



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on July 1, 2013

California Students to Be Trained as ObamaCare Promoters

Parents of teenagers in the Los Angeles Area Unified School District (LAUSD) may want to think twice before asking their kids what they learned in school today. Beginning this fall, LAUSD is going to spend nearly \$1 million of taxpayers' money promoting ObamaCare, including turning teens into salespeople for the healthcare law.



In May, Covered California, the state's insurance exchange, announced [\\$37 million in grants](#) to 48 organizations for the purpose of "outreach and education" about ObamaCare — in particular, getting people to sign up for (often subsidized) health insurance through the exchange, which is supposed to be operational in January. Among the grantees was LAUSD, which is receiving \$990,000 to plug the healthcare overhaul.

The district's target population, according to the grant announcement, is "full-time adult education students and [the] district's part-time and contract employees." To that end, LAUSD's outreach plan calls for "meetings with part-time and contract employees" — those most likely to be eligible for subsidized insurance — and "adult-student class presentations."

LAUSD, however, clearly has greater ambitions. It also plans to mount "outreach calls to families with students in [the] district." With any luck, caller ID and voice mail will save some parents from these. But what will save them from a living propaganda machine in their own home?

Yes, LAUSD wants to turn kids into ObamaCare promoters. Its outreach plan culminates in "Teens trained to be messengers to family members." That is, teenagers will spend precious school time learning not how to solve equations or conjugate verbs but how to convince their parents, grandparents, and other relatives to sign up for subsidized health insurance. Then they will be expected to put what they've learned into practice. If they don't, the district will surely step up its efforts since "the funding will come based on performance," as LAUSD spokeswoman Gayle Pollard-Terry put it in an e-mail to the [Heartland Institute](#).

"We have confidence that the model LA Unified brought to the table will be successful in reaching our target population, which includes family members of students," Covered California spokeswoman Sarah Soto-Taylor told the think tank. She "said staff have not questioned this goal," Heartland wrote.

Why *would* they object? "Public school teachers get paid taxpayer dollars to preach Obamacare to their co-workers and the students, so the kids will then go home and sing the glories of the health scheme to the same taxpayers who are funding the whole process," *Reason's* [J.D. Tuccille](#) remarked. "Everybody



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wins!”

Of course, the LAUSD plan is just one small part of Covered California’s overall outreach efforts. What about the other \$36 million?

While some of the grants went to universities and small-business groups, WND’s [Gina Loudon](#) noted a fair number of eyebrow-raising awards:

The Covered California Access California Service’s goal is to focus on “empowering under-served Arab-American and Muslim-American communities and enhancing their quality of life through direct services, referrals ... and government assistance programs.” They will get \$500,000.

The Bienestar Human Services, Inc.: \$500,000 goes to “events and fairs” for “Latino and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community” in three counties.

The California Council of Churches will receive \$750,000 to “educate” faith communities in two counties, to “pursue justice, equity and fairness in the treatment of all people.”

Planned Parenthood will receive \$694,000.

The Actors Fund is awarded \$435,000 for “union meetings, member orientations and recording events” in four counties.

The Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center gets \$1 million for “outreach to social justice organizations.”

Then again, given that Covered California shamelessly tried to pass off a [false comparison](#) as proof that insurance rates are not going to rise steeply under ObamaCare, it is hardly a surprise that they would be equally unabashed in granting taxpayers dollars to these types of organizations — the ones most likely to sing ObamaCare’s praises.

And when it comes to public perception, the healthcare law needs all the help it can get. The [June Kaiser Health Tracking Poll](#) found that just 35 percent of Americans favor the law — the lowest level of support ever (tied with October 2011 and April 2013) — while 43 percent oppose it. Meanwhile, 47 percent of Americans told [Gallup](#) they expect ObamaCare to make healthcare worse, with just 34 percent predicting an improvement. (Only 22 percent think it will actually help their families.)

That’s why the Obama administration is engaged in what [Andrew Malcolm](#) of *Investor’s Business Daily* called “a broad, desperate promotional effort ... to combat the controversial healthcare program’s declining support.” The administration has already enlisted [thousands of libraries](#) in its effort and has tried — [not entirely successfully](#) — to persuade professional sports teams to help spread the word. Shaping school students into ObamaCare propagandists is just one small part of this campaign.

It could, however, turn out to be the most insidious part.

“Teens are part of a ‘pilot’ program to test whether young people can be trained as messengers to deliver outreach and limited education to family and friends in and around their homes,” Pollard-Terry told the Heartland Institute.

In other words, if LAUSD is successful in teaching teenagers to tout ObamaCare at home, Americans can expect their public-schooled kids to become permanent mouthpieces for the state. Is it any wonder that homeschooling and other alternatives to public schools are increasingly popular among those who value their liberty?



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