

## **Title III Part A Strengthening Institutions Program FY 2009 Project Abstracts**

### **P031A090166 - Barton County Community College, Kansas**

Barton County Community College (Barton) is a comprehensive, public, two-year community college located in Great Bend, Kansas. Our service area, which spans 5,486 square miles and seven large counties, is truly a vast region. Furthermore, Barton's second campus is located 140 miles away at the Fort Riley Army Installation where the college provides services to members of the military and their families, civilian employees, and the general public. The college also provides educational opportunities to more than 1,500 students through our distance learning programs including online, hybrid, and ITV. For over 39 years, Barton has served the scattered small communities across our extremely rural, under populated west-central Kansas service region. In fall, 2007 Barton's enrollment was 5,773.

#### **Title III Project Goals for Distance Learning:**

1. Increase academic and support services at several points in the college's interaction with distance learning students.
2. Improve assessment of distance student learning.
3. Increase distance student retention.
4. Increase distance learning faculty and staff development.
5. Increase the percentage of courses that incorporate distance learning technology.

#### **Strategies:**

Barton County Community College proposes to improve student success and retention through the implementation of intensive distance learning services and quality improvement measures. This ambitious project employs six strategies to accomplish the identified goals: (1) assessment of student learning outcomes; (2) data collection; (3) faculty and staff development; (4) student services; (5) technology services; and (6) quality assurance.

#### **Project Management:**

Barton is committed to the success of the Title III project; the college will support the cost of a half-time Title III project coordinator who will provide overall leadership and supervision. Title III funds are requested to hire an external evaluator who will provide direction for the Title III administrative team and internal evaluation team.

## **P031A090170 - South Arkansas Community College, Arkansas**

South Arkansas Community College (South Arkansas) is a public, open-door, comprehensive, two-year college enrolling more than 3,200 students annually. Our purpose is expressed in our mission statement: *“South Arkansas Community College promotes excellence in learning, teaching, and service; provides lifelong educational opportunities; and serves as a cultural, intellectual, and economic resource for the community.”* Governed by nine appointed trustees and fully accredited by the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission (2007), the South Arkansas College has a main campus in El Dorado and satellite in Warren, Arkansas, and offers Associate degrees and certificates in a wide range of general and technical studies, adult basic education and GED, workforce development, and noncredit courses. With 44 percent of students in Health Sciences, South Arkansas is the second largest provider of health education in the state.

South Arkansas Serving four extremely disadvantaged Mississippi Delta counties bordering northern Louisiana, South Arkansas enrolls a growing (+31 percent since 1995) but increasingly at-risk number of students: female, minority, older, first-generation, employed, and solely responsible for dependents' care. Unfortunately, as failure and drop-out rates show, too few reach their goals. Additionally, South Arkansas is challenged to extend postsecondary opportunity throughout a very rural area.

That opportunity is more within reach for those we serve than ever before. In January 2007, Murphy Oil Corporation, with headquarters in El Dorado, launched the *El Dorado Promise* to provide the city's high school graduates with \$5 million in scholarships each of the next ten years. Awards vary by students' length of enrollment in the district and are capped at the maximum costs for a state public university (\$3,005 per semester in 2006 – 2007). Students may enroll in any accredited two- or four-year, public or private, in- or out-of-state college or university for up to five years. However, to keep their scholarships, they must complete at least 12 credit hours each semester with 2.0 GPAs.

As South Arkansas's students' failure rates attest, these requirements will challenge many graduates of El Dorado High School, and we must strengthen our college to support them. We therefore propose **Fulfilling the Promise: Strengthening South Arkansas Student Access and Success**, a comprehensive initiative of effective **basic skills programming, online course development, and support services** for on-campus and online students. **Endowment** is also requested to help sustain new programs and services.

## **P031A090148 – Berkeley City College, California**

**College:** Berkeley City College, a two year, degree-granting California community college

**City:** Berkeley, California

**Purpose:** Application for a grant under the Strengthening Institutions Program, United States Department of Education, Title III (CFDA Number: 84.031A)

**Project Title:** The Foundations Program, *strengthening the foundations of teaching, learning, and student success*

Through **The Foundations Program**, Berkeley City College (BCC) will address identified weaknesses in programs and services to become a stronger, more effective **learner-centered** minority-serving institution serving a student population that is 24 percent African-American, 12 percent Hispanic; 60 percent female; 82 percent part-time; and 41 percent age 24 and younger. There are 230 teaching faculty members, 29 full-time; that is, only 12.6 percent of the faculty is full-time, and they teach only 20 percent of the course load. The **Foundations Program** is designed to accomplish three over-arching goals:

- To provide students the opportunities to develop the competencies identified in the institutional learning outcomes and to provide faculty training to enhance student learning;
- To provide outcomes-based, evidence-based assessment of the learning, including training of faculty and staff in assessment practices; and
- To aid students in transitioning from basic skills to transfer-level courses or careers.

This shift to a learner-centered educational model will be facilitated by two activities: Activity One: Assessment Institute – will employ evidence teams to assess institutional effectiveness in each Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) area and will design research studies to contribute to best practices models. Activity Two: Student Learning Outcomes across the Disciplines will provide educational experiences to help students develop competencies in the seven ILO areas and will provide training for faculty in learner-centered instruction. The project will result in:

- ❑ A 10 percent increase in the number of first-time students in developmental math and English courses who successfully complete a course at least one level higher.
- ❑ A five percent increase in first-time students who complete an associate of arts/associate of science (AA/AS) degree or become transfer-ready within three years.
- ❑ A system to collect data on and assess the seven identified institutional learning outcomes.
- ❑ Data documenting that students are achieving student learning outcomes.
- ❑ Training of faculty, who will report implementing new instructional or assessment methodology into their courses.

## **P031A090064 – Black Hawk College, Illinois**

Black Hawk College (BHC) is a comprehensive community college serving all or parts of nine counties in northwestern Illinois. The faculty is composed of 142 full-time and 218 part-time instructors with a faculty to student ratio of 15:1. The composition and expectations of students entering the college are changing rapidly and dramatically. The student body of 5,718 is increasingly diverse in terms of age (36 percent over 24), experience, educational preparation, gender (62 percent female) academic ability, cultural background, race (17 percent minority) language skills and the educational goals which they pursue.

If BHC is to maintain its historic commitment to open access and opportunity for all, it must develop new approaches and systems to accommodate the increasingly individualized and evolving needs of its students. Through the series of actions outlined in this application BHC will: improve outcomes for student enrolled in developmental courses; improve completion rate of minority students; increase graduation rate of BHC students; improve the delivery of student services to provide accessible services to all, with targeted intensive services to those most in need; reengineer more efficient and effective administrative and student processes to address the challenges of an increasingly under prepared, consumer oriented student body; transform the student tracking system to provide timely, relevant, longitudinal data that informs decision making at all levels; increase the value of attending BHC through system and internet technology (IT) enhancements that allow for improved services to students at the same or lower cost; and implement strategies to improve student success and thus increase total college revenues.

To accomplish these goals, the project activity is composed of five overlapping and interacting components: (1) Faculty-Centered Early Alert System; (2) Enhanced Academic Support (*tutoring, technology enhanced classrooms, faculty mini-grants*); (3) Online Student Support Services; (4) Student Tracking System; and (5) Enhanced IT Capabilities.

## **P031A090075 - Carroll College, Wisconsin**

Carroll College is a private, four-year institution of higher education located in Waukesha County, the southeastern corner of Wisconsin. In the past ten years the institution has seen numerous changes including a 45 percent increase in full-time undergraduate students and a 35 percent increase in the number of full-time faculty. Of particular concern however, are decreases in retention rates. Recent evidence of connections between declines in retention and low standardized scores in student and faculty engagement, have led the institution to review its capacity to retain students and develop a plan that will increase persistence and graduation.

Carroll College requests \$1,916,076 for a single comprehensive activity—*Pathways to Success*—to increase student retention rates which have been declining recently. Through a systematic institutional review we have determined that we can **increase student retention** through an integrated activity that will focus on: (1) developing engaged faculty; (2) instituting a comprehensive advising program; and (3) monitoring student success. Each of these three components is fundamental to the success of the Title III activity.

**Component One: Engaged Faculty.** An intentional faculty development program will include summer retreats, faculty learning communities and a faculty-to-faculty mentor program. Increased engaged classroom practices will lead to increases in student and faculty engagement, two variables that are predictive of student retention. The number of faculty trained in engaged classroom practices will increase from zero to 65 to include 50 percent of the faculty. Specific National Survey of Student Engagement NSSE and Faculty Survey of Student Engagement FSSE cluster scores will meet or exceed NSSE established predictor values.

**Component Two: Comprehensive Advising.** Through a developmental advising process, students will form stronger bonds with advisors, partake more fully in planning for academic and co-curricular activities and better articulate career and personal goals. The number of trained comprehensive academic advisors will increase from zero to 75. SSI gaps for student satisfaction with advising will be reduced by 0.2 points and NSSE advising ratings will increase by 0.1 point.

**Component Three: Monitoring Student Success.** The development of a centralized retention monitoring system and subsequent campus-wide culture of retention will assure student success and persistence. Carroll will build the monitoring system, pilot the system and develop a centralized retention infrastructure that coordinates with faculty development and advising, as well as with other aspects of campus life. This infrastructure will allow for the collection and analysis of longitudinal retention data that will assist with planning and implementing on-going monitoring and retention best practices tailored to Carroll's unique student population. Fall-to-fall freshmen retention will increase by 7.4 percent and six-year graduation rates will increase by 10.4 percent over the 2007 baseline.

## **P031A090165 – Clark State Community College, Ohio**

**Clark State Community College** is one of 23 two-year institutions of higher education in Ohio. State-funded, Clark State serves a population of 372,000 in its four-county west central Ohio service district and students throughout the Midwest via online learning. The college has three campus sites serving a disparate 70 percent urban and 30 percent rural population. Its central location is in the urban City of Springfield in Clark County. Its Greene Center serves Greene County in the southern part of its district. Leased classrooms at a career center serve Champaign and Logan Counties in the northern part of the college's district. The rate of unemployment is higher than the national average (5.2 percent) in all four of Clark State's service counties. Founded in 1961, the mission of Clark State is to "foster individual and community prosperity through access to the highest quality, learning-centered education." An open-admissions institution, the college is dedicated to preparing students for success. The college offers 90 certificate and associate degree programs, including technical and transfer programs. The college serves an average of 3,200 credit students each quarter. Of the student population, 69 percent are female, and 14 percent are minorities. More than half of Clark State students attend part-time. Their average age is 28. Clark State employs 60 full-time and 225 adjunct faculty members each quarter.

*Strengthening Student Success* is a comprehensive plan that solves significant institutional problems affecting academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability. Goals are to: (1) Improve the persistence and success of students; and (2) Decrease the time it takes for students to graduate. Outcomes are to reach Ohio state averages: (1) Improve the rate of retention for students needing to take both math and English remedial courses from 37 to 42 percent; (2) Increase the percentage of credits successfully completed from 73 to 77 percent; (3) Double the percentage of transfer students who earn their degree by the end of their third year from 7 to 14 percent; and (4) Decrease the time it takes for technical program students to graduate from 4.5 to 4.0 years.

The comprehensive implementation strategy will strengthen student engagement, continuous improvement, and student learning. Strategies to strengthen student engagement include expanding orientation and first year experience options and implementing customer relationship management software. Strategies to strengthen continuous improvement include using student and faculty surveys, data mining, and best practices research. Strategies to strengthen student learning include implementing assessment management software and providing faculty development.

Five personnel will ensure strategies are implemented and outcomes are met: a project coordinator, activity director, student success director, student success research and development specialist, and a faculty advocate for student success. An Evaluation Consultant will lead formative and summative analysis using a logic model approach to study program resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact. Programs implemented and the student success director position will remain after project funding ends. Led by the project coordinator and activity director, a student success team will be initiated to support all college implementation of the project. Institutionalization will be ensured by using existing organizational councils and committees to engage students, faculty, and staff throughout the college in the project's success.

Budgeted to implement the project is two million dollars. Personnel costs comprise just over 50 percent of total project costs. Almost one-quarter of costs are contractual. Fringe benefits costs are about 17 percent of the total. Travel costs and funding for the endowment challenge each represent approximately three percent. Equipment and supplies together comprise less than one percent of total project costs for *Strengthening Student Success* at Clark State Community College.

**P031A09079 – Colby Community College, Kansas**

Colby Community College (CCC), founded in 1964, is a public, open-door comprehensive community college serving a vast 14-county rural region of northwest Kansas. Characteristic of a region in need of economic revitalization, 40.4 percent of families are low-income and only 17.9 percent of adults have bachelor's degrees (vs. 28.6 percent statewide). Accredited by the *Higher Learning Commission* and governed by a local board of trustees, CCC offers a diversified curriculum with associate degrees in the arts and humanities in 23 areas, associate of science degrees in 26 areas, applied science degrees in 14 programs of study and one year certificate programs. **Institutional Problems:** (1) declining enrollment threatens institutional stability (29 percent decrease since 2001); (2) existing resources are prohibitive of expansion to accommodate distance delivery of coursework; and (3) stagnant revenue sources are inadequate for the development and expansion of distance delivery technology and support services. **Proposed Solution:** increase enrollment by *Developing a Distance Learning Network for Rural, Place-bound Students*. Activity initiatives consist of development of distance delivery coursework in high demand courses and programs, creation of online student support services, strengthening infrastructure to accommodate increased volume of distance courses, and faculty/staff development.

Ongoing formative and summative evaluation processes have been integrated in the design of this activity in order to assess project progress toward benchmarks in stated objectives and against defined baseline statistics and/or, when appropriate, in contrast to comparison groups. Data and information gathered through the evaluation and analysis process will be used to modify the proposed project (within federal guidelines) so as to maximize project success and positive impact of proposed strategies on improved CCC student success as defined by successful course completion, fall-to-fall retention, and graduation.

**Total Request: \$1,971,695**

## **P031A090076 – Columbus State Community College, Ohio**

Columbus State Community College in Columbus, Ohio is a two-year, state-funded community college. The college has grown from an initial enrollment of 67 students in 1963, to its current thriving 80-acre downtown campus, and nine off-campus sites serving more than 23,000 students. Columbus State's Career & Technical Programs division offers two-year career programs in more than 55 areas of business, health, public service, human service, and engineering technologies. Students with transfer intentions take the first two years of their bachelor's degree through the Arts & Sciences division, then transfer to a four-year college – often The Ohio State University or Ohio University. Since 2003 Columbus State has been the leading provider of distance learning courses in the State of Ohio. The Community Education and Workforce Development division offers for-profit educational services to business and industry while dislocated workers are served through the federal Workforce Investment Act. A testing center, language institute, continuing education classes, and licensure courses assist adults in perfecting skills that lead to employment.

