

EOP Bus presented to UCSD by Sears-Roebuck Foundation

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A 27-foot, blue and white van, especially equipped as a mobile office and counseling center, will begin soon to extend the boundaries of the San Diego campus of the University of California to all of San Diego and Imperial Counties.

The van, a Dodge-Travco Corporation Mobile Office with 45 square feet of student counseling space, will operate as an extension of UCSD offering educational information specifically aimed at minority and low-income students from the elementary grades through the junior college level.

Large blue lettering on the sides identify the vehicle as part of the Educational Opportunities Program of the University of California, San Diego.

The mobile counseling service, probably the first of its kind in the country, will operate in support of the Urban Crises Program recently established by University of California President Charles J. Hitch. At UCSD, the operation is a joint effort by the Faculty Committee on Special Scholarships, the Black Students Council, the Mexican-American Youth Association, and the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs.

The Sears-Roebuck Foundation, acting as a co-sponsor, has made a yearly commitment to fund the mobile unit.

The counseling program--and the van itself--will be operated by Kern Carson, Coordinator of Community Services at UCSD. Carson, a graduate of San Diego State College, has a background of educational counseling, especially among minority and disadvantaged students.

Carson, and a bilingual secretary, will take the van into minority and low-income areas of San Diego and Imperial Counties. The counseling will be informal with groups of five to ten students each sitting on folding chairs in the open center section of the bus. Photographs and racks of books and brochures will line the van's walls.

At the elementary and junior high school levels, the talks will center on the need to stay in school and the value of a good education. One goal will be to give the students the incentive to plan ahead in choosing proper high school courses. At the high school level, the talks will get more serious. Recruitment will start for the Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) and the Upward Bound Programs offered during the summer months. At the junior college level, the emphasis will be on continuation of the college education through transfer to UCSD or to one of the other four-year institutions in the San Diego area.

San Diego State College and other institutions in the San Diego and Southern California area will be involved by supplying campus information, entrance booklets and forms, and scholarship applications.

In addition to educational counseling, the van will eventually serve as an extension of the UCSD Personnel Office for job recruitment.

According to Lynn C. Naibert, Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Financial Aids Officer at UCSD, "the idea of the mobile counseling service came about during the search for a director for the EOP program. EOP provides

money, tutorial help and counseling to minority and low-income students who, without such aid, probably would not be able to attend college."

Naibert said the original plan was to establish an educational clearing house and counseling center in southeast San Diego to seek out those students who would qualify for EOP help.

"A logical extension of that plan was to establish a mobile center that would move from school to school, neighborhood to neighborhood and community to community in an effort to extend our reach," Naibert continued.

"It has become apparent that in order to reach the greatest number of students, we will have to go out to the communities. Too many teenagers in minority communities lack the incentive and confidence needed to take the first step," he concluded.

UCSD currently has 57 students in the Educational Opportunities Program and is planning for as many as 100 next year.

Summing up the importance of the mobile counseling center, Kern Carson added, "We can't afford to wait for them to come to us. We need to build bridges to all segments of the surrounding community, and we hope this unit will be one of the first."