

2016 Grant Application

Deadline : November 04 2016 at 11:59 PM EDT (Midnight)

Applicant Information

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Summary

Organization Name Middlesex Community College

Project/Program Name Support for At Risk Out-of-School Youth

Summarize the project, in 50 words or less.

The project will assist students enrolled in our Out-of-School Youth Development Center (OSYDC) with financial support for testing fees, certification training, books and classroom materials. Most have fulfilled academic requirements but lack the funds to progress or complete their programs.

This project addresses/serves the following interest area(s) of the Saab Family Foundation: Education~Low Income~Youth

This project is located in or serves individuals in the following county: Middlesex County (MA)

Amount Requesting 15000

Organization Information

Organization Name Middlesex Community College

What is the mission of the organization?

As part of its most recent strategic planning process, Middlesex Community College (MCC) developed the following mission statement: "MCC provides affordable education for a diverse community, preparing students for academic success and lifelong learning, providing workforce development opportunities, and

empowering all learners to become productive and socially responsible members of our local and global communities.” Our vision is to be committed to academic excellence and transforming lives through educational and career opportunities for all students. We inspire and prepare learners to successfully meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Our Out-of-School Youth Development Center (OSYDC), has been serving out of school youth, students from Lowell High School and other schools that enroll at MCC and are referred to the OSY Center for additional support, and newly arrived refugees/immigrants for the last 15 plus years. The center is committed to providing students with the necessary resources to improve academic skills and develop life skills that will enable them to enroll and be successful in post-secondary education, advanced training or employment.

Briefly describe the programs and services offered by the organization.

MCC was founded in 1970 and has grown to be one of the largest public community colleges in Massachusetts with over 9,000 students. MCC offers more than 70 degree and certificate programs through the Divisions of Business, Education and Public Service; Humanities and Social Science; Health; and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Since 1997, the OSYDC has assisted over 150 youth annually from Lowell who have dropped out of school. OSYDC conducts significant outreach to identify participants through its partnership with the Lowell Public Schools, the Lowell Career Center and other area organizations. Once enrolled, OSYDC assists youth with academic remediation, HiSET (high school equivalency) preparation, and career exploration and offers opportunities for simulated testing and workplace preparation to improve outcomes and meet goals. OSYDC aids youth through case management, career workshops, tutoring, and facilitation of access to other academic and personal support services. Students must make a commitment to work with staff, attend classes, follow through on assignments, and perform job searches. Students are supported in returning to school, attaining their high school equivalency, and enrolling in certificate or other training programs, college or employment. MCC operates two campuses, one in downtown Lowell, MA and the other in Bedford, MA. The funds sought will support programming on the Lowell campus.

In addition to its credit programs, the College has developed extensive community partnerships. Those with the Lowell Public Schools include in-school mentoring and enrichment programs and the operation of Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School. The College also offers non-credit courses, workforce development programs, and youth camps. Engagement with the community is reflected in MCC students taking part in community work through credit granting service-learning projects, as volunteers in community engagement programs and through internships.

Provide a brief description of the organization's structure (i.e. board, staff, volunteers, etc.).

MCC has a Board of Trustees whose members are representative of the community at large in regard to academic and business interests as well as by gender and ethnicity. There is a student representative elected annually. College leadership includes the President, Provost/Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, an Executive Director of Institutional Advancement, and the Chief Administrative Officer.

OSYDC is directed by Associate Dean Maria Cunha who reports to the Dean of K-16 partnerships. The OSYDC Director is responsible for working with at-risk youth and their families to provide alternative pathways to success by designing, developing and supervising programs that meet the needs of students who follow non-traditional paths.

What is/are the organization's long term goal(s)?

MCC's long term goals include strengthening the core academic enterprise through scholarship and promoting innovation in teaching and learning. In regard to access and student success, MCC strives to increase the expectation of college attainment by minorities, low income and first generation students.

MCC embraces pedagogies to increase success of every student and to eliminate achievement and enrollment gaps. MCC's target populations include men and women over 18 years of age seeking credit and non-credit post-secondary education, academic enrichment, career exploration and preparation, and job skills training.

OSYDC goals include strengthening the academic skills of participants to assist their passing exams and certifications and providing them with the academic skills necessary for work or post-secondary education. Our programming meets the City of Lowell's Consolidated Plan Goals of improving economic opportunities for low-income people.

Please attach a copy of your current IRS 501(c)(3) letter or documentation that may serve as proof...

MCC_501(c)(3).pdf

Proposal Information

Provide a description of the project, program or service for which you are seeking funding.