Data from autumn 2007 provides the following student body characteristics:

- Unduplicated headcount, credit students totaled 23,057;
- 57.63 percent of students are female and 42.37 percent are male;
- Ethnic diversity has these percentages: White/Caucasian (69.28), Black (20.50), Asian (3.23), Hispanic (2.02), and race unknown (4.98);
- 55.29 percent of students are 18 to 24 years old, and 44.71 percent are 25 years or older.

In autumn 2007 Columbus State employed 278 full-time faculty and 1,222 part-time/adjunct faculty. The faculty-to-student ratio reported at that time was 1:15.

Through data collection and analysis, Columbus State has identified three academic and institutional weaknesses: (1) the College falls short on graduation and transfer rates; (2) it experiences low persistence rates; and (3) it does not have processes that influence retention.

Therefore, with Title III funding, Columbus State will achieve the goal of increasing student success to achieve greater rates of retention by: (1) building infrastructure to support effective **tutoring**; (2) building infrastructure to effectively coordinate, deliver, and track advising for **articulation**; and (3) implementing the Blackboard **Portal System** to provide student access to retention and transfer services.

Columbus State will utilize Title III funds to standardize and enhance academic tutoring efforts by introducing new strategies such as Supplemental Instruction and offering faculty development. Articulation information will be organized and made available to advisors, faculty, and students to improve transfer rates. Retention efforts will be expanded by providing information and services through the college's Blackboard Web portal. These services will include online tutoring options for distance learners, articulation information and guidance, as well as early warning messages and notices of important dates such as registration and fee payment.

Strengthening the institution's retention efforts will increase the college's persistence, graduation, and transfer rates with an additional outcome of improving fiscal stability.

## **P031A090152 – Cleveland State University, Ohio**

Cleveland State University (CSU, four-year public) and Cuyahoga Community College Metropolitan Campus (Tri-C Metro, two-year public) are Ohio institutions located one mile apart in downtown Cleveland. Our shared primary service population is the urban core surrounded by metropolitan Cleveland.

The two institutions were founded one year apart during the turbulent 1960s, when civil unrest devastated the city, and matured while the city's blue-collar, heavy manufacturing base crumbled. Tri-C was founded in 1963, the first community college in Ohio. CSU assumed the holdings of Fenn College a year later. Our original missions were similar: serve the higher education needs of Cleveland's inner city. Today, both have multi-campus serving the underprivileged inner city and the more affluent parts of Northeast Ohio. At both institutions, the most diverse campuses are located downtown. Our institutions have recently recommitted and propose to reconnect and refocus back onto our original missions, thus joining a massive revitalization effort that is underway to make downtown Cleveland once again a thriving metropolis.

In addition to a number of graduate degrees, CSU offers Bachelor degrees in 70 major fields. Tri-C Metro offers more than 1,200 courses leading to Associate of Arts and Science (AAS) transfer degrees, and 130 career AAS and certificate programs. Both are accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.

Our two institutions – CSU serving as the lead on this project – propose in this Cooperative Arrangement to provide a model for an urban college transfer initiative, the “*Cleveland Transfer Connection*.” The project consists of four components:

**Student Services:** Developing student success teams at CSU and Tri-C Metro.

**Academic Programs:** Developing Learning Communities at CSU and Tri-C Metro.

**Infrastructure:** Developing two Transfer Success Centers – first at Tri-C Metro and then at CSU; tutoring /financial aid; student tracking; program agreements.

**Faculty Development:** Tri-C Metro and CSU faculty teams.

An endowment of 7.6 percent of requested funds is sought to help sustain new practices and improvements in transfer initiatives at both institutions and for transfer scholarships.

Our proposed project aligns perfectly with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). It seeks to increase the number and percent of full-time degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled at both institutions of higher education. It seeks to increase the percentages of retention and successful transfer of those students while increasing the percentages of students enrolled at Tri-C Metro graduating within three years and at CSU graduating within six years. Five-year funding for both institutions is \$2,462,822.

## **P031A090175 – Delta College, Michigan**

**Delta College, University Center**, is located in mid-Michigan. Delta College was established in 1961 as a comprehensive community college to serve the residents of Bay, Midland, and Saginaw Counties-population 403,070 (2000 Census). During the fall 2007 semester, the college enrolled 10,387 students.

**Significant Problem:** Student retention is an ongoing, long-term concern. The college only retains 40 percent of its students from fall to fall; first-time in any college students' non-success rate is 32 percent; and less than 17 percent of career students graduate in three years. These retention issues are magnified, as 87 percent of incoming students are not prepared for college-level math courses and the number of high school graduates is declining. It is critical for the college to identify incoming students' goals and provide the instruction, academic support services, and student engagement activities to assist students to successfully achieve their enrollment objectives.

The consequences of not solving this problem are significant. The long-term financial viability of the college is dependent upon student enrollment. Tuition provides 35 percent of college revenues and state appropriations are tied to enrollment and performance measures, including graduation rates. As regional employers transition from low-skill, high-wage automotive manufacturing jobs to high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand jobs in healthcare, the chemical industry, and alternative energy, it is critical for Delta College to produce associate degreed graduates with the required skills.

**Activity:** Delta College will solve this problem by increasing student retention. Title III project components will: (1) train faculty in developmental or online pedagogy and learning strategies; (2) train student services and academic support staff to work effectively with developmental, online, first-generation, and at-risk students; (3) provide supplemental academic, student support, and student engagement activities to at-risk students; and (4) increase the retention of developmental, online, first-generation, and at-risk students.

**Title III Request:** The college is requesting \$1,511,181 over five years and will provide \$465,387 in institutional match for project management and evaluation.

**Project Outcomes:** By September 30, 2013, this project will increase: (1) within semester retention; (2) fall-to-winter semester retention; (3) fall-to-fall semester retention; (4) the graduation rate; (5) participating developmental students' grade point average; (6) participating developmental students' retention; and (7) online students' retention.

**Project Management:** The project director is Trevor Kubatzke, the Vice President of Student and Educational Services, who reports directly to the President. Mr. Kubatzke will devote 20 percent of time to project management and evaluation.

## **P031A090123 - Dyersburg State Community College, Tennessee**

The **Student Engagement Equals Success** project will transform the college and bring its practices more in line with its mission. The key objectives are to improve the success, retention, and graduation rates of students. Strategies are based on best practices in creating a learner-centered environment and assisting students in developmental programs. The project will strengthen and integrate three closely-related college structures critical to student success: teaching and learning processes, advisement and counseling, and support services for students. Outcomes include a faculty well-equipped to engage students in the learning process; stronger academic advising, student assessment, and career planning services; and in-depth academic support services that include assessment, prescriptive skills development, tutoring, and flexible scheduling. Incorporating technology to provide the services will increase the availability of services to students. The project will result in increased student success by creating an environment for students that implements a holistic approach to learning.

**Institutional Information:** Dyersburg State Community College, a two-year public, community college accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate degree, provides career and college transfer programs, lifelong learning opportunities, and developmental studies programs to residents of northwestern Tennessee.

**Student Body Characteristics:** Fall 2007 headcount enrollment was 2,457 students. Racial and ethnic representation is 79.8 percent white, 17.3 percent black or African-American, and 2.9 percent other races or ethnic groups. The average age of students is 26, and 65 percent of students are female.

**Faculty Characteristics:** Dyersburg State employs 58 full-time and 136 adjunct faculty. The faculty to student ratio (based on FTE) is 1:16. The average class size is 20 students.

## **P031A090205 – Eastern Connecticut State University, Connecticut**

Eastern Connecticut State University (Eastern), a four-year, public liberal arts university in Willimantic, Connecticut, seeks \$1.5 million from the U.S. Department of Education's Strengthening Institutions Title III Part A program to implement a coordinated strategy to increase retention and progress toward graduation among its diverse student body, many of whom enter the institution under-prepared for university-level study. This *Strengthening Institutions Title III* project responds to the needs identified in Eastern's recently completed strategic planning process and is correlated with several academic improvement and faculty development initiatives to be implemented by Eastern in fall 2008. Eastern's five-year *Increasing Retention and Academic Success among Eastern's At-Risk Students* project will implement three coordinated strategies: (1) centralizing and strengthening student academic support services through a new Student Success Center; (2) strengthening student advising and academic planning skills for identified at-risk students; and (3) providing enhanced skill assessment and career mentoring and new student experiential learning activities.

One of four Connecticut state universities (CSU), Eastern serves one of the highest-need student populations within the CSU system. Eastern has 4,898 undergraduate students (2115 males and 2783 females) and 341 graduate students. Included in the total are 84 percent white, five percent Hispanic, two percent Asian, one percent American Indian and seven percent black, non-Hispanic. Eighty-four percent of students are age 25 or younger. The teacher-student ratio is 16:1 with 199 full-time and 213 part-time instructors. Minority group members account for twenty-six percent of the full-time faculty and twenty-one percent of the administration. The institution identifies inclusion as a primary value in its academic culture.

Many of Eastern's students risk dropping out or not graduating on time. Low-income students comprise 38 percent of enrollment. A total of 51.5 percent of entering full-time students at Eastern are the first in their families to attend college. Equally important, more than 60 percent of entering Eastern students now take developmental math courses and 42 percent of entering students are not prepared to take the foundation writing and composition course. Over the past four years, 25 percent of entering students do not return for their second year. Of the entering Eastern cohort in 2000, only 48 percent of students graduated in six years.

Eastern's recently completed strategic planning process has helped the entire university community to define strengths, weaknesses and significant problems in academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability. Eastern's new President, Dr. Elsa Nuñez, has identified the need for earlier intervention and more effective advisement and academic support services as a primary institutional strengthening goal. Title III funding will assist Eastern in achieving these academic goals by partial funding of the three interrelated strengthening activities to be initiated in fall 2008. Based on review of other Title III grantees' retention efforts and its own on-campus research, Eastern will establish a new Student Success Center that will offer comprehensive, centralized advisement and academic planning, academic support in math and writing, and tutoring for at-risk students in other subject areas, and new career development, mentoring and student engagement services. Using a data driven approach for increased retention and student success, Eastern will refine, centralize and expand advising and academic support services to students identified as most in need of these services. Ongoing professional development and engagement of faculty and involvement and feedback from students will determine the efficacy of the Student Success Center. An external evaluator will work with Eastern's Office of Institutional Research for annual and summative project assessment.

## **P031A090185 – Harold Washington College, Illinois**

**Harold Washington College (HWC)** is one of the seven separately accredited two-year public institutions that make up District 508 – the City Colleges of Chicago. Students choose the college because of its affordability, location, flexible class schedule, wide-range of course offerings and state-of-the-art facilities.

**Student Body Characteristics:** Fall 2006, of the total number of 8,901 students enrolled, 57 percent were female. African-Americans represented the largest race/ethnic group with 42 percent, followed by Whites (20 percent), Hispanics (21 percent), Asians (13 percent) and others constituted four percent. A full 54 percent were enrolled as part-time students and the average age was 28 years old. Credit students made up 54 percent of the headcount in the fall 2006 term. According to the Director of Financial Aid at Harold Washington College during the 2006 – 2007 Academic Year, 45 percent of the students enrolled in credit programs at the college received some type of financial aid. A total of 55 percent were employed (33 percent worked full-time). Perhaps the greatest challenge is that nearly seventy percent of all students entering HWC test below college level in English and mathematics, and into developmental education courses. Fifty percent of the students who enter these programs may not complete their first year of community college.

**Faculty Characteristics:** As of fall semester 2007, HWC employed 380 faculty members, of whom 55 percent were full-time. Fifty-one percent of the full-time faculty members were women. The ethnicity/race of full-time faculty at that time was 53 percent White, 28 percent African-American, six percent Hispanic and 10 percent Asian. The faculty (FTE) to student (FTE) ratio was 1:10.

**The Project:** The *Developing Career Pathways* project targets HWC most vulnerable, at-risk students and has as its main focus to modify and strengthen the developmental education curriculum, to integrate these improved courses into contextually based, career specific certificate programs and finally, to surround the students with the needed comprehensive support services to guarantee their success. Completers are expected transition into the workforce, secure employment and bridge to completing their Associates degree.

Accomplishing this activity will include the following:

- Development of career specific, short-term, contextually based learning programs which incorporate developmental English, reading and math components;
- Comprehensive academic and nonacademic support services provided through the development of pathways that connect the student to both career and academic ladders and include advising, tutoring, career planning, coordination with an early alert system, and other support services as needed.
- Transition of successful completers to careers and to Associates degree programs to continue their education.

**Institutionalization:** The institutionalization of the program at the end of the grant is a commitment of the college. The President's involvement, the grant's management structure, the evaluation and planning process and the college's in-kind support all are imperative to the success of the transition.

**The Request:** HWC is requesting Title III funding at the level of \$ 1,416,608 over a five-year period in order to support the full implementation of *Developing Career Pathways: Targeting Developmental Education Students and Transitioning Them into Productive Careers*.

## **P031A0900018 – Enterprise-Ozark Community College, Alabama**

Established in 1965, Enterprise-Ozark Community College (EOCC), a member of the Alabama Community College System, is a public, two-year institution of higher education governed by the Alabama State Board of Education. The college has campuses in Enterprise and Ozark, Alabama, and sites in Mobile and Fort Rucker, Alabama, and it offers liberal arts, career/technical, and non-credit instruction.

Enrollment in the fall of 2007 totaled 2,189 credit and non-credit students. Of these, 53 percent were male, and 47 percent were female. In terms of age, 43 percent of these were 20 or younger, 30 percent were between 21 and 29, and 27 percent were 30 or older. The racial breakdown of the fall 2007 cohort was as follows: 73 percent (white, non-Hispanic); 19 percent (black); three percent (Hispanic); two percent (Asian/Pacific Islander); one percent (Native American); and two percent (Other). There were a total of 143 full-time and adjunct faculty members, with a mean faculty-to-student ratio of 15:1. The college's 2007-2008 operating budget was \$15,187,264.

### **Activity -- \$1,254,211.76 over five years. Improving Student Retention and Persistence.**

This five-year Activity represents a comprehensive, coordinated effort to improve student retention and persistence. To that end, the strategies proposed in this document include providing peer support to selected admitted and current students, improving orientation and advising programs, increasing and facilitating student access to financial aid services, expanding and enhancing student access to college computing resources, and providing for faculty and staff professional development, as well as improving the means by which knowledge gained in professional development activities may be effectively broadcast to a wider college audience.

Proposed key outcomes at the end of the five-year project:

- An eight percent increase in the number of students retained from fall to spring;
- An eight percent increase in the number of students retained from fall to the subsequent fall;
- A 15 percent increase in the number of students who persist until graduation.

Approximately 47 percent of the Activity portion of the budget is for Personnel, 17 percent for Benefits, three percent for Travel, two percent for Equipment, 22 percent for Supplies, two percent for Contractual Services, and seven percent for Other.

