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BEGIN TRANSCRIPTION

00:00:03:22 - 00:00:26:23

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Hey, we'd like to welcome everybody today, to a presentation about the CSU Center at Todos Santos. This is presented by the Colorado Zeta chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi. And we have some time for questions at the end. So you can either type them in the chat or just hang on to them, and we'll have some time to talk.

00:00:27:00 - 00:00:46:08

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And then if you should happen to not have a question answered, we'll make sure that you have a way to get it answered after the webinar. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Kim Kida and Olaf and I, Dahlia, and let them take it from there. Hi, everyone. Welcome. We're really happy for you to join us this afternoon.

00:00:46:10 - 00:01:06:24

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I think the first thing I want to say and introducing myself, my name is Kim Kida, and I'm director of CSU Total Scientists. I've been in this role for about eight years and for almost the beginning. So I have a lot of the history of how the how we preserve the Baja Peninsula. And it's not uncommon that we have some internet challenges.

00:01:07:02 - 00:01:37:00

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So I have found myself the best internet in town, which is here at this coffee shop. And, we're looking forward to talking with you today. We're pretty informal, so as Kristi said, we have a presentation put together. Feel free to add any questions in the chat. Our intention is to talk for maybe 30 minutes, so that we allow about 15 minutes for questions and conversation at the end, just to give you a sense of what to expect.

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So as I mentioned,

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We're here in of Santos, which is in the southern part of the peninsula. I'm presenting with a dahlia on this. Carlos is our associate director here at the center, as well as, Olaf, who is our languages coordinator. And just to start with a little bit of orientation, in case you don't know where Toto Santos's, you might be familiar with Cabo San Lucas and, San Jose Cabo at the very southern part of the peninsula.

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So, Toto Santos is about an hour from the airport there, and at the last census, the population was 5500. They're doing a new census this year, so we anticipate that to increase quite a bit. There's quite a bit of population growth here happening. So maybe seasonally, upwards of about 10,000 people in the region. Christy had asked that we share a little bit about the history of the center, why the center exists, how we how it came to be.

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And so really, it started back when Obama was president. And there was an initiative called the 100,000 strong in the Americas. And so there were national efforts to strengthen relationships with, with Mexico on a lot of different fronts. The business fronts, education, culture, arts, all sorts of things. And then at the state level, Governor Hickenlooper at the time put together a committee of people to take a look at how to strengthen relationships between Colorado and Mexico.

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And one of the members of this committee was, doctor Frank, you're familiar with and also a couple of business people in Denver who were starting a project here in total. Santos, Mexico. And so that was the context of the original from First Nations. Was taking a look at, again, how to strengthen this relationship. The conversations progressed with the business in Denver, a partnership with a business in Mexico City and Colorado State University.

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And so essentially, CSU was able to have this footprint of about it's about one acre of land. And you can see in this photo we have four buildings. And it was all a donation to the CSU, with the intention that CSU would operate independently and provide engagement and educational opportunities, to inbound students, to community members and and also to those who visit the town for tourism.

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So you can see on the on my left hand side, this building with the rooftop, there's a classroom rooftop there. We have lodging for about 50 people in total. And we have a commercial kitchen. The brick building is

our administration building, which has some offices in it. So that just gives you a sense of the size of the center.

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It's, you know, it's relatively small, but I think when a lot of people hear about the Total Santa Center, I've had faculty share with me that they envisioned a very small building in the middle of the desert. So it's actually a little bit bigger than that in terms of the sizes of the groups that we can accommodate.

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So, as you can imagine, CSU has a large public university coming into the small town of total Santos and rural Mexico. We really had a lot of challenges in the beginning as well as opportunities. And so it helped us to clarify from the very beginning, how were we going to make decisions and how did we want to engage and be a participant within the larger community?

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So of course, we operate in accordance with the land grant mission and values. But we also went through a community needs assessment process, and this was in 2015 for the purpose of understanding, what are the priorities in the community here? And with that information, we can better assess how CSU can connect and support and, provide exchange opportunities and learning opportunities not only for our students, but for community members living here.

