

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080001
Grantee : University of the Virgin Islands
Director : Miriam V. Osborne Elliott
Telephone : 340-692-4188
E-mail : mosborn@uvi.edu
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

As the only accredited American historically black college or university (HBCU) in the Caribbean serving a significantly diverse cultural, socioeconomic and linguistic population, University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) is poised to significantly increase the number of unrepresented students who have access to enter and persist in postsecondary education.

In collaboration, the Office of the Governor, the Virgin Islands Board of Education, and UVI will strengthen capacity in the United States Virgin Islands by working with middle and secondary school educators, the local American Counseling Association Chapter, and the mass media to enhance the territory's families awareness about the benefits of attaining a college education and methods of accessing and financing higher education in general. Through directed marketing approaches, community workshops and seminars on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and supporting the professional development of counselors and key higher educational staff directly linked to the outlined goals and objectives of the grant, the UVI will be effective in reaching intended populations. Grant funding will be allocated to the Virgin Islands Board of Education to provide enhanced scholarship opportunities for underprivileged recent high school graduates. Through its marketing efforts, UVI will encourage students and families to apply for these and other scholarships, which support their higher education goals in keeping with the guidelines of this funding project.

The activities of this project will be conducted within the parameters of the stated objectives of the grant and in keeping with Title VII of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. section 1141, and the vision of UVI, which is to be an exceptional United States institution of higher education in the Caribbean, dedicated to student success, committed to excellence, and pledged to enhance the social and economic transformation of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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PR Award # : P378A080002
Grantee : Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
Director : Carna Pfeil
Telephone : 402-471-0029
E-mail : carna.pfeil@ccpe.ne.gov
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The major goal of the programs funded by Nebraska's College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) award is to significantly increase the number of underrepresented students who enter and remain in postsecondary education. Nebraska has divided its funding into six parts with the Coordinating Commission operating one program and the remaining funds allocated as mini-grants to five public and private entities.

The Coordinating Commission's project is to increase the funding for a program that provides scholarships to low-income high school students to assist them in paying for college courses while still in high school. The goal is to fund 325 to 350 low-income high school students. The five other programs or projects address most of the activities and services identified in the CACG grants.

Making the Connections is a public/private partnership that proposes to assist students identifying career paths, develop learning plans, make connections to postsecondary institutions, expose students to financial aid information and counseling, and connect with Nebraska employers.

Learning for Life/Exploring Tomorrow is a partnership with the Cornhusker Council of the Boy Scouts of America. The main goal of the project is to increase leadership skills of low-income youth; increase awareness of postsecondary education financing opportunities available to all scouts, particularly targeting low-income families; and encourage students to complete high school. It also provides positive adult role models for disadvantaged youth.

The Pipeline to College project is a public/private partnership that will inform students and parents about what it takes to attend college and potential scholarship financial aid available. The main goal of the project is to encourage disadvantaged youth to consider careers in the health professions.

Expanding Chadron State College's Educational Family project targets low-income, disadvantaged fifth and sixth grade students for in-depth encounters and interactions that will lead to a more productive and positive transition to middle and high school.

Access to a College Education proposes to improve college access and completion, targeting underrepresented middle school students, especially low-income and first-generation. The main goal of the project is to increase awareness among parents regarding preparing children for college.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080003
Grantee : Pennsylvania Department of Education
Director : Kathleen M. Shaw
Telephone : 717-783-9259
E-mail : katshaw@state.pa.us
Year 1 Award : \$2,105,061.00

Project Description:

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) proposes to partner with Project GRAD USA (GRAD USA) and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) to deliver coordinated, intensive services to 16,629 students in seven low-income and below-proficient high schools and their feeder middle schools while also providing financial aid information to the entire state in a coordinated fashion under the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Program.

As the goal of Pennsylvania's CACG is to increase significantly the number of underrepresented students who enter and remain in postsecondary education, GRAD USA will provide targeted, intensive intervention services from its College Readiness Initiative (CRI), leveraging the significant college access resources provided by PHEAA state-wide. The choice of these services, including college access programming and academic personalization strategies, is based on the immediate needs of the targeted high schools. In addition, to address the critical transition from middle to high school, GRAD USA will provide targeted college access programming to the feeder middle schools.

The Pennsylvania Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education will ensure CACG implementation, effective program delivery, and quality control and will support buy-in with the targeted districts and the statewide effort.

PHEAA will provide financial aid informational services throughout the State but will also focus resources on the seven-targeted high schools. PHEAA's services at the targeted schools will be coordinated with the GRAD USA CRI framework and will include delivery of financial aid workshops, training, and materials.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080004
Grantee : Ohio Board of Regents
Director : Chad Foust, Director, State Grants and Scholarships
Telephone : 614-752-9475
E-mail : cfoust@regents.state.oh.us
Year 1 Award : \$2,268,044.00

Project Description:

In 2007, our Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) was elevated to a cabinet level post appointed by the Governor. Within a year of his appointment, Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut presented a 10-year strategic plan to build a world-class system of higher education in Ohio. The plan includes clear goals, measurements and strategies to implement innovative policies and track progress. OBR plans to use the funds of the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Program to support the objectives already identified in the Chancellor's strategic plan (<http://universitysystem.ohio.gov/pdfs/strategicPlan/USOStrategicPlan.pdf>).

Specifically, OBR will focus CACG funds on the elements of the Chancellor's strategic plan dealing with increasing access to higher education. OBR plans to use CACG funds to supplement the Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG), the state's largest need-based grant program. OCOG was implemented during the 2006-07 academic year gradually replacing the existing need-based grant program, the Ohio Instructional Grant (OIG). OCOG was designed to reach more students by applying the federal methodology of need (EFC-based instead of income and household size based) and by offering funding to both part-time and full-time students.

The Chancellor's strategic plan seeks to increase enrollment in Ohio's public colleges and universities by nearly 50 percent by the year 2017. The Ohio College Opportunity Grant will continue to serve as a vital resource to attract and encourage more Ohioans to enroll in an institution and a program best suited for their future aspirations. In this time of economic and budget uncertainty, supplementing our OCOG program with CACG funds is of paramount importance to ensuring appropriate levels of funding to meet the future needs of all eligible students.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080005
Grantee : North Dakota University System
Director : Dr. Marsha V. Krotseng
Telephone : 701-328-2979
E-mail : marsha.krotseng@ndus.nodak.edu
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The public and private sector leaders who participated in North Dakota's Roundtable on Higher Education envisioned a university system that is "accessible and responsive to all citizens of the state," a goal which is embedded in the system's strategic plan. Through the College Access Challenge Grant, partners representing K-12 education; the state's public, private, and tribal colleges and universities; the Bank of North Dakota/Student Loans of North Dakota; state agencies; and professional associations will implement a statewide network committed to increasing college access for low-income and underrepresented populations, both traditional-age students and adults.

The goal is to strengthen and formalize a partnership among key stakeholders, building a network of support for individuals who, otherwise, may believe a college education to be unattainable. Activities will include reaching out to students and their families through regional and statewide forums designed to raise awareness of college possibilities and financial aid opportunities toward the ultimate objective of increasing the number of low-income and underrepresented students who enter and are retained in postsecondary education. In addition, an annual conference will offer professional development opportunities for education professionals.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080006
Grantee : New Jersey Commission on Higher Education
Director : Betsy Garlatti
Telephone : 609-292-3235
E-mail : betsy.garlatti@che.state.nj.us
Year 1 Award : \$1,097,047.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the Tools for College Access program (New Jersey's implementation of the College Access Challenge Grant) will be to increase students' and parents' awareness about college financing and preparation options. Tools for College Access (TCA) will act as a catalyst for coordinating the many existing state, university, and federal programs that deliver similar services.

Through subgrants with institutions of higher education, the TCA program will be implemented through Financial Aid Awareness/FAFSA Completion Days. These events will make financial aid administrators and counselors available so students and parents can receive information about going to college; sources of and how to apply for financial aid; and applying for a FAFSA PIN and completing the FAFSA online.

Juniors and seniors in New Jersey are offered opportunities to take college courses for credit while still in high school. Tools for College Access will establish baseline data on the numbers of students participating in such dual enrollment opportunities and their locations, then work to expand such opportunities statewide, setting annual goals.

According to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), New Jersey has over one million adults who have completed some college but do not have a degree. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) will narrow this population to those under 30 years of age who left college in good standing during the last 10 years. Subcontracted institutions will identify and contact such students and make counseling and financial aid advising available to them. Through our partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD), we will also outreach to adults through the established One-Stop Career Centers to encourage them to enroll in a certificate or degree program.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080007
Grantee : Wisconsin Department of Administration
Director : Harald (Jordy) Jordahl
Telephone : 608-261-7520
E-mail : herald.jordahl@wisconsin.gov
Year 1 Award : \$911,111.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the state of Wisconsin's College Access Challenge Grant project is to motivate Wisconsin high school students to attend college and to help them prepare for college both academically and financially. To accomplish this goal, a team of college access outreach staff will provide college planning and preparation materials and services to students and families throughout the state of Wisconsin, as well as training to guidance counselors and other college access mentors regarding state, federal and local resources available to help students plan, prepare and pay for college.

In addition to providing materials to all high schools in the state of Wisconsin, the team of college access outreach staff will provide on-site services to counselors and students at participating Wisconsin high schools included on the U.S. Department of Education's 2007-2008 Teacher Cancellation Low-Income Directory. The schools most in need of this project's services will be identified via collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and community-based college access organizations throughout the State.

The goal of the project is to increase awareness amongst students, families, guidance counselors and college access mentors of postsecondary education opportunities, federal and state financial aid options and scholarship opportunities, the process for applying for college and financial aid, and the availability of free assistance to prepare for the SAT and ACT exams. The project will also facilitate and offer hands-on assistance to students and families as they complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080008
Grantee : Oregon University System State Board of Higher Education
Director : Diane Saunders and Joseph Holliday
Telephone : 503-725-5714
E-mail : diane_saunders@ous.edu
Year 1 Award : \$697,006.00

Project Description:

Oregon has developed a collaborative cross-sector group to implement the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) program including: the Oregon University System, Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, Independent Colleges Association, Oregon Student Assistance Commission, Employment Department, and Department of Human Services. This program will use CACG grant resources to achieve the goal of increasing the number of underrepresented students – both traditional age and adult learners – who are prepared for, enter, succeed in, and graduate from college. This will be addressed by increasing awareness of the need-based Oregon Opportunity Grant, the financial aid and college application process overall, and with a special focus on aiding adult students to understand the types of aid they are eligible for, and to support them with the college enrollment process, including on-campus follow up aspects. The match for the CACG will come from state funding for the need-based Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) program expansion.

