be able to. ASU strives to be affordable for everyone and the Adventure Program tries to share this value. We cannot however, increase trips and participants without more programming dollars.

The challenge course and climbing wall are the essential revenue generating aspects of ASAP. Our programs see over 500-1000 participants each year and are the primary source of revenue generation for the program.

As the budget is designed right now, there is not even enough money to pay the salary and benefits of the coordinator, so about 60% of his salary must be taken out of the Rex fitness and Wellness budget, which is also hurting. With little investment, the coordinator is able to run a program that significantly impacts ASU students, the SLV communities, and has been nationally recognized for its success. Within the program students are receiving thousands of hours of experience facilitating and leading groups. We may not have the largest impact on the student population on campus, but the impact that is had on students within ASAP is profound. In addition to the impact on students, our contribution to the community of the San Luis Valley has been greatly beneficial. For every dollar that ASU has invested into the salary and benefits of the ASAP coordinator he has raised \$40 for the SLV community. Unlike the majority of other universities, the rental center, climbing wall, challenge course, ALP minor, and trip program are all predominately funded through self-generated revenues.

Quality of Outcomes

The mission of Adams State Adventure Program is: *Participants, members, and customers of ASAP have support for achieving their adventure needs.* The coordinator and staff work hard to make the outdoors accessible for the diverse population they serve. Quality is determined in many different ways in the adventure program. After every trip and program a survey is sent or given out to receive immediate feedback. The program tracks most of its data through the app known as "Presence." This has helped track data for climbing wall usage, and trip and program participation. ASAP also participates in the Rex Fitness and Wellness survey that goes out twice

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a year, with much larger data points. Adaptations to the program are made in part based on these survey results. Being a co-curricular program, we also track a large set of student learning outcomes for ASAP staff that are assessed at the end of each semester.

Outcome	TYPE (OO or SLO)	Year Last Assessed
Can explain the importance of desired learning outcomes when designing activities & Programs	SLO1	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Is able to modify teaching or instruction to changing situations or groups	SLO2	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can explain the importance of modeling to skill acquisition and retention	SLO3	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Critically assesses others with intention of providing growth oriented feedback that promotes learning	SLO4	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Able to facilitate an effective pre-trip meeting emphasizing inherent risks & participant responsibility	SLO5	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates ability to present information in an organized manner (e.g., lesson plans, pre-trips)	SLO6	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Able to facilitate activities to meet desired outcomes	SLO7	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can explain the concept of transference; able to use debriefing to make connections	SLO8	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Able to effectively use and explain the outcome model	SLO9	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Accurately assess the group's ability to complete a specific activity and modifies activities when necessary	SLO10	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates basic outdoor skill mastery (e.g., LNT, backpacking, navigation, campsite selection, knots)	SLO11	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can explain and explicitly apply the ASAP Risk Management Strategy (Instructor Positioning)	SLO12	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Shows competence in specific activity knowledge, systems, and procedures (e.g., off trail hiking, climbing, caving, canoeing)	SLO13	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Recognizes hazards and exercises quality judgement and decision-making skills within a leadership position to help avoid potential problems or dangers	SLO14	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17

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Demonstrates wilderness medical skill competency and rescue skill competency	SLO15	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates ability to read topographical maps, choose routes, and make accurate decisions in the field regarding route choices, changes, & evacuation options	SLO16	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can explain the importance of emergency planning (e.g., evacuation routes, plans, alternates)	SLO17	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates ability to assess weather conditions and make appropriate decisions based on the group's safety	SLO18	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates familiarity with ASAP's basic trip equipment use and limitations	SLO19	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates integrity and takes ownership of his/her behaviors and decisions	SLO20	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Receives and processes feedback from peers and professional staff	SLO21	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Shows ability to accurately self-assess, take care of self emotionally and physically to be prepared to lead (self-leadership)	SLO22	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can point out own tendencies for self-deception and analyze own way of being; can explain the consequences of self-deception	SLO23	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Able to effectively mentor those directly under his/her care	SLO24	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can explain differences between leadership styles and uses them appropriately	SLO25	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates ability to listen with the intent to understand another's frame of reference	SLO26	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Demonstrates effective communication on all levels (e.g., Clear, direct, concise)	SLO27	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Leads within the limitations of experience and training; accurately assesses self	SLO28	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Can explain the role personal values play in decision-making	SLO29	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Is encouraging and able to coach others during activities	SLO30	Assessed semesterly. Fall '17
Equipment is appropriate and effective at meeting the needs or the user	OO1	Spring '17
ALP apprentices gain administrative and customer service experience	OO2	Spring '17
Members gain health, social, and technical benefits that meet their needs	OO3	Spring '17

