

**HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT
INNOVATION GRANTS
FISCAL YEAR 2008 GRANT ALLOCATIONS**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: This item presents grant recommendations for fiscal year 2008 Innovation Grant projects under the Higher Education Cooperation Act Program (HECA). This program supports innovative cooperative projects that address higher education goals and priorities throughout Illinois.

In September 2005, a Board committee was convened to review the HECA Grant program and develop strategies for improving its effectiveness. The implementation of the strategies recommended by the Board committee has resulted in: (1) greater emphasis on innovative projects, (2) highly focused statewide priorities, (3) increased transparency, (4) increased accountability for project results (external project evaluation), and (5) greater sharing of project results (dissemination of effective practices).

For fiscal year 2008, the General Assembly and the Governor appropriated \$3.8 million for the HECA grant program along with a direct HECA appropriation of \$220,000 for the Quad Cities Graduate Center. Sixty-four percent of the grant program appropriation, or \$2.4 million, is recommended to support continuation of 13 projects that were initially approved in fiscal year 2007. The remaining 36 percent, or \$1.3 million, is recommended to support 12 new Innovation projects.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) approve the fiscal year 2008 allocation of \$3.9 million in Higher Education Cooperation Act grant funds in support of 13 renewal and 12 new Innovation Grant projects and the Quad Cities Graduate Center.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT
INNOVATION GRANTS
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Transition to Innovation Grants

In September 2005, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) appointed a committee to review various aspects of the Higher Education Cooperation Act grant program. The improvements recommended by the Board committee have resulted in: (1) greater emphasis on innovative projects, (2) highly focused statewide priorities, (3) increased transparency, (4) increased accountability for project results (external project evaluation), and (5) greater sharing of project results (dissemination of effective practices).

Focus on Baccalaureate Completion

In April 2007, Board staff released the FY2008 HECA Innovation Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) and the FY2008 Renewal Application for Innovation Grants that were originally approved in fiscal year 2007. The focus of the RFP for new projects was increasing baccalaureate completion for all Illinois residents. Grantees were permitted to submit grant proposals for one or more of the funding categories stated in the RFP. Listed below are the fiscal year 2008 funding categories that fall within the baccalaureate completion theme:

Increasing Baccalaureate Completion		
Funding Categories	Definition	Suggested Topics
Access & Affordability	Promoting increased student access to an affordable education throughout Illinois' higher education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting outreach strategies for adult learners ▪ Developing initiatives to reduce costs associated with college ▪ Developing baccalaureate completion programs offered by senior institutions on community college campuses ▪ Developing programs to increase college-going rates of at-risk students
Research & Evaluation	Program evaluation of statewide initiatives to enhance opportunities for increasing baccalaureate completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation of HECA Program ▪ Evaluation of statewide transfer issues, such as the Illinois Articulation Initiative

P-20	Promoting high quality teaching and learning throughout Illinois' higher education system to ensure a successful and smooth transition of students from elementary to postsecondary degree completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing college readiness among elementary and secondary students ▪ Developing pipeline programs to increase student interest and enrollment in STEM fields ▪ Identifying and fostering curricular alignment between secondary and postsecondary institutions
Persistence	Promoting degree completion and increased graduation rates at community colleges and four-year institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing retention/graduation rates of underrepresented students ▪ Improving campus climate to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students ▪ Improving campus climate to foster an inclusive and supportive working environment for all faculty

Summary of Applications

Table 1 shows that 61 Innovation Grant proposals, including the Quad Cities Graduate Center, totaling \$8.8 million were received in response to the fiscal year 2008 RFPs. Because of the limited funds available, the BHE staff is unable to recommend all the high-quality projects that were submitted.

Table 1

Application Type	# Projects Received	Amount ¹ Requested	# Projects Funded	Amount ¹ Funded
New	47	\$5.9	12	\$1.3
Renewal	13	\$2.8	13	\$2.4
Quad Cities	<u>1</u>	<u>\$220K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>\$220K</u>
Total	61	\$8.8	26	\$3.9

Dollars in millions except for Quad Cities¹

Review Process

Proposals were classified by funding category and assigned to three-person teams for review. Each of the four review teams consisted of one out-of-state content (funding area) expert, one Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) staff member, and one IBHE staff member. ICCB

and IBHE staff members were also assigned by content area expertise. The following criteria were used to rate the proposals:

- **Eligible Project Activities:** The proposal addresses one of the eligible funding categories to increase baccalaureate completion and clearly defines the need for the project as supported by current research and best practices, target population to be served, key project personnel, project goals and objectives stated in measurable terms, and timeline and implementation strategies.
- **Evaluation and Dissemination Plan:** The proposal provides a comprehensive evaluation plan that clearly identifies the expected outcomes of the project, including a description of benchmarks that will be used to determine project effectiveness throughout the life of the grant. The proposal provides clear rationale for selection of an external evaluator(s) recommended for the project. The proposal outlines a plan to disseminate project results.
- **Sustainability and Budget:** The proposal provides convincing evidence of institutional support (monetary and non-monetary) and the ability to sustain efforts of the project after the life of the grant. Sustainable systemic improvements are those integrated into the policies and practices of the institutions and for which ongoing support is allocated from available resources. The proposal clearly presents a cost-effective budget and narrative justification that is consistent with the scope of the proposed objectives and activities.
- **Interinstitutional Cooperation:** The proposal provides clear evidence of genuine interinstitutional cooperation through partnerships, including the roles and responsibilities of each participating institution.

After initial scoring, each review team participated in a consensus meeting during which the three team members discussed their scoring rationales and came to an agreement on funding priorities within their funding category. IBHE staff then selected the top-ranked projects based on available funding and contribution toward the Board goals listed in the RFP. In order to fund a maximum number of projects while protecting project integrity, Board staff prorated recommendations at 90 percent of requested amounts for renewals and 79 percent for new grants.