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So I thought it would be interesting, especially for this group, to take a look at what some of the community priorities are. You can see the the list here. It's it's not listed in rank order. But the way we approached the process was we engaged with 11 different focus groups. So we brought together groups of women, groups of educators, farmers, ranchers, and, and basically asked the question, how do you envision your future and what are some of the challenges to get there?

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And we fully expected that our focus group with educators would talk a lot about the education system. But what surprised us is the same group of educators talked about public health, and they talked about youth engagement. And so these are the themes that we distilled from conversations with about 150 community members at that time. And we're currently in the process of doing a refresh of this community needs assessment.

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We're doing it Covid style, which means instead of convening focus groups, we're reaching out to people one on one partners we've worked

with over the years just to make sure that we still understand what's most relevant to the community and what might be emerging, that hasn't come or come our way or that we haven't been aware of yet.

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In terms of the programs at the center, I won't go into a lot of detail or levels, share a little bit more of that towards the end. But this gives you an idea. I always think of it as, you know, in balance program, so to speak, where we're serving CSU students, from Pueblo, from Fort Collins, and also from students from other universities across the U.S. and in addition, we provide workshop engagement opportunities and English classes to local community members.

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And one thing we always like to emphasize is that we focus on experiential learning and also different ways of going. So really trying to remove the sense of expertise, so to speak, and create a space where people can share the knowledge that they have that that may come from a book and may also come from life experience. So I'm going to hand it over to my colleague Dalia.

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So talk a little bit more about community engagement and how the programs here interact with the community. Hi. It's great to be here with you today. And, when we think about the community engagement and how we try to create a new program, it's always on our mind idea to share information. So, there was one program that I really enjoyed it a lot, and it was about this pathology workshop where they have the opportunity to work together from the source from CSU, local professors, from labs, students from both countries together in a table, but also also sharing with local fishermen.

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So it was like, the opportunity to bring all the, you know, in their own lives and, and discover, that what they know, it's important, you know, for a fisherman to provide the information that they know, because they had been working on the ocean their whole life, and that they have some knowledge that you're not going to find in any book for this student to be able to learn from both professors, from each country for the future meant it was amazing and and how the energy flows between all of them, because they all have the same goal to learn and to share.

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It was just just great. And that's more or less how we tried to build it. Like, okay, they're coming and we're trying to connect from someone community so we can share what we have, what we learn. And then from each other. And recently that we had been making this refreshment of the community assessment. We had contact, with the cultural center.

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That's another very good example. And they tell us and I just you had me here for a while now, and your students, your professor participant has had the opportunity to learn about the Santos. But now we will like to learn about you. Why don't you tell us your story? We want to learn about Colorado. We want to learn about your students.

00:11:18:12 - 00:12:03:12

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We want to hear your stories. That's the same way you come and learn from our community. Why don't you come and bring us something to show and to teach us? Like, okay, this is our story. This is our culture, this is what we are doing or what we are. Believe in. So we have that project now with them to have this opportunity for us to then to come and present, their own culture, not only to listen or learn from the local culture, but we have this interchange, and it's been great that, at the beginning, we were just like, okay, welcome.

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You are the visitors, and we allowed you to be here, and we share with you. But now they have this truly interest in us. Like, okay, now that I know you, I want to learn more about you. So that's amazing. And so in this community assessment conversation that we had been following up for a couple of months now, it showed up that all of them are talking about connecting more between each other and find a way to have a better relationship, like, some years ago, the first time we built this community assessment, the problems that you are or the interest that you, with public health, water waste.

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But at this moment, they are all pointing at being a better community, had better relationships, had, more healthy, connections. And, and it's great that all of them identify, as a bridge on those connections and those conversations that they will probably are not just to work together, but both of them are what are used to work with us.

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So we had become, at that point, point of reunion between different groups and different, partners in the community. So we are glad that we have help to build somehow those levels of trust between different groups in the inter, the scientists in the community.

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I think that's my part. Hello everyone. So my name is Olaf Morales. I hope you can hear me. Well, so I will be talking today about the language program, CSU to the Santa Center and ways you could participate or be part of it. So, I will first like to say that I am originally from Chiapas.

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Chiapas is located in the south of Mexico, which is very close to what? Amala. Actually, it's in the border between Mexico and Amala. And it was probably it was like around four years ago that I moved to Todos Santos to, to run the language program. Basically, at first it was my it was the opportunity that I had to create and run the language program, which was the English program for the local community.

