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Developing physics teacher identity through Learning Assistant program participation¹

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In this study, we analyze the experience of students in the Physics Learning Assistant (LA) program at TXST in terms of the existing theoretical frameworks of community of practice and physics identity. The goal of our current project is to understand the details of the impacts of participation in the LA experience on participants' practice and self-concept, in order to identify critical elements of LA program structure that positively influence physics identity and physics teaching interest for students. Our analysis suggests that participation in the LA program impacts LAs in ways that support both stronger "physics student" identity and stronger "physics instructor" identity, and that provide opportunities for negotiation of their forms of membership in multiple communities. Increased sense of community with peers, near-peers, and faculty seems to be an important component of this identity development and reconciliation.

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