



# Cummings Foundation

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**Trustees**

**Organization Information**

**Scholarships**

**\* Legal Name** Middlesex Community College

**Links**

**\* Address** 33 Keamey Square

**News**

**Address 2**

**\* City** Lowell

**Annual Report**

**County** Middlesex

**Contact Us**

**\* State** Massachusetts

**\* Zip** 01852

**Website Address** [www.middlesex.mass.edu](http://www.middlesex.mass.edu)

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**Contact Information**

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**\* Address** 33 Keamey Square

**Address 2**

**\* City** Lowell

**\* State** Massachusetts

**\* Zip** 01852

**Fax** 978.656.3443

**Request Information**

**\* Previous Grants** No

**\* Other Previous Funding** Yes

**\* Project Title** Program: Building student engagement, academic support and career exploration

**\* Requested Annual Installment** \$50,000.00

\* **Program Manager** Pamela Flaherty, Dean of Students

\* **Category** Education - other

\* **Geographic Area** Middlesex county

\* **Summary** Build capacity at Middlesex Community College to enhance academic and career opportunities for students using peer support staff to improve engagement, leadership and job readiness.

\* **Organization Background** At Middlesex Community College (MCC), our mission statement is "everyone teaches, everyone learns." MCC educates, engages, and empowers a diverse community of learners. The MCC Foundation's mission is to further the educational and charitable purposes of MCC.

Established in 1971, MCC is one of the largest community colleges in the state with enrollment exceeding 12,000 students. MCC serves an increasingly diversified student body drawn from more than 30 cities and towns in northeast Massachusetts. With two campuses, one in Lowell and the other in Bedford, MA, the College is centrally located within Middlesex county. Over 2,500 students are from the City of Lowell. In the fall of 2014, 38% of all students were of ethnic and racial minorities. The College offers more than 70 certificate and degree programs, community education and training programs. Through partnerships with schools, businesses, arts and service agencies, MCC contributes to the educational, cultural and economic development of Lowell.

At MCC, the focus on students is both on their academic progress and their personal growth. Accordingly, the College has Academic and Student Affairs divisions. Student Affairs encompasses all support and enrichment activities for students as individuals. Its vision is to provide a learning environment which encourages students' personal and intellectual growth, fosters their involvement in the college community, assists them in overcoming specific personal, physical or intellectual barriers, enhances their capacity to appreciate individual and cultural differences, and challenges them to increase their understanding of themselves and others as responsible members of society. Through advocacy, diversity, and inspiration, Student Affairs provides opportunities for all students to become active and engaged leaders. MCC aspires to educate holistically, and the division offers an atmosphere where all students can feel safe and supported in order to reach their fullest potential.

In 2007, The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) announced Middlesex Community College as one of 18 institutions chosen to participate in the Core Commitments Leadership Consortium. The model is to embed personal and social responsibility objectives pervasively across the institution in both the curricular and co-curricular experiences as key educational outcomes for all students.

Implementing the Core Commitments Leadership programming is MCC's Student Affairs, an MCC division overseeing the Academic Center for Enrichment (ACE), Student Support Services (SSS), International and Multicultural Affairs, Leadership Development, and all student engagement and wellness initiatives. ACE provides individual and group tutoring (online and face-to-face), study sessions, guidance in the use of computers and learning tools, project and assignment assistance, and Supplemental Instruction (SI). SI provides weekly student groups for students enrolled in targeted science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses. Online eTutoring is also available at all times. SSS offers support for eligible students, those who are first generation and/or, low-income, and those with disabilities. SSS works collaboratively with selected students to provide the most inclusive and accessible environment. International and Multicultural Affairs fosters a climate that embraces and develops cross cultural awareness, personal growth and a deeper sense of the benefits of a pluralistic society. This office hosts educational, social, and cultural activities that support diversity education with the goal of raising awareness and appreciation of different perspectives. Leadership Development encourages students to participate in opportunities designed to develop their leadership style and abilities. Students meet others, interact with the larger College community by joining or starting clubs, entering Student Government, applying for an International Fellowship, or attending lectures or immerse themselves in a variety of other topical programs.

In addition to the commitment to student growth and achievement personally and academically, MCC has a mission to prepare them for immediate or future employment. Career exploration and support services at MCC guide students through a five step process: 1) self-assessment to learn more about their personal strengths and challenges; 2) research to understand what may be required to pursue a careers in different disciplines; 3) development of decision making skills to foster critical thinking; 4) goal setting to aid planning and prioritizing; and 5) job searching techniques to be effective and compelling to potential employers.