Innovation Grant Recommendations

The Governor and General Assembly appropriated \$3.8 million for the fiscal year 2008 HECA Grant Program and \$220,000 for the Quad Cities Graduate Center. Two percent of the grant appropriation, or \$75,746, will be held in reserve, leaving \$3.7 million available for awards at this time. Table 2 presents fiscal year 2008 funding recommendations totaling \$2.4 million for 13 renewal grants and \$1.3 million for 12 new grants, together with \$220,000 for the Quad Cities Graduate Center. Appendix A presents a project synopsis for each of the grant projects recommended for funding in this item.

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolution:

The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the fiscal year 2008 allocation totaling \$3.9 million for Higher Education Cooperation Act grants, including \$220,000 for the Quad Cities Graduate Center, as shown in Table 2. Payment of grants is subject to the receipt of all required documentation. The Board authorizes the Executive Director to withhold payment or

adjust a grant allocation, if necessary, to conform to existing statute, rule, or available funding or to assure compliance with any previous grant agreements.

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2008 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

		Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
<u>NEW APPLICATIONS</u>			
Project:	100 Males Preparing for a College Education	125,500	99,597
Co-op Institutions:	Northern Illinois University* and Rock Valley College		
Project:	A Partnership for Advances in Registered Nurse Education	114,400	90,788
Co-op Institutions:	City Colleges of Chicago and University of Illinois at Chicago*		
Project:	Brother-to-Brother program	188,800	149,832
Co-op Institutions:	Governors State University*, Illinois Institute of Technology, Joliet Central High School, Joliet Junior College, Kankakee Community College, Kankakee High School, Lewis University, Northwestern Business College, Prairie State College, Saint Xavier University, South Suburban College, Thornton High School, Thornwood High School, Trinity Christian College, and University of St. Francis		
Project:	College Transitions Program	74,000	58,726
Co-op Institutions:	Millikin University and Richland Community College*		
Project:	Increasing Retention in Online Courses Through Peer Mentoring	22,000	17,459
Co-op Institutions:	Black Hawk College, Elgin Community College, Illinois Community College Board, Lake Land College*, Moraine Valley Community College, Triton College, University of Illinois at Springfield, Waubensee Community College and William Rainey Harper College		
Project:	SIUC Service Centers for College and Career Planning	350,000	277,760
Co-op Institutions:	John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale*		

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2008 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

		Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
Project:	Supporting Regional Manufacturing Needs through Career Academies	73,097	58,010
Co-op Institutions:	Lewis and Clark Community College* and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville		
Project:	The Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance	233,000	184,909
Co-op Institutions:	DePaul University, Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE), the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE), Prairie State College, and University of Illinois at Chicago*		
Project:	The TAPE Program - Thrive, Aspire, Persist, and Engage	100,300	79,598
Co-op Institutions:	Black Hawk College, Rock Island County Board, Rock Island Task Force on Poverty, and Western Illinois University*		
Project:	Training All Teachers to Help English Language Learners Succeed	187,600	148,879
Co-op Institutions:	Illinois State University* and Northeastern Illinois University		
Project:	Transition and Degree Completion for Veterans with Disabilities	85,610	67,940
Co-op Institutions:	John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville		
Project:	Transitional Allied Health Educational Partnership	122,400	97,137
Co-op Institutions:	Chicago State University*, Richard J. Daley College, and South Suburban College		
TOTAL FOR NEW APPLICATIONS (12)		1,676,707	1,330,635

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2008 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

		Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
<u>RENEWAL APPLICATIONS (2nd YEAR)</u>			
Project:	A Partnership to Facilitate the Development of Special Educators	55,000	49,500
Co-op Institutions:	Carl Sandburg College, Spoon River College, and Western Illinois University*		
Project:	A Teacher Data Warehouse	85,000	76,500
Co-op Institutions:	Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, and University of Illinois -University Administration*		
Project:	ACCESS (Attaining College Credit and Educating Successful Scholars)	13,700	12,354
Co-op Institutions:	Eastern Illinois University* and Parkland College		
Project:	Expansion of the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Database	150,857	135,771
Co-op Institutions:	Illinois Community College Board, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and University of Illinois		
Project:	Illinois Course Applicability System: Ensuring Transfer Students' Success	406,800	366,120
Co-op Institutions:	Northern Illinois University, Parkland College, University of Illinois -University Administration*		
Project:	Illinois Functional Web Accessibility Consortium	174,359	156,923
Co-op Institutions:	City Colleges of Chicago, College of Dupage, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Harry S Truman College, Harold Washington College, Illinois Central College, Kennedy-King College, Joliet Junior College, Kishwaukee College, Malcolm X College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, Western Illinois University, Wilbur Wright College, and William Rainey Harper College		

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2008 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

	Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
Project: Illinois Homeland Security Education Center	370,600	333,540
Co-op Institutions: Northern Illinois University* and Western Illinois University		
Project: Increasing Access to Supply Chain Management Instruction	83,000	74,700
Co-op Institutions: John Wood Community College and Western Illinois University*		
Project: Lake County Latino Student Success Initiative	39,700	35,730
Co-op Institutions: College of Lake County*, DePaul University, Grant Community High School District 124, Mundelein High School District 120, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Round Lake High School District 116, University Center of Lake County, Waukegan High School District 60, and Zion-Benton Township High School District 126		
Project: Making College Readiness a Reality	210,600	189,540
Co-op Institutions: Illinois State University*, Heartland Community College, Lincoln Land Community College, and University of Illinois at Springfield		
Project: Minority Student Success in Transfer, Retention and Graduation	662,810	596,529
Co-op Institutions: City Colleges of Chicago and Northeastern Illinois University*		
Project: NIU Regional Development Model for Community College Partnerships	305,000	274,500
Co-op Institutions: Northern Illinois University* and Waubensee Community College		
TOTAL FOR RENEWAL APPLICATIONS-2nd YEAR (12)	2,557,426	2,301,707

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2008 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

		Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
<u>RENEWAL APPLICATIONS (3rd YEAR)</u>			
Project:	ENLACE Fellows: Higher Education Leadership for a Global Society	88,013	79,212
Co-op	Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership Development of Chicago, College of Lake County, Northeastern		
Institutions:	Illinois University*, Richard J. Daley College, and St. Augustine College		
TOTAL FOR RENEWAL APPLICATIONS-3rd YEAR (1)		88,013	79,212
<u>DIRECT APPROPRIATION</u>			
Project:	Quad Cities Graduate Study Center	220,000	220,000
Co-op	Drake University, Saint Xavier University, Illinois State University, University of Illinois, Iowa State		
Institutions:	University, University of Iowa, Northern Illinois University, University of Northern Iowa, St. Ambrose University, and Western Illinois University		
TOTAL FOR DIRECT APPROPRIATION- (1)		220,000	220,000
GRAND TOTAL FOR HECA (26)		4,542,146	3,931,554

*Fiscal Agent

APPENDIX A

ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**INNOVATION GRANTS
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT
FISCAL YEAR 2008
PROJECT SYNOPSES**

October 2, 2007

New Projects

Project Title: 100 Males Preparing for a College Education

Project Director: Ms. Felicia Regina Bohanon
Director, Office of Precollegiate Programs
Northern Illinois University
c/o Upward Bound Program
DeKalb, IL 60115
(815) 753-1868
fbohanon@niu.edu

Recommended Amount: \$99,597

Cooperating Institutions: Northern Illinois University* and Rock Valley College

* Fiscal Agent

Project Synopsis: African American and Hispanic males are graduating from high school and matriculating to college at significantly lower rates than Caucasian males and African American and Hispanic females. Educational access is impacted by poverty, cultural norms, isolation within communities and poor awareness of educational opportunities. Northern Illinois University and Rock Valley College have joined with four middle schools in Rockford and Aurora to prepare 100 African American and Hispanic males for success in high school and college matriculation. The program will emphasize rigorous academic preparation in mathematics, science, and writing and seek to overcome the barriers to educational access that these young men face. The keys to the success of the program are a long-term commitment to students, a challenging curriculum, a nurturing environment emphasizing positive male development, mentoring, access to the latest technology, and counseling and guidance that helps parents and students plan for academic success.

The objectives of the project are to: (1) increase the number of low-income African American and Hispanic males who are prepared to successfully complete a college preparatory curriculum and subsequently enroll in and complete a post secondary education program; (2) promote rigorous academic coursework based on college entrance requirements; (3) provide comprehensive services including mentoring, tutoring, counseling and enrichment activities; (4) foster and improve parent involvement in preparing students for high school and college; (5) inform students and parents of high school and college options and financial aid opportunities; and (6) respond to the unique issues that low-income African American and Hispanic males face as they prepare for college matriculation.

Methodology for Implementation/Basic Activities: (1) year-round tutoring and academic instruction based on student needs and interest; (2) individual and group counseling services for students and their families, including college planning, required academic coursework, and financial aid opportunities; (3) annual standardized testing and skill assessments, entry skills assessment, and follow-up support services including study groups and tutoring; (4) college visits, cultural enrichment activities and sports activities that will give students a broader view of the world and serve as incentive to participate in other program activities; and (5) socialization and male leadership training. College students and adults from similar backgrounds will serve as role models, provide tutoring and mentoring and participate in counseling sessions and workshops.

Expected Outcomes: (1) parents and students will develop an awareness of the prerequisite courses needed to follow a college prep curriculum; (2) parents and students will develop an awareness of the requirements needed to attend the college or university of their choice; (3) participants will develop a four-year college preparation plan that will facilitate college matriculation; (4) participants will follow a college preparatory curriculum each year and remain in high school until graduation; (5) participants will develop study skills, test preparation skills, and socialization and leadership skills that will help them to respond to academic, social and environmental pressures.

Project Title: A Partnership for Advances in Registered Nurse Education

Project Director: Dr. Patrick Robinson
Executive Assistant Dean, College of Nursing
University of Illinois at Chicago
845 S. Damen Avenue (MC 802)
Chicago, IL 60612
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prphd@uic.edu

Recommended Amount: \$90,788

Cooperating Institutions : City Colleges of Chicago and the University of Illinois at Chicago*

Project Synopsis: Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the healthcare workforce is in the nation's compelling interest. A preponderance of scientific evidence supports that greater diversity among health professionals is associated with improved access to care for racial and ethnic minority patients, greater patient choice and satisfaction, better patient-provider communication, and better educational experiences for all students while in training. Registered Nurses (RNs), at 2.7 million, represent the largest number of health professionals in the country; as yet, approximately 87 percent of all RNs are Caucasian, and only five percent are African-American and two percent are Latina/Latino. Interestingly, minority nurses obtain baccalaureate and graduate degrees in nursing at a much higher rate than their Caucasian counterparts. Such data indicate that minority nurses have a strong interest in furthering their education and moving into upper-level roles. Thus, enhanced access to baccalaureate education in nursing represents an attractive mechanism for diversifying the nursing workforce, including the ranks of advanced practice nurses (e.g., nurse practitioners), health care executives, and nursing faculty.

The purpose of the proposed pilot program is to increase the number of underrepresented minority (URM) students who have access to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Nursing by entering them into a special preparatory and support program, called the Advances in Registered Nurse Education (Advances) program. Specifically, the program represents a partnership between the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) Nursing Program and the UIC College of Nursing. The CCC offer the associate's degree in nursing (ADN), and UIC offers an online BSN completion program.

The overall program goal is to recruit 30 URM students at the midpoint of their ADN studies and retain at least 18 of them to the midpoint of their BSN studies (midpoint only due to the three-year study limit; obviously, we hope ultimately for them to attain their BSNs). Eligible students will be entered into the proposed Advances baccalaureate preparatory and support program. The program has three one-year phases: (I) ADN completion (while doing ADN studies); (II) degree transition (post-ADN and RN licensure work toward BSN admission); and (III) BSN matriculation (the first year [15 credits] of the BSN program).