### **Project Management and Evaluation -- \$455,623.24 over five years.**

The college is committed to the successful implementation of an effective but sustainable project that will serve current and future students. To that end, the monitoring of the efficacy of the project's components is essential, and the utilization of evaluation instruments and processes will ensure the accomplishment of project goals. To facilitate this, the college will contract with an external evaluator, who shall assist Title III personnel in implementing the evaluation plan. Approximately 68 percent of the project management/evaluation portion of the budget is for Personnel, 25 percent for Benefits, one percent for required Travel, three percent for Supplies, and three percent for Contractual Services.

### **P031A090139 – Florence-Darlington Technical College, South Carolina**

Located halfway between Maine and Miami in the heart of the Pee Dee region is Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) in Florence, South Carolina. FDTC's service area (Florence, Darlington and Marion Counties) has some of the highest poverty rates in the nation coupled with some of the lowest educational attainment rates in the Southeast. FDTC is a two-year, technical, public institution. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and offers 65 degree and certificate programs. In the 2006-2007 academic year, FDTC had 3,957 students (2,188 were full-time). Of those students, 48 percent were minorities. Sixty-seven percent of students were female and the largest age group was 20 to 24 years. There were 103 full-time and 125 adjunct faculty with a student-to-faculty ratio of seventeen to one.

This Title III project, *Mathematics Momentum (M<sup>2</sup>): Student Learning of Mathematics Competencies Via Integrated Instruction*, addresses three significant weaknesses identified through a comprehensive college-wide evaluation process. The college must address these weaknesses in order to fulfill its mission and strengthen the institution. Students are not prepared to enter curriculum-level mathematics courses and must take pre-curricular mathematics courses; students often cannot complete pre-curricular mathematics courses; and FDTC lacks facilities conducive to a proven remedy: a blended learning environment. At FDTC, minorities (48 percent of students) graduate at lesser rates than non-minority students (eight percent versus 20 percent). In order to increase minority academic success, FDTC has efforts underway: targeted marketing and recruiting; academic advising and personal counseling; college skills courses; financial aid assistance; early academic alert system; and on-campus child care.

To boost the success rates of all students, FDTC has two goals: **Goal one** is to increase student knowledge of course competencies in pre-curricular mathematics courses. The first measurable objective is that by 2010, when all main campus pre-curricular courses are in a blended learning environment, the average difference in pre-assessment scores and post-assessment scores will increase more than 10 percent; **Goal two** is to increase student completion rates in curricular mathematics courses. The second measurable objective is that by 2013, the completion rates of curricular mathematics courses will increase more than 10 percent.

The Mathematics Department has long been aware that student completion rates were consistently below the college average and has tried other strategies to help students succeed. However, much of what was done to smooth the pathway through mathematics yielded little progress. After extensive research, FDTC began creating a blended environment and initiated pilot Math Hub sections. Data gleaned from primary-goal studies demonstrate that students learn more in the blended environment than in the traditional classroom. Students taking courses in the Math Hub increased their competency skills by over 19 percent. The improvement in student success rates following the intervention was statistically significant and data indicate that students in the Hub succeed at a higher rate than those in curricular classes. However, *the improvement in pre-curriculum course completion rates overall is still modest because limited funds prevent the application to all pre-curricular mathematics classes. This grant will be a vehicle for increasing the completion rate for all students.*

FDTC is requesting funds to expand the Math Hub to include all pre-curricular mathematics courses (approximately 1,400 students per semester). FDTC is also seeking funding to transition selected curriculum mathematics courses to the hub environment, serving an additional 500 students. The expansion of the Math Hub will lead to lasting, measurable, documented increases in student learning outcomes. Institutionalizing proven technologies and pedagogies and renovating facilities for the blended learning environment will strengthen the college and the region.

## **P031A090209 – Gaston College, North Carolina**

Gaston College (GC), founded in 1964, is a comprehensive, community college serving Gaston and Lincoln counties in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. It offers 90 associate degree, certificate, and diploma programs, numerous continuing education courses, and customized industry training. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, GC enrolls approximately 5,000 students in its curriculum programs each term and averages over 16,000 students annually in its Continuing Education programs.

Gaston College operates a main campus in Dallas and an East Campus in Belmont in Gaston County, and a campus in Lincolnton in Lincoln County. Community support is strong. The 178-acre Dallas campus began with two and now has 28 buildings (estimated value = \$77,751,068). Thanks to good stewardship and aggressive fundraising (voters passed a \$24.9 million bond issue in 2006), five major buildings have been constructed on the Dallas campus since 1996 and two more are underway. Major renovations are also being completed on the East Campus, and a new Science and Technology Building in Lincolnton will open in fall 2008. The student demographics are relatively typical of community colleges nationally: Unduplicated headcount enrollment in 2005-06 was 7,140 (2,394 male, 4,746 female; 5,562 white; 1,578 non-white; 3,692 age 25 or younger; 1,579 age 26 to 35, and 1,869 age 36 or older).

But massive job losses in the 1990s left the service area economically distressed. It shares some of the growth but not the wealth of nearby Charlotte in Mecklenburg County. In 2005, the per capita income of Gaston and Lincoln counties was \$29,854 and \$26,785, respectively. Mecklenburg County's was \$42,984. Only 3.8 percent of Gaston County residents, and 3.3 percent of Lincoln County residents hold a graduate degree, while 10.5 percent of Mecklenburg County residents do; and the lower educational attainment is inversely proportional to the unemployment rate: Gaston, 5.5 percent; Lincoln, 5 percent; and Mecklenburg, 4.5 percent in 2006. To the extent that Gaston and Lincoln counties' economic development hinges on retraining workers for higher-tech jobs of the future, GC's student attrition is particularly troubling. While the overall retention rate for 2006 was 52 percent, for those receiving financial aid it was 48 percent; and for those receiving financial aid plus enrolled in one or more developmental courses, it was only 34 percent. The current completion rate hovers at an unacceptable 18 percent, and too many of those who leave default on their Pell grants: GC estimates its losses on loan defaults to be as high as \$1.9 million annually.

Research on student success (e.g., The Lumina Foundation's "Achieving the Dream" project) suggests several clear strategies this project hopes to adopt. In particular, we need to address the following institutional problems. Advising is scattered throughout the college and is ineffective for at-risk students who need more individualized attention. The student ratio to counselors is 954:1, creating registration wait-times of up to four hours. Data collection and retrieval is too fragmented and staff unequipped to make concrete recommendations based on it. Finally, GC has not had a structured approach to faculty and staff development in dealing with non-traditional learning styles.

**ACTIVITY:** By "STRENGTHENING STUDENT SERVICES AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT TO IMPROVE SUCCESS AND RETENTION OF AT-RISK STUDENTS," GC will: Increase the success and retention rate of at-risk students; (2) Improve the academic advising process; and (3) Improve data tracking and outcome assessment related to retention, persistence, and academic success in order to make timely managerial decisions based on concrete and easily accessible data. These goals will be achieved by implementing a holistic advising process for at-risk students, making curriculum changes, providing structured faculty and staff development, and improving data gathering and analysis capabilities. These objectives are in full alignment with the college's strategic initiatives and goals, which makes their institutionalization a college priority.

## **P031A090249 – Genesee Community College, New York**

Genesee Community College proposes to implement two activities included within its project titled **Improving Institutional Management Through Technology and Professional Development**. The first activity, “Banner on Linux Operating System,” will implement the migration of the college’s Banner information system from the Open Virtual Memory System VMS platform, which is old and unlikely to be supported in the near future, to a Linux Operating System. This activity includes support for the technical installation of the new operating system, and the technical training of the college’s computer services staff that will carry out the implementation and the subsequent maintenance of the system. By September 2013, Banner will have been migrated to Linux, and new enrollment management software will enable the college to identify and track the experience of “high risk” students, and to evaluate the usefulness of specific “wellness” interventions on student success.

The second activity, “Professional Development: Student Wellness for Retention,” will adopt Dr. Bill Hettler’s “Wellness Wheel” guide to wellness, and treat students’ adverse behaviors as the result of lack of information and understanding. The college will embark on a substantial professional development activity that will result in college staff who are able to provide learning opportunities for students so that they understand “wellness” and the need to pursue their own “wellness” in their approach to physical, financial, mental, social, and academic challenges in their lives. The college has long treated student disciplinary encounters as “teachable moments,” but has lacked a coherent strategy to address a wide range of behavioral issues through engaging students in learning. The Wellness Wheel provides that strategy. The goal of this activity is to improve the retention rate of Genesee students from 61 percent all-to-fall retention at the present time to at least 70 percent by 2013.

Additionally, the college will build its endowment through matching funds provided by Title III so that scholarships and emergency loans can be provided from the earnings of the endowment to students who face substantial financial challenges that threaten their ability to stay enrolled in college .

## **P031A090160 – Indian Hills Community College, Iowa**

Indian Hills Community College (Indian Hills or IHCC), Ottumwa, Iowa, is located in the Midwest. It was founded in 1966 as a two-year public, institution with 4,180 students in fall of 2007. The current operating budget is \$26,069,491 (June 30, 2007).

**Activity 1: Upgrade Technology to Strengthen Academic Programs and Institutional Management**  
\$1,964,726 over five years.

- ◆ Strengthen **Academic Programs** by: (1) **increasing student access** through technology upgrades that will assure uninterrupted distance learning services and improved online offerings; and by (2) **providing faculty and staff with training and technical support services** to effectively utilize new technology to improve teaching-learning strategies and individual student services; and
- ◆ Strengthen **Institutional Management** by: (3) **purchasing, installing and using imaging software** to improve security and efficiency; and by (4) **replacing storage area network (SAN)** to increase data storage capacity and guarantee continued maintenance support.
  - Increase the number of upgraded Iowa Communication Network (ICN) Classrooms assuring continued student access to distance learning.
  - Increase the number and quality of online class offerings.
  - Increase faculty skills and knowledge in the use of online interactive educational technology and pedagogy.
  - Image documents, such as student records and business files, transforming them from paper to electronic form.
  - Increase security and institutional efficiency through improved document management.
  - Increase data storage capacity to enable adequate space for daily business activities, online software and imaging technology.

The overarching problem Indian Hills will address is its ability to provide quality educational services throughout its 10-county rural area while enhancing the efficiency of the faculty and staff to serve individual student needs.

The proposed project will make Indian Hills more self-sufficient and expand its capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the college's academic programs, institutional management and fiscal stability.

Expenditures for implementation of this activity include the following: 31 percent, Personnel; 11 percent, Fringe Benefits; less than one percent, Travel; eight percent, Equipment; 26 percent, Supplies; and 23 percent, Contractual.

## **P031A090138 – InterAmerican College, California**

InterAmerican College (IAC) is a private, non-profit 501c-3 institution of higher education incorporated in the State of California located in National City, California, a small city south of San Diego within seven miles of the Mexican border. IAC is the first Latino college in Southern California and the fourth in the nation. It was founded in 1998 to provide access to Latinos and other minority working adult students. Since it is a new college, growth has been gradual and carefully monitored. IAC prepares undergraduates in four degrees: Spanish, Liberal Studies, Science, and Interdisciplinary Studies; and in postbaccalaureate teacher preparation programs. This year IAC will enroll the first nursing students. Through non-traditional programs, IAC provides access to a quality college education to working adults. Ninety-five percent of students are Latinos and 85 percent of are women. IAC recruits transfer students from community colleges and also educated immigrants who completed their education in foreign universities. IAC schedules courses in the evening and on the weekends. Due to the urgent need for trained bilingual personnel, IAC focuses on preparing bilingual teachers and bilingual nurses.

**Hispanic Academic support Institute, a three year grant**, proposes to provide training and support to develop the capacity of IAC. The goals are: (1) to improve student learning through faculty development; (2) to raise academic level in math, science, English, and Spanish; (3) to increase retention and graduation rates through support services; (4) to improve the science lab; (5) to add academic resources through expanded library services; (6) to implement distance learning capacity; and (7) to support sustainability through endowment.

Due to the budget crisis in California, local state colleges are capped and are limiting enrollment. Colleges are using entry grade point averages to reduce the number of new applicants. This is affecting minority students negatively. Furthermore, there is only a five percent transfer rate of Latino students from the community college to four-year institutions. IAC's open enrollment will provide the access that is needed in this time of budget cuts. In order to serve low-income students, IAC's tuition is affordable.

**Institutionalization of plan.** IAC successfully institutionalized the para-professional and teacher training programs through seed money from three U.S. Department of Education grants. The hispanic-serving institutions grant will build IAC's capacity to graduate science, math and Spanish teachers. With a strong science lab and resources, IAC will address the shortage of bilingual nurses in Southern California. IAC has built the program through funding from the California Wellness Foundation.

## **P031A090171 - Madonna University, Michigan**

Madonna University (Livonia, Michigan) seeks \$2.5 million in funding from the Title III – Strengthening Institutions program (\$500,000 per year for five years) in order to improve the graduation and retention rates of targeted populations of students: first-time-in-any-college (FTIAC) students; African-American male students; and part-time students, particularly adult learners. *Crissman Ishler and Upcraft (2005)* argue that in the past two decades there has been a decline in student admissions and that changing student demographics and characteristics have proven to be a challenge to attracting and retaining college students. Since there are fewer students enrolling or persisting into subsequent college terms or years, there are fewer financial resources flowing into the university, affecting functions such as student advising, academic support services, student services, and other types of infrastructures, such as technologically driven services and data management, which are at the heart of institutional decision-making. The activities presented in this proposal speak to the dynamic interplays of various environmental factors (Astin, 1993), social and academic factors (Tinto, 1975, 1993, 2003), noncognitive variables (Sedlacek, 2004), and institutional satisfaction factors (Bean, 1983) that are reflected in the major models, theories, and theoretical frameworks discussed in contemporary research literature on college student retention. Improving student persistence toward degree completion will strengthen Madonna University's capacity to fulfill its mission and contribute to the fiscal stability of the university, given its high level of tuition dependency.

The strategies proposed as interventions include increasing the extent and quality of student-faculty interaction, particularly advising (objective 1); expanding academic and personal support services (objective 2); localizing services for adult learners in a centralized office (objectives 1 and 2); implementing a one-stop service shop concept that will co-locate students that are currently dispersed across the campus into a centralized location, with an advising commons adjacent to other services (objectives 1 and 2); and expanding instructional delivery options for adult learners at the university's outreach center in Orchard Lake (Michigan), 25 miles north of the main campus, by utilizing interactive video technology (objective 2). To support these activities, a third objective involves solving the data discrepancy issues that have plagued the university's management information system (Jenzabar) since its adoption by licensing business intelligence software, such as Information Builders, to facilitate the analysis of data, production of customized reports to inform decision making; and storage of reports with data from milestone moments, which is currently not possible given the dynamic character of Jenzabar.

The project's fourth objective will ensure the sustainability of the project activities after the grant period is over by creating a \$1 million endowment, the interest drawn down from which, according to the university's spending limit policy of percent, will partially fund the increased personnel and other expenses associated with the project activities. The project will address institutional challenges identified in the Comprehensive Development Plan and contribute to the university's ability to accomplish its academic goals, achieve efficiency and effectiveness in institutional management, and facilitate fiscal strength.