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And this is the first thing I will show you until the next slide. So it was basically, let's play scheme. Thank you. So it was in January 2018. So which like two months later, I arrived to Todos Santos. The the, the English program started here at the center. So we, I remember we have, over 100 students taken English classes, had their center divided into five different groups.

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So I remember, like many people in the local community said that it was it was going to be the biggest challenge because this program had started like a year before I was here. And then the one of the challenges they found is that students did not really come into the classes. So they had like a high number of students, like dropping out and not attending the classes.

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And this was probably because of several reasons. So when I was like, well, it's all let's start the English program again and let's see what happens. It was like this idea in my mind, like what to do to just encourage students to participate and to just keep going because, you know, languages is not an easy thing to learn.

00:16:11:15 - 00:16:36:13

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So it takes time. And sometimes students get really frustrated. So, after a year like, December 7th, 2018. So we finished the first cycle and it was I mean, it was a big success for for all of us at the center because we, we had like, almost 100 students, like, finish that cycle. So what kind of this year we have we have all types of students.

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So I basically divided the classes and I'll show you into the next slide. But we had students coming from many different organizations and also students like it's just studying primer level. So the classes were divided into two different groups. So we have the young learners, which were basically kids like you can see on the pictures. And these kids, came from the local primary school in El Pescadero, which is a nearby community to Todos Santos.

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And basically, one of the challenges that these kids had and is still have is that the, curricula, offers English classes to those kids. So they're supposed to have English classes. But the truth is, like, there are not, language teachers in the area. So the center basically promotes that and supports so language education in those areas.

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So these kids which were like pretty much like about like 30 students at that time. So they were taking English classes with us. And actually it was like that for for two years. So on the other hand we had teenagers and adults taking classes at the center, and these were like four groups, divided into different schedules. And also we were teaching on the weekends and we had like, 75 students average, just taking classes from basic level students or middle level.

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So what was the plan? The goal was to to provide students, with activities or tasks where they could develop their communicative skills. So which was basically what they really need here, since still the sentences are very touristic area and people need to communicate in English as well. So, came next, please.

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So, this English program also collaborates with some other programs coming from CSU, CSU Pueblo and other universities and organizations, in the United States and also in Mexico. So the idea of these collaborations was to connect with some, other people in different parts of, of the United States and the world. And so then students could learn about the culture as well, because remember that when we learn a language is not only about like learning grammar, learning vocabulary, but it's also learning about like cultural aspects, which is very important to understand.

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So, let's please thank you. Kim.

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So, in the second year, so we have this, graduation ceremony, which happened in the fall 2019, and, 25 kids and 70 adults, finished the second year and in that case, we invited different people within the community. And these included, like, people who had collaborated with CSU in some way. But also it was really interesting because at that time.

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So Kim, director of the center and some other people from see as you were there and they were able to participate and see what, what what actually, like students look like and, talk to students. So this is one way, like

CSU and in general, staff, faculty and students could connect with, with the local community here into the center just throughout the, the English program.

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And then secondly, the second program, I am in charge of is, Spanish immersion program, which, by the way, Chrissy has been part of it. So during the first year, which was in 2019, we launched the first Spanish immersion program. And this was basically designed for for students, people who are interested in learning Spanish and also experience this Mexican culture firsthand.

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So we, launched the program and, there were like, like my more than ten people you can see on the picture here, which was the first cohort, there were like about 14, 15 people who actually, participated in the first Spanish immersion course. Then we learned a range of basic expressions. We also changed personal information on the students, learned about asking directions, ordering at the restaurant, and also like, like just learning how to communicate emotional state.

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So it was basically like a hands on course because it wasn't just not only being in the classroom, but also to experience, like what culture and what Mexican lifestyle means. So here in Todos Santos, so, next please team. Thank you. So then we decided to the volunteers create two different, programs for the Spanish immersion course. And that's how we came up with, Spanish immersion fall, which is the first step of, Spanish course offered here to the center.

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And these basically focus more on cultural aspects. So this includes, he's to learn more about the history of the Santos, to, participate in a turtle hatching release, and also to visit, like some other towns nearby Todos Santos, like a dream fort, which is a mining town, which was a mining town, by the way, and also to participate and to learn more about the Dia de Los Muertos celebration, which is a very traditional, aspect here in, in Mexico and in other countries as well.