Programmatic components of each stage include a variety of academic and social support mechanisms. Phase I includes faculty and peer mentoring, tutoring, participation in networking and professional development events, and early academic advising. Phase I ends with graduation from the ADN program with an academic plan to continue to the BSN.

Phase II is the year between ADN graduation and matriculation in the BSN program. Specific BSN prerequisite courses are taken during this year. All the elements of phase I, plus specific academic enrichment programs related to writing, test-taking, and critical thinking skills, are included in this phase. The phase ends with successful admission to the BSN program.

Phase III is the first year (15 credits) of the BSN completion program and includes the same academic and support mechanisms as the previous phases. This endpoint, rather than BSN completion, is chosen because that will take an additional year, and funding under this request is limited to three years.

Project Title: Brother-to-Brother program

Project Director: Ms Genevieve Boesen, Executive Director
South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium
Governors State University
1 University Parkway
University Park, IL 60466
(708) 534-4984
g-boesen@govst.edu

Recommended Amount: \$149,832

Cooperating Institutions : Governors State University*, Illinois Institute of Technology, Joliet Central High School, Joliet Junior College, Kankakee Community College, Kankakee High School, Lewis University, Northwestern Business College, Prairie State College, Saint Xavier University, South Suburban College of Cook County, Thornton High School, Thornwood High School, Trinity Christian College, and University of St. Francis

Project Synopsis: Over the past decade, the relative absence of male students, especially minorities, in higher education has become a national crisis. In a survey of its 16 member institutions in 2005, the South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium (SMHEC) determined that the graduation rate of its minority male students was less than 10 percent. To address this problem, the SMHEC's Presidents Council directed the Consortium to develop the Brother-to-Brother Program (BtB) with the goal of promoting increased transfer rates and degree completion for minority male students at its member institutions. The BtB is modeled after the national, highly acclaimed Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB) program which was founded in 1990 and is in place at 140 colleges and universities and 11 high schools across the United States. This program creates a culture that shapes young men's values, forms their beliefs and transforms their behaviors. The Grand Victoria Foundation recently granted SMHEC \$58,000 as seed money to begin this program.

The BtB program is an interinstitutional collaboration between five high schools and 11 postsecondary institutions. It promotes the efficient use of educational resources, incorporates community involvement, and develops new and innovative educational concepts that effectively deliver educational support programs. The program assists high school and college minority males to make a personal commitment to graduate, establishes institutional and regional commitments to provide role models and targeted support for these students and creates seamless transitions for students between educational institutions. The colleges/universities partner among themselves and with high schools to provide program activities that promote accountability, self-discipline, leadership and a sense of caring for themselves and their "brothers." Four-year institutions partner with the community colleges to develop relationships and create smooth transition experiences for students. Consortial programming builds cohesion among BtB students, staff and programs.

The population served in this project includes minority male high school and college students in the south metropolitan Chicago region. The region is geographically defined by the boundaries of five community colleges including: Kankakee Community College, Joliet Junior College, Moraine Valley Community College, Prairie State College and South Suburban College of Cook County

The project objectives include: (1) create BtB programs at five high schools and 11 postsecondary institutions by June, 2008; (2) transform behaviors to increase retention rates by 60 percent in year one and 70 percent in year two; (3) create a plan to address the barriers minority male students face when transitioning from high school to college and within postsecondary institutions; and (4) recruit 68 project mentors by June 2009.

At the end of grant period each BtB Program will have doubled the number of participants. The retention rate of the participants will be 60 percent in year one and 70 percent in year two.

There are many different minority support programs at individual colleges across Illinois. The BtB program distinguishes itself because it is regional, multi-institutional, promotes a continuum of learning and support, and utilizes the unique SAAB model. The program is designed to optimize the well established interinstitutional relationships within SMHEC, to promote efficient use of members' educational resources and to build on the Consortium's past experiences and successes to reach BtB's goal.

Project Title: College Transitions Program

Project Director: Mr. Marcus Brown
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mbrown@richland.edu

Recommended Amount: \$58,726

Cooperating Institutions : Millikin University and Richland Community College*

Project Synopsis: The College Transitions program will seek to establish an innovative program to assist students from underrepresented groups access and enroll in higher education institutions; to assist currently enrolled students from underrepresented groups with persistence, graduation and transfer from Richland Community College into senior institutions; and to create clear and achievable benchmarks/outcome measures.

The objectives of the program are as follows: (1) increase the number of students from underrepresented groups that benefit from pre-collegiate activities and as a result, enroll in a college/university upon graduation; (2) increase the enrollment, retention, graduation and transfer rates of students from underrepresented groups at Richland Community College; (3) increase the level of proficiency of students, staff and faculty by providing them with information, training, and updates on the Course Applicability System, the Illinois Articulation Initiative, and Academic Success Strategies in College; and (4) provide an accurate follow-up, tracking, and evaluation system that determines the effectiveness of the program and its services.

The grant intends to focus its efforts specifically on the category of persistence, though some focus will be paid to accessing higher education institutions. The College Transitions program will devote its efforts to working with and enrolling students from underrepresented groups as defined by IBHE. In order to fully implement College Transitions, several actions will be taken. The program will run year long and each summer have a High School/College Summer Camp. College Transitions will assist students with accessing appropriate academic and transfer information, assist students in appropriately using the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), and also will train counselors, advisors and students to use the Course Applicability System (CAS). Finally, the College Transitions program will work with staff, faculty, and students, particularly from underrepresented groups, to develop a better understanding of graduation, transfers, and academic success skills while in college. The College Transitions program will track student performance and progress from enrollment through graduation and complete follow up with graduates in transfer programs.

As a result of the College Transitions Program, the following outcomes will be completed: during fiscal year 2008, new baseline data (from underrepresented groups) will be established for enrolled students including tracking from high school graduation to enrollment in college; baseline data of students enrolled will show an increase from year to year; baseline data will be established for students from underrepresented groups enrolled in traditional and non-traditional (e.g. online or bachelor completion) programs in fiscal year 2008; persistence rates for course completion will be at

least 85 percent retention of students from underrepresented groups will match or exceed their “majority” counterparts; baseline data will be established for the number of staff who have been trained on cultural competence, sensitivity, academic success skills, and accurate advising tools such as CAS, IAI, and course transfer equivalencies.