## **P031A090128 - Miami Dade College, Kendall Campus, Florida**

**Primary Service Population:** Residents of Miami-Dade County, Florida

**Programs of Study:** Degrees offered include: Bachelor of Science in Exceptional Student Education (ESE); Secondary Mathematics Education, and Secondary Science, with specialties in Biology; Chemistry, Earth and Science and Physics; Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Safety Management; Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Associate in Arts (university transfer programs); Educator Preparation Institute; Associate in Science and College Credit Certificates (two-year degree, college credit and certificate programs in occupational areas including –but not limited to– business, computers, aviation, hospitality and travel, criminal justice, fire science, allied health, nursing, public service, and entertainment; Associate of Applied Science (two-year degree that leads to employment); Advanced Technical Certificate (certification beyond the AAS/AS degrees); and Career Training programs including Vocational Credit Certificates (hands-on technology courses leading to employment).

**Student Body Characteristics.** (Kendall campus, 2006-2007): *Unduplicated Headcount:* 32,222 credit students; *Ethnicity:* 9.3 percent African-American; 76.3 percent Hispanic; 11.3 percent white non-Hispanic; 2.0 percent other; 1.2 percent not reported. *Gender:* 58.4 percent female; 41.6 percent male. *Age:* 5.5 percent 18 years or younger; 28.0 percent 19-20 years; 33.3 percent 21-24 years; 15.7 percent 25-30 years; 6.1 percent 31-35 years; and 11.4 percent 36 years or older. The mean age is 25.10 years old.

**Faculty Characteristics** (Kendall Campus): Full-time faculty: 194 Adjunct faculty: 412; Faculty-to-student ratio: 20:1.

**Purpose of project:** Through the Student Tutoring and Retention System (STARS) project, Miami-Dade College-Kendall Campus, in collaboration with the InterAmerican Campus and Medical Center Campus, will implement and improve student service, tutoring, and counseling programs (Title III authorized Activity Number Six). The goal of STARS is to strengthen academic programs with the goal of increasing passing rates, retention rates, and on-time graduation rates among students at high risk of failing, dropping out, and/ or not graduating on time. To accomplish this goal, STARS will achieve annual objectives leading to achievement of the following measurable objectives in the five-year project period:

1. Provide, annually, a minimum of 4,500 at-risk students with intensive assessment, tutoring, counseling, and other student services.
2. Increase total passing rates among at-risk students by 12 percentage points.
3. Increase retention rates among at-risk students by 10 percentage points.
4. Increase the percentage of at-risk students graduating from degree programs within three years by nine percentage points.

Strategies to achieve these objectives include: (1) identifying at-risk students earlier in their programs using proven computer-based and outcome-based learning assessment methods; (2) implementing new programs to increase access to online and face-to-face student services among at-risk students; and (3) more effectively guiding at-risk students into tutoring, counseling and other student services.

## **P031A090142 – Minot State University, North Dakota**

Minot State University (MSU) is a four-year, public university enrolling 3,424 students; 81.9 percent are North Dakota residents, 64 percent are female, 10 percent are students of color, and 68 percent are between the ages of 18 and 24. MSU offers 66 bachelor's level programs, 10 master's level programs, and one specialist's degree program. The university is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. MSU employs 177 full-time and 92 part-time faculty.

**Weaknesses:** Students are not engaged in their work and are not academically challenged. MSU pays little attention to first-year students. Faculty and staff are stretched too thin to provide adequate academic services. State support is declining and the pool of high school graduates in North Dakota is in decline as well. The first-to-second year retention rate (69 percent) and six-year graduation rate (29.2 percent) are extremely low. The university's endowment is small.

**Problem:** Declining enrollments. **Goal:** To increase headcount enrollment to 4,000 by 9/30/13.

**Objectives:** (1) To increase levels of engagement among our students to the level of our peer institutions nationwide, as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement, by 9/30/13. (2) To increase our first-to-second-year retention to 75 percent by 9/30/13; six-year graduation rate to 40 percent by 9/30/13, and to 43 percent by 9/30/15.

### **Strategies:**

- Establish a Center for Engagement in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to coordinate engagement and retention activities for students and faculty.
- Require three engagement experiences of all students prior to graduation. One experience will be completed during students' first year. One experience will be a field experience (e.g., internship, campus job related to major, student teaching).
- Create learning communities centered on a first year experience (FYE) course for all first-year students.
- Implement a faculty development program to enhance the first-year experience for students: workshops facilitated by visiting experts on the first-year experience; classroom observations and consultations; mentoring for inexperienced faculty.
- Develop and expand peer tutoring and mentoring programs for all students.

**Key Personnel:** Vice President for Academic Affairs Gary Rabe will serve as program coordinator (15 percent). Full-time Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Director, two half-time associate directors, full-time tutoring/mentoring coordinator, and full-time administrative assistant.

**Evaluation:** Measurement of completion of goals and objectives through National Survey of Student Engagement scores and retention, graduation, and enrollment data; and correlating academic success with participation in Title III activities. Measurement of success of project components through focused and annual project surveys and focus group interviews.

### **P031A090136 – Mount Ida College, Massachusetts**

Mount Ida College, located eight miles west of Boston, Massachusetts, is a four-year independent college that enrolls 1,431 (headcount) students in 25 baccalaureate and five associate degree programs. These academic programs are offered within four schools and one institute, including the School of Animal Science, School of Arts and Science, School of Business, School of Design, and the New England Institute (funeral service.)

Mount Ida is one of the most ethnically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse independent colleges in the northeastern United States. As of the fall 2007 semester, 30 percent of Mount Ida's 1431 students come from diverse ethnic backgrounds, 30 percent are eligible for Pell Grants, and 25 percent are the first-generation of their families to go to college. Faculty and staff strive to provide a supportive, small college environment for this diverse population. The student to faculty ratio is 14:1.

In recent years, Mount Ida has rapidly evolved from an associate degree curriculum to a comprehensive baccalaureate curriculum, increased enrollment, and added new academic programs. But the colleges' administrative processes and technology infrastructure have not kept pace with this rapid change. Mount Ida's endowment fund is very small (ranked in the bottom five percent of all college endowments) and resources to support new initiatives are limited. In particular, the ability of faculty and staff to provide efficient service for students, and implement effective retention strategies, is impaired by a complex and obsolete management information system (MIS) and aging technology infrastructure.

Mount Ida College is requesting a Strengthening Institutions grant to transition to a new MIS, make needed infrastructure upgrades, initiate new retention and advising programs that will take advantage of the capabilities of the new MIS, and improve teaching and learning through expanded faculty development programs.

## **P031A090104 - Mid-South Community College, Arkansas**

Mid-South Community College (MSCC), a rapidly-growing public two-year college in West Memphis, Arkansas, serves an impoverished, undereducated county (2000 population 50,866) in the Mississippi River Delta. The annual per capita income is just \$14,424, or about two-thirds of the national per capita income of \$21,587. The state is 49<sup>th</sup> in percent of citizens with bachelor's degrees or higher, with just 18.2 percent having degrees, compared to a national rate of 27 percent. In Crittenden County, just 12.8 percent have earned a college degree. The college offers the Associate of Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Technical Certificates, and Certificates of Proficiency. It also hosts a new University Center where four universities offer access to selected occupationally-related baccalaureate degrees.

**Students.** Sixty percent of our 1,656 students (fall 2007) are degree-seeking. Nearly all (91 percent) are first-generation, and 69 percent receive Pell grants. Just over half (54 percent) are minorities, mainly African-American, and females make up 63 percent of the enrollment. The average age is 28.

**Faculty.** Mid-South employs 32 full-time faculty, supplemented each semester by about 80 adjuncts. Both full-time and part-time faculty meet all educational requirements to teach in the particular programs they serve. The student-to-all-faculty ratio is 20 to 1, but the ratio for full-time faculty, who carry out most of the advising, is 52 to one.

**Problem.** 2008 state funding for Mid-South is just \$3,687,840 compared to the state two-year college average of \$6,223,201. MSCC has had to dip into cash reserves each of the last seven years to cover operating costs. Increasing enrollment-related revenues is critical to fiscal stability, and both internal and external analysis have determined that adding new programs in Allied Health is the best way to boost numbers as well as income, while also providing students with access to high-demand job opportunities.

The college offers a pre-nursing program to prepare students interested in health care careers for a registered nurse (RN) program offered on our campus by Arkansas State University. Only a small number, however, are admitted to the RN program, leaving the others with few choices because MSCC offers only Certified Nursing Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician, and Medical Transcription, all just one-semester Certificate of Proficiency programs. MSCC currently has inadequate resources to increase the number of Allied Health programs it offers, despite regional and national demand.

**Purpose.** The college proposes to use Title III funds to: (1) develop and pilot new Allied Health programs in Pharmacy Technician (one-year Technical Certificate), Medical Assistant, and Respiratory Therapist (both two-year AAS programs); (2) develop and equip an Allied Health Skills Lab to accommodate enrollment in the new programs; (3) develop new support services (such as infusing study skills, test-taking skills, etc., into the curriculum) while linking Allied Health and pre-nursing students to such existing services as tutoring and advising. By providing students access to high-demand Allied Health programs and offering enhanced academic support to pre-nursing and Allied Health students, the college expects to see enrollment-related revenues rise, thus strengthening its financial stability.

## **P031A090044 - Northeast Alabama Community College (NACC), Alabama**

Identified weaknesses and significant problems have led to the proposal of one activity, Enhancing Student Engagement in Learning and Student/Faculty Interaction with Technology, with two components: (1) Technology Infrastructure and (2) The Student/Faculty Technology Center.

The first component, Technology Infrastructure will include: In each of the Years one-three, an existing classroom will be converted into a technologically state-of-the-art teleconferencing/distance learning classroom. The classroom converted in year one will become the dedicated Student/Faculty Technology Center (SFTC). Each classroom will contain a Tandberg MXP Integrator Podium2/Tandberg Mode 8000 Server, or equivalent, with cameras, microphones speakers, DVD/VCR, and associated hardware and software. The SFTC will also contain a Tandberg Content Server with software to store and manage streaming data. An HP MFP laser printer will be placed in each of the classrooms. NACC will convert 31 existing traditional classrooms and two large lecture halls to electronic “smart classrooms” with Internet connectivity. One setup with an additional 10 computers will be installed in the SFTC for training purposes. Each smart classroom will include the following: 17” Walk and Talk Interactive Panel, podiums with DVA/VCR and A/V controls, NEC projectors, screen, and sound system, mounting hardware, programming and installation, and IBM-compatible computers.

For the second component, The Student/Faculty Technology Center, the college proposes to build student and faculty skills and competencies in the use of classroom technologies thereby dramatically increasing student exposure to a more interactive, technologically sophisticated, learning environment. This will be accomplished through structured student/faculty/tech support learning communities. Initially, the students will be composed of peer tutors; then year two-three will introduce developmental studies students into the learning communities. The combination of technology exposure and mentor/mentee relationships built in the learning communities should dramatically increase student achievement and retention.

In an article in *eSchool News*, Susan Patrick, formerly of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Educational Technology emphasizes that online learning is opening doors, especially to low-income, rural, and minority students. Lemuel Watson wrote an article called “Access and Technology”, published in *New Directions for Community Colleges* (no. 128, Winter 2004), where he used the term “digital divide.” He states that although community colleges have made access to higher education more widely available, there is still a disparity in access to technology. Watson states, “Educating these learners and providing them with access to and support for technology is the first step in bridging the digital divide” (p. 33). He goes on to cite Madden (2003) whose research indicates that the South shows the lowest levels of Internet usage.

In addition to collecting and reporting an array of output data, including data on the number of students and faculty trained and the infrastructure components installed, the **evaluation plan** includes components of **experimental design**. There will be experimental and control groups established with developmental studies students. The experimental group will consist of those students who are in the learning community with the technology component. The control group will be a randomly selected group of students in a learning community without the technology component. A second “control group” will be a randomly selected group of developmental studies students who are not in any learning community.

With the current interest in helping developmental students remain in college and achieve, there are many implications in this study that would be of interest to publications and conference. Results will be made available and presented at professional outlets such as these.

## **P031A090050 - Northeast Community College, Nebraska**

Northeast Community College is a comprehensive, public, two-year institution of higher education offering vocational/technical, liberal arts, college transfer, and continuing education programs of study. It serves residents across a twenty county area in northeast Nebraska—a rurally isolated area consisting of small towns and rural communities built around farming and ranching—with a population of 161,068 residents. It is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to award two-year Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate in Nursing degrees, one-year diplomas, and certificates.

The faculty consists of 102 full-time and 395 part-time members. They taught 24,387 (3,302 FTE students) students in 2006-07: 7,620 credit students and 16,767 noncredit students. The student faculty ratio is 15.3:1, and the average class size is 25 students. Forty percent of the credit students are full-time and 60 percent are part-time; 53 percent are female and 47 percent are male student. Two-thirds of the students are the first in their families to attend college. The student body characteristics closely reflect the general population characteristics. The largest ethnic group in both students and district residents is Anglo (96 percent), followed by Hispanic (three percent) and African American (one percent). Most families have lived here for generations.

This proposal addresses several significant institutional problems: 1) no distance learning access to degrees; 2) inadequate distance access to student learning and support services; 3) limited distance learning faculty/staff development; and 4) limited technology resources to support distance learning. The college seeks to achieve three key overall institutional goals:

1) to increase access for students at a distance through the development of online courses and degrees; 2) to expand and strengthen the design and delivery of distance learning courses and learning support services; and 3) to expand and strengthen distance access to student support services.

Specific objectives focus on the following performance measures (summarized): 1) increasing the number of distance learning courses; 2) increasing the number of online degrees; 3) increasing the number of students with online degree intents; 4) increasing the online course completion rate; 5) increasing the number of students enrolled in online courses; and 6) increasing the fall-to-fall persistence rate among first-time, degree-seeking distance learning students.

Specific activities include faculty and technology development; integration of online tutoring, writer's clinic and learning resources into distance learning courses; development of online student support services and enrollment management services. A grant of \$399,995 is requested for the first year.

## **P031A090167 - Northland College, Wisconsin**

Northland College is a private four-year residential college located in Ashland, Wisconsin; founded in 1892. Since 1972 Northland has defined itself by integrating environmental studies with the traditional disciplines of a liberal arts college. It is accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) to award baccalaureate degrees.

*Mission: Northland College integrates liberal arts studies with an environmental emphasis; enabling those it serves to address the challenges of the future.*

**Student Characteristics:** Fall 2006: 692 headcount. These students are predominately female, (57.4 percent), young (85 percent), white (86 percent), and traditional undergraduates (96 percent). The average ACT score is 25.0. More than 49 percent receive Pell Grants or other need-based assistance and 95 percent receive institutional grants.

**Faculty Characteristics:** There are 40 full-time faculty members and 20 FTE adjunct faculty, for a 1:13.8 faculty/student ratio. Supporting faculty and students are: 16 executive, 47 full time and 21 part time professionals, 24 full time and 3 part time clerical and 6 service/maintenance staff for a total of 96 employees. 2007 Annual Budget: \$18,300,000.