A comprehensive outreach campaign tied in to on-campus help and resources will be the focus of Oregon's CACG program. This effort will coordinate with Oregon's current successful outreach campaign to middle/high school students/families about financial aid and the OOG, and will expand into a new area: making more adults aware of college and financial aid opportunities, and the many pathways to a degree. Key program components will include: an adult-learner hotline to guide students through the financial aid and enrollment process, tied in to on-campus support services once they enroll; free internet-based resources for schools, social service, health, and other agencies and groups to use in their outreach materials with clients to increase awareness of financial aid and college preparation assistance; financial aid training provided to middle and high school counselors, training for college admissions hotline staff, and resources for community outreach events; printed outreach materials in both English and Spanish to be distributed through high schools, colleges, community-based, civic and other organizations; and a donated and paid advertising campaign to spread awareness of the Oregon Opportunity Grant through electronic and print media, targeted to both traditional age students and adult learners.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080009
Grantee : Board of Regents, University System of Georgia
Director : Patricia Paterson
Telephone : 404-463-0105
E-mail : patricia.paterson@usg.edu
Year 1 Award : \$2,089,027.00

Project Description:

The goals of Georgia's College Access Challenge Grant Project is: (1) To increase the number of underrepresented students who graduate from Georgia high schools academically ready, informed about, supported, and motivated for postsecondary education; (2) To increase the number of underrepresented students graduating from Georgia high schools who successfully transition into, persist in, and complete postsecondary education; (3) To increase the college degree attainment of low-income adults who have some college credit but have not been enrolled in the past year and have not attained a degree.

Target Populations: (1) P-12 students who are underrepresented in postsecondary education and their families; and (2) low income adults at risk of not completing college.

Partners: The Chancellor of the University System of Georgia will lead implementation of Georgia's College Access Plan on behalf of the Governor's Office and the Alliance of Education Agency Heads. The Plan is a collaboration with the Governor's Office, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Student Finance Commission, Governor's Office of Student Achievement, and Technical College System of Georgia. Additional partners include the Governor's Office of Workforce Development; the Southern Regional Education Board, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, and Communities in Schools Georgia.

Activities/Services:

- Update, enhance, and expand access to GAcollge411, the State's free Web-based portal to help students plan for, apply, and pay for college;
- As a companion to GAcollge411, develop and disseminate modules and outreach materials to promote understanding among families and students underrepresented in postsecondary of the benefits and opportunities of postsecondary education;
- Implement a comprehensive system of professional development and collaboration opportunities for school counselors, financial aid administrators, and college admissions counselors, including training on use of GAcollge411 financial aid services;
- Establish a special fund—the Early College Grant Program—to fund all postsecondary education costs not covered through Georgia's ACCEL (dual enrollment) program;
- Implement Apply to College Week at high schools serving large percentages of underrepresented students;
- Modify and/or expand postsecondary degree programs which are matched with workforce needs and strategic industries; and
- Conduct outreach activities and enhance programs for adults returning to college (“stopped out” students with some college credits who have not attained a degree).

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080010
Grantee : Connecticut Department of Higher Education
Director : Mark E. French
Telephone : 860-947-1856
E-mail : mfrench@ctdhe.org
Year 1 Award : \$419,179.00

Project Description:

The Connections Program will be a partnership between the Connecticut Department of Higher Education (DHE) and Housatonic Community College for the development, implementation and evaluation of a demonstration project to explore the efficacy of an integrated mixture of intentional and intrusive interventions designed to bring about an acculturation process to assist Hispanic/Latinos and African Americans in surmounting the college access and success barriers.

The FAFSA First Program is designed to address the difficulties low-income students and families face in filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. The program will provide this target population basic information, guidance and assistance in completing the form and understanding the financial aid process.

FAFSA Preparation – DHE will partner with Co-opportunity, the lead organization of the Hartford, Connecticut VITA campaign, to design and implement a free FAFSA completion and submission service linked to the VITA tax preparation services for low-income students and families.

FAFSA First Workshops – DHE will partner with College Goal Sunday Connecticut to provide supplemental FAFSA preparation and completion workshops. These events will allow for more students and families to receive assistance from financial aid professionals, than normally would be served by the College Goal Sunday event.

The Guidance Counselor Workshop – DHE will partner with the Connecticut Association of Professional Financial Aid Administrators, Connecticut College Goal Sunday and Know How To Go, to put on a one day Guidance Counselor workshop focused on the topic of successfully guiding low income, at-risk students through the college admissions and financial aid processes.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080011
Grantee : Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Project : Brenda Easter
Telephone : 515-725-3415
E-mail : brenda.easter@Iowa.gov
Year 1 Award : \$474,145.00

Project Description:

The purpose of Iowa's College Access Challenge Grant (ICACG) project will be to enable access to postsecondary education opportunity and promote a college-going culture among low-income and underrepresented students across the state.

The goals of the Iowa College Access Challenge Grant are: (1) to provide low-income and underrepresented students with access to Iowa College Student Aid Commission products and services which promote college-going expectations and provide practical information for college planning; and (2) to provide need-based grant aid to low-income and underrepresented students to enable qualified students to fully participate in the college experience.

The ICACG will help support a statewide system of public awareness, information, and services for low-income students in the form of a Web portal to online resources, aid applications, and staff assistance. The portal will allow students to apply for state-funded student financial aid programs, save applications, view and archive awards, compare student financial aid available from all sources, and make informed decisions about postsecondary education financing. The Web portal will be a single source for a range of tools to help students identify, understand, and apply for financial aid and obtain direct assistance from grantee staff in completing the FAFSA. College Access Challenge Grant resources will also provide need-based grant assistance to students from low-income and underrepresented backgrounds.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080012
Grantee : Indiana Commission Higher Education
Director : Jeffrey L. Spalding
Telephone : 317-464-4400
E-mail : jspalding@che.in.gov
Year 1 Award : \$1,223,581.00

Project Description:

According to the Lumina Foundation in its “What We Know” research series, large and growing gaps in postsecondary educational access and success of students, based on their socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, undermine the goal of equity delineated in the Higher Education Act of 1965. These gaps indicate that thousands of capable and motivated students face formidable roadblocks to a college education. The primary obstacles to access and success are unmet financial need, inadequate academic preparation, and insufficient information, guidance and encouragement.

The state of Indiana faces a unique dichotomy when addressing access issues. The dichotomy lies in the fact that in 1992 the state ranked 34th in the nation for college going rates, but now ranks 10th. While Indiana has seen significant improvement in the number of people entering post-secondary education, more than 40 percent fail to complete a degree within six years.

Indiana, through the College Access Challenge Grant, seeks to address the dichotomies affecting access and degree attainment for all residents. Indiana will work through existing infrastructures to build/add sustainable local capacities across the state with the goal of improving access and success rates among low-income students while systematizing important messages and information regarding access, affordability, and preparation for all Indiana residents. Grant funds will accelerate Indiana’s goal of ensuring every resident an understanding of the steps needed to access and succeed in postsecondary education.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080013
Grantee : State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
Director : Dr. Monica Osei
Telephone : 804-225-2600
E-mail : monicaosei@schev.edu
Year 1 Award : \$1,010,007.00

Project Description:

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) in partnership with other state agencies, private industry, and non-profit organizations, will develop and undertake a comprehensive campaign to disseminate information about access to postsecondary education to the residents of the Commonwealth. The proposed project, "Information is Key to Access and Success," is an important first step in Virginia's campaign to educate students and parents, with emphasis on low-income families and traditionally underrepresented groups, about the tools necessary and services and resources available to assist them with successful transition from high school to postsecondary education.

The purpose of the proposed project is to "demystify" postsecondary education by providing information on the importance of education beyond high school graduation, career planning and choices, and clarifying how to apply for, finance, and enroll and succeed in a postsecondary education setting. With a focus on students from low-income families, the proposed information campaign will offer opportunities for students and parents to receive information "where they are" via print media and internet-based databases. The project will include the following initiatives: (a) education workshops addressing the importance of postsecondary education and career planning; (b) Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) day to assist parents with completing the FAFSA; (c) development of a Web portal; and (d) professional development for middle and high school counselors and financial aid and admissions personnel in postsecondary education settings. Efforts will include targeting selected school divisions and selected regions, and statewide dissemination of information.

With concentrated effort to reach and inform students from low-income families, the planned initiatives should successfully accomplish three goals:

- To increase students' and parents' awareness and knowledge of access programs and providers operating in the Commonwealth and to inform students of the importance of planning early for postsecondary education;
- To increase students' and parents' knowledge of financial aid and scholarship opportunities and assist parents with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form;
- To augment the work of middle and high school counselors and financial aid and admissions personnel by providing information through print media, workshops, and an internet-based database on the tools and resources needed to assist students with transition from high school to postsecondary education.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Aware # : P378A080014
Grantee : SD Dept of Education, Office of Indian Education
Director : Keith Moore
Telephone : 605-773-6118
E-mail : keith.moore@state.sd.us
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The South Dakota College Access Challenge grant program (SDCAC) strives to meet two goals: (1) increase students' and parents' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing; and (2) increase the number of students who enroll in postsecondary education within one year of high school graduation.

The Governor of South Dakota, M. Michael Rounds, has designated the South Dakota Department of Education, Office of Indian Education, as the agency responsible for administering the SDCAC program.

The SDCAC program will focus on five authorized activities: (1) Provide information to students and families on post-secondary education benefits, opportunities, planning and career preparation; (2) Conduct outreach activities for students who may be at risk of not enrolling in or completing college; (3) Assist students in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); (4) Implement professional development for guidance counselors at secondary schools to improve their capacity to assist students and parents; and (5) Offer need-based grant aid to students.

SDCAC will work with a diverse set of partners to provide authorized activities to students and families across the state of South Dakota who are living below the poverty line. These activities include college and career counseling; advising and mentoring; college visits; and workshops on postsecondary options, preparation, and financing.

Partners include various offices within the South Dakota Department of Education, Mid Central Education Cooperative, a local education agency, and 11 institutions of higher education including four technical institutes, all six South Dakota Regental Universities, and Sitting Bull Tribal College.