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So then students learned about what, an altar means, and, they actually created, an altar in, like, in the main plaza into the Santos and learn more about the same place with cheese, marigold flower. So you can see on the picture here where Chrissy, by the way, she's actually there. So we created this altar, for the local community, and we participated and we engaged with, the local people to learn more about this, traditional festivity.

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So. And then also, thank you very much, Kim. We have the Spanish immersion spring, which this happens like, well, like in 2019, 20, 2019 was like in the, March, April pretty much. And this was a bit more focused on local ecosystems and wildlife. So here during this Spanish immersion spring, students can actually visit places such as easily Spirito Santo where the this picture with the the ram head and rams abroad flag is so so students stayed there for one night actually.

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Unknown

And then we also saw with the whale shark and with sea lions, and we did a little bit of snorkeling and kayaking, and also we visited the cacti sanctuary and also visited the mining town of three and four. So it's pretty much like more like a nature, course where, like, students learn Spanish while they learn also about, like, animals and, wildlife and like, flowers and plants that are very representative in this area.

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So, Kim, next, please. Thank you very much. So as you can see, we have two different versions of the Spanish immersion courses here, which happened 2018 2019. As we were getting ready to offer the 2020 Spanish immersion program. Well, you know, as everybody knows, then, the pandemic just hit and then we were not able to to offer these opportunities in 2020.

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So then we had to be creative and to adapt to the situation. That's how we came up with the online Spanish immersion course, which was something we had already like talk about and talked about as well. But we weren't so sure if we were going to be like successful as if they were the Spanish immersion courses here at the center.

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So we decided to just, take the risk and just just launched our online Spanish immersion program. And then in 2020, which was basically like a few months ago, we, offered the, the online Spanish immersion course, which was like, divided into different modules, each module lasting for weeks. And so students can take classes twice a week and also completes its activities.

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I have access to extra resources online. And we, as you can see here on this picture, this is, Emily. It's this is one of my students who participated, on the online Spanish program. And also Chrissy has participated in this program. And basically here we moved to online to an online environment. And this is via zoom, just like we're doing it right now.

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And we connect like twice a week and students can actually participate, just talk to each other in break rooms. And they can also have like, extra resources such as videos, music and, and since I'm like, big fan of, like the technology and I love to use technology in my classes. So then I think that this is a great opportunity for people who cannot actually come to, to Mexico because of the situation nowadays, but, still can learn Spanish like in the comfort of home.

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Unknown

So that was the opportunity. And, actually she brought, an article about the class and I could just share with you later if you are interested.

So,

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As you can see, as we move through, like, Spanish immersion courses, full version of spring version and an online version, what comes next? Well, we're planning to launch a new, modules for this year, 2021. And this will be module zero, intended for those students who are who have a very basic level or who have no previous knowledge, and they were interested in to, like, start to learn more about Spanish and the culture and then also to to offer module one, two and three.

00:27:29:17 - 00:27:53:10

Unknown

And those modules are for ones for students who are who have like some basic knowledge and would like to improve and learn more about, like grammar, grammatical features, let's see, and culture, especially Mexican culture. So so this one's are we're going to or I'm working on that right now. And I'm actually starting a new module just started last week.

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And just we'll be finishing this one in April and just planning to to move forward and offer the modules in June. So this is also opportunities to connect online. And as the final slide, thank you Kim. Let's hear 2022. Well we're just thinking to offer a hybrid Spanish immersion course, which will be like a four weeks of online instruction and then one week of Spanish immersion here, into the center.

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So you were probably, you are probably asking, well, how can I connect? What do I have to do in order to, to participate in this program? So it's basically pretty much very simple. We try to make it as simple as possible. So the center provides which is lodging accommodation, meals, transportation and as well as all the material.

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That instruction is included in the program. And as Kim showed at the very beginning of this presentation, so the center has like studios which

actually have like, it's, personal bathroom and we have all the basic facilities, the kitchen area and the dining room. So it's all included. So what the center does not provide, of course, is the the flights and, tips and some extra spaces that are not included into the program.