Project Title: Increasing Retention in Online Courses Through Peer Mentoring

Project Director: Mr. Jeff Newell
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Recommended Amount: \$17,459

Cooperating Institutions : Black Hawk College, Elgin Community College, Illinois Community College Board, Lake Land College*, Moraine Valley Community College, Triton College, University of Illinois at Springfield, Waubensee Community College, and William Rainey Harper College

Project Synopsis: “Increasing Retention in Online Courses through Peer Mentoring” is a project designed to improve student retention rates in online courses via an online peer mentoring program. Retention of students at the course level is an important aspect of persistence to degree completion. Trained peer mentors can serve as an important support system in online courses, modeling effective behavior to students and assisting faculty in providing effective communication and support for students to foster a successful online learning experience. Implementing a peer mentoring program can reduce course-level barriers to persistence.

The project goal is to increase student retention rates by 20 percent in targeted online courses via a peer mentoring program. This will occur by accomplishing the following three objectives: First, seven community colleges will implement a peer mentoring program, affecting 14 low retention online courses. Second, faculty of targeted online courses will be able to identify a minimum of five key online teaching behaviors that promote student retention in their courses. Third, ILCCO will disseminate best practices for implementing a peer mentoring program that promotes improved student retention to all 48 community colleges in the state of Illinois.

Outcomes of the project include

- increased retention in the targeted online courses
- increased student satisfaction in online courses
- increase faculty knowledge about communication strategies in online courses
- increased faculty satisfaction in online courses
- dissemination of the implementation and results of the peer mentoring program to the 48 Illinois community colleges

The peer mentoring project partners include seven community colleges who are members of the Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO) consortium and the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS). The ILCCO colleges who will participate in this project are Black Hawk College, Elgin Community College, William Rainey Harper College, Lake Land College, Moraine Valley Community College, Triton College, and Waubensee Community College.

This online peer mentoring project seeks to replicate the success of the peer mentoring program at UIS and adapts it to the community college environment. The program hires students who have

successfully completed a particular online course to be a peer mentor for students in the same course in subsequent semesters. As peer mentors, these students model effective behavior in online courses, encourage participation by posting in the discussion board, answer student questions about assignments, monitor student performance and participation, and initiate regular communication with students, especially those who appear to be at risk for one reason or another. The peer mentor can work with students who may not be keeping up with course assignments or posting lower quality contributions to the discussion board. By proactively contacting these students and identifying any particular issues that may be affecting their ability to be successful, they can provide encouragement and potentially communicate student needs to the instructor.

Project Title: SIUC Service Centers for College and Career Planning

Project Director: Mr. John C. Davis, Special Assistant to the President
SIU University Wide Services
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Recommended Amount: \$277,760

Cooperating Institutions : John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale*

Project Synopsis: Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) will use IBHE FY2008 HECA Innovation grant funds to open and staff a network of cutting-edge SIUC Service Centers to serve as college and career planning offices on partnering Illinois community college campuses over the next several years. This initiative is aimed at increasing the pipeline of university-bound Illinois community college students who have demonstrated an interest and intent to pursue a baccalaureate degree program, and who plan to enroll through a 2+2 or dual enrollment program after completing their first two years of education through an Illinois community college associate degree program.

The SIUC Service Centers will work closely to complement the supportive and assistive services provided by community college staff to encourage students to set goals based on education and career aspirations; persist in their academic efforts; complete an associate degree or certificate program; explore career interests and prepare career ladders; enroll in a 2+2 dual admission transfer program; and gain the skills and support needed to successfully complete a baccalaureate degree of interest to them.

The SIUC Service Centers will be staffed by a full-time Student Advocate and will be supported by the service of dozens of SIUC faculty, students, staff, and alumni who will be recruited and trained to work with students who seek their assistance with issues related to completing college applications; accessing financial aid or scholarships; analyzing career assessments; succeeding in the 21st century world-of-work; identifying career ladders in high job growth industries and critical skill shortage areas; selecting college majors; accessing needed community or government resources; preparing for transition to a university community; and accessing the full range of student support services available to them as they persist and progress towards degree completion.

The HECA initiative also will utilize the services of the SIUC Mentorship Academy which will train approximately 100 SIUC students, faculty, staff, and alumni each year to serve as a mentor for interested community college students who seek their support or assistance through either face-to-face or electronic communications. Through the SIUC Service Centers community college students can select individuals to serve on their own personal SIUC mentorship team. Students can preview available SIUC mentors by viewing photographs, reading personal stories written by the mentors reflecting on their own college experience and career ladder development, or by viewing a short video vignette segment introducing each mentor to interested students.

Through this initiative Illinois students and community members can participate in a series of Student Success Symposiums which will be held on each partnering college campus. Throughout the year community college students will also be invited to participate in a series of “University Immersion Experiences” which will be held on the SIUC campus to introduce students to university classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and the full range of financial, social, and academic resources available to SIUC students. A HECA partnership conference will be held to disseminate project outcomes and to plan for the expansion of the SIUC Service Center model to additional community colleges.