The SDCAC program includes a need-based scholarship component. In addition to federal funds, SDCAC partners provide scholarships as match.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080015
Grantee : Alabama Department of Education
Director : Sherry A. Key
Telephone : 334-242-9116
E-mail : skey@alsde.edu
Year 1 Award : \$1,128,810.00

Project Description:

The purpose of Alabama's College Access Challenge Grant (ACACG) project is to increase the percentage of qualified high school students that graduate from high school and are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary/higher education and/or work.

The ACACG grant will target qualified underrepresented students (students and families who are living below the poverty line applicable to the individual's family size) in each of Alabama's counties and local school districts.

Overarching Goals: (1) Significantly increase the percentage of Alabama's qualified underrepresented students that complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); enroll in college; and receive a certificate, credential, or degree annually; and (2) Improve the capacity of Alabama's secondary and postsecondary counselors and financial aid administrators to promote financial literacy and deliver relevant financial awareness information for transition period from secondary to higher education to qualified underrepresented students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A80016
Grantee : Kansas Board of Regents
Director : Diane Lindeman
Telephone : 785-296-4749
E-mail : dlindeman@ksbor.org
Year 1 Award : \$501,000.00

Project Description:

The plan proposed for the Kansas College Access Challenge Grant (KCACG) project is threefold. It encompasses the areas of training, education, and early awareness. KCACG will broaden opportunities for students, parents, guidance counselors, financial aid administrators, and other interested parties to be exposed to information and education about postsecondary education and financial aid possibilities.

Within the training aspect of this plan, KCACG will expand the existing high school counselor training workshops that are conducted each fall and sponsored by the Kansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (KASFAA). At present this training consists of one-half day educational sessions held in three regional areas of the state, with anywhere from two to three sites within each regional area. Every high school counselor in the state is invited to the training and it is estimated that fewer than 50 percent of counselors are able to attend. KACG will expand the number of training sites and include middle/junior high school counselors, as well as principals and Federal TRIO program colleagues in the invitations to the training. In addition, it would include TRIO program counselors not only as participants but as trainers in providing information about their programs to the high school/middle school counselors. The goal is to cast a wider net in providing financial aid educational opportunities to those individuals who have direct contact, within the schools, about higher educational access and affordability.

The educational aspect of the plan would also include the expansion of the existing College Goal Sunday programs that are coordinated by KASFA. The goal is to enhance access to lower income families and first generation families who don't have any experience with higher education and may not have the financial resources to travel even 30 to 60 miles to one of the sites. KCACG will expand the number of sites in the state particularly in some of the urban and rural sites to allow easier access for families.

The third component of the plan involves early awareness. Early awareness initiatives are important in increasing the number of low income and at-risk students pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities by encouraging them at an early age. KCACG will allow the state to expand the current TRIO Talent Search summer programs that are offered at six sites. These programs provide educational awareness about postsecondary education opportunities, financial aid information and career exploration to students from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds. By raising students' aspirations about postsecondary education and providing them with the tools that are needed to be eligible and successful, all Kansas citizens will benefit.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080017
Grantee : The University of North Carolina General Administration
Director : Harold Martin
Telephone : 919-962-4614
E-mail : hmartin@northcarolina.edu
Year 1 Award : \$1,898,667.00

Project Description:

The North Carolina College Access Challenge Grant Program (NC CACGP) will expand the scope of existing services and enhance college access efforts currently in existence through a strong collaborative effort of the University of North Carolina General Administration, the lead organization, and the NC Community College System, the NC Independent Colleges and Universities, the NC Department of Public Instruction, the NC State Education Assistance Authority, and the pre-college programs housed on the North Carolina college and university campuses. The purpose of the NC project is two-pronged:

- Encourage and increase postsecondary enrollment by expanding access to information about course transferability between NC community colleges and senior institutions, both public and private, through the College Foundation North Carolina (CFNC) Online Transfer Articulation and Transcript System; and
- Enhance current pre-college outreach initiatives through strengthened collaboration, strategic planning, evaluation, and leadership oversight.

In an effort to build upon existing college access initiatives including the statewide college planning Web portal, CFNC.org, a well-defined comprehensive articulation agreement between University of North Carolina and the NC Community Colleges, and a network of over 40 established pre-college programs and 41 early college high schools, the NC CACGP will increase high school students' preparation for college by providing online college courses and transfer advising, and expand statewide programs to increase the number of low income students applying for college and financial aid. Specific goals include improving the ease of transferring credit from community colleges to senior institutions, increasing the college application and FAFSA completion rate of students, and strengthening the effectiveness of existing college access initiatives to address the needs of low income students and their families.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080018
Grantee : Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Director : Pamela Taylor
Telephone : 202-724-2146
E-mail : pamela.taylor@dc.gov
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) will provide the District of Columbia students and families with services in three key areas: awareness, access, and advocacy. The goals of this program are to: (1) increase District students and families knowledge of how to prepare for, gain acceptance and finance a college education; (2) provide District parents and students with a deeper understanding of college financing (including financial literacy and debt management); and (3) increase the number of students who persist through critical college transitions.

The OSSE will accomplish these goals by subgranting to the following organizations:

- College Success Foundation
- DC Parent Information Resource Center
- The Posse Foundation

These organizations will provide the following activities and services:

- Launch a citywide college awareness campaign;
- Develop a comprehensive college information and resource Web site;
- Conduct financial literacy and college financing workshops for parents;
- Provide professional development training for college faculty at selected institutions; and
- Provide campus support training for college first- and second-year students.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award : P378A080019
Grantee : Minnesota Office of Higher Education
Director : Emily C. Kissane
Telephone : 651-259-3965
E-mail : emily.kissane@state.mn.us
Year 1 Award : \$735,025.00

Project Description:

The Minnesota College Access Challenge Grant (MCACG) project will increase the number of underrepresented students who enter and succeed in postsecondary education by focusing on two areas:

Increasing and enhancing counseling and advising capacity for counselors and teachers at middle and secondary schools by:

- Providing professional development on comprehensive school counseling programs, models and processes designed to increase students' ability to successfully prepare for college (including leadership training, teamwork, tutoring, mentoring and preparedness for postsecondary entrance exams);
- Funding first-year licensing, installment and training for Web-based counseling tools;
- Delivering training and resources needed to implement effective Web-based counseling and academic planning tools to help prepare large numbers of students for college in more systematic ways; and
- Providing workshops on the effective use of assessment data in teaching and counseling students, specifically the use of ACT's EPAS assessments.

Helping low-income students and their families understand college access and financial aid by:

- Training counselors, teachers, college staff and community leaders to become competent financial aid presenters and resources for low-income families; and
- Providing information to students and parents in targeted communities regarding planning for postsecondary education, financial aid and assistance in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid through community-based events.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award : P378A080020
Grantee : Louisiana Board of Regents
Director : Theresa R. Hay
Telephone : 225-342-4253
E-mail : theresa.hay@regents.la.gov
Year 1 Award : \$1,239,533.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the grant program is to increase underrepresented students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education benefits and opportunities, planning and preparing for college and career, financial planning and availability of and procedures for federal and state student financial aid programs.

The goals of the program are: (1) to increase the number of students and families in targeted areas of the state who have received information about and understand the availability of federal and state student financial aid; (2) to increase the number of students in the targeted areas who enroll in college after high school; and (3) to increase the number of qualified students in the targeted areas who receive Pell and the state's need based financial aid grant.

The Louisiana Board of Regents will partner with other state agencies and contract with consultants to conduct activities to identify and target areas of the state where students are least likely to enroll or plan to enroll in college and/or demonstrate the need for student financial assistance and coordinate outreach activities to students and their families in these targeted areas of the state.

The Louisiana Board of Regents will: (1) conduct targeted marketing (media) activities to inform students and their families of benefits of postsecondary education and availability of postsecondary opportunities (including technical education, community colleges and universities); (2) develop printed and electronic marketing materials (informational brochures, posters and video) and disseminate to students and their families on the Web portal and at workshops and summer camps; and (3) contract with consultants to expand LAePortal (Web) to provide information on postsecondary financing options, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and financial literacy for students and their families.

The Louisiana TRIO Talent Search Programs will conduct academic, career and financial counseling at informational workshops for middle and high school students and parents to inform them of benefits of postsecondary education and availability of postsecondary opportunities (including technical education, community colleges and universities).

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance will conduct Pre-College Goal Sunday informational workshops for middle school students and families to inform them about taking the core curriculum in high school, dual enrollment opportunities, financial aid, FAFSA, and financial literacy.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080021
Grantee : Montana / Montana State University (Creative Research Lab)
Director : Terry Beaubois
Telephone : 406-994-4184
E-mail : tbeaubois@montana.edu
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The overall goals of Montana's College Access Challenge Grant (MCACG) project are:

- Engaging underrepresented students and families, school counselors, and college admissions officers in interesting new ways of addressing college preparation, access and success;
- Gathering data “why” Montana students do or do not go on to college;
- Increasing the number of students completing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- Efficiently and effectively addressing Montana's educational information needs, bridging the distances that are such an imposing factor in reaching Montana's population;
- Building collaboration within the education community to foster a college going culture;
- Providing professional development to K-12 counselors and college admissions officers;
- Creating sustainability of this project after this two-year College Access Challenge Grant period; and
- Creating a 21st Century online resource – Virtual Montana College Access -- that anyone with internet access can reach from anywhere in Montana 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year.

The Montana College Access Challenge Grant (MCACG) project , Go2CollegeMT, will employ both traditional and leading edge technology to communicate valuable information and engage Montana citizens in creating the “college going culture” called for in many of the Governor's programs related to education. The Go2CollegeMT project will raise the awareness in underrepresented students, of the opportunities available to all Montana students; and contribute to more Montana students that are prepared for college, apply for college, and successfully continue to the completion of a degree or certificate.

This project will create an online multimedia resource (with print, video, online, and 3D internet components), “Going to College in Montana -- A Virtual Adventure,” as one components of the Go2CollegeMT project, as an engaging new resource for Montana students and families, school counselors, college admissions officers, and financial aid officers.

Go2College MT will partner with OPI and OCHE to pilot the development of electronic transmission of transcripts and student support services that facilitate dual enrollment opportunities and programs. Because one of the major limitations to dual enrollment is awareness and communication, this project the first year will focus on information for universities, K-12 principals, teachers, students, and parents.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080022
Grantee : Michigan Department of Treasury
Director : Robert L. Kleine
Telephone : 517-373-3223
E-mail : kleiner@michigan.gov
Year 1 Award : \$2,092,786.00

Project Description:

The Michigan College Access Challenge Grant (MCACG) project will equip more Michigan families to take extra steps on the Pre-school through College (P-16) pathway toward a college degree and train local counselors and communities to create a college-going culture that supports those steps.

