



The Advocate
Winter 2021

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Community & Service-Learning Programs Go Virtual

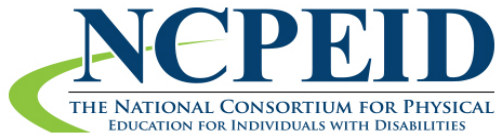
Children and adults with disabilities have struggled with access to physical activity programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. For university practicums that serve individuals with disabilities using student support, this has meant a shift away from more traditional approaches and the need for program instructors and faculty to think outside the box with service delivery models. While programming may look different at various universities, the goal has stayed consistent: provide quality physical activity programming for the individuals from the community that are served and help students gain a better understanding of how to work with people with disabilities. Below we highlight three programs that are providing quality APE/APA experiences. These programs offer a snapshot of the amazing work we know so many are doing throughout our field.

Slippery Rock University

At Slippery Rock University, undergraduate students minoring in Adapted Physical Activity (APA) thrive with hands on practicum experiences. When we made the shift to online learning, practicum programs had to shift as well. This past fall, undergraduate students had been able to develop and implement virtual APA programming for community members and school aged students with disabilities. SRU students taught physical activity sessions to an early childhood center in Texas, school aged students in western PA, and a local assisted living community. They also facilitated weekly virtual physical activity sessions for local transition aged students using Zoom.

With a rich history of APA practicum experiences, faculty, staff and students at SRU made it a priority to find a way to continue experiences during the shift to online learning. Graduate students from SRU participated in both virtual and socially distanced practicums during the fall semester. Using virtual platforms, graduate students designed and implemented physical activity fitness sessions for local blind athletes, transition aged students, and adults with disabilities in the community. SRU's Transition Achievement Program was facilitated by undergraduate and graduate students both in person and virtually. Graduate students are also leading teams in the Special Olympics virtual Fitness Heptathlon, where athletes can qualify for local and national competitions. For an example of how SRU programs run, check out this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRac07Rx6-Y>

California State University, Chico



The service learning programs at California State University, Chico have served both adults and children with disabilities in the greater Northern California Region for over 30 years. The pivot to online service delivery was not without concerns and a lot of hard work, but the two program coordinators for the service-learning programs were committed to serving our students and program participants with the same level of caring that has always been part of the program. Beyond Exercise, Wellness Enhancement for Life (BEWEL) partners with classrooms in the local school districts (Tuesday/Thursday) and community members with physical disabilities (Monday/Wednesday) to provide APA experiences. This last semester (FA 2020), the programs served 44 community participants and 128 students. For more information about Chico State's APE program, please visit: <https://www.csuchico.edu/kine/community-service-programs/index.shtml>.

California State University, Long Beach

Prior to COVID, California State University Long Beach (CSULB) ran three service-learning programs (a) Camp Nugget, (b) After School Adapted Physical-activity Program (ASAPP), and (c) Transition Practicum. In these practicums, individuals with disabilities came to the CSULB campus and worked with pre-service adapted physical education students on health-related physical fitness, fundamental motor skills, aquatics, cooperative games, and sport experiences. However, due to COVID, these face-to-face programs were not possible, yet the need for physical activity experiences was ever present due to shelter-in-place orders. The CSULB APE program made the decision to pivot and offer programming in an online format. APE programming is live on Facebook (@LongBeachStateAPE three days a week (Tuesday/Thursday @ 3:45pm & Wednesday @ 1pm Pacific Time).