**One Activity:** \$1,999,994; Increases student retention and graduation rates by implementation and assessment of a new college-wide curriculum (core, programs and paired majors) with support services for faculty, improved student engagement, and expanded classroom technology led by a Learning Technologies Coordinator (New Hire). Required assessment necessitates improved institutional data collection, storage, and access to support students records, fiscal management, and provide material for institutional research, evaluation, and academic review at all levels; to be supported by an Institutional Researcher beginning in year three (New Hire) and through faculty and staff release, workshops, seminars and speakers and opportunities to attend national conferences. Project Management at \$163,950 is just 8.2 percent of the total budget. Expected outcomes: 1) increased retention and graduation rates; 2) improved access to institutional data; 3) assessment of student learning outcomes in relation to a new curriculum; 4) improved skills, knowledge and competency of faculty and staff; and 5) improved satisfaction and engagement of students.

## **P031A090015 – North West Arkansas Community College, Arkansas**

North West Arkansas Community College (NWACC), whose main campus is in Bentonville, Arkansas, is a public, open-door, comprehensive two-year college serving more than 8,600 students annually at the main campus and six sites throughout its service area of Benton and Washington Counties, Arkansas. The college offers associate degrees and certificates in a wide range of general and technical studies as well as adult basic education, GED, ESL, workforce development, and continuing education. Only 17 years old, NWACC has grown an average of 11 percent annually and is now the second largest, and 53 percent larger than, the average of 22 two-year colleges in the state. Nine elected business and community leaders serve as trustees, and the college maintains full accreditation by the NCA Higher Learning Commission through its Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). The college's mission is "to serve and strengthen the community through learning for living."

Growth in the service area's population (382,566, +23 percent since 2000, ACS 2006) explains the college's expansion and its current challenge, to meet the needs of increasingly diverse students: female, older, first-generation, employed, minority. For example, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander student enrollments have increased a third to a quarter in the last year alone. More than three-quarters of entering minority students and 71 percent of all students place into academic skills (pre-college, developmental) courses; 44 percent of minority and 24 percent of all entering students place into academic skills courses in math, writing, and reading. Their course failure rates range from a third to more than a half. Not surprisingly, too few reach their goals: a third of our students leave from fall to spring and 56 percent from fall to fall.

Our response has been to analyze the problems NWACC faces in meeting underprepared students' needs: ineffective academic skills courses, enrollment-limiting structures in classes for non-native English speakers, and inadequate academic support structures and student services. We therefore propose a project entitled Strengthening Academic Resources and Support, or STARS. STARS will provide a comprehensive array of academic resources (academic skills courses, College Intensive English (ESL), writing tutoring, bridge programs, learning communities) and support services (assessment / placement, planning, advisement, early alert/referral, mentoring, progress tracking/degree audit). Endowment is also requested to help sustain new capabilities and strengthen fiscal stability.

## **P031A090072 - Pratt Community College, Kansas**

Pratt Community College is requesting funding for a single activity designed to increase enrollment through developing additional online courses, implementing e-recruiting practices, expanding academic services, and strengthening related faculty development. The activity proposes to build on the existing collaboration between the Division of Students and Enrollment Management, Division of Finance and Operations, and Division of Instruction to ensure a seamless approach for increasing enrollment and ensuring retention of students from pre-entry to graduation. Four components comprise the proposed Title III activity. The four components are:

- **Component 1: Development of Online Courses** – Additional general education and technical education courses will be developed for offering in an online format in order to attract new student populations, including non-traditional students and minority students.
- **Component 2: Implementation of Electronic Recruiting (e-recruiting) and Student Information System** – An e-recruiting program and Web portal will be developed to increase online applications. In addition, a new document imaging system will be implemented to improve academic advising and case management processes.
- **Component 3: Expansion of the Student Success Center** – Peer tutoring and case management services will be implemented aimed at facilitating academic success.
- **Component 4: Providing Faculty Development Opportunities** – Professional development opportunities will be provided to faculty/staff pertinent to the activity components. Such opportunities will target advising, instructional technology, and online course development.

Activity objectives focus on building full-time student enrollment, improving semester-to-semester student retention, improving academic success in developmental education, and developing innovative online coursework to meet the regional needs and result in institutional growth.

## **P031A090106 – Mary Frances Clarke College, Iowa**

Mary Frances Clarke, the college founder, told her faculty to “teach the students to think for themselves.” That mandate is alive and well 165 years later. Clarke College is situated in Dubuque, IA in the northeast quadrant of Iowa bordering Wisconsin and Illinois, a largely rural area. Clarke serves 1,230 students from 22 states, Puerto Rico and five foreign countries. The fall 2007 enrollment includes 1,022 undergraduates (83 percent) and 208 graduate students. The faculty includes 74 full-time, 12 part-time and about 54 adjunct faculty members. The student-to-faculty ratio is 11:1. As an independent college in the highly competitive Iowa higher education market, the college strives to implement programs and services to support current needs. Over the past five years, most campus teaching spaces have been equipped with Internet access and presentation technology and 75 percent of the faculty have achieved basic competency in the use of some instructional software and teaching technologies. Shifting student demographics and heightened expectations for access to and use of technology in the learning environment have lead to a heightened strategic focus on delivery and design of courses using alternative pedagogies and formats.

**Activity: Creating a Technology-rich Teaching and Learning Environment.** The activity supported by this proposal will contribute to the growth and self-sufficiency of Clarke College by creating a technology-rich teaching and learning environment that will enable faculty to use existing and emerging instructional software and technology to develop discipline-specific materials that engage students of all backgrounds in acquiring the knowledge, skills and dispositions for living and working in a global knowledge-based economy.

## **P031A090131 – Southeast Missouri State University, Missouri**

Southeast Missouri State University (Southeast), in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, was founded in 1873 as a “normal school” for training teachers. Southeast is a public, moderately selective, comprehensive four-year university. As the only baccalaureate-granting institution in its 27 county region (outside the St. Louis metropolitan area), Southeast serves both extremely rural and urban populations from St. Louis to Memphis. Over 150 academic programs are offered in six colleges and schools: Liberal Arts, Science and Mathematics, Health and Human Services, Polytechnic Studies, Business, Visual and Performing Arts and Education. *Faculty Characteristics:* There are 413 full-time faculty, and 201 part-time faculty. Of full-time faculty, 73 percent are tenured or tenure-track, and 78 percent have a doctorate or other terminal degree. Of all faculty, 50 percent are women. The faculty-to-student ratio is 1:17. *Student Body Characteristics:* Headcount enrollment is 10,665 (9,209 undergraduate). Southeast students are 37 percent male and 63 percent female, 82 percent Caucasian, eight percent African-American, one percent Hispanic, and nine percent other minority or international. The majority of Southeast students must maintain part-time or full-time employment while attending college, and over one-third of incoming freshmen are first-generation college students. *Service Region Highlights:* The university’s service region includes the 10<sup>th</sup> poorest Congressional district in the country, where geographical isolation, poverty and other factors lead to low educational attainment. The percentage of adults in the service region with a college degree hovers at **10 percent** (compared to 24 percent nationally) and over **30 percent** of adults have not obtained a high school diploma.

This application was developed in response to an intensive, campus-wide information-gathering and assessment process which revealed specific service gaps and institutional weaknesses that relate to *the quality of the life science curriculum and safety of science education facilities*.

Activity I: **\$2,000,000 over 5 years. Strengthening Academic Programs at Southeast Missouri State University through Redesigned Life Science Courses, Targeted Faculty Development and Critical Laboratory Renovations.** Southeast requests funds to strengthen the quality of critical science education programs through two complementary components: 1) integrate technology-rich, inquiry-based laboratory experiences into coursework for students through course revisions and faculty development, and 2) modernize and improve the safety of several of our fifty year old teaching laboratories. The combination of initial facilities investments and intensive, strategic faculty development will ensure long-term adoption of curricular improvements and new pedagogies. These funds will allow Southeast to leverage the singular confluence of rich natural resources, faculty expertise and student demand to improve the university’s long term stability and self-sufficiency. **Primary Key Measure:** The University’s overall retention rate will increase at least six percent over the grant period. **Proposed Expenditures:** Life Science Teaching Laboratory Renovations (56 percent), Science Equipment for Teaching Laboratories (19 percent), Faculty Development and Stipends (one percent), Project Personnel (16 percent), and Endowment Funds (three percent). **Project Evaluation:** \$58,000 (plus additional \$5,000 expended by the university after the grant period).

**P031A090153 – Southern West Virginia Community College, West Virginia**

Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a two-year public institution with four campuses located in the coalfields of southern West Virginia. Southern is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and is authorized by that entity to award certificates and associate degrees. Students may choose either a career or technical program that leads to employment directly after college or a liberal arts program that leads to university transfer. Southern offers Associate of Arts, Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees.

Most Southern students attend fulltime (56 percent). Full time equivalent for fall 2005 was 1,918. The gender composition of the student body is 69 percent female and 31 percent male. The average age is 25. The student body is ethnically homogenous: 98 percent are Caucasian. Southern has 83 full-time faculty who teach 61 percent of the sections offered. The student credit hour ratio is 287:1.

The Title III project proposed addresses the need for student open learning spaces (labs) and the integration of multimedia into classroom instruction. The proposal, when funded, will affect the most centrally located campus, Logan, and specifically, the Center for Allied Health and Technology (CAHT). Currently there are no classroom with multimedia capability and no open computing facilities for students. The proposal calls for creation or repurposing of the Teaching and Learning Centers on two campuses, training of faculty on the use of multimedia in the classroom, and the purchase of data storage devices. Simulators for classroom use will also be deployed. At the end of the grant cycle, all classrooms in the CAHT will be multimedia equipped and a majority of courses will have multimedia components. Two open computing student learning spaces will also be created. The proposed five-year total for the grant is \$2,000,000.

**P031A090155 – Southside Virginia Community College, Virginia**

**Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC):** Located in rural Virginia, Southside Virginia Community College had a total enrollment for fall 2005 of 5,255; 39 percent are African-American. The College loses 55 percent of its degree-seeking students during the first year. To combat this loss and add institutional stability and self sufficiency, SVCC is proposing a single activity: Bridges to Success Project (BTSP). The project is designed to increase student retention from 37 percent to 47 percent. The three strategies to achieve the activity are: 1) Establish required advisor training for one-on-one student success counseling; 2) Establish Bridges Learning Labs to improve students' cognitive and perceptual abilities; and 3) Establish Comprehensive Learning Centers to provide assistance in all academic areas including assistance to improving student success in Internet courses where the dropout rate is 51 percent. Bridges to Success Project expects to increase retention rates from a baseline of 37 percent to 47 percent by 2013 by meeting the following objectives:

- ◆ A 25 percent increase in the number of students completing year one;
- ◆ A 100 percent increase in the number of advisors completing required training zero-61;
- ◆ A 25 percent increase in the number of students completing developmental courses; and
- ◆ A 20 percent increase in the number of students completing programs and/or transferring to four-year institutions.

## **P031A090217 – Pearl River Community College, Mississippi**

*Pearl River Community College (PRCC)* was established in 1909 in Poplarville, Mississippi, and is the oldest publicly funded two-year institution of higher learning in the state and the 16th oldest in the United States. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and governed by a 16-member Board of Trustees, PRCC offers 15 career certificates, 30 associates in applied science and associates in arts degrees. Our mission is to provide “*quality educational and service opportunities for all who seek them.*” Located in southern Mississippi, PRCC serves a six-county area stretching from Hattiesburg to historic Bay St. Louis and Waveland on the Gulf Coast. As the map shows, our main campus is in Poplarville; the next largest campus is the Forrest County Center in Hattiesburg. Two smaller campuses are the Woodall Advanced Technology Center and the Hancock Center.

**Key Institutional Threats:** More than two years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the area, PRCC is still struggling with lost ground (enrollment declined by 1,000 FTE in 2005). PRCC students and the college are losing ground in other ways: retention and graduation/transfer rates are low and declining; enrollment revenue/state appropriations are declining; and, success rates for high-risk developmental and general education courses are *far below* national benchmarks. PRCC serves southern Mississippi students with a disproportionately high number of characteristics that put them at risk of failing to succeed and persist.

**Student and Faculty Profile:** PRCC students are predominantly low-income, academically underprepared, first-generation, and underserved: Total headcount 3,963 (2,750 full-time; 1,213 part-time); 33 percent *minority*; 87 percent *low-income*; 84 percent *first-generation college*; 65 percent *female*; 29 percent *single parents*; and, 42 percent *work 20+ hours per week*. PRCC faculty members are 170 full-time; 105 part-time; and seven (7.2) percent *minority*. The median age is 46. The student-to-faculty ratio is 20:1.

### **Proposed Activity: *Integrated Learner Support System for At-Risk Students***

Funds are requested to support developing/piloting new, promising practices in advisement and academic support: 1) Success Centers at Poplarville and Forrest County campuses; 2) faculty and staff advisor training in proactive advising, especially for special populations; 3) peer mentoring; 4) First Year Success Course; 5) Supplemental Instruction; 6) Web-accessible advising tools such as student e-portfolios; and, 7) student progress/outcomes tracking. Overall success, retention and graduation/transfer outcomes as a result of the funded improvements and interventions will help PRCC regain lost ground—lost enrollment revenue and lost opportunities for low-income, first-generation and underserved students in southern Mississippi to succeed in achieving their education and career goals for a brighter future. **Activity Funds Requested (\$1,709,065) + Endowment Match (\$288,000) = \$1,997,065**

## **P031A090220 – The University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi**

**Institutional Overview:** The University of Southern Mississippi (Southern Miss) is a public, four-year, comprehensive doctoral and research-extensive university. Southern Mississippi is the only dual-campus institution in the state of Mississippi, with the main, historic campus located in Hattiesburg and the newer Gulf Park campus, with five teaching and research sites, on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Now approaching its centennial celebration, Southern Miss offers degrees in over 50 academic departments from its five colleges (Arts and Letters, Business, Education and Psychology, Health, and Science and Technology).

**Proposed project:** *Strengthening Student Success through the Student Think Center*, \$1,954,267 over five years. The single activity of the project is to improve student success by implementing a design thinking strategy model and by creating an innovative space for formal, informal, and collaborative learning.

Student success will be defined by retention rates, grade distribution, and satisfaction. The first three years of the project will focus on development and implementation at the Hattiesburg campus. In years four and five, the Think Center model will be adapted for the Gulf Coast teaching sites.

The Student Think Center will improve student outcomes in several ways. First, a curriculum will be created to educate students about their learning preferences and styles and to establish a guided approach to design thinking. A Learning Specialist will reside in the center to work with students to develop an individualized academic success plan based on their needs.

Next, the Think Center staff will identify and work jointly with key faculty members to develop learning communities among the university community. This will be supported in a technology-rich learning space designed for flexibility, collaboration, and innovative thinking.