The Program will be built on the successful state level collaboration for Michigan GEAR UP/College Day (GU/CD) between the Department of Treasury, Department of Labor and Economic Growth and EduGuide: Partnership for Learning. It will provide detailed information to more than 1,000,000 Michigan families and services to more than 1,000 college pathway professionals. In the 36 Michigan GEAR UP communities, where more than seventy-five percent of students on average qualify for free or reduced lunch, the Program will go deeper to create local collaborations and family college clubs that will build a college-going culture.

The Program will expand services to families in the GU/CD cohort and to others in GU/CD schools and communities as well as students placed in foster care. It will provide personal assessments, planning and coaching through an online college club and on-site training events. Counselors, teachers and community leaders will be trained, equipped with tools and provided an online learning community for seeking to support these students on their way to college.

The Program is designed around extensive research and partner experience in working with first generation families, including a detailed national study on the use of digital strategies to reach such families. It addresses specific Michigan needs, including creating a community to support greater collaboration among college pathway professionals in Michigan, which has no State Higher Education Executive Officer or formal college access network.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080023
Grantee : Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Director : Judy Loredo
Telephone : 512-427-6248
E-mail : judy.loredo@theccb.state.tx.us
Year 1 Award : \$6,262,491.00

Project Description:

In 2000, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) adopted *Closing the Gaps by 2015* as the higher education plan for the state. In spite of considerable progress made toward achieving the plan's goals for postsecondary participation and success, significant challenges remain, most notably, for reaching target numbers for the Hispanic population. Funds from the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Program will be used to: (1) increase awareness of the importance of postsecondary education and how to prepare for it academically; (2) provide knowledge and skills to students and their parents enabling them to apply to and pay for college; and (3) provide counselor professional development incorporating strategies to prepare underrepresented students for success in accessing and completing postsecondary education.

There are five major components to Texas' implementation plan for the CACG project: (1) creation and implementation of a public awareness campaign focusing on the importance of college readiness; (2) provision of professional development for counselors; (3) outreach activities through the College Connection model; (4) partnerships with community-based organizations for outreach to minority communities; and (5) mentoring provided through college work-study funding.

Texas Counseling Association is a CACG partner and will develop training materials and conduct a training-of-trainers to be deployed statewide in professional development for counselors. Requests for Proposals will invite the 21 regional P-16 Councils in existence on or before September 27, 2007, as well as other qualifying nonprofit educational organizations, to apply for funds for community partnership outreach and College Connection programs. This approach will ensure that planning and coordination for all outreach activities occurs locally and serves the schools and populations most in need. A new statewide college readiness awareness campaign will be developed, with materials in a broad array of media deployed through CACG sub-grantees and other existing programs and networks, such as GO Centers, that focus on college access.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080024
Grantee : Utah State Board of Regents
Director : Melissa Miller Kincart
Telephone : 801-366-8492
E-mail : mmkincart@utahsbr.edu
Year 1 Award : \$433,354.00

Project Description:

The Utah State Board of Regents (Board), as the state agency designated by Utah Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr. to apply for, and administer College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) project. The Board has one overriding goal—to dramatically increase the percentage of Pell-eligible students in Utah who qualify for, and receive, federal Academic Competitiveness Grants (ACGs), from 12.8 percent (2006-2007) to 35 percent by 2010. Consistent with this goal, the Board plans to expend grant funds on three principal objectives, one focused on local activities, one focused on regional activities, and one focused on statewide activities.

First, the Board will use a third of the funds for intensive implementation of the Utah Scholars Initiative (State Scholars Initiative) in 20 local high schools with high populations of low-income students in order to help students complete a rigorous core of study in high school that will make them academically eligible for ACGs. Second, the Board will use a third of the funds for a series of regional training workshops, attached to public colleges in the Utah System of Higher Education, to enable college financial aid and admissions counselors, public school guidance counselors, and college outreach program staff to better advise and mentor low-income students and their parents. Third, and finally, the Board will use a third of the funds to defray the costs of the UtahMentor Web site, an highly visible and successful Internet portal that provides a wide array of college access information to Utah high school students throughout the state.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080025
Grantee : Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Director : Lora Jorgensen, Director of Outreach & Early Awareness
Telephone : 907-269-7591
E-mail : lora.jorgensen@alaska.gov
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

For a significant majority of Alaskans, education beyond high school is not a priority and not part of Alaska's culture overall, according to a recent Institute for Higher Education Policy report. In fact, Alaska's current college-going rate is 28 percent, among the nation's lowest. The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE), in partnership with the University of Alaska (UA) and related organizations, will develop and implement a peer-mentoring program in keeping with broader statewide efforts to foster a college-going culture. The Alaska Career and College Ready Program is designed to increase the number of Alaska students who complete high school and continue on to attain a postsecondary education credential. The overall goal is to increase Alaska's college-going rate by five percentage points. The scope of the project is expected to unfold in three phases: pilot development; implementation/improvement; and expansion/sustainment. Phase I is development of a pilot program in the Anchorage School District. Phase II focus will be to use year one experiences and data to determine what program modifications are needed to improve program results. Phase III will focus on expanding the program's reach across the state, while continuing quality improvement efforts.

The peer-mentoring program will consist of career/college guides (college students or recent college graduates) placed in local high schools to directly assist students with making positive curricular choices; and with activities directly related to college admission, financial aid, and scholarship applications. Working alongside guidance counselors, the guides will encourage and assist students through the career exploration and academic and financial planning for higher education up to and through the college application process. The target audiences for the program are high school students in low-income and/or low performing schools.

Primary project partners include the University of Alaska, the Anchorage School District and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Additional partners include the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Education Consortium, the Consortium of Alaskans Supporting Higher Education, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, the Alaska Vocational Technical Educational Center, the National College Access Network, the Alaska Community Foundation and the Foraker Group (a consortium of over 500 community-based organizations across Alaska).

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080026
Grantee : Idaho State Board of Education
Director : Dana Kelly
Telephone : 208-332-1574
E-mail : dana.kelly@osbe.idaho.gov
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The Idaho State Board of Education (Board) will house the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) program and will oversee its administration. Idaho will use program funds toward five primary activities:

In cooperation with the Idaho Association of Financial Aid Administrators (IASFA) the state will design an implementation plan to assist underserved students in the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Grant funds will be geared toward program design and development using College Goal Sunday as a model. Due to Idaho's rural nature, geography, and winter conditions, the format will be altered to best meet the unique needs of Idaho. Using financial aid staff, volunteers, and others, at least two programs will be offered in each of Idaho's seven geographic regions.

Idaho's CACG program will focus on increasing the participation of students from underserved populations in Dual Credit and Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Dual Credit coordinators from participating public and private institutions will provide awareness programs to high school staff throughout Idaho. Additionally, CACG funds will be used to provide financial assistance to students for tuition and textbooks to aid in their participation in dual credit programs.

Idaho has seen increases in the number of students taking AP courses and completing AP test over the past few years. Staff from participating districts indicate that training for secondary counselors would be beneficial in expanding the offering of this program to low-income students. CACG funds will be used to provide the necessary AP counselor training.

Campus visits were identified as one of the strongest outreach programs that influence college-going behaviors for low-income populations. Idaho's CACG program plan provides funds for school staff to initiate campus visits for groups of students.

Providing information to students and families on postsecondary education benefits, opportunities, planning and career preparation is critical to influencing college-going behaviors. While Idaho provides quality publications and attempts to get this information distributed in an effective way, several gaps have been identified. Funds from the CACG program will be used to assist Idaho in more effectively distributing information.

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) will coordinate and manage the CACG Network. This is a group made up of staff from Idaho and other Western states involved in developing, implementing, and maintaining state CACG programs where they can join together to learn from each other and share best practices, lessons learned, most recent evidence-based research results. As part of the CACG program, Idaho will participate in this WICHE-coordinated Network.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080027
Grantee : State of Hawaii, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism
Director : Elizabeth Corbin
Telephone : 808-587-2690
E-mail : ecorbin@dbedt.hawaii.gov
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The goal of Hawaii's College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) project is to increase the number of underrepresented students who enter and remain in postsecondary education by helping students gain entrance to and succeed in a postsecondary education environment.

The State of Hawaii will award sub-grant(s) to one or more non-profit organization(s) to implement authorized activities and services. Authorized activities and services may include: (1) providing information about college to students and their families; (2) financial aid for college students; (3) professional development for guidance counselors, financial aid administrators, and college admissions counselors at postsecondary institutions; and (4) student loan cancellation or repayment or interest rate reduction.

Non-profit organizations in the state of Hawaii may apply for the grant. To be eligible, the non-profit organization must have been in existence prior to September 27, 2007, and have experience in implementing activities and services related to increasing the access to postsecondary education. Priority will be given to students and families who are below the poverty line applicable to the individual's family size.

Activities and services will be made available to qualifying students and families regardless of choice of postsecondary institution, student's academic performance, or type of student loan received and server of such loan. These activities and services will be made available at no charge to students and their families.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080028
Grantee : Vermont Student Assistance Corporation
Director : Scott Giles
Telephone : 8020-654-3740
E-mail : giles@vsac.org
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The purpose of Vermont's College Access Challenge Grant (VCACG) project is to increase the postsecondary education and training aspirations of students through four main objectives:

- Improve the career development skills of Vermont middle and high school students so that they will be better able to identify career interests and opportunities and link them to education or training requirements and opportunities throughout their lives;
- Increase Vermonters' postsecondary aspiration, continuation and completion rates, and particularly the aspiration rates of first generation, low income students;
- Increase Vermonters' awareness and utilization of Introduction to College Studies; and
- Increase Vermonters' awareness of and access to postsecondary programs through better alignment between high school/ vocational-technical and postsecondary programs, expansion of dual enrollment programs, and stronger pathways from certificate to two-year to four-year degree programs.