Students have the opportunity to engage in career preparation through academics, internships, service learning, certification programs, and exploration. MCC offers professional career advising, hosts job fairs and manages a chartered one stop career center in Woburn, accessible from both the Bedford and Lowell campuses. To further reach students in regard to career preparation, MCC piloted a peer intervention and mentoring program funded by a partnership of the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) and Commonwealth Corporation in 2014. During the academic year, four individuals were hired as Career Liaisons and linked to the MSA program for training and networking. At MCC, the Career Liaisons were taught mentoring skills, writing and resume preparation and how to capitalize work or school experiences of their potential mentees into relevant job prospecting material. All of the Career Liaisons were of similar ages of typical MCC students and all were either attending or had graduated from college.

The Career Liaisons were then embedded into three different college departments to reach out to students enrolled in that particular course of study, meet with and mentor them to foster career exploration and impart job expectations and goals. The MSA pilot initiative for career preparation was so effective reaching students, it exceeded projected outcome numbers in all of the College departments where the hires were assigned. Students reported the ease of finding the mentors within their department, their flexibility for meeting times and their similar age as reasons they engaged with them so readily. Based on this model's success, MCC wants to broaden and replicate this design in other contexts throughout the College in keeping with our mission, "everyone teaches, everyone learns."

**\* Program/Need Description** This grant request is to build capacity by initiating the successful student outreach model of peer liaisons located on our Lowell Campus and embed four trained workers on our Bedford campus as Achievement Liaisons (AL), as well as hire a program coordinator for oversight and add technology and supplies to the assigned study space. The ALs will operate out of the Multicultural Center in Bedford and target their services for students engaged in the Center for Enrichment (ACE), Student Support Services (SSS), International and Multicultural Affairs, and Student Leadership areas. As profiled above in our history and mission section, Student Affairs improves the lives of all students enrolled at MCC and this project will target 300 low income students annually (600 total) who may not be benefiting from services at this time.

The Achievement Liaisons will support students who are in populations identified as more likely to experience gaps in achievement not only through peer mentoring and leadership but also guiding mentees into career exploration and compiling a work history inventory. Achievement gaps are defined as observed and persistent disparities in educational measures between the performance of groups of students, especially those defined by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity and gender. In addition to the aforementioned categories, students who face barriers to achievement may also be first in their families to attend college (first generation), be from non-traditional families, be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning (GLBTQ), or gender neutral, be English Language Learners and/or be a person with disabilities.

The proposed strategies to be used by the ALs will be to act as peer mentors, leaders, and tutors to other students. The AL's will provide: 1) content specific tutoring instruction in which ALs facilitate study groups as well as individualized tutoring; 2) professional and career guidance to individual students through one-on-one meetings ; 3) mentoring strategy development and team building; and 4) referrals of students between

academic programs and MCC's professional Academic and Career Counseling Advisors.

When students enroll at MCC, they are asked to choose either the Lowell or Bedford campus or the web as their primary location. As a large city, Lowell has typically had more students affiliate themselves with that campus as MCC's classroom buildings are in the downtown area, accessible by public transportation and walkable from the most densely populated areas. Over the past few years, however, the numbers have become more equal, averaging about 4,500 students choosing either campus with over 2,000 opting to be online, utilizing the web for the bulk of their coursework. In 2013, MCC began an inter-campus shuttle service which allows students to travel the 11 miles between campuses for free. As the shuttles have gained in popularity, students now sign up for courses regardless of their building location and many spend equal time on their non-primary campus.

While student support services are available to all students regardless of campus affiliation, the concentration of student activities has traditionally been in Lowell. The Multicultural Center in Lowell is fully staffed and offers students a study/meeting place with computers, a small library and snacks. Thousands of students use the Center annually and activities are hosted almost weekly. In Bedford, the Multicultural Center consists of a study room without staffing and technology. Grant funds will equip the space with two computers and updated technology for student shared use and virtual desktop access to all College systems. The AL Coordinator will be housed in this space and will be able to welcome students and respond to their needs. The Coordinator will be on the premises 18.5 hours a week during the school year (35 weeks) and will encourage student walk in visits as well as schedule programming to draw more numbers to the space. The ALs will have individual contact creation and mentee goal numbers to bring additional individuals to the Center and to provide services.

The role of the AL is necessary to address student needs at MCC. At MCC, 42% of students receive financial aid, the majority receiving Pell Grants. Students must document they are from low-income households to be eligible for Pell Grants. Studies show the leading cause of achievement gaps in education is socioeconomic status, specifically, the lower a student's income, the larger the gap will be with their wealthier peers. The traditional model at MCC and most colleges is to work with students who seek help for academic, career or accommodation assistance. Outreach efforts such as posted signage, social media and word of mouth are successful to bring in many students who need help navigating the college environment and to receive individual attention to succeed in course work, career preparation and secure employment. Most MCC student resources are structured as an addition to core activities. Unfortunately, many MCC students do not investigate these support offerings during the limited time most have while on campus.