Finally, faculty will have opportunities to observe how students learn and to discover diverse approaches to pedagogy, particularly in collaborative or technology-rich environments, while exploring emerging technologies for possible integration into curriculum. Faculty and students alike will be exposed to a learning environment that uses technology and social learning solutions to improve the quality of learning.

## **P031A090002 – Neosho County Community College, Kansas**

Located in Chanute, Kansas, and established in 1936, Neosho County Community College (NCCC) serves a rural three-county area (Neosho, Franklin, and Anderson) with a combined population of approximately 50,000. Southeast Kansas, where the main campus is located, has been designated the most economically distressed area of Kansas for the last 17 years.

More than half of the students (54 percent) come from low-income families and three-fourths (75 percent) are first-generation. Low educational levels and low skills among area residents have contributed to below average per capita and median household incomes. Per capita income is \$7,088 lower than the Kansas average and the median household income is \$8,221 lower than the U.S. average. Residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher at a rate considerably lower (14.4 percent) than Kansas (25.8 percent) and the nation (24.4 percent).

Our **mission** as a two-year, open admissions public community college is to *offer comprehensive educational programs to meet the expanding needs of the service area residents for retraining, continuing education, and attaining a postsecondary education degree*. **Accredited** by the North Central Association, the college offers Associate in Applied Science, Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees and technical certificates. Neosho County Community College is **governed** by a six-member Board of Trustees.

**Project Activity:** Neosho County Community College is at a pivotal point as declining enrollment harms institutional viability. Academic program options are limited - not meeting student interest in programs of study and career pursuits and not meeting local industry/business market demands for graduates. To strengthen our institution, the college requests funds to develop two high-demand Allied Health associate degree programs and to provide the necessary instructional resources to support the new technical degree programs and accommodate new enrollment growth.

### **P031A090212 – The University of Mary, North Dakota**

**Institutional Overview:** The University of Mary is located in North Dakota's capital city of Bismarck, which is home to approximately 55,500 residents. It is the second largest city in the state, a state with an extremely rural population of less than 650,000 people and only 9.3 per square mile.

The institution was founded by the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery in 1955 as a private, Catholic, two-year nursing school. In 1959, the institution began offering baccalaureate degree-granting programs, primarily health sciences, education, and liberal arts. It has been accredited by the North Central Association since 1969. In 1986, the institution became the University of Mary, offering master's degree programs. Today, UMary has 1,937 full-time students enrolled in 44 baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree-granting programs.

In 1996, UMary launched the School for Accelerated and Distance Learning (SADE) and opened its first permanent off-campus location. Since 1997, additional off-campus centers have been opened to provide accelerated and distance education in North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Missouri, and Kansas.

**P031A090169 – Baton Rouge Community College, Louisiana**

Baton Rouge Community College is a two-year public institution. Fall 2007 statistics include: FTE, 4,792 students; 42 percent minority student population; 42 percent are male and 58 percent female; average age is 23; 103 full-time and 141 adjunct faculty with student-teacher ration 28 to 1.

**The Title III Activity** proposed is to increase the success of 1,944 developmental education students each year, nearly 27.7 percent of the student population, through proven strategies in the areas of : 1) data collection and analysis; 2) improved tutoring and advisement services; 3) faculty enhancement through professional development; and 4) retention strategies. The strategies include: a) the hiring of a project director who will coordinate data collection and entry; b) the hiring of learning specialists and professional counselors to upgrade student services; c) purchase of new equipment and software that will improve the tutoring and provide needed lab experiences for these students; d) centralize all efforts with the institution of a Building STARS Team; d) create hybrid and linked courses to provide a support system for students; and e) enhancing professional development focusing on the needs of under-prepared students.

**Expected Outcomes:** Major yearly outcomes will be: 1) The average fall to fall retention rates will improve by four percent; 2) The percentage of students who successfully complete their first college-level course will increase by two percent; 3) The percentage of students who successfully complete the last course in their developmental education sequence will increase by five percent; and 4) 100 percent of all developmental faculty will attend the symposiums and workshops. **Contributions for Research** will be to report on the use of theory-based proven strategies to positively alter the nature of the educational experience of developmental education students.

## **P031A090192 – Wallace State Community College, Alabama**

Wallace State Community College (WSCC) is a public, two-year college located in Hanceville, Alabama, that serves a four county (Cullman, Winston, Morgan, and Blount Counties) service area and a population of 264,945 (2000 Census). The counties are sprinkled with small towns and communities typical of the southern Appalachian Region. The service area of Wallace State has been described as the *Automotive Corridor of the New South* (Business Alabama). Ten years ago, Alabama did not produce one vehicle. In this year alone, Alabama automotive industries will produce 800,000 automobiles, an astounding growth that presents significant challenges for Alabama's community colleges in preparing a skilled workforce.

The college's mission as a state-supported, open-door admissions institution is to provide "*meaningful learning that transforms lives and communities.*" The Alabama State Board of Education is the college's governing body and is vested with the operation, authority and responsibility for the management and control of the institution. The Chancellor of the Alabama College System provides leadership for the two-year institutions that comprise the Alabama College System. A local Advisory Board assists the college in fulfilling its mission, particularly as related to programs of study. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits WSCC to award associate degrees and certificates. WSCC's accreditation was most recently reaffirmed in December 2004.

Wallace State Community College students can select a pre-baccalaureate degree major in General Studies from a variety of programs designed for transfer to a four-year university; a career/technical major leading to an Associate of Applied Science degree, or short-term occupational programs leading to a certificate. Programs with the highest percentage of majors are: Associate in Science (30 percent); Associate Degree in Nursing (17 percent); Diagnostic Imaging (3 percent); and Diagnostic Medical (3 percent). The college is the recognized leader in allied health programs in the state and nation; ranking 12th in the nation for the number of health graduates.

Wallace State Community College's fall 2007 enrollment was 5,251, a decrease of two percent over the previous fall term. Over 70 percent of students reside in the college service area, 28 percent are from contiguous Alabama counties, and 2 percent are from outside the area. The students range in age from 16 to 87. Due to low academic placement scores, 49 percent were placed in one or more college preparation (i.e. developmental) courses, 42 percent are economically disadvantaged and 78 percent are classified as first-generation college students.

Wallace State Community College's faculty is composed of 130 full-time faculty members and approximately 150 adjunct instructors. Of the full-time faculty, 11 percent hold doctorates, 57 percent hold Master's degrees and 24 percent hold Bachelor's degrees and teach in terminal career programs. The full-time faculty-student ratio is 1 to 40. Approximately 20 percent of WSCC's full-time faculty are within five years of retirement.

The proposed Title III activity is titled "**E-Learning Design.**" The activity will have two primary outcomes on the academic program, institutional management, and fiscal stability of WSCC. These include: 1) a transformed and redesigned learning curriculum that results in greater student access with increases in enrollment, retention and graduation rates for the diverse students enrolled at WSCC including many at-risk students, and 2) improved faculty expertise in the use of instructional technology in support of E-Learning throughout the curriculum.

## **P031A090004 – Flathead Valley Community College, Montana**

Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) is in the northwest corner of Montana and is surrounded by alpine lakes and rivers and panoramic views of Glacier National Park and the Rocky Mountains. Established in 1967, FVCC is the largest of Montana's three comprehensive two-year public community colleges. The main campus in Kalispell is in Flathead County with a population of 74,471. The extension campus located 90 miles northwest in Libby is in Lincoln County with a population of 19,226. Combined, the college serves a population of 93,697 distributed over 5.6 million acres, an area larger than the state of Massachusetts. FVCC's rural isolation combined with its mission to provide access to affordable higher educational opportunities make it unique as the only postsecondary institution directly serving one of the most remote regions in the contiguous 48 states.

Accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, FVCC offers Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. Associate of Applied Science degrees and certificates are offered in nearly 50 career and technical fields. FVCC is recognized for its outstanding culinary arts; goldsmithing and jewelry arts; surveying; radiologic technology; and building construction trades programs.

Flathead Valley Community College enrolls over 3,000 students in credit courses annually. Ages of students range from 14 to 95 years old, with 32 as the median age and the majority falling into the traditional age range between 18 and 21. Sixty-one percent of FVCC's students enrolled are female; 93 percent are white; and 54 percent are transfer students. Ninety-one percent of students are in-district, six percent are in-state, and three percent are out of state or foreign students. Of those FVCC students who earned degrees and certificates during the 2006-2007 academic year, 77 percent received financial aid. FVCC employs 184 faculty, with 46 employed as full-time and 138 employed as adjuncts. Fifty-nine percent of the full-time faculty are male, and 41 percent are female. The college maintains a small classroom environment with the average student-to-faculty ratio of 16 to one, enabling faculty to provide personalized attention to every student.

### **Activity: Strengthening Academic Support and Student Services to Improve Retention and Student Success**

Flathead Valley Community College is requesting \$1,997,367 over five years to help solve persistent and critical problems that seriously impede its sustainability. The goals of FVCC's activity are: 1) to improve capacity to increase retention and graduation rates; and 2) to increase capacity to analyze institutional data for improved student outcomes and institutional performance. The objectives related to Goal One are designed to measure improvement of retention, persistence, and ultimately the graduation rates of FVCC's students through an enhanced advising system, faculty development, and academic intervention strategies. The objective related to Goal Two is designed to measure FVCC's increased capacity to analyze data for informed decision-making in key areas that affect the college, including enrollment and retention, budgeting, assessment, and strategic planning.

### **P031A090011 – Lake City Community College, Florida**

Lake City Community College is one of the smallest public two-year community colleges in the state of Florida, serving Baker, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, and Union Counties. The region it serves has no affluent population centers and very high rates of poverty. The mission of Lake City Community College is to provide superior, affordable, quality education for all residents. There is an “open-door” admissions policy. The average Lake City Community College student is first-generation, underprepared, a commuter, a part-time student, employed, and older than traditional age, increasing their risk of academic failure. Nearly eighty percent of incoming freshmen require remediation, leading to a three-year graduation rate that is extremely low.

Lake City Community College will use these Title III Strengthening Institutions grant funds to increase retention and course completion rates of students who require remediation. This goal will be reached through modification of all remedial (“developmental”) coursework to utilize Universal Design for: Instruction, implementation of a proactive developmental advising model, increasing diagnostic, technological, and personnel support for students with learning disabilities; providing supplemental instructors within the classroom and the learning lab; updating learning lab technology resources; and investing funds in the Lake City Community College Foundation endowment that can be used to sustain this initiative and provide “seed money” for future academic improvement initiatives.

These strategies will be piloted, evaluated, revised, and institutionalized within all developmental courses and populations by the end of the five-year grant period. These “best practices” will increase the percentage of students passing developmental coursework from the current baseline of fifty-six percent to sixty-two percent. The number of students who successfully complete developmental coursework within two years will increase from thirty-six percent to forty-one percent. Retention rates for students in developmental coursework will increase from fifty-one percent to fifty-eight percent.

## **P031A090197 - Holyoke Community College, Massachusetts**

Established in 1946 as Massachusetts' first public two-year institution of higher education, Holyoke Community College (HCC) is accessible to the residents of both urban and rural areas of the Connecticut River valley. In the most recent academic year, 37 percent of students came from the region's major cities of Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee. Spring 2008 enrollment data for 6,040 (3,990 FTE) students show that 76 percent were white, 15 percent Hispanic/Latino, six percent African-American, two percent Asian and one percent Native American. Women comprise 63 percent of HCC students. Two-thirds of the student body is under 25. Almost two-thirds of all HCC students (64 percent) are the first in their families to attend college. These percentages are higher for students of color: 81 percent of Latino and 65 percent of Black students reported they were first-generation to college.

With 129 full-time faculty and 342 part-time faculty, HCC has a student to faculty ratio of almost 13:1. The college currently offers 91 Associate Degree programs and 40 certificate programs, with the majority of students enrolled in the Liberal Arts Program. Other popular programs include Pre-Nursing, Business Administration, Criminal Justice and Early Childhood Education. Among Massachusetts' 15 community colleges, HCC consistently has the highest rates of transfer students. HCC is accredited by the New England Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges and is a member of the American Association of Community Colleges.

**Title III Activity Statement:** "*Shoring Up the First Year at HCC.*" Through development of increased assessment protocols and capacity and improved coordination and enhancement of curriculum and support services, HCC will create a data-informed, comprehensive, cohesive, high-quality first-year experience and ultimately improve rates of student success.

**Planning Process:** Through a partnership with the *Policy Center on the First Year of College - Foundations of Excellence (FoE)* initiative – a task force at HCC participated in a guided self-study that identified the strengths and weaknesses of the college as they relate to how well students succeed during and after their first year. Recommendations from the self-study, the FoE Coordinating Team, active college committees, and accreditation report and the college's annual priorities were used to develop the Title III goals, objectives and activities.

**Title III Goals:** 1) Institutionalize HCC's *Philosophy of the First Year* and *Seven Cs, Seven Anchors* guiding values; 2) Increase the success of first-year student cohorts in their first year, in transitioning to the second year, and in obtaining a degree or transferring; 3) Increase access to information about and coordination of student services and programs; and 4) Increase use of data and assessment protocols for the continuous improvement of the first-year experience at HCC.

**Project Activities:** Activities will focus on creating a first-year experience for HCC students through: increased knowledge and use of the *Philosophy* and *Seven Cs, Seven Anchors*, increased coordination and communication between programs and faculty/staff, development of proactive advising practices across the college, improving orientation coordination and delivery, creation of a new system to identify first-year student needs and use of support services, developing new or revised first-year courses, and increasing faculty/staff knowledge and skills of first-year programming and assessment protocols through professional development opportunities.

**Assessment:** Project success will be monitored by an evaluation plan that includes both formative and summative components. Dr. Scott E. Evenbeck, Dean of the University College at Indiana University, will act as the external evaluator for the project. **Five-Year Budget:** \$1,846,312.00

## **P031A090093 – Pensacola Junior College, Florida**

Pensacola Junior College (PJC), located in the far corner of the panhandle of Northwest Florida, is a comprehensive two-year public institution governed by a local District Board of Trustees. Founded in 1947 as Florida's first public junior college, PJC serves Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, with a combined population of 439,987 (U.S. Census, 2007). As an open-door institution, PJC provides affordable postsecondary education culminating in Associate in Arts (A.A.) degrees, Associate in Sciences (A.S.) degrees, and college credit certificate (CT) programs to citizens from diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. Pensacola Junior College enrolled more than 26,000 individual students (unduplicated headcount), in credit and non-credit courses offered during the 2006-07 academic year; of those students, 7,860 (FTE) were enrolled in college credit courses (McLeod, 2007). The student body is diverse and generally reflects the ethnicity of the service area: White (74 percent); Black (16 percent); Hispanic (four percent); Alaskan Native/American Indian (one percent); Asian/Pacific Islander (four percent); and Others (one percent). Mirroring national trends, PJC enrolls more females (61 percent) than males (39 percent). The average age of A.A. degree majors is about 23; that of A.S. majors is about 29; about 35 percent of A.A. students are between 22 and 35, as are 45 percent of A.S. students. Seventy-two percent of first-time-in-college (FTIC) students entering PJC required remediation. PJC has 909 faculty – 222 full-time and 549 adjunct instructors and maintains a faculty to student ratio of 1:22.