Project Title: Supporting Regional Manufacturing Needs through Career Academies

Project Director: Ms. Kathy D. Turner
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Recommended Amount: \$58,010

Cooperating Institutions : Lewis and Clark Community College* and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Project Synopsis: Lewis and Clark Community College (LCCC) is proposing a Career Academy program for students in local high schools (Edwardsville, Roxana, Alton, East Alton-Wood River) that will focus on the areas of mathematics and science. The program will offer introductory courses, field experiences and academic support for students of the four identified high schools with a focus on students who are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and show an interest in the areas of mathematics and science. As a result of the Career Academy programming identified in this proposal, area high school students will be introduced to postsecondary degree and/or certificate programs in the areas of: Water and Wastewater Processing (Environmental Resources Training Center, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), Certificate Program) Process Operations Technology (Lewis and Clark Community College Associate Degree Program), or Engineering, specifically the Southwest Illinois Area Manufacturing (SIAM) program of SIUE that targets manufacturing fields through engineering degrees. It is believed that this project will offer to area high school students an overview of the potential manufacturing and processing career opportunities as well as various supporting training/education programs available within the region ranging from certificate programs, to associate degree programs to baccalaureate degree programs. As such, it will be presented to participating students as a multitude of options available at the postsecondary level which lead to careers in high growth jobs within the region. The focus will be to target anticipated high-growth, high-need careers, including: process operation technicians (LCCC); Water and/or Wastewater Treatment Operators positions (ERTC); and/or positions with some of the many partners in the SIAM project already in place as a cooperative program of LCCC and SIUE. Each has varying levels of postsecondary education to be eligible for employment.

In order to accomplish the goals of this project, LCCC will hold a two-week summer Career Academy for area high school students. The curriculum will be team-taught by representatives of the LCCC, ERTC, and SIUE and will focus on mathematics and sciences, the areas of study for all identified programs. During the regular academic school year, students will work with a district faculty member to continue their course of study through a team-building program focusing on Trebuchet development, Legos Robotics, and/or Bridge Building. The competitions reinforce the math/science components necessary for the careers identified in the proposed Academy. These projects will culminate in a Spring competition for area high school and college teams on the LCCC campus.

The program falls within the Funding Categories identified by the IBHE of Persistence, in that it promotes the enrollment of students in degree seeking programs and completion of those programs; P-20 focus, in that it enrolls current high school students in a summer program that will identify for them college and/or certificate program available for credits; and Access & Affordability, in that the program will be offered to students at no cost (through the benefit of grant funds) and will target students who are considered at-risk of not enrolling in postsecondary degree programs.

The objectives of this project are to: (1) develop interest in the employment opportunities within the region that require either certificate, associate or baccalaureate degree programs that are currently considered high-need employment fields; (2) expose the students to realities of these professions; (3) strengthen the academic skills necessary for success in these fields; and (4) provide bridges of support and articulation agreements to facilitate smooth transition from high school to the community college, the certificate program and/or the university program. It is anticipated that the program will enroll eight to 10 students from each of the districts in the three-year summer career academy program with subsequent reinforcing follow-up activities identified in this proposal, or 32 to 40 students each year.

Project Title: The Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance

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Recommended Amount: \$184,909

Cooperating Institutions : DePaul University, Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE), the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE), Prairie State College, and the University of Illinois at Chicago*

Project Synopsis: The Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (IALHEA) is an innovative collaborative effort between the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE) and the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE) to ensure access and equity among African American and Latino students, faculty, administrators, and staff in postsecondary institutions in the state of Illinois. The project approaches continuing barriers by enhancing African American and Latino faculty, administrator, and staff professional development; increasing cultural awareness of the unique experiences and contributions of African Americans and Latinos in Illinois; increasing African American and Latino faculty-student research collaboration and opportunities; increasing the level of monitoring and accountability of Illinois postsecondary institutions toward greater diversity and equity; and advancing leadership potential and peer relationships among African American and Latino students.

The goals of the IALHEA are to increase persistence and graduation rates among undergraduate and graduate underserved students by improving cultural and self-awareness; fostering supportive learning environments in Illinois postsecondary institutions; and improving campus climate to foster an inclusive and supportive working environment for faculty, administrators and staff. The target population of the initiative is African American and Latino students matriculating at Illinois public and private postsecondary institutions; and African American and Latino faculty, administrators, and staff.

Key components of the initiative include: a joint annual professional development conference of the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE) and the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE); an African American and Latino faculty, administrator, and staff newsletter (on-line and print) and list-serv; the development of a documentary tracing the history and struggles of African Americans and Latinos in higher education in the United States and Illinois; the development of a curriculum that examines the experiences and contributions of African Americans and Latinos in their quest for equal elementary and secondary, and postsecondary educational opportunities; an annual African American and Latino faculty student research forum; an annual joint African American and Latino institutional access and equity report card; increased accountability and professional expertise on access and equity; and an annual African American and Latino student leadership conference.

Project Title: The TAPE Program - Thrive, Aspire, Persist, and Engage

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Recommended Amount: \$79,598

Cooperating Institutions : Black Hawk College, Rock Island County Board, Rock Island Task Force on Poverty, and Western Illinois University*

Project Synopsis: Although the Illinois Quad Cities region, consisting of Rock Island and Henry counties, has a higher than average rate of the population with associate's degrees, the percentage of individuals holding bachelor's degrees within this region is much lower than in other Illinois communities.

Western Illinois University (WIU) and Black Hawk College (BHC) enjoy a strong partnership. For nearly 40 years WIU has maintained a presence in the Quad Cities region while BHC has served the community for over 60 years. Black Hawk College is one of the main "feeder" schools for WIU's Quad Cities campus, which offers upper-division undergraduate and graduate coursework and does not duplicate the offerings of the region's community colleges. Other partners for this grant are the Rock Island County Board and Rock Island County Task Force on Poverty.

By establishing a Thrive, Aspire, Persist, and Engage (TAPE) Program, this grant will serve two specific populations:

- Dual Admissions Students: These are BHC students who have applied to and been accepted at WIU prior to completing 30 credit hours and thus are committed to attending WIU.
- Pathways Students: Each year, Black Hawk College admits 45-60 students into a special summer program prior to their matriculation in the fall. Students in the program take an orientation course (one credit hour) along with college courses. From 2004-2006, 42 percent of the students were from underrepresented groups.

Within these two populations, we will increase: (1) the number of community college students who raise their educational and career aspirations toward bachelor's degree attainment during their pursuit of higher education goals at the community college; (2) the rate of community college students who transfer to a four-year college or university; (3) student persistence toward bachelor's degree completion; and (4) student completion of a bachelor's degree or higher.