The State of Vermont has initiated an award winning campaign entitled "Start Where You Are" that is designed to achieve objectives 1 and 2. This campaign has focused primarily on 8th through 10th grade students but will be expanded to the 11th and 12th grades in order to achieve objectives 3 and 4. To accomplish this, Vermont's CACG project will: (1) support a traveling "Opportunist"—a motivational speaker (and first generation college graduate) will work with teens in teen centers, Boys and Girls clubs, in the classroom and other places that teens congregate across the state; (2) provide tools to enable parents of first generation students to engage their children in career and education exploration activities; (3) expand and enhance the award winning "Start Where You Are" interactive career development and college exploration Web site that allows students to begin career exploration; (4) expand dissemination efforts for the new Vermont Career Gateway on-line career development internet portal for adults and professionals; (5) use social networking and other internet based communication techniques to "meet students where they are" and create communities of students who are exploring career and education opportunities and taking concrete steps to achieve their education and training goals; and (6) develop effective and engaging Web portals for dual enrollment programs available through the Community College of Vermont, the Vermont State Colleges and other Vermont institutions. These portals will provide students and parents with user-friendly ways to access "Introduction to College Studies" and other programs that allow at-risk and other students to experience college while in high school.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080029
Grantee : Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Director : Stafford Peat
Telephone : 781-338-6312
E-mail : speat@doe.mass.edu
Year 1 Award : \$879,879.00

Project Description:

Massachusetts' College Access Challenge Grant (MCACG) project will develop a college and career Web portal. The Massachusetts College and Career Web Portal will offer students, parents and guidance counselors online resources and tools to prepare for college and manage the application and financing process, including practice exams and tutorials to prepare for standardized tests, such as the SAT; virtual campus tours; tools to apply for financial aid, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); the ability to research potential scholarships and grants; the ability to track and manage multiple college applications and letters of recommendations; a common application to apply to colleges online; and a mechanism to send high school transcripts to colleges electronically.

The State's ultimate vision is to develop a "one-stop shopping" Web portal that will primarily serve students, parents and guidance counselors, as well as secondary schools and higher education institutions, resulting in greater numbers of students including those who are first generation pursuing and succeeding in college. A side benefit from a more streamlined college application process would be millions of dollars in potential cost savings to both secondary and higher education institutions, as well as to the Commonwealth.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary education will partner with the Department of Higher Education and the Massachusetts Education Financing Authority (MEFA) to develop the portal along with an on the ground and in-the-air campaign. MEFA will manage the day-to-day operation, marketing and training related to the Massachusetts College and Career Web Portal.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080030
Grantee : Finance Authority of Maine
Director : Angela Dostie
Telephone : 207-623-3263
E-mail : adostie@famemaine.com
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) intends to expand its current outreach efforts by creating two new outreach positions that will not only work with high schools but also will coordinate with middle and elementary schools and adult education centers in an effort to reach students and parents.

We intend to increase the number of first-time, never-attended-college students filing out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). We will accomplish this by providing informational workshops for students and families to prepare them for and assist them with financial aid requirements; continuing and enhancing training opportunities for guidance counselors and college access advisors; creating, publishing and distributing informational materials pertaining to financial aid and financial literacy topics; and enhancing the information and accessibility of financial aid information available on the FAME Web site.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080031
Grantee : Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board
Director : Weiya Liang
Telephone : 360-753-7884
E-mail : weiyal@hecb.wa.gov
Year 1 Award : \$1,116,302.00

Project Description:

The Washington College Access Challenge Grant (WCACG) project consists of the following activities:

- Support the Washington College Bound Scholarship, an early promise of financial aid to low-income students and their families.
- Increase college awareness and financial aid opportunities for low-income, underrepresented students and families through targeted activities statewide.
- Provide college preparation activities, tools, and resources to low-income students.
- Develop a statewide Web site and/or portal for an information delivery system.
- Develop a statewide college access network to create support, share best practices, and exchange information.
- Provide financial aid grants to students who are at or below poverty level.

The goals for the Washington CACG project are:

- Increase the number of students from low-income families who are prepared for and will succeed in college and careers.
- Test models of sustainable public and private partnerships.

The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) will work with existing school structures and community-based organizations to deliver college access information. The state plans to develop tools that will benefit low-income students and their families. It will invest in the creation or revision of college access and success materials, and support the development of a Web site and/or portal that will provide a one-stop shopping experience for all college and career preparation needs in the state. In addition, the HECB will support the establishment of a college access network in Washington and explore network options with other states. Key partners are the College Success Foundation, Northwest Education Loan Association, the Metropolitan Development Council, and the Community Foundation of North Central Washington.

The College Access Challenge Grant aligns well with the state's 2008 Higher Education Strategic Master Plan, which calls for an expansion of college access programs to reach increasing numbers of students identified as at-risk for not completing high school and continuing to postsecondary education.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080032
Grantee : CollegeInvest, A Division of the Colorado Department of Higher Education
Director : Janet Gullickson
Telephone : 303-376-8800
E-mail : jgullickson@collegeinvest.org
Year 1 Award : \$852,698.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the Colorado College Access Challenge Grant (CCACG) project is to address Colorado's educational paradox: Colorado is one of the highest educated states in the country with one of the lowest college matriculation rates particularly for minority students. Through CCACG, educational achievement, especially that of underrepresented Coloradoans, will increase. As important, the number of twenty-first century, educated workers from underrepresented populations will increase. This proposal is aligned with Governor Bill Ritter's key educational initiatives, the P-20 Education Coordinating Council and the Jobs Cabinet.

The goal of CCACG is to build statewide capacity, using existing infrastructure, to recruit and retain postsecondary students, both traditional and non-traditional ages. The method is to broadcast the benefits of and opportunities for postsecondary education; inform students and parents of the importance of planning for post-secondary education and careers and the means of removing financial barriers to post-secondary education; provide assistance for professionals in student guidance; and make available direct aid to needy students.

Using people, tools, and financial assistance, the scope of CCACG is statewide with special attention given to rural and remote areas of the state. The intent of the proposal is to build on existing services and partnerships rather than create new programs. This will assure the sustainability of the services as well as leverage new and existing funding to meet the goals. Using existing infrastructure maximizes the dollars spent on direct services and aid to unrepresented students.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080033
Grantee : Nevada System of Higher Education
Director : Patty Wade, Chair, P-16 Advisory Council
Telephone : 775-348-9444
E-mail : pmwade@wadedevelopment.com
Year 1 Award : \$383,809.00

Project Description:

The centerpiece of Nevada's College Access Challenge Grant (NCACG) plan calls for conducting a public information campaign that will foster a college-going culture, while communicating both college and workforce-readiness expectations. The campaign, developed and implemented by the Nevada P-16 Advisory Council and its partners, will build on the Nevada System of Higher Education's "Go to College" effort. The campaign will draw upon the following resources to deliver the message:

- Recognizable members of Nevada's business community will emphasize the importance of continuing education beyond high school to gain the skills necessary to succeed in the future;
- Representatives of higher education will visit classrooms to stress the importance of continuing education and discuss how to prepare for college; and
- A trained cadre of middle and high school teachers and counselors will work with students to prepare them for college and workforce training program entry.

The target audiences for the campaign are: (1) students in the third, sixth, and eighth grades in low-income schools; (2) high school students applying for college/financial assistance and those preparing to enter the workforce; and (3) every student and parent/guardian in the state with the aim of building a college-going culture.

Partnering with the Nevada P-16 Advisory Council will be: the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, the Nevada System of Higher Education and its seven institutions, the Washoe County School District and Clark County School District, middle and high school counselors from every school in Nevada, Nevada State GEAR UP program and USA Funds.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080034
Grantee : California Student Aid Commission
Director : Diana Fuentes-Michel
Telephone : 916-464-7511
E-mail : cashforcollege@csac.ca.gov
Year 1 Award : \$7,678,868.00

Project Description:

Through the California Student Aid Commission's (Commission) college access partnership programs, the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) and the California Cash for College Programs will significantly increase awareness and availability of college and career opportunity information for underrepresented students and their parents; increase targeted student and parent knowledge of financial aid programs and opportunities to fund college and career technical education; and assist low-income students and their parents to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). California will deliver \$3.8 million in loan repayment benefits to teachers in high need geographic and subject shortage areas, and in low income/low performing schools.

Cal-SOAP serves successive groups of students from grades 7 through 14 with intensive one-on-one and small group academic and college and career access advising and planning, as well as community-wide, large group outreach services. Cal-SOAP consortia will provide statewide promotion of college and career technical opportunities to targeted middle and high school students, conduct individual and small group college admissions counseling sessions, career exploration workshops, and college and career search assistance. In major regions of the state, Cal-SOAP consortia will conduct college tours, college search assistance, career exploration workshops, college admissions workshops, and informational parent counseling. Cal-SOAP operates through 15 locally governed consortia throughout the state, consisting of representatives from local secondary school districts, community colleges, universities, career technical schools, and community agencies. Cal-SOAP offers privately funded scholarships for students served in each program.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080035
Grantee : New York State Higher Education Services Corporation
Director : Ken Storms
Telephone : 518-473-7197
E-mail : kstorms@hesc.org
Year 1 Award : \$4,017,131.00

Project Description:

The overall goal of New York State's College Access Challenge Grant (NYCACG) project will be to increase the rate of low-income, minority, and underserved students prepared to apply for, and succeed in college, with a priority on below-poverty-level families. As lead agency, the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) will achieve the goal by establishing a multifaceted New York College Access Network (NYCAN). NYCAN will be a confederation of schools, colleges, community-based organizations, education agencies, professional associations, and others that share the work of bringing high-need students to education success. HESC will use CACG funds to identify, coordinate, encourage, and enrich the established activities of these organizations, and initiate new support that will further the common goals identified in the CACG legislation. The CACG activity will be coordinated within New York's larger statewide effort to meet P-16 achievement goals established in legislation, extant within State and local education partnerships, and recommended by the Governor's Commission on Higher Education.

New York State will:

1. Provide professional development training and support from HESC and other state agencies and organizations to build the capacity of front-line providers who are best able to meet targeted students' needs: school counselors; college financial aid administrators and admissions reps; and education counselors of community and faith-based organizations.
2. Create School-College Partnership Pilot sites through a competitive RFP process. The Partnership Pilots will be intended to establish or expand imaginative, successful secondary-to-postsecondary bridges for the highest-need students and adapt these methods to other institutions, statewide and nationally.
3. Provide targeted support to local schools, agencies, and community-based organizations through a series of small-scale sub-grants, for specific products and services that the grantees will provide to high-need students and families to meet measurable goals and objectives in specified geographic areas.
4. Create a statewide public college access and success information campaign directed at CACG-eligible students and their families, designed to reinforce and support NYCAN activities in the target communities.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080036
Grantee : Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
Director : Dr. Debra L. Stuart
Telephone : 405-225-9168
E-mail : dstuart@osrhe.edu
Year 1 Award : \$915,418.00

Project Description:

The purpose of using the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Program funds in Oklahoma is to expand existing initiatives that will significantly increase the number of students from underrepresented groups who are enrolled, retained and complete degrees in higher education. Despite concerted efforts to generate more college graduates, some Oklahomans are still falling through the cracks, including first-generation college students; lower than average income; ethnic backgrounds of Hispanic, African American, and Native American; transfers among institutions; and working adults. The activities funded will promote five goals.