Pensacola Junior College has faced severe cuts in state appropriations. A statewide decline in revenue has already resulted in a budget cut of over \$1.2 million during the 2007-08 fiscal year. As a result of new cuts in state funding, the college is anticipating an additional cut of \$1.7 million during the 2008-09 fiscal year. As funds continue to decrease, PJC faces critical barriers to reaching its goals and struggles to fulfill its core mission of providing quality educational opportunities and support services to meet the requirements of all students.

The need to increase student success and retention is so critical that PJC requests funds for one activity:

### **Enhancing Student Success through Faculty Development & Technology**

Funds in the amount of \$1,854,044 over five years are requested to provide an effective and efficient administration of the Title III project activity components and to coordinate internal and external evaluation of the entire project and each aspect. The activity is designed to increase student success and retention through the development of: 1) A comprehensive program to integrate technology into the classroom, to strengthen instruction in developmental education and general education courses for first-time-in-college students and under-prepared learners; and 2) A comprehensive faculty development program to enable adjuncts and faculty to incorporate a variety of methodologies, including multimedia into the classroom to increase the success of diverse learners.

## **P031A090224 - Southwestern Community College, North Carolina**

Southwestern Community College (Southwestern) was established more than 40 years ago to provide educational and training services to the people in its service area. When the college opened its doors in 1964, a total of 133 students were enrolled in short-term courses in four programs of study.

Today, the college provides instruction in more than 70 programs which can culminate in a diploma, certificate or associate's degree to its service area population of more than 80,000. More than 2,600 students enroll annually in these credit classes, and more than 10,000 participate in a wide variety of courses, workshops, and seminars offered through Continuing Education. The college also provides support to the area's business and industry sector through customized training and its Small Business Center, and is actively involved in promoting the economic development of the region.

In addition to the main campus in Sylva, the college operates four additional campuses located in Franklin, Bryson City, Cherokee, and Cashiers. The college's facilities are used extensively by the community for graduations, recitals, plays, conferences and other events—totaling close to 20,000 annually. Southwestern is one of 59 institutions operating in the North Carolina Community College System, a statewide organization of public, two-year, postsecondary educational institutions. The college is governed by a local Board of Trustees, is accredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges, and has 200 full-time and 430 part-time employees. It enjoys a positive relationship with an affiliated non-profit, the SCC Foundation.

The college service area is located in the southwestern portion of western North Carolina. Situated in the heart of rural Appalachia, the area is a several hour drive from Atlanta, Charlotte, Knoxville, and Chattanooga. The three county target area (Jackson, Macon, and Swain, which includes the Cherokee Indian Reservation) is surrounded on all sides by the 5,000-foot peaks of the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains—home of their namesake National Parks. These rural counties and the Cherokee Reservation include some of the most formidable terrain in the United States—ranging from some of the highest mountains east of the Mississippi to deep, shaded gorges where trout-filled streams turn into rushing Whitewater Rivers.

Southwestern's students experience low persistence and success due to a lack of resilience, limited 'bonding' to the institution, and weak retention services and distance learning options. In addition, the college's business continuity is at risk and employee productivity is strained due to a lack of telecommunications network redundancy, paper-dependent processes, a difficult data extraction system, and an overextended research and planning office. Finally, the institution's financial self-sufficiency is threatened due to funding that is not keeping pace with growth and the lack of diversity in funding sources.

The college plans to utilize a proposed \$1,821,012 in U.S. Department of Education funds to conduct three distinct activities: 1) Close gaps in important student services; 2) Modernize data storage retention and retrieval systems and improve research and planning functions; and 3) Stabilize and diversify financial resources.

## **P031A090067 – Monroe County College, Michigan**

**Monroe County Community College, Monroe, MI.** Founded in 1964, Monroe County Community College (MCCC) is a public, two-year institution supported by tax monies from Monroe County (55.3 percent), the State of Michigan (16.63 percent), student tuition (25.85 percent), and grants and gifts and other resources (2.22 percent). Governed by a seven-member locally elected Board of Trustees, the Main Campus is centrally located within Monroe County.

The Whitman Center, a satellite campus, located near the Michigan-Ohio border, was established in 1991. Academic programs (both occupational and transfer) include 34 degree programs, 28 certificates and abundant transfer options. In 2000, the College received a 10-year accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association.

In the fall of 2007, student enrollment was 4,433 credit students. The service population is 85.6 percent residents of Monroe County. The ethnic diversity of the MCCC student population is 86.9 percent white, non-Hispanic; 2.2 percent Hispanic; 1.6 percent Black, non-Hispanic; and 9.3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan, Non-Resident Aliens, or unidentified. The female to male ratio is 2,441:1,752. The mean age is 24.9 years with 2,169 students under age 21, 1,321 students between the ages of 21-30, and 538 students over age 31. There are 66 full-time and 177 adjunct faculty with an average faculty to student ratio of 1:18.

The Title III activity will **Increase Capacity to Develop Grant Proposals and Major, Planned, and Annual Gifts** by instituting an aggressive grants, major gifts, planned giving program, and expanded annual giving programs as well as strengthen the college's capacity to fully utilize database systems, and research, identify, educate, and cultivate grants and gifts from public and private sources.

## **P031A090026 – Bossier Parish Community College, Louisiana**

The mission of Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) is to provide instruction and service to its community. This mission is accomplished through courses and programs that provide sound academic education, broad career and workforce training, continuing education, and varied community services through flexible instructional delivery systems.

Northwestern State University (NSUL) is “a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs.”

Bossier Parish Community College (two-year public institution) offers academic degrees through six academic divisions: Behavioral and Social Sciences; Business and Computer Science; Liberal Arts, Mathematics and Technical Education; Science and Allied Health; and Telecommunications. The college offers 22 associate degree programs, eight certificate and technical diploma programs, and 21 technical competency area programs. Northwestern State University (four-year public institution) offers academic degrees through the following colleges: business, education, liberal arts, nursing, science and technology, the Louisiana Scholar’s College, and the University College. Northwestern State University has seven associate degrees, a Bachelor of Arts degree in 15 areas, a Bachelor of Science degree in 23 areas, eight additional Bachelor’s degrees (such as Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Social Work etc.), 11 Master’s degrees within Education, 9 additional Master’s degrees, and an Educational Specialist degree.

For the fall 2007 semester, BPCC enrolled 4,986 students: 62.3 percent White, 30.6 percent African-American, 2.2 percent Hispanic, and 1.1 percent Asian; 64.6 percent of the student body was female and 35.4 percent male. NSUL had 9,037 students: 61.7 percent were White, 27.4 percent were African-American, and 5.0 percent were other minorities; 69.6 percent were female and 30.4 percent were male. Northwestern State University’s College of Nursing enrolled 2,439, or 26.99 percent, of the 9,037. At the NSUL CON in Shreveport, there were 981 enrollees.

Bossier Parish Community College had 110 full-time faculty and 142 adjunct faculty. The student/full-time faculty ratio was 23 to 1. Northwestern State University had 320 full-time teaching faculty members and 120 full-time equivalent adjunct faculty members. The student/full-time faculty ratio was 16.6 to 1.

Overview of Project: BPCC and NSUL will eliminate barriers to produce an increased number of healthcare professionals by analyzing current practices to improve retention and transfer of Nursing and Allied Health students at both institutions, integrate effective academic/student-services practices and strategies that will support positive outcomes and improve student transfer and transition between the two institutions, and implement curricula and instructional revisions for improving the academic skills of students. This cooperative agreement will bring the two institutions together and provide a focused agenda which will: a) increase the second-year-success rate of academically under-prepared students from both institutions; b) increase student retention-to-graduation in BPCC programs; c) increase the number of students who transfer from BPCC to NSUL to study nursing; and d) increase the graduation rates of BPCC allied health students who transfer to NSUL’s nursing programs. The two objectives are to increase student retention and transfer rates by improving academic instruction in common gateway barrier courses in Nursing and Allied Health programs and to develop joint student success programs with services that increase student retention and graduation rates in Nursing and Allied Health programs.

## **P031A090206 - University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Wisconsin**

### **About the Institution:**

- Four-year, liberal arts comprehensive university
- Public university; part of the University of Wisconsin System
- Primary population is undergraduates from Southeastern Wisconsin

**About Our Students:** 2007-2008 headcount = 5,013:

### **Demographic Characteristics:**

- Women - 55 percent
- Men - 45 percent
- African American - 11 percent
- American Indian/Alaskan Native – one percent
- Asian/Pacific Islander - three percent
- Hispanic/Latino - seven percent
- White - 76 percent
- International - one percent
- Over the age of 25 - 20 percent

### **About Our Faculty:**

- Full-time instructional faculty = 174; Adjuncts = 100
- Faculty to student ratio = 20:1

### **Overview of Project:**

**Activity:** Develop, expand, and integrate our programs, services, policies, and procedures to improve student success. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside's students are unique on a number of dimensions that distinguish them from students at other campuses. However, many of these distinctions pose barriers to their academic success. For example, 49 percent of our freshman work 16 hours or more per week off campus, 43 percent are from the lowest two quintiles of family income, and 71 percent receive financial aid. In addition, 70 percent of our freshmen are first-generation university students, as are 62 percent of our transfer students. Finally, because of our access mission, UWP serves a disproportionate percentage (~ 40 percent) of students who graduated in the bottom half of their high school class. We are proposing a number of initiatives designed to address the challenges and barriers to success our students face. As a substantial number of our students are considered high-risk, many of our interventions will be geared toward their specific academic and personal needs, especially during their first year at college. We also are proposing several initiatives that will benefit UWP's general student population as well as our faculty and staff. Collectively, the proposed initiatives will allow us to build upon, supplement, and better integrate our current programs and services and ultimately create a comprehensive, coordinated, and seamless infrastructure designed to foster student success and increase our retention and graduation rates.

## **P031A090226 – York College, Nebraska**

York College seeks Title III funding for one activity to strengthen the college through improved retention and institutional management--Improving Retention: Resolving Academic, Management, and Fiscal Restraints through the Application of Technology.

### **Two program initiatives will occur through this activity:**

1. Implementation of a technology-based information management system to improve assessment, communication, and instruction; and
2. Development of the York College Center for SUCCESS (Students Understanding Course Content and Educational Study Strategies), to enhance student and faculty procedures, creating outcomes consistent with persistence to graduation.

**York College, located in York, Nebraska**, a city of nearly 8,000 is situated at the geographic center of the United States. The college serves primarily rural students from the sparsely populated North Central Great Plains region. Chartered by the City of York in 1890, today York College is a four-year private liberal arts institution affiliated with the Churches of Christ. For the years from 1953-1993, York granted only Associates in Arts degrees. Now a young senior college, York has awarded baccalaureate degrees for 15 years.

The fall 2007 student body at York College consisted of 405 students. Of those, 412 attended full-time, and 32 were part-time attendees. The ratio of female to male students was almost 1 to 1 in fall, 2004 (207:205 full-time, 19:13 part-time). Minority students compose nearly 25 percent of the York College student body, a rate nearly double that which is found in Nebraska, and four times that which is found within York County.

Of York College's 60 instructors, 35 are employed full-time, two are employed part-time, and 23 are utilized on an adjunct basis. Eighteen of York's instructors hold tenure. Of the 35 full-time instructors, 17 have terminal degrees.

## **P031A090204 – American International College, Massachusetts**

American International College (AIC) is a private, culturally-diverse, masters-level educational community located in the heart of Springfield, the third largest city in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Founded in 1885 for the purpose of providing educational opportunities for newcomers to this country, AIC prepares students for personal fulfillment, professional achievement and service to others through educational experiences that transform lives. The college has a long history of outreach to non-traditional students, and continues to reach out, identify, and enroll students who would not have ordinarily considered attending college. Academic programs founded on the knowledge, skills, and values of the liberal arts engage students in theory and emphasize applied learning, while preparing them for challenges and opportunities in the global environment.

In 2007-2008, AIC's total enrollment was 2,678 for all degree programs; of this number, 1,567 students were full-time undergraduates. AIC has a diverse student population; over 40 percent of whom are minorities, primarily Black and Latino. Of the total student undergraduate population, 69 percent are female and 31 percent are male; and 79 percent of the undergraduate student population are of traditional college age.

AIC's student to faculty ration is 14:1. AIC has 76 full-time faculty members who are dedicated to student-centered learning and offer many years of experience. Faculty members typically carry 12 teaching credit hours per semester and serve as academic advisors. Many are involved in additional shared-governance and faculty committees. One hundred twenty six part time adjunct faculty offer their professional experience to course offerings and enable AIC to provide quality instructional expertise that meets the needs of students, particularly in graduate and continuing education programs.

### **Title III Activity: Strengthening Student Success to Improve Retention**

**Funds requested:** \$1,853,800 over five years part of which will include endowment funds.

**Project:** The goal for the AIC's Title III activity is to increase student success by supporting and encouraging a learning-centered campus culture that provides opportunities for optimum student development. This will be accomplished through the development of a comprehensive Learning Assistance Program.

With Title III funding, AIC will create a solid foundation on which opportunities for student success can increase and will build upon the student support activities that have proven to be successful on campus. All campus student support services will be integrated to enhance student development and improve the overall academic experience. AIC is proposing a multi-faceted strategy to achieve the institutional goals addressed and to meet all objectives. Through a holistic approach, the Learning Assistance Program model will provide students a continuum of support throughout their college experience that can ensure positive outcomes.

AIC's Title III activity will consist of three facets: the development of a **Summer Orientation Program**; Coordination and integration of **three components for academic support**; and enhancement of the **Student Career Development Support Programming**. These three facets will benefit students by providing the resources to support and provide purposeful academic opportunities that will foster the development of responsibility and accountability in one's own learning.

### **Project Management:**

Project Management and evaluation will provide effective oversight and efficient administration for all Title III activities. Of the budget, approximately 47 percent will support positions to establish effective student support services and 20 percent will support strengthening AIC's endowment fund.

## **P031A090117 - Hesston College, Kansas**

**Institutional Characteristics:** Founded in 1909, Hesston College is a private, two-year college affiliated with Mennonite Church USA. Its liberal arts and technical programs serve 434 students (401 FTE), including three percent African-American, two percent Native American, one percent Asian-American, three percent Hispanic, one percent multiracial, and eight percent international (fall 2007). The average age is 22, with 61 percent women and 39 percent men. There are 24 full-time, and 19 part-time faculty, with an average of 12.1 years of service at Hesston College. The faculty to student ratio is 1:10.

Students represent a wide geographic scope: 44 percent from Kansas; 11 percent from states bordering Kansas; 6.5 percent from upper Midwestern states; 6.5 percent from Western states; 24 percent from eastern and southern states; and eight percent from other countries. Hesston is committed to the openness and inclusion of all faiths.