00:29:14:04 - 00:29:28:21

Unknown

So, as soon as I have further information and possible dates for these programs and those opportunities, if you are interested, it will be great to to share with you all of this information.

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Unknown

Okay. That's it. Thank you everyone. So we want to to give a chance for conversation for questions or anything else that you're interested to learn about. Center from any of the three of us.

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I have a question. If you have, good basis, for the Spanish language, I learned basically, my, when I lived in Costa Rica for a long time, kind of in the streets. Right. Want to work on your grammar? Is there a way to test your Spanish knowledge and figure out which module you want to join?

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Or are the modules made up of people with varying abilities? That's a very good question. Let's see if I can answer correctly. It's hard to say, but I divided the modules. Let's say module one, it's more like, grammar oriented. And in that module we learn more about like basic aspects such as the subject and object pronouns, I how these can be used in like real contexts.

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And module two for example, it offers more the opportunity to, to learn more about like Mexican culture. So aspects such as like the meaning of modeling how the model is originated and why it is important in Mexico. We also talk about like the mescal, for example, and we learn about like the mescal history. So when students ask which one should I take first, I would say like both are really, important.

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And it all depends on like, what do you feel more more the most interested? And of course I encourage students to take both. At the moment I am working on module three, which will be a combination of module one and module two. And it's like, kind of it's kind of connected with the previous modules. And I'm going to use a combination of both for like culture and grammatical feature.

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Unknown

So I'm gonna, we're going to be talking about like reflexive verbs for example. But also we're going to be talking about some other cultural aspects here in Mexico. So I can offer the complete, syllabus, if you are interested. And then you can actually see and just think about what works best for you. Thank you. Welcome.

00:32:08:03 - 00:32:38:09

Unknown

So all, Olaf, is it best for us to just reach out to you to get an idea of when upcoming classes are or do these get put on your, website quickly or, many times I've gone to the website and gone, oh, my calendar's already full for those dates for these programs, so I would love to be able to block out time so that that doesn't happen moving forward.

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Unknown

Yeah, definitely. And that happens a lot because since like courses fortunately fill out really quick. So we offer very limited spaces. Because another disadvantage of like online teaching is that we cannot have more than 12 students per per room because it will be, like, not really good for each student. So, what I suggest is, like, you could send me an email.

00:33:04:01 - 00:33:26:13

Unknown

So I have, like a participant list. So what I usually do is I first send those students information because I know that those are the ones who are the most interested, and then if there are still available spaces, then I send it to some like lists at CSU. But I first start with, internships. You know, so you could send me an email.

00:33:26:13 - 00:34:02:16

Unknown

I can put you on that list. Thank you. Kurt. As Olaf mentions, that's a really good way to get the early notice. I wanted to add the our center. We partner with the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures and delivering that on the online Spanish. So our niche is really short courses and noncredit. And for students interested in going more in depth, CSU employees, we have the opportunity to take courses with the LLC department.

00:34:02:16 - 00:34:34:11

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So I wanted to be sure to to mention that as well. And we do plan a lot further ahead for the in-person courses, because we know those of us in the US especially really need to plan. We have to plan our vacations, our families, our work schedules. So once we have some confidence that, the pandemic is kind of changing and turning to a point where we can plan ahead for the next immersion, we'll share that information as well.

00:34:34:11 - 00:34:53:04

Unknown

And as a as all I've as he shares it with his mailing list of people. And then we also put it in stores, through emails and then also on our website.

00:34:53:06 - 00:35:13:19

Unknown

So, Olof, could we ask you to put your email address in the chat for everyone? For sure. I'll do it right away. So this is my email.

00:35:13:21 - 00:35:39:11

Unknown

So feel free to send me an email and I'll just reply as soon as possible. So any questions you have for, also you could you share these with people you feel you feel our interested. Because by the way, on this something I forgot, this is not only for CSU faculty staff. I mean, I have have students who are connected to CSU, but not necessarily work at CSU.

00:35:39:13 - 00:36:01:19

Unknown

So this is an open course. So anyone who's interested in learning Spanish or improving, their skills so that they can actually join the class, since this is a noncredit course.