- To increase the completion rate of students who have started and not completed a college degree by providing designated, need-based scholarships as an incentive to complete a baccalaureate degree. The degree completion scholarship also will be promoted with businesses to garner support for employee tuition reimbursement programs.
- To increase the college-going rate of high school students through use of OKcollegestart.org, the student information portal, using a field-based coordinator to provide professional development for all middle school and high school counselors.
- To increase the college-going rate and degree attainment of students taking courses at technology centers for college credit through *Cooperative Alliance* agreements by developing for the higher education institutions a toolkit of best practices designed to encourage students attending technology centers to pursue a college degree.
- To improve the college preparation of students from underrepresented groups by increasing awareness for academic preparation using ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) and the student information portal (OKcollegestart.org) through sponsorship of retreats for inexperienced high school counselors across the state and experienced counselors from the geographic areas with high poverty rates. Because some parents do not receive the EPAS college and career preparation materials that are delivered to schools, EPAS student homes also will be targeted with a mail-based, direct marketing campaign for parents.
- To improve success of students attending college by using national consultants and piloting data-driven plans at urban community colleges to improve retention of students from underrepresented groups and to close the gap between their success in college and other groups. The planned retention activities address developmental education, first-year persistence and financial aid.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080037
Grantee : Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Director : Deborah Boyd
Telephone : 615-532-0406
E-mail : deborah.boyd@state.tn.us
Year 1 Award : \$1,410,814.00

Project Description:

The Tennessee College Access Challenge Grant (TCACG) project will increase the quality and quantity of college access related information and services for Tennessee students. TCACG will allow numerous organizations in Tennessee, state agencies and non-profit, to reach out to low-income, underserved students with a unified message of college access and success under a single umbrella, helping bridge the education attainment gap between them and their peers.

The scope of the TCACG will include college access and success professional development opportunities for middle and high school counselors and postsecondary financial aid administrators and admissions officers, increased reach and frequency of media messages through the statewide college access campaign, statewide early academic indicators, and an increase of direct services offered to low-income students through expansions of current college access programs. The overall goal of TCACG will be to create a network among organizations working in college access with a unified message while also increasing the number of underserved students that enroll and succeed in postsecondary education.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080038
Grantee : University of Wyoming
Director : Pilar Flores
Telephone : 307-766-6189 TTY: 307-766-3073
E-mail : pilar@uwyo.edu
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

Each of Wyoming's eight institutions of postsecondary education (seven community colleges and the University of Wyoming) is partnering under the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) grant to provide need-based aid and services to Wyoming's low-income, Pell-eligible college students. Administrative oversight and budgetary functions are centralized under the University of Wyoming's office of Student Educational Opportunity, which manages several U.S. Department of Education grants.

Over \$300,000 is allocated to provide need-based aid to Pell-eligible students attending Wyoming's partner institutions with priority funding going to students with the lowest "expected family contribution" for college education costs. In addition to need-based aid, Campus Resource sessions will take place at each institution. Sessions will be delivered by local staff and will include information on the availability of federal student services programs, institutional academic success services, scholarships available to low-income students, tutoring resources, and student groups for nontraditional students and others such as ethnic minority students and Veterans.

Financial aid and other services provided by partner institutions under the CACG grant are intended to increase the retention/persistence rates of low-income students in Wyoming with an eventual positive impact on graduation rates among CACG aid recipients.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080039
Grantee : Arkansas Department of Higher Education
Director : Tara Smith
Telephone : 501-371-2055
E-mail : taras@adhe.edu
Year 1 Award : \$706,129.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the Arkansas College Access Challenge Grant (ACACG) project is to encourage students and families to learn about, prepare for, and finance a postsecondary education. The mission of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, in part, is to advocate for higher education and to work towards improving the delivery of higher education services to the citizens of Arkansas. This project will be a comprehensive partnership that will focus the state's attention on the need for its citizens to understand the positive impact of higher education upon the lives of all Arkansans and upon the economic development of Arkansas.

The scope of this project will include a statewide outreach effort that will be held at all Arkansas public high schools that will provide tools that can be used on a long-range basis to help relate of the importance of higher education, how to prepare for higher education and how to finance a higher education. The attention of the state and local media will be centered on one week in February during which a statewide focus on higher education will take place. A training program will also be developed for high school guidance counselors who are located in the most economically critical counties of Arkansas. This training program will help counselors to improve their Career Action Plan (CAP) Program within their school. The CAP Program will help counselors advise their students to make better decisions about what classes to take, what kind of education is needed after graduating from high school, what activities to get involved in, and which careers to consider. Arkansas will also choose four schools located in the economically critical counties of Arkansas to receive grant funds to develop and/or improve upon the academic preparation activities in their respective schools.

In order to successfully implement this grant project, Arkansas will partner with many entities that include: Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, Arkansas Association of Public Universities, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, Arkansas Education Association, Institutions of Higher Education, Southern Good Faith Fund, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, Arkansas State Parent-Teacher Association, Arkansas Educational Network Television and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. The goal of this project is to change the existing culture in Arkansas—that higher education is only for the segment of the population that has the academic ability, appropriate aspirations and financial wherewithal to seek a college education—to a culture that embraces some form of higher education for all Arkansas residents.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080040
Grantee : Florida Department of Education
Director : Theresa Antworth
Telephone : 850-410-5180
E-mail : theresa.antworth@fldoe.org
Year 1 Award : \$3,116,708.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the Florida College Access Challenge Grant (FCACG) project is to help underrepresented Florida students obtain a postsecondary education. Training and education beyond the secondary level rewards the individual with expanded job opportunities and higher wages. It also rewards Florida, with an educated workforce that is prepared to meet the challenges our global economy presents. All project activities will be directly related to three broad goals; getting students ready for college in any postsecondary program, getting them into college, and getting them through college.

It is vital that students begin to prepare and plan for college early, preferably in middle school. Florida's College Access Challenge Program Grant activities will ensure that students, parents, and guidance counselors are fully informed about the courses and other requirements for college entrance and that they know how to make full use of the career and academic information and planning tools provided to them. The Florida Department of Education Workforce Education and Equity & Access offices, as well as the Florida Center for Advising and Academic Support will offer such information for students and parents via printed, Web and counselor training activities.

A major roadblock to entering college is lack of funds. Therefore, the bulk of the grant will be used for need-based grants to students. The admission process itself can also be daunting, so programs designed to assist students with every step in the process will also be available. The Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance will make need based grant awards.

Too many students begin college only to drop out within the first few semesters. Information and outreach programs will be provided that offer substantial assistance to help students successfully complete their postsecondary education by the Florida Department of Education's Division of Community Colleges.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080041
Grantee : Arizona Department of Commerce
Director : Darcy Renflo
Telephone : 602-542-1455
E-mail : drenfro@az.gov
Year 1 Award : \$1,348,705.00

Project Description:

Recent data shows that almost all teens (90 percent) have college aspirations, regardless of their income level, and almost all parents (91 percent) expect that their students will continue their education beyond high school. Contrary to this, 40 percent of parents perceive that their child's school provided no information or did not do very well in providing information on higher education opportunities for their students. High expectations are prevalent with students and parents regarding higher education participation, however a significant gap exists in providing support and resources to ensure that these students move onto a college or university. It is abundantly clear that greater provision of college access programs and services is necessary to prepare students to enter higher education.

The Arizona College Access Challenge Grant will increase the number of low-income students who are prepared for and enroll in higher education by (Goal #1) providing scholarships to low-income students to continue their higher education, (Goal# 2) creating the Arizona College Access Coalition, and (Goal #3) providing grants to college access programs to increase the number of students and families served throughout Arizona.

These activities will be coordinated by a state team consisting of the Governor's P-20 Council, the Arizona College Scholarship Foundation, the Arizona Department of Commerce, and the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080042
Grantee : West Virginia Higher Education
Director : Rob Anderson
Telephone : 304-558-1112
E-mail : randerson@hepc.wvnet.edu
Year 1 Award : \$448,769.00

Project Description:

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's proposed College Foundation of West Virginia is designed to promote preparation for and access to postsecondary education statewide, especially among the impoverished, underserved areas of West Virginia. In order to address these issues at the state level, the Commission with support from the College Access Challenge Grant Program will create a unified outreach and marketing campaign to provide students and their families with a single source of information helping them prepare for and finance their college education. The centerpiece of this effort will be the creation of a college access Web portal, an integrated system designed to assist students in the college search, selection, and application processes. This portal will allow the state's postsecondary institutions to reach students and help them prepare for college by providing an interactive medium through which students can explore postsecondary educational and career opportunities as well as learn which institutions best fit their needs and how to finance their education.

These efforts will coalesce to assist West Virginia in achieving the following four project goals: (1) Address affordability issues in postsecondary education by increasing knowledge of resources as well as the number of students applying; (2) Address the availability of higher education by linking students with matching assistance enabling them to more easily discern which campuses best meet their needs and interests; (3) Address academic preparation issues by providing a standardized test resource that will result in more students taking these exams; and (4) Address the application process by streamlining the admission and financial aid procedures through pre-populated, online applications reducing both time and effort.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080043
Grantee : Illinois Student Assistance Commission
Director : Jacqueline Moreno
Telephone : 847-948-8500
E-mail : jmoreno@isac.org
Year 1 Award : \$2,411,050.00

Project Description:

Using programming already in place in ISAC's Division of Public Service, CACG funds will allow Illinois to establish a statewide corps of 'near peer' mentors who will reside in each of 39 community college districts. These recent college graduates will serve two-year terms as community liaisons for ISAC's existing activities in college and career planning outreach. Two mentors per district will collaborate to raise college awareness and improve college planning, preparation, application, attendance and completion. These goals will be met through the implementation of college awareness and preparation activities, e.g., establishment of IllinoisMentor accounts; guided career exploration; college visits and fairs; guest speakers; events for parents without college experience; financial aid nights; FAFSA completion workshops; test preparation; career advisement; consumer education; the construction of long-term college and career plans; and essay-writing and personal statement workshops.