Hesston College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC, formerly North Central Association). Stimulated by HLC recommendations and the input of diverse constituencies from across the country and within the college, Hesston has recognized the importance of implementing a comprehensive integrated computer system (Enterprise Resource Planning or ERP system) to meet its institutional goals.

Hesston College proposes one activity entitled *Strengthening Information Technology (IT) and Practice at Hesston College*. In project years one-two, Hesston plans to purchase and implement an ERP system. The focus in years three-five will be on improving campus-wide use of the ERP system to further institutional goals, while dedicating an increasing proportion of institutional resources to the project. The proposed cost of the project is \$1,494,619 over five years. Project management and evaluation costs over five years are anticipated to be \$112,397 or 7.5 percent.

**A. Goals.** The three main goals of the proposed project are to: 1) strengthen **IT-supported services**; 2) optimize **management**; and 3) increase **fiscal stability**.

**B. Implementation Strategies.** 1) Implement an ERP computer system; 2) improve technological access; 3) systematize training; and 4) redesign practices and policies.

**C. Measurable Outcomes** are designed for each goal, with quantitative levels specified for each goal as described in the project narrative and tables.

- 1. Services:** IT staff, students, faculty, staff, and alumni will have reached specified levels of ERP management and/or user competence, and will attain specified satisfaction levels of ERP usage and application. Students and faculty will indicate specified satisfaction and usage levels of interactive Web-based learning and instruction.
- 2. Management:** ERP users will demonstrate specified levels of ability to plan and manage computer-facilitated projects; and the Assessment & Research Coordinating Committee (ARCC) will plan and manage projects, using Web access and semi-automated data collection/analysis.
- 3. Fiscal Stability.** The college will achieve specified levels of increased enrollment and donor giving, both facilitated by an ERP system and systematic training and redesigned practice. The college will control the rate of cost increases at specified ratios relative to increased enrollment-generated revenue.

## **P031A090052 - Kaskaskia College, Illinois**

Kaskaskia College (KC), the first community college in Illinois to be established under the Junior College Act of 1965, has a rich tradition of providing comprehensive, high quality, cost-effective educational opportunities for lifelong learning. Accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the college serves residents of nine south-central Illinois counties (population 130,375); five counties comprise the primary service area, with parts of four additional counties served as well.

KC offers classes at its main campus (Centralia) and five outreach sites. In addition to Associate in Arts and Science degrees preparing students for transfer to baccalaureate programs, KC offers 31 Associate in Applied Science programs and 68 certificate programs to prepare students for meaningful careers or advanced training.

Despite some economic setbacks, including recent area layoffs, our region looks forward to a bright future, fueled by growth potential in transportation, manufacturing, and tourism. But low educational attainment, too common in our rural area, threatens the area's ability to capitalize on its promise; only 17 percent of area residents have Bachelor's degrees (compared to 29 percent for the state and 27 percent nationally, U.S. Census 2006).

Over the past seven years, KC enrollment has increased 89 percent, challenging the college to address the needs of a rapidly-growing number of at-risk students. Of 9,189 students, 83 percent are first-generation; 94 percent of first-year students are underprepared.

To respond to high failure rates, KC proposes major curriculum reform through redesign of key developmental and gateway courses. Redesigned courses will be supported by faculty development and student academic support, including Structured Learning Assistance and Learning Communities. We further propose to develop information-based, proactive student support services, built upon robust student services technology. Data analysis and student tracking will be developed and implemented in years four and five, increasing capacity for information-based evaluation and assessment long after the grant has ended.

The KC Foundation has pledged to raise \$225,500 to match Title III endowment (11.3 percent of total request). Total five-year request: \$1,998,203

## **P031A090201 - The Houston Community College, Texas**

The Houston Community College System (HCCS), a minority institution and Hispanic-serving institution, is a public two-year community college. The system's six colleges serve the culturally and linguistically diverse needs of more than two million residents in the nation's fourth largest city.

To address significant problems within the community and at HCCS—the urgent need for health career personnel in the community, the lack of space for additional students at the Coleman College for Health Careers—and to build the institution's infrastructure and capability to address the needs of low-income African-American and Hispanic students, HCCS proposes the *Videoconferencing to Improve Teaching and Learning* (VITAL) program. A five-year grant of approximately **\$350,000** a year from the U.S. Department of Education's Title IIIA program will enable HCCS to furnish videoconferencing capability and classrooms to all six colleges. The videoconferencing capability will allow HCC-Coleman College for Health Careers in the Texas Medical Center to increase enrollments and graduates in health careers to meet the urgent needs of a diverse community.

The proposed program will bring new resources to faculty to ensure that their students learn. New professional development resources and strategies and proven student services will enhance and reinforce the instructional content of health career courses and increase retention and graduation rates. A Title IIIA grant will enable HCCS to broaden opportunities for increasing enrollments and teaching and learning to ensure the success of all health career students and, long-term, to all students in the college system.

### **Proposed Activity**

**Component 1.** To increase enrollments, over five years HCCS will establish videoconferencing classrooms at six colleges (and a second room at HCC-Coleman College for Health Sciences) for targeted health career needs: Nursing (RN), Medical Assistant, Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN), Histologist, Human Services, Medical Laboratory Technician, Occupational Therapy Assistant, and Health Information Technician.

**Component 2.** HCCS will offer a number of student support services to ensure the retention and graduation of students taking the videoconference courses: the development of cohorts of students taking labs together at HCC-Coleman College for Health Sciences; tutoring; faculty mentoring; computer labs, peer mentoring; and proven students services such as Survival Camp and Supplemental Instruction.

**Component 3.** HCCS will train at least 60 health career faculty members and other interested faculty to use videoconference instruction. The HCCS Teaching and Learning Center will offer an eight-hour faculty certificate training course in videoconference pedagogy, videoconferencing equipment and trouble-shooting, and videoconference curriculum development.

## **P031A090164 - University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Wisconsin**

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UW-Eau Claire) is a four-year comprehensive public residential university and a member of the University of Wisconsin System. It serves 10,096 undergraduates and 497 graduate students and offers 80 undergraduate degree programs and 14 graduate programs in both the liberal arts and professional fields of study.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire is proud to provide an affordable education to its students, 41.1 percent of whom are first-generation college-bound students and 11.4 percent of whom are from low-income families. Ninety-three percent of students are Caucasian, 0.4 percent African-American, 0.6 percent Native American, 2.8 percent Asian American, one percent Hispanic, 0.9 percent International, and 1.3 percent did not report racial or ethnic characteristics. Fifty-nine percent of UW-Eau Claire's students are women and 41 percent are men; 56.5 percent of students are under 21, 36.3 percent are between 21 and 24 years of age and 7.12 percent are 25 or over.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire has 412 full-time and 106 part-time faculty members and a faculty-to-student ratio of 19:1. Eighty-five percent of faculty members are Caucasian, one percent American Indian, five percent Asian American, one percent African-American, two percent Hispanic, two percent International and four percent did not report.

Title III Strengthening Institutions funds will allow UW-Eau Claire to improve six-year graduation rates by supporting three initiatives that will enhance the academic success of our students. These three initiatives include: 1) the faculty development necessary to create educators prepared to deliver an intentional, integrated, efficient and engaging lower-division General Education program that generates within our students the essential knowledge and skills for success in the 21st Century; 2) faculty development emphasizing an acceleration of General Education content in global and multicultural studies, complemented by the creation of effective global and multicultural learning communities, and leading to a transformative education that allows our students to thrive in a culturally pluralistic and globally interdependent world; and 3) the faculty, staff and student development necessary to implement a "Connected Learning" advising system that better integrates the Academic Affairs and Student Advising units in order to coordinate advising and assessment capabilities focused on both curricular and co-curricular educational outcomes, leading to the empowerment of students to become more intentional about and responsible for their education. These outcomes are critical to student success and retention and intricately tied to the ability of UW-Eau Claire to survive in an increasingly competitive educational climate.

## **P031A090180 - Carl Albert State College, Oklahoma**

Carl Albert State College is a two-year public institution serving rural southeastern Oklahoma through the Poteau campus in Le Flore County and two branch campuses--one to the north in Sequoyah County, the other a joint higher education center to the south in McCurtain County. Nearly 90 percent of the student body lives within those three counties and two others: Haskell and Latimer to the immediate west of the three counties containing campus sites.

Students may enroll in four basic programs: Certification of completion, Associate in Applied Science Degree, Associate in Arts Degree, or Associate in Science Degree. The Associate of Arts is the most popular program offered, accounting for just over 50 percent of the average graduating class. Allied Health programs, business, and education attract the most majors.

During the 2005-2006 academic year, the college served 3,665 students. Seventy percent of the students are women, only 30 percent are men. The average age of the student body is 26, although the individual ages range all the way from 16 to 80 years old. The racial/ethnic makeup of the CASC student body includes 26 percent American Indian students (significantly more than the overall makeup of the service area at 15 percent), 67 percent White, three percent Black, two percent Hispanic and one percent or less of any other groups. The faculty consists of 57 (35.6 percent) full-time and 103 (64.4 percent) adjunct members, with a student/faculty ratio of 18:1 and an average class size of 17 students. (IPEDS 2007)

With an overarching activity designed to strengthen student services, institutional technology and data management in order to improve student retention, CASC requests Title III, Part-A Strengthening Institutions Program grant funds of **\$1,736,647** over five years (2008-2013). The persistent problems to be addressed include: 1) low student retention and graduation rates; 2) underprepared students who are unaware of and/or unable to access campus services; 3) no counselor available to assist with students' problems; 4) computer labs are overcrowded and inadequate to accommodate students' needs; 5) inadequate technology to engage students and facilitate the learning process; and 6) institutional assessment and data management systems are outdated or nonexistent.

If funded, CASC proposes to address all those problems through a holistic approach designed to improve student services and institutional processes through technology, prepare students for success through a new eight week *FAS-TRAC* orientation initiative, identify and intervene with those at-risk for dropping out, and ultimately, retain a higher percentage of successful students.

## **P031A090181 – Lakeshore Technical College, Wisconsin**

Lakeshore Technical College (LTC) is a not-for-profit, public, two-year postsecondary educational institution that focuses on occupational education. One of 16 comprehensive two-year postsecondary technical colleges in Wisconsin that operates under the administration of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), LTC is governed by a local nine-member District Board whose representation is determined by state statute.

Located in east central Wisconsin, LTC serves 200,000 residents in a 1,200 square mile district covering all of Manitowoc and Sheboygan counties and parts of Calumet and Ozaukee counties. The main campus is in the village of Cleveland, centrally located between the district's two city centers, Manitowoc and Sheboygan. The college operates two learning sites strategically located in the Sheboygan and Manitowoc One-Stop Job Centers (LTC-S and LTC-M). Lakeshore Technical College also operates seven Community Outreach Centers in rural district high schools.

Through five instructional divisions, the college offers 33 Associate of Applied Science degrees, 28 technical diplomas, 38 technical certificates, and 10 state-indentured apprenticeships. Thirteen programs hold professional or specialized accreditation certification from 11 agencies. LTC's Workforce Solutions provides customized training to employers. The Goal Oriented Adult Learning (GOAL) program offers Adult Basic and Secondary Education (ABE/ASE), General Educational Development (GED), and High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) at all LTC locations. English Language Learning (ELL) is available at LTC-S and LTC-M.

Lakeshore Technical College proposes a Title III project to increase the GOAL student transition rate from basic skills to postsecondary programs by implementing a comprehensive case management system, a Bridge Student Tracking System, and creating seamless access points for GOAL students.

**P031A090194 - Luzerne County Community College, Pennsylvania**

**Luzerne County Community College (LCCC), Purpose:** “Building Bridges for Equality of Services”  
The Goal of this Title III Project is to strengthen and extend student support services to students who attend classes during the evening, weekends and at the six dedicated off-campus sites. It will help improve the student success rates in persistence, academic success and program completion by “Building Bridges” between the main campus and the dedicated off campus sites through the use of enhanced communication technology, two cross-trained student support services coordinators, and increased professional development training for the adjunct faculty who serve these students.

Luzerne County Community College (LCCC) is Northeastern Pennsylvania’s largest college serving 16,000 students each year from over 13 counties. Luzerne County Community College consists of a 167 acre main campus in Nanticoke, five (soon to be six) off campus dedicated sites, seven satellite sites and distance learning programs. Luzerne County Community College is a two-year public community college offering over 100 associate degrees, certificates, and diploma programs most on an open admissions basis, to high school and GED program graduates. Founded in 1966, it is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Approximately 53 percent of the students are enrolled in transfer programs and 47 percent are enrolled in occupational programs. Over 84 percent of all LCCC graduates live and work in the region. Spring 2008 credit enrollment was 6,068 or 4:47, 765 full-time equivalents. The current operating budget for 2007-2008 is \$35 million.

## **P031A090028 - Labette Community College, Oklahoma**

Labette Community College (LCC), a two-year, public comprehensive community college, serves a two-county, 1,243 square-mile area in the extreme southeast corner of Kansas bordering Oklahoma and Missouri (service area population 43,310). Our rural area has been ranked for the past 18 years as the most economically distressed region in Kansas, based on a host of socioeconomic indicators (Kansas Inc., 2007). With 40 percent of families in the low income range, economic struggle is a way of life throughout the region.

Since 1923, LCC has provided traditional academic programming, with the addition of community/technical programs that open doors to greater employability and economic stability for area residents. Offering particularly strong nursing (Practical Nursing leading to Licensure, and the Associate Degree in Nursing leading to careers in Registered Nursing), and Allied Health (Radiologic Technology and Respiratory Therapy), LCC has earned a reputation for preparing graduates to fill growing needs for healthcare professionals. Annually filled to capacity, these programs are key to LCC fulfillment of its mission to “provide quality learning opportunities in a supportive environment for success in a changing world.”

Today, LCC looks to build upon healthcare program successes to address the institutional problem of declining enrollment. In response to increased area need for healthcare services appropriate to the region’s aging population, the area’s key healthcare provider will, in 2009, open the Center for Rehabilitation Excellence (C.O.R.E), a facility that promises to increase the number of residents seeking healthcare right in LCC’s backyard. Reflecting state and nationwide trends, it is projected that the need for Physical Therapy Assistants, Occupational Therapy Assistants, and Surgical Technologists—already high in the area—will grow even more. But without adequate resources to develop and support these programs, LCC cannot take advantage of this exciting opportunity to expand enrollment while filling a genuine area need.

Therefore, we propose “New Opportunities in Allied Health,” an activity to develop three new healthcare programs: two-year Associate of Applied Science degrees in Physical Therapy Assistantship (PTA), Occupational Therapy Assistantship (OTA), and Surgical Technology. New programs will be supported through program-specific equipment and resources, as well as instructional technology, at LCC’s Cherokee Campus (Columbus).

The LCC Foundation and Alumni Office has pledged to raise \$395,000 to match the Title III requested Endowment.

Total five-year request: \$1,999,583.