To achieve these goals, we will: (1) expand and build upon the current orientation program for both Pathways and dual admissions students for enhanced navigation of higher education; (2) enhance engagement and empowerment of students in the cohort by involving family, advisors, peer mentors, and fellow students; and (3) develop leadership and academic preparedness of students in the program by establishing student learning communities, study groups, and cohorts and by implementing early warning systems, such as mid-term and earlier student progress tracking, allowing for early intervention.

Project Title: Training All Teachers to Help English Language Learners Succeed

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Recommended Amount: \$148,879

Cooperating Institutions : Illinois State University* and Northeastern Illinois University

Project Synopsis: Training All Teachers to help English Language Learners (ELLs) succeed in schools is an innovative program of curricular enhancement for preservice and inservice educators across disciplines. The project focuses on English Language Learners (ELLs) in U.S. schools and the fact that the training of school personnel in issues related to these children's needs has not kept pace with their growing numbers. The goal of this project is to increase opportunities for all preservice and inservice teachers, pupil services personnel, administrators, and other education personnel to learn about issues specific to ELLs. To these ends, College of Education faculty across departments and disciplines participated in a variety of activities designed to support integration of ELL issues into their teacher preparation courses. The goals and structure of these faculty development activities and their outcomes are expected to benefit teacher education institutions and teachers in the state of Illinois.

Project Title: Transition and Degree Completion for Veterans with Disabilities

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Recommended Amount: \$67,940

Cooperating Institutions : John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Project Synopsis: In response to IBHE priorities regarding promoting degree completion and facilitating transition to baccalaureate institutions, the Transition and Degree Completion for Veterans with Disabilities program will be created by the combined efforts of Disability Support Services (DSS) and Information Technology (IT) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) with the support of collaborating institutions in the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market (SICCM). It will be a statewide project to provide essential peer-directed training opportunities for veterans with service-connected disabilities from the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars who are preparing to attend any postsecondary institution in the state. Project staff has done extensive Internet research as well as discussed the issue with veterans' agencies and not a single project was located in the state that offers services similar to those offered in this project.

The project will be offered in the form of a one-week training program; veterans will live on campus and training sessions that have been demonstrated to improve the likelihood of academic success and completion will be offered. Areas of training will include adapted computer technologies, basics of computing, using a modern library, PA management, career development, and other strategies for success at the college level. In response to a focus group that was held, sessions specific to veterans' needs will be included, such as how to apply for college credits for military experience, how to deal with GI bill and tuition problems, etc. Socialization and recreational opportunities also will be offered and counseling and health service support will be readily available. All materials will be published on a project website so that the program can be replicated in other settings. Longitudinal studies will be administered annually for several years to assess the long-term benefits of the program, to gather college retention and completion data, and to improve the experience for future programs.

Southern Illinois University Carbondale has a long history of excellence in serving the needs of veterans and others with disabilities. In that tradition, DSS has offered a fall transition program for the past 10 years to their new students, which has shown an 83 percent first to second year retention rate in its last six years compared to the average SIUC rate of 67 percent. In this program, students move into their residence halls a few days before other students and begin an intensive and guided transition to student life. The DSS also holds a summer Transition and Inclusion Camp for Students with Disabilities, which has shown impressive longitudinal data in that 76 percent of past participants

are currently in higher education programs and 100 percent of those who are not, plan to be in the near future.

It is anticipated that the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan will result in more disabled and injured veterans than any other war in U.S. history, due to the unique nature of the war (Yoenst and Adams, 2007). These increased numbers are expected to result in an influx of newly disabled veterans into our society with little or no knowledge of how to make the transition to academic or employment settings. The DSS and SIUC already have experience in offering state-of-the-art transition services to students with disabilities. This program, however, will be totally unique in that it will support newly injured veterans through these challenges.

Project Title: Transitional Allied Health Educational Partnership

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Recommended Amount: \$97,137

Cooperating Institutions : Chicago State University*, Richard J. Daley College, and South Suburban College of Cook County

Project Synopsis: The Need for the Project: Although ethnic minorities constitute about 33 percent of the U.S. population, they represent less than 20 percent of the members of most health professions. A pragmatic and efficient way to address the under-representation of ethnic minorities in health professions is through a carefully planned transitional program that will facilitate the transfer of health science major students from the community colleges to four-year colleges and universities. The College of Health Sciences at Chicago State University (CSU) in conjunction with two community colleges in the Chicago metropolitan area [South Suburban College of Cook County (SSC) and Richard Daley College (RDC)] hereby propose a transitional allied health educational partnership (TAHEP) designed to increase the number of ethnic/racial minorities in health disciplines. The application supports the Illinois Board of Higher Education's (IBHE) Innovative Higher Education Cooperation (HECA) grant under the "Persistence" funding category.

The goals of the three year project are to: (1) provide academic support to improve academic performance of students enrolled at CSU, SSC, and RDC to ensure retention and on-time graduation; (2) strengthen and expand the guidance and counseling services to student at SSC and RDC to ameliorate the effects of non-academic barriers on student retention and graduation rates; (3) strengthen and expand the comprehensive academic services provided by the Transfer Centers at SSC and RDC to ensure appropriate course selection and sequencing; and (4) develop practical and credible project sustainability plans.

Methodology: The TAHEP will use a two-tier approach of ensuring the retention and graduation of allied health students enrolled at CSU while also creating an admission pipeline for students at SSC and RDC through mentoring and guidance for appropriate course selection. Personnel at CSU, SSC and RDC will arrange several educational activities, support groups, formal orientations and workshops on time management, studying, and test taking skills for participating students to improve their impressions and adjustments to their college/learning environment, plus relationship building, guidance and counseling on course selection and sequencing, confidence building, and scientific writing skills development to ensure retention and on-time graduation of participating students. The CSU's department chairpersons for occupational therapy, health information administration and health studies (community health and pre-physical therapy), along with the project director and the coordinators at SSC and RDC will form the Coordinating Committee. This committee will meet once every semester to review activities and progress of TAHEP. The aligned science, mathematics, and allied health courses offered at SSC and RDC will be entered into the CSU's Curriculum Advising

Planning Program (CAPP) computer software and the software will be made available at the Transfer Centers at CSU, SSC and RDC. The faculty advisors in each partnering institution will use the CAPP printout as a guide in counseling students on course selection, sequencing and transfer options. Personnel in the Transfer Centers at SSC and RDC will provide counseling and admissions information on allied health programs to participating students.