Mentors will be charged with reaching their communities through events around the district at a variety of times and days, including evenings and weekends. A particular focus will be placed on boosting high school completion and college-going rates among students at the lowest-income Illinois high schools. Mentors will develop strong working relationships with high schools' college advising staffs and will build relationships with the admission office at the nearest four-year college; the financial aid office at the local community college; the middle school; trusted community-based organizations, and major employers in the area. The long-term goal for the guides, in conjunction with ISAC, will be to build collaborative vertical relationships along the P-16 pipeline in the community so that coordinated college outreach activities persist well beyond the term of the College Access Challenge Grant.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080044
Grantee : Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning
Director : Jennifer Rogers
Telephone : 601-432-6333
E-mail : jrogers@mississippi.edu
Year 1 Award : \$932,499.00

Project Description:

On behalf of the state of Mississippi, the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) seeks to expand access to higher education by increasing awareness and knowledge of financial aid options and college entrance requirements among students, particularly middle school students, their parents, and counselors, and by improving student financial literacy.

IHL will launch a statewide outreach campaign to drive parents of middle and high school students to the state's new college access Web site. The campaign will integrate mass media and grassroots efforts. Mass media efforts include television and radio spots, as well as some Internet ads and printed collateral, targeting students and parents separately with the message that college is both accessible and affordable. The messages will call the audience to visit the new college access Web sites for more information.

Grassroots efforts include placing salaried outreach coordinators in two pilot regions of the state where the greatest financial need exists: the Mississippi Delta and Southwest Mississippi. These coordinators, who will operate out of offices donated by Delta State University and Alcorn State University, will work closely with local middle schools to reach students, and they will organize and facilitate community-based college and career outreach events for families. Other grassroots efforts include developing and distributing college toolkits to show adults how to help students go to college and college planners to middle school students. The middle school college planners will be developed and produced with assistance from *Parents and Kids Magazine*.

IHL will also hold a series of five professional development workshops for middle school and career counselors, focused on college advising - financial aid, financial literacy, college entrance requirements, and college readiness. State guarantor USA Funds graciously provided matching funds to support the workshops.

Finally, IHL, in partnership with the Mississippi Council on Economic Education, will help middle school students develop grade-appropriate understanding of the relationship between financial literacy and college readiness, and provide Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion assistance to high school students through College Goal Sunday events, which are being spearheaded by Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Mississippi.

As a result of these efforts, students and parents will visit the College Access Web site and complete online profiles in greater numbers, demonstrate greater understanding of financial aid and financial literacy, enroll at higher rates in the college prep curriculum, and ultimately pursue postsecondary education at higher rates.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080045
Grantee : Maryland Higher Education Commission
Director : Paula Fitzwater
Telephone : 410-260-4504
E-mail : pfitzwat@mhec.state.md.us
Year 1 Award : \$615,592.00

Program Description:

The Maryland College Access Challenge Grant (MCACG) project will focus services in areas of greatest poverty and lowest achievement in Maryland. Baltimore City and Prince George's County are the two areas in Maryland with the greatest number of low-income, underachieving students. The purpose of the project is to increase the number of low-income, underachieving students from Baltimore City and Prince George's County who enter and remain in postsecondary education. Goals of the project are: (1) To increase college awareness among underrepresented middle school students and families; (2) To increase the number of underrepresented students taking STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) or algebra courses in high school (Maryland Scholars); and (3) To increase the number of underrepresented middle school students with career plans.

Through a Request for Applications process, sub-grants will be awarded to eligible nonprofits to serve 6th, 7th, and 8th grade low-income students in Baltimore City and Prince George's County through mentoring programs, summer and weekend sessions, and other activities. As part of the state match, Maryland will provide additional funds each year to supplement the federal grant funds to provide for 12 to 16 sub-grant awards to support projects.

A steering committee of stakeholders will serve in an advisory capacity. A Web-based, annual survey will be administered that will collect the student outcome data and participation in services and activities.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080046
Grantee : Kentucky Higher Education Assistance
Director : Susan Hopkins
Telephone : 502-696-7379
E-mail : shopkins@kheaa.com
Year 1 Award : \$1,019,425.00

Project Description:

The Kentucky College Access Challenge Grant (KCACG) Project goals are: (1) increase students' and families' knowledge of postsecondary education financial aid options; and (2) increase the number of Kentucky students accessing higher education. KCACG will provide the following activities and services through a combination of federal funds, state appropriations and other monies:

Regional Outreach - Nine service areas have been identified within the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Throughout each area, outreach counselors will promote higher education opportunities.

Financial Aid Tips of the Month - Newspaper articles and pre-produced radio public service announcements will be prepared by our publications team and distributed to media outlets in each territory.

Career Exploration and College Planning Web site - A one-stop Web site to supply information to students and families to help them plan, prepare, and pay for higher education will be provided.

College Info Road Show - Visiting middle schools, high schools, adult education centers, public libraries and other sites, this mobile classroom will provide a host of critical services directly to student and families in their own communities.

Age-Appropriate Publications - A variety of publications will provide an introduction to making good grades, careers, high school graduation requirements, extracurricular activities and clubs, and the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) program; information on preparing for college, bonus high school courses, test dates, test-taking tips, and an introduction to student financial aid; information on virtual learning options, admissions information, how to compare schools, and a college planning timeline; an introduction to major financial aid programs, tips on how to get student aid, financial aid questions and answers, tax information, Web sites, and how to complete the FAFSA; and information about colleges, technical colleges, trade schools, majors, costs, how to get enrolled, and financial aid opportunities.

Newsletters - Targeted newsletters will be sent periodically throughout the academic year to middle and high school counselors, adult education providers, Federal TRIO and GEAR UP program personnel, social service offices, and others.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080047
Grantee : Rhode Island Higher Education
Director : Mary Ann Welch
Telephone : 401-736-1171
E-mail : mawelch@riheaa.org
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The purpose of the Rhode Island College Access Challenge Grant (RICACG) project is to identify the financially neediest students and offer them \$1000 Challenge Grants. Students awarded will be those whose families are living below the poverty line, whose expected family contribution (EFC) is zero and who filed the FAFSA by an established cutoff date.

The primary objective is to increase access and enrollment by decreasing the gap between the cost of education and the student's resources to cover that cost. In addition to increasing the access and enrollment rate of the neediest students, the second objective is to increase the retention rate of award recipients by making the grant renewable.

Through a partnership with College Planning Center of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Office of Higher Education, the project will provide activities and services offered to low-income students and their families that provide information to students and families on postsecondary education benefits, opportunities, planning and career preparation and that assist students in completing the FAFSA.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080048
Grantee : South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
Director : Dr. Karen Woodfaulk
Telephone : 803-737-2244
E-mail : kwoodfaulk@che.sc.gov
Year 1 Award : \$989,701.00

Project Description:

The South Carolina College Access Challenge Grant (SC CACG) project will provide a grass roots community based program throughout the state of South Carolina based on the belief that college success is possible for students who prepare academically and graduate from high school.

The following activities will be implemented:

- Advertising the accessibility and affordability of postsecondary education in South Carolina;
- Expanding the *College Goal Sunday* format to provide a grass roots intervention by local postsecondary institutions in the 12 Regional Areas across the state;
- Providing a yearly College Access Conference to disseminate information and provide training for all College Access stakeholders in the state of South Carolina;
- Enhancing the activities of the state's 12 Regional Education Centers by providing additional support focused on data and resources for guidance counselors across the state;
- Collaborating with South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV) to plan a series on student access and attainment of postsecondary education. Parents and students will be able to gather information from any individual show or the entire series on the affordability, academic preparation, and availability of postsecondary education;
- Recruiting high profile individuals from the state of South Carolina, such as athletes, entertainers, legislators, and community leaders, who have successfully completed (or are in the process of completing) postsecondary education to speak and mentor low-income students across the state;
- Collaborating with South Carolina Education Television to provide a series of programs designed to educate guidance counselors on postsecondary advisement;
- Producing an extensive resource manual that describes all resources, activities, courses, and other applicable support that is available to guidance counselors across the state; and
- Providing, through a nomination process as part of collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Education, a Guidance Counselor of the Year Award.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080049
Grantee : Delaware Department of Education
Director : Dr. Michael Owens
Telephone : 302-857-3302
E-mail : mowens@doe.k12.de.us
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

Delaware's College Access Challenge Grant (DCACG) project will increase students' and families' knowledge of the college application process, enhance the use of Student Success Plans in our secondary schools, and expand the capacity of our guidance counselors through professional development and networking opportunities. We will accomplish this by:

- Focusing our trainings on the use and application of our Student Success Plans;
- Creating a Web-based application to catalog high school-to-college and college-to-college course transfer information;
- Facilitating a professional development conference for guidance counselor led high school teams and in-state higher education officials in financial aid, admissions, and academic advisement;
- Enhancing the Delaware "Yes You Can" Web site to serve as a portal through which Delaware students and families can access all college and financial aid information; and
- Partnering with SREB and other states in the development of course modules for training guidance counselors on the intricacies of advising college bound students.

The Delaware Department of Education and DHEC (Delaware Higher Education Commission) will be collaborating with all of Delaware's postsecondary institutions, the State Board of Education's P-20 Council, the Delaware School Counselors' Association, and the Delaware Association of School Administrators to accomplish the work of the CACG. By providing students and parents with direct access to college information and ensuring our educators have the knowledge to assist students we can break barriers and create opportunities for all Delaware high school graduates to obtain a postsecondary education.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080050
Grantee : New Hampshire Postsecondary Education Commission
Director : Judith A. Knapp
Telephone : 603-271-2555, ext. 352
E-mail : jknapp@pec.state.nh.us
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The project funded under the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Program will build upon existing infrastructure to deliver programming, resources and direct services to increase access to postsecondary education for underrepresented students. By encouraging a collaborative partnership of statewide non-profits that focus on higher education and State entities, whose focus is education, duplication of effort will be decreased. The agency best able to provide a particular service will do so; and services, both to students and educational professionals, will be enhanced, where currently available, or begun where none currently exists.