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Trips, Clinics, events, and programs meet or exceed the desired outcomes for their intended participants	OO4	Spring '17
ALP apprentices gain leadership, facilitation, and teaching experience	OO5	Spring '17

The program defines quality by the quality of the students within the program and the levels they reach within the apprenticeship. The ALP apprenticeship is a robust leadership development program that takes years to accomplish. A student graduating with this certificate of leadership stands out amongst their peers. Since the Apprenticeship has been implemented we have had 3 students graduate with the certificate of leadership. Currently we have another few set to finish it this year. The goal is for all of our students to graduate and attain this high level of leadership experience but it is robust and difficult to achieve. Not everyone attains the certificate, but ASAP has a very high retention rate. 23 out of 26 students who have worked for ASAP in the previous 4 years still go to Adams or graduated. The 3 that left Adams transferred away during a transition time in ASAP in 2015, all to seek a major not offered at ASU. Due to funding, the program is still small, staffing only 8-12 students at any given time. With additional funding however, we could increase the size and impact of the program. The demand is present for such growth.

Conclusion

The benefits of having the Adams State Adventure Program are quite numerous. At a foundational level, students who participate in recreational activities tend to do better in school and live healthier lives. Not everyone is into lifting weights however, and if you wish to reach a wide audience within recreation you need to offer a wide variety of activities. ASAP is so much more than what is seen at face value. Operating out of ASAP is the most robust leadership program on campus and the only certificate of leadership currently available at Adams State. ASAP is currently subsidizing the ALP minor that has no operating budget and cost around \$10,000 annually to run. We run trips that are open to the students and the community, and these are largely run below cost in order to reach our low-income student population. The operating fund for which we are budgeted is less than \$5,000, but in reality, costs are at a minimum \$18-20,000 for the size of the program that we operate. This means we must generate our own revenue each year in order to make ends meet and much of the time our self-generated revenues fall short of what is needed. Much of the self-generated revenue comes from SLV programs that are grant funding dependent and this means at times, programs who we often count on run out of funds.

Unfortunately, we cannot always put money where it needs to go and must float operations that make us money. The Adventure Program comes up very short every year in replacing gear when it needs to be retired. In addition, we do not have enough student wages to open the climbing wall on weekends or holidays, and no longer have the funds to staff a rental center. The program is also being run out of a back room of the Rex with no electricity, air condition or heat, has leaking ceilings, no flooring and is growing moss on the walls. This means program areas are slowly dying off. Fortunately, the program has been able to survive recently based on the work of the coordinator who has been able to fund gear purchases through grants instead of funding

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from the University. In order for this program to thrive, additional support from the University is necessary as grant funding is unpredictable and not sustainable over the long term.

In order for the program to grow and move forward, more funding is necessary. The program needs a one-time investment of \$40,000 into their new space to simply bring make the room habitable. That budget request was submitted in 2016. The program needs an additional \$15,000 each year in operating funds to be able to replace gear at the rate it needs to be replaced. An additional \$30,000 is needed to move the coordinators salary out of the Rex budget and into ASAP's budget. Finally, an additional \$30,000 in campus employment wages is necessary to be able to start staffing the Rental Center again and open the wall for more hours. With an increased investment from the University, the Adventure Program will be able to continue its growth and further its leadership in the community.

In terms of working towards goals laid out in the 2020 plan, the Adventure Program is greatly contributing. The Coordinator has raised over 1.96 million dollars for the community of the San Luis Valley and brought in over \$110,000 to the program itself to keep it alive. The program is graduating students into the community who know how to be a leader and are thriving in their respective fields. The program has been tracking over 30 student learning outcomes for years before the new assessment coordinator made it mandatory. All of the programs within the program are student led and offer unparalleled facilitation and leadership experience at Adams. The students within the program are even able to help train the staff of other program areas on and off campus. Adams State Adventure Program is one of the strongest programs on campus that brings Adams a great deal of respect and prestige.