As stated earlier, OSYDC serves an average of 150 youth each year who have dropped out of high school, entered MCC, or are new arrivals in the US requiring additional support. OSYDC strengthens their academic skills and confidence to pass the HiSET and certification exams such as Certified Nursing Assistant, or post-secondary education as well as employment or training opportunities. We seek funding to support classes offered by the English Learner's Institute or enrolled students who are unable to afford books and class materials or fees associated with testing for the HiSET or for work-readiness certifications or to attend training that would further their academic or job skills for employment. Every year, dozens of students who have managed to attend MCC OSY programming or enroll in MCC classes cannot pay generally nominal fees and expenses that would make a difference in their completion of a certificate or advancement to higher academic standing or to be gainfully employed. Students in this situation have looked to the OSY program to help them bridge a short term funding gap.

Many of these at-risk students served by OSYDC juggle minimum wage jobs with classes and family schedules and are in desperate need for fees required to register and take the HiSET, ServSafe, First Aid and CPR or Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification testing. Many finish the course work and then have to delay the completion of the program due to financial duress. OSYDC seeks funding to evaluate each student's situation on a case by case basis and give financial support to those destined for success. OSYDC works with other College student support programming and does not duplicate services. Students are directed to other programs and limited funding mechanisms if they qualify for assistance. OSYDC is requesting \$15,000 to fund an estimated 60 students to allow them to: 1) buy books or class materials necessary for course completion; 2) pay fees for certification training after fulfilling all other requirements; 3) attend Summer Bridge programs to enhance their academic abilities or for career exploration; 4) register and take the GED, HiSET or other testing fees after completing related programming; and 5) pay for online certification testing acknowledging job readiness .

Describe the need for such a project in the community.

In 2015, more than 75% of students in the Lowell Public Schools were classified as low-income/economically disadvantaged (State average: 38.3%). Students from low income families are more than twice as likely to drop out of high school. After being unsuccessful in finding work or job readiness programs without a high school diploma, this population engages with MCC's OSYDC to better prepare for their future. Our experience with out-of-school youth indicates the need for extensive individual supports to address a wide range of barriers that has resulted in our participants dropping out of school and academic

programming. These obstacles include the need for counseling services related to one or more of the following: drug/alcohol involvement, domestic violence, involvement in the criminal justice system, homelessness, pregnancy and the lack of financial resources. We assign a Case Manager to each participant to identify personal needs and situations that impede successful re-entry to secondary school, HiSET completion, and enrollment in post-secondary education or other training programs and employment. We assist our students to overcome many challenges and keep them on track to reach goals. Staff refers students to counseling and student support services, as necessary. In addition, the Case Manager provides assistance with completing admissions and financial aid applications to attend MCC to OSY students who have passed the HiSET. The Case Manager also works with the Career Center of Lowell to support students in obtaining employment.

MCC has successfully addressed the needs of OSY and high risk in-school youth since 1997. The College has a well-established record of educational partnerships with public schools and other community organizations involving the implementation of more than 20 different programs. Programs have included: High School dropout prevention/re-entry program (Student Connections); school-to-work (Lowell Career Pathways for Youth), academic preparation (Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Gear Up and The Opportunity Project (TOP) for out-of-school youth.

How will this project support or strengthen the current offerings of the organization?

The majority of students completing their high school equivalency requirements over the years have chosen to enroll in MCC when pursuing a post-secondary academic degree or certificate. In the past three years, dozens of participants who have received short term funds for books, testing and/or certification and training have completed their programming. Most have become full time MCC students and have moved into employment. Students achieving success passing the HiSET have been re-introduced to studying, homework, and setting goals

How will the organization measure the success of this project?

Overall measures of success will be determined by outcomes associated with the OSYDC: 25 out-of-school youth will receive academic tutoring and support in preparation for the GED, HiSET exams and/or other testing for certifications; An estimated 20 youth will receive financial support for books and class materials and approximately 20 will receive aid for job readiness and Summer Bridge programming. All youth will participate in workshops on topics such as financial management, health issues, job opportunities, and other areas. 125 students will be provided with HiSET instruction and additional tutoring in identified remedial need areas. 80%, or 100, students will take the HiSET exam.

OSYDC will report to the Saab Foundation about use of grant funds and outcomes a year from grant start date and/or by request.

(Optional) You may attach any additional information regarding the program/project here.

OSY_Summer2015
newsletter.pdf

Financial Information

Project/Program Financials

Please attach a budget summary for this specific project.

Saab Family Budget for OSY
Draft 1.xlsx

Total funding required for this project:

15000

Secured Funding

(Optional) What is the total amount of funding that has been secured for this project/program from... 0

(Optional) Additionally, what is the total amount of other grants currently submitted for review (... 0

Organization Financials

(Optional) You may also choose to attach a budget or financial summary of the organization. FY15.pdf

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