The scope of the project will fall into three areas: improving access and expertise to college planning information for all students and parents, with emphasis on underserved populations; enhancing the tools already available for schools to encourage education beyond high school; and, encouraging entry into high need workforce areas through loan repayment.

New Hampshire has several underrepresented populations regarding access to higher education. These include, but are not exclusively, rural, foster children, Latino/minority and the children of recent immigrants. While we expect to increase the higher education access for all students, our ultimate goal is to increase the percentage of students from these demographics who aspire, apply, and attend some form of postsecondary education to 70 percent, closer to the statewide percentage (75 percent).

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080051
Grantee : Northern Marianas College
Director : Daisy Villagomez-Bier
Telephone : 206-234-5498, ext. 1007
E-mail : daisyb@nmcnet.edu, daisyvbier@gmail.com
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) project is a community collaborative effort to increase the number of students from low-income families in the CNMI who enroll, remain, and succeed in college. Project counselors and community partners aim to increase college enrollment among public high school graduates by ten percent (10 percent) and decrease attrition among this same group by ten percent (10 percent). The project draws on the expertise and resources of key social, educational, and other community non-profit service providers, including Northern Marianas College, CNMI Public School System, CNMI Scholarship Office, Saipan and Tinian Mayor's Offices, Department of Community & Cultural Affairs, Community Guidance Center, and CNMI Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to prepare public high school juniors, seniors, first-year college students and their families for successful transitions to college.

The CNMI CACG project will expand existing student support services and activities available within the community to include: (1) college info sessions for students and families about higher education and financing options; (2) financial aid and FAFSA form completion workshops; (3) professional development for system-wide guidance counselors and student support personnel; (4) career and college fairs; (5) math, English, SAT and ACT enrichment classes; (6) academic summer camps; (7) college exposure tours; (8) need-based financial aid; and (9) outreach activities for at-risk students.

The CNMI CACG project is administered and supported by the Northern Marianas College's Dean of Student Services, Director of Counseling Programs & Services, two dedicated outreach counselors, and ten academic tutors.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080052
Grantee : New Mexico Higher Education Department
Director : Tashina Banks Moore
Telephone : 505-476-6549
E-mail : tashina.banks-moore@state.nm.us
Year 1 Award : \$556,798.00

Project Description:

In collaboration with key partner the College Success Network, a non-profit organization that focuses on college outreach to middle and high school students, the New Mexico Higher Education Department will design and implement a statewide College Outreach Campaign targeted at New Mexico's underrepresented communities that will change the face of higher education in New Mexico. The campaign champions the value of higher education and represents a unique opportunity to leverage existing resources including local outreach programs as well as government, business and nonprofit initiatives. Current outreach activities conducted by various entities are largely under funded, are not coordinated by any one organization, and the messaging is inconsistent. The ability to harness multiple outreach activities into a coordinated campaign will greatly enhance New Mexico's capacity to reach underrepresented student populations with key messages about planning, preparing, and paying for college.

To achieve the objective of reaching underrepresented student populations in low-income communities with the College Outreach Campaign, the Department has identified four goals for this project:

- Establish an online, Web-based college and career Web portal for all New Mexicans to access information on how to plan, prepare, apply and pay for college in collaboration with other public agencies that are providing similar activities;
- Expand distribution of the annual 28 page College Bulletin publication to include every middle and high school in New Mexico; the College Bulletin is currently distributed as a newspaper supplemental in 300,000 Sunday newspapers on Sept 28 around the state;
- Expand and support the grassroots effort of the College Goal Sunday initiative that provides FREE assistance to students and their families in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to increase the number of FAFSA filers in New Mexico; and
- Establish a formal New Mexico College Outreach Collaborative to leverage resources, collaborate efforts, identify best practices and share information about college outreach services available to students throughout the state.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080053
Grantee : Guam Community College
Director : Joanne Ige
Telephone : 671-735-5516
E-mail : joanne.ige@guamcc.edu
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

Guam Community College (GCC) will serve 500 participants that are from the underrepresented and low income. This grant is to develop and implement the CACG project by accomplishing a goal and three objectives. The goal is: *To significantly increase the number of underrepresented and low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education* and the objectives are: Objective 1: Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education for CACG students each year of the project period. Objective 2: Increase CACG students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing each year of the project period. Objective 3: Implement professional development training to enhance and increase the postsecondary knowledge for guidance counselors of middle and secondary schools each year of the project period.

The services will include after-school and summer academic programs, tutoring, mentoring, academic advising, counseling, educational and cultural field trips, professional development for counselors and administrators, college/career advisement for students and parents, access to multimedia computers and online interactive educational material, and parental involvement in activities. The student population to be served for this project cohort will be from seven middle schools (grades 6th – 7th) and four (4) high schools (grades 9th – 12th). The CACG staff consists of three full-time positions: one project director, one word processing secretary II, and one counselor (10 month), and part-time tutors and adjunct faculties.

The project funded under this proposal will build a foundation of services by conducting classroom instruction to participants after school hours (Mondays – Fridays), Saturdays, and summer session (Mondays – Saturdays). The academic areas will include: reading, writing, English, math, computer science, laboratory science, and foreign languages. Personal, career, and academic counseling will be provided in order to address motivational problems and prepare participants to enroll in postsecondary education. The project will also provide social, cultural, and recreational activities that will enhance appreciation of the arts, improve social relationships and build group identification and support. Additionally, financial aid and career planning workshops, and completion of admission applications and financial aid application to a postsecondary institution will be provided. These services will be unique in the area for the cohort students to be served. Currently, there is only very minimal support services provided to cohort students the CACG grant proposes.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080054
Grantee : University of Puerto Rico System
Director : Dr. José L. Cruz Rivera
Telephone : 787-765-9250
E-mail : jose Luis.cruz@upr.edu
Year 1 Award : \$2,592,042.00

Project Description:

The University of Puerto Rico (UPR), the designated state agency, and the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE), have joined forces to develop a series of activities and services that seek to increase the number of socioeconomically disadvantaged students who enter and remain in postsecondary education. The proposed activities and services will: (1) provide information for students and families regarding the benefits of a postsecondary education, opportunities, planning and career preparation, and provide information on financing options, including activities that promote financial literacy and debt management among students and families via an Internet Portal; a "Personal Roadmap to College" kit; the effective use of student academic information for career planning purposes; and the first ever in-house administration of the College Entrance Examination to all PRDE 12th graders so that they may weigh their postsecondary options; (2) conduct outreach activities for students who may be at risk of not enrolling in or completing college via the Cyber Space STEM Outreach project; Summer STEM Immersion Camps; and Online courses and Open courseware materials; (3) Assist students in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) via the implementation of a modified College Goal Sunday™ model in Puerto Rico; and (4) implement professional development for guidance counselors at middle and secondary schools to improve their capacity to assist students and parents with issues pertaining to college admissions, college preparation, and financial aid requirements. Most activities will be open to the community at large, while others will target high-poverty school communities in an attempt to establish the required infrastructure and knowledge to allow the scaling up of the corresponding activities beyond the funding period contemplated by CACG.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080055
Grantee : American Samoa Community College
Director : Kathleen Kolhoff
Telephone : 684-699-7834
E-mail : k.kolhorf@amsamoa.edu
Year 1 Award : \$330,000.00

Project Description:

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC), for the American Samoa Government, will conduct a variety of activities in seven categories to support increased college enrollment and retention for Samoan students: (1) Financial Aid Awareness; (2) Math Instruction; (3) English Instruction; (4) College Awareness; (5) Retention; (6) Financial Assistance; and (7) In-service training for counselors.

1. Financial Aid Awareness: ASCC will hold at least three evening workshops for parents and six school fair financial aid workshops to assist students with college financial aid applications.
2. College-level math skills: High school students will be able to take the ASCC placement tests and enroll in ASCC developmental math courses, with the schedules adjusted for their high school classes, and/or SAT math preparation courses to increase readiness for college entry and success.
3. College-level English skills: As with the math skills, high school students will be able to enroll in ASCC developmental English courses and/or SAT writing preparation courses.
4. General Awareness: Project staff will provide general college and financial aid information through at least three "Family College Night" events and at least 15 school-based workshops.
5. Retention: ASCC students will provide daily homework assistance and tutoring to high school and college students to increase academic persistence and success.
6. Financial Assistance: Loan repayment assistance of up to \$5,000 will be provided to students who are college seniors (or at the end of a degree program such as Registered Nurse) or who have graduated within the last two years, with priority given to the high-need professions of nursing and teaching. Applications will be screened by a local review committee and be need-based. Scholarships of up to \$500 and college application fee assistance of up to \$100 per student will be provided within available funds.
7. In-service training: Middle school and high school counselors will receive training to provide SAT, FAFSA, and college exploration support to their students. The counselors will also be able to enroll tuition-free in related ASCC classes.

College Access Challenge Grant Program -- FY 2008 Project Abstracts

PR Award # : P378A080056
Grantee : Missouri Department of Higher Education
Director : Leroy Wade
Telephone : 573-751-2361
E-mail : leroy.wade@dhe.mo.gov
Year 1 Award : \$1,148,535.00

Project Description:

Missouri is at a crossroads with regard to the changing needs and demographics of students in the educational pipeline and the impact those changes will have on the workforce of tomorrow. It is critical that this state address those issues if it is to remain competitive in the world marketplace and maintain the standard of living of its citizens. Based on this situation, the goal of the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) for this grant is to increase the number of Missouri students who view postsecondary education as an academically and financially viable option for their futures.

The program scope includes three primary areas of focus. First, the department will develop and distribute financial literacy information, including a mini-curriculum easily adapted by classroom teachers or guidance counselors, for high school students. Second, the department will create a Web portal designed to provide a unified, targeted and appealing one-stop Internet destination for Missouri students and families to learn about higher education and the planning and preparation that are necessary to succeed in education beyond high school. Third, the department will conduct a subgrant process designed to build and strengthen existing outreach activities implemented to assist students and families in preparing for postsecondary education.

The grant will involve a broad range of MDHE partners to accomplish each of the focus areas. The financial literacy component, designed to improve the financial literacy of high school students, will include involvement by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Missouri's 529 College Savings Plan, the Jump\$tart Coalition, and several associations of secondary school educators. The Web design project, intended to provide students with a range of tools to assist in preparing for and succeeding in postsecondary education, will include involvement of the Missouri School College Relations Commission and other related organizations. The subgrant process will be broad based and designed to encourage wide participation by all non-profit organizations with experience and a positive record of improving student access and success in higher education.

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