00:36:01:21 - 00:36:29:24

Unknown

For us, if there's any other questions or reflections, I know over the years I've always learned a lot from extension colleagues, from Christy, from Cara, who also came to the center, Jeff Piper, Ashley Stokes, I mean, kind of different levels of the organization of different geographic regions in Colorado. And I've always been struck by how much opportunity there there is to learn from one another.

00:36:29:24 - 00:36:51:19

Unknown

So I'm curious just for feedback and input as well, based on what you've heard, if you have any any ideas for us or anything that comes to minds based on your own experiences.

00:36:51:21 - 00:37:22:15

Unknown

So this is one of the things that I've noticed that other departments on campus have done with the center is be able to come down and do something with the community. I know that, veterinary science, has come down and run that clinics and, I believe there's been other groups that have done things too. And I think that extension people have lots of lots of skills in different kinds of community development and that sort of thing.

00:37:22:17 - 00:37:47:04

Unknown

I know when I was there, I was really wishing that I could go into the school and share the kits that Ursula brought with her. And so I think that that would be a, a way that, extension people would, would, be able to make that community connection while they were there.

00:37:47:06 - 00:38:16:23

Unknown

Thank you. Christy, we we do work directly with faculty or with departments to co-create programs and have had some conversations with, with extension about the possibility of, especially the language and culture piece. Given the demographics in Colorado and the ways that you're working with your communities and, and the opportunities for exchange and learning here as well.

00:38:16:23 - 00:38:56:05

Unknown

So, yeah, and for the students, I mean, right now we're working in, campaign nature to your law, and we're talking about, food and how in Mexico we demonstrate love through food. And we had been having these interviews and conversations with different partners and participants of the community and from CSU. And we had recently had this interview with, one of our students and how her life changed with Typekit, to the Santos and CSU center.

00:38:56:07 - 00:39:24:14

Unknown

She is from the agriculture program and how her expectations of the program change when she was able to have these, work together with the community members. And at the end, she decides to come back to the Santos and stay for a vacation. And then she decides to stay longer and stay here for a year. And she works here and brings her family, and they went to the school.

00:39:24:16 - 00:40:05:16

Unknown

So it really, changed the perspective of kids used to that in all levels, not only in their education, but also in their personal life. And they had had the opportunity to have conversation with the two nine student. And then Christy and I remember one of those students telling me, like, I feel more comfortable now or more trust in my skills because I was able to practice by myself 15 surgeries in one week and during my whole career at Fort Collins, I was only able to have two surgeries by myself.

00:40:05:18 - 00:40:34:24

Unknown

So now I try to say to my clients, I can do the surgery. And that's something that he was able to do because he came here and he collaborates in that campaign with the community for free surgeries for cats and dogs. So it's not only the learning, but also the self learning and the growing in their personality and in their confidence.

00:40:35:01 - 00:40:48:00

Unknown

As a professionals.

00:40:48:02 - 00:41:20:19

Unknown

I, I, you know, I play games in that Todos Santos area. What is something that a the community would want education on that extension professionals

could provide if they had come down. What is something that is important to the community members? There? Part of what we did in the first community needs assessment was talk with stakeholders and agriculture, and we have an agricultural report on our website.

00:41:20:21 - 00:41:57:01

Unknown

So there's absolutely a lot of interest in, like composting, for example. We've done composting workshops. We've worked with schools, and kids to help create a garden at their schools. So I really think, there's a broad range of topics, anything having to do with water or having to do with, Diseases, plant diseases, for example, and how to manage them, especially in natural ways, rather than chemicals.

00:41:57:03 - 00:42:20:18

Unknown

So and once we know a group has come in, what we do is we reach out to partners again and we start to say, what is relevant to you now? And, and then try to match up those, the interests and the needs for, for maximum benefit, you know.

00:42:20:20 - 00:42:47:08

Unknown

When I add my email address as well in the chat and then please feel free to contact any of the three of us. I know we're right at 1:00 and everyone has meetings that we're moving on to, so, we're always interested in continuing this conversation and really appreciate you spending your, your lunch hour with us. Okay.

00:42:47:10 - 00:43:03:24

Unknown

So many thanks, Kim. Olaf, Italia. And thanks to all of you for coming. This will be hopefully if I did it right, recorded and, on the Zeta website so that you can share it with other people as well. So thank you all very much.

END TRANSCRIPTION