MCC Institutional Research shows the majority of MCC students also work, in full-time and part-time capacities, while enrolled in courses. The typical job is hourly employment in the service or restaurant industry. Many students see this employment as low-paying and are pursuing postsecondary credentials to move to higher wage jobs. Many students are also involved in paid or volunteer experiences on or off campus. The ALs will build on MCC's current assets of academic and employment readiness and unite it with the personal work and volunteer experiences of students to improve their success with course work and job readiness. ALs will be trained to raise awareness of the academic and work skills their fellow students possess, connect them to classroom learning as needed and help them with resumes for highest impact. ALs will improve work readiness and professional development to hundreds of economically disadvantaged students.

With nearly half of MCC students from economically challenged homes, living in areas of high unemployment, MCC wants to implement interventions for students to improve their chances of success to attain a high grade point average, persist in their education and attain employment and higher than average wages. This project will supplement student knowledge and skills for graduation or certification attainment, improved employability and/or career advancement.

Our project plan is to hire four ALs for 15 hrs/week for 31 weeks who are

current students or recent graduates of MCC and are/were Pell Grant recipients. The peer aspect is important to this model, and the goal will be to have diversity among the AL group to reflect the student population. ALs will be trained to: 1) Collaborate with each other to share resources, abilities and build team spirit; 2) Enhance their communication skills to be approachable by MCC students; 3) Learn MCC resources in depth to be able to do accurate referrals; 4) Be peer leaders/mentors to MCC students; 5) Prepare MCC students to recognize leadership opportunities; 6) Raise MCC students' awareness of skills each currently has, connect it to classroom learning and translate experiences to build high impact resumes; 7) Design and facilitate small group workshops for resume and cover letter writing for MCC students at convenient times; 8) Develop professional development seminars to be held during scheduled school-wide Career Day/Job Fair activities; 9) Conduct pre-and post- surveys of MCC students using prepared materials; and 10) Role model research skills to maximize the study skills, test-taking and career exploration.

Specific activities: ALs will: 1) Design and implement school-wide professional development seminars for students by working together to gather resources, make contacts and schedule the seminars through College administration. ALs will have the opportunity to work with MCC Communications and Student Services departments to maximize visibility of efforts and to gain networking skills. 2) Create career-oriented peer mentorship groups of at least 25 students per AL and engage the students in small group workshops, mentoring activities, and leadership opportunities. 3) Increase referrals from their respective departments by 10% to MCC Academic and Career Advising counselors. AL will interact with MCC students beyond their mentorship groups and increase referrals to established college resources (estimated 50 students for each AL). 4) Compile student data by conducting pre-and post- surveys of MCC students to collect information about student awareness of resources before and after project plan implementation to document best practices, referral rates and timelines of student engagement.

**\* Results and Measurement** Results and measurable outcomes of the project are anticipated to be 300 MCC students each year to have enhanced abilities to achieve academically, persist in their education, make better decisions, embrace leadership opportunities, and understand job readiness and employment requirements to set and pursue career goals. In the short term, both ALs and MCC students will gain experience in collaboration, goal setting, and improve their written and verbal communication skills. In the long term, all participants will have an accurate assessment of their academic and employment skills, an enhanced awareness of career opportunities as well as the ability to research job postings and utilize career and work placement services to maximize their prospects for employment. These steps will improve the economic well-being and security of currently economically disadvantaged individuals and those experiencing achievement gaps.

Phase one:

Each year of the grant, the Project Coordinator and ALs will be selected, hired and receive orientation as new or (renewing in year two) staff. The Multicultural Center in Bedford will be updated with computers, technology and supplies. The Coordinator will schedule training which includes team building exercises, improving communication skills, conducting surveys and data gathering, and meeting with departmental personnel who will link ALs with MCC professionals to help them prepare for their student interactions. Pre-project surveys will be developed, distributed and collected.

Collaboration meetings between ALs will be facilitated by the Coordinator and a calendar of activities will be established. Each AL will familiarize themselves with their assigned department and the students affiliated with each. Anticipated groups sought by outreach to become mentees include the Academic Center for Enrichment (ACE): students who need subject tutoring, technology skills, and reading/study skills assistance; Student Support Services (SSS): targeted achievement gap populations and students with disabilities; International and Multicultural Affairs: students from outside of the U.S. and those whose heritage is not American, English language learners, and GLBTQ. Leadership Development: students who are

looking for leadership opportunities and/or affinity clubs or projects, internships, travel, scholarships and school-wide activities to join.

Measurements of grant funded activities: Hired: One Project Coordinator and four Achievement Liaisons; Multicultural Center updated and advertised as the Liaison meeting area/shared space for students; training completed, introduction to departments and affiliated students, and pre-project surveys conducted; and a calendar of activities established.

Phase two:

The Coordinator and ALs will conduct publicity to boost student participation for mentoring and for professional development workshops/activities. ALs will begin mentoring individuals and designing and conducting workshops/activities in topic areas such as tutoring, career exploration, decision making, goal setting and job searching.

Measurements of grant funded activities: Mentoring numbers monitored; workshops/activities conducted counted; number of students participating tracked; referral numbers tracked; evaluations of workshops/activities collected and reported; and publicity tracked.

Phase three:

Coordinator and ALs will close academic year activities, conclude mentoring and prepare students for summer break/graduation/career or workplace entry. Post-project surveys will be distributed and collected; participating MCC student names will be submitted for departmental recognition and/or for celebrations; ALs will record numbers of students mentored and referred and document best practices and challenges.

Measurements of grant funded activities: Survey results compiled and shared; Number of mentored estimated to total 100 per year; Attendees at workshops and activities to total 200 per year; Referrals to MCC resources estimated to have increased 10%; best practices documented; wrap-up meetings and exit interviews conducted.

**\* Budget Form**

- [BudgetForm 2016 cummings MCC complete.xlsx \(99.71 K\), uploaded by Susan Anderson on 03/10/2016](#)

**\* Budget Narrative** Budget Narrative:

Revenue: Grant from Cummings Foundation

Support of the MCC Celebrity Series @ \$5,000 for each year =  $\$5,000 \times 2 = \$10,000$

Support for expansion, student engagement =  $\$45,000 \times 2 = \$90,000$

Total Foundation support: \$100,000

In kind:

Supervision of Achievement Liaisons:

3% of time: Pamela Flaherty, Dean of Students = \$3,359; Susan Woods, Assoc. Dean, Student Support Services = \$2,761; Patricia Demaras, International and Multicultural Affairs = \$2,639; Rebecca Newell, Assistant Dean of Students = \$2,483; Noreen McGinness Olson, Director, Academic Center for Enrichment = \$2,005. Total: \$13,247. Fringe benefits at 35.17% (includes Medicare) = \$4,658

Departmental support for materials, in kind: \$100 each = \$400

Professional Development: Professional Day workshops, training courses, in-kind = \$2,000

Total in kind: \$20,305

Total revenue including in-kind: \$120,305

Grant expenses:

Marketing and Advertising: MCC Celebrity Series sponsorship @ \$5,000 each year = \$5,000 x 2 = \$10,000

Print and copy: flyers, hand outs and other materials produced and distributed by Achievement Liaisons

Supplies: Computers, software and other items for Bedford Multicultural Center

Achievement Liaison stipends (four): Year 1: 15/hr a week for 31 wks x \$11 = \$20,460;

Year 2: 15 hr/wk x 31 wks x \$12 x 4 workers = \$22,320, Total: \$42,780

Medicare at @1.67 = \$714 + budget increase of 1% for year two: Total: \$773

Total Grant Expenses: \$100,000

**\* Committed Funding** MCC commits to funding in-kind line items through operational budgets

**\* Revenue** MCC Foundation: \$858,397

**\* Balance Sheet** • [MCC Foundation audit budget page for Cummings.pdf \(294.24 K\), uploaded by Susan Anderson on 03/10/2016](#)

**\* Employee Annual Income Disclosure** Foundation has no employees

Top five MCC employees involved with grant

Pamela Flaherty, Dean of Students, \$111,971

Susan Woods, Associate Dean, Student Support Services, \$92,024

Patricia Demaras, Assistant Dean, International and Multicultural Affairs, \$87,956

Rebecca Newell, Assistant Dean of Students, \$82,753

Noreen McGinness Olson, \$66,851

**\* Board Members** The MCC Foundation Board:

James W. Henderson, Chair - Retired

Lois A. Alves - Retired

Robert A. Barton – Retired

David Basile- Senior VP - Financial Advisor - Wealth Management at Janney Montgomery Scott

John P. Chemaly – Co-Owner and President of Trinity EMS

William J. Chemelli - Retired

John Cogliano, Jr. - Retired

Carole A. Cowan, Ed.D. - Retired

Samir Desai – CEO - Aditi, Inc.

James M. Geary, Jr. - Retired

Eric (Rick) W. Hanson - Chairman and Chief Financial Officer of Klin Groupe

Abbey L. Henderson –President and Owner of Abaris Financial Group

Lura Smith – Assistant to the President, Middlesex Community College

Duane Taylor – Software Engineer at MITRE Corporation

**\* Board Compensation** not applicable

**501(c)(3) Verification**

- [MCC Foundation IRS Determination Letter.pdf \(297.38 K\)](#),  
[uploaded by Susan Anderson on 03/10/2016](#)

\* **Litigation** No

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