Expected Outcomes: At the end of the project, we expect to attain the following outcomes: (1) 50 percent of the members of the freshmen class who declare an allied health major at the three partnering institutions will participate in TAHEP; (2) 75 percent attendance and participation in the programmatic activities of TAHEP will be observed; (3) the cumulative grade point average (GPA) of the students participating in TAHEP at the end of the year will be higher than the GPA of other students not participating or earlier cohorts; (4) 10 percent increase in the GPA of the participating students from semester to semester; (5) 10 percent annual increase in the number of SSC and RDC students selecting and taking appropriate courses and pre-requisites that will enable them transfer to health programs in Illinois; (6) five percent annual increase in the number of SSC and RDC students enrolled in health programs at CSU; (7) attain institutionalization of TAHEP at CSU through in-kind contributions of faculty time, and (8) develop a tracking data base to monitor the progress of students who transfers from SSC and RDC to allied health programs at CSU and other four-year colleges and universities in Illinois. TAHEP will strengthen the overarching goals advocated by the Illinois Articulation Initiative and therefore serve as a model program for other institutions statewide and nationally.

Renewal Projects

Project Title: A Partnership to Facilitate the Development of Special Educators

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Recommended Amount: \$49,500

Cooperating Institutions : Carl Sandburg College, Spoon River College, and Western Illinois University*

Project Synopsis: Western Illinois University (WIU), in partnership with Spoon River College (SRC) and Carl Sandburg College (CSC), will participate in this partnership effort to continue to promote interest and involvement of area high school students in the field of special education. This effort will sustain partnerships that include students and faculty from six regional high schools, two regional two-year colleges, and one four-year university. The partnership members will continue to encourage an interest in earning a special education teaching certificate among secondary students at regional high schools, help those students develop the skills to access an affordable high quality postsecondary education using special education Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree programs at the two regional colleges, promote involvement in the high-needs field of special education, and promote degree completion and increased graduation rates through completion of an AAT degree program.

This effort will continue to provide opportunities to foster student interest in the field of special education through the development and expansion of future special education teachers clubs in the regional high schools. The effort will continue to facilitate a basic understanding of the expectations of students enrolled in special education teacher education programs and of special education teachers. It will enhance the movement of students from high schools through AAT programs and the teacher education program at a university. In so doing, the project addresses three goals of *The Illinois Commitment* (IBHE, 1999).

This effort has the following four major goals: (1) The effort will result in an increased interest in special education as a future profession and promote interest in the AAT initiative; (2) the effort will result in increased matriculation in a four-year institution of higher education through completion of an AAT degree program; (3) the effort will result in increased commitment to the profession through membership in the Council for Exceptional Children; and (4) the effort will result in increased understanding of school climate and culture beyond what is learned through academic instruction or in the academic setting.

Future special education teacher clubs will be maintained and enhanced at the participating high schools and student Council for Exceptional Children organizations also will be maintained and

enhanced at the two colleges. High school teachers and the students and teachers at the two colleges and university will receive support to attend the annual Illinois Council for Exceptional Children fall conference or some other professional conference that has an emphasis on the teaching of individuals with disabilities. High school students will visit their regional college campus. High school students and teachers, AAT students and teachers, and university students will participate in a two-day summer program at WIU where they will participate in activities that focus on team building and the development of skills that are important for a successful special education teacher, like leadership skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, risk-taking skills, and esteem building. They also will continue to learn about the expectations and requirements for special educators.

Project Title: A Teacher Data Warehouse

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Recommended Amount: \$76,500

Cooperating Institutions : Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, and the University of Illinois – University Administration*

Project Synopsis: The Teacher Data Warehouse (TDW) continues to support P-20 by helping to provide statewide integration of student data. The TDW supports Illinois higher education institutions and two state agencies by providing data and reports on students in the teacher training pipeline and certification and employment outcome data for teacher education program completers. It allows program completers to be tracked to determine the state certification received and provides information on subsequent employment and retention in Illinois public schools. These data assist educational institutions in determining the best strategies for training teachers to meet the state's growing needs and in determining how to improve retention of teachers once they are employed.

For the past three years, the TDW worked closely with the public university Teacher Graduate Assessment (TGA) project to survey new public university teacher education graduates employed in Illinois public schools and their supervisors to determine if the new graduates are adequately prepared for their first teaching job. By assisting the institutions as they incorporate a continuous improvement model, the TDW is helping to improve the preparation of new Illinois teachers. The institutions also use these data to meet accreditation requirements.

This year the TDW also will support the Educational Administrative Survey (EAS), a survey of newly trained administrators who have earned a new type seventy-five certificate. This survey will be similar to the TGA survey; both the newly trained administrator graduates and their supervisors are surveyed to determine if the new graduates of the administrative program are adequately prepared to be administrators. This survey is designed not only to ask about the institution's administrative training program, but also to determine how many of the program completers are employed in administrative positions.

The TDW is helping to integrate statewide student data. It accepts data from any of the 57 Illinois colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs, from the Illinois State Board of Education, and from the Shared Enrollment and Graduation data files. It uses these data to provide information and reports to the teacher education programs, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), and the State Board of Education (ISBE).

For fiscal year 2008, the TDW proposes to continue the working relationship with both IBHE and ISBE by: (1) providing standard reports to both boards; (2) providing Ad-Hoc reports and

information upon requested; (3) becoming a portal for data that ISBE collects from 57 teacher institutions; (4) providing additional information for ISBE's annual Supply and Demand report; (4) working to obtain a permanent funding source; (5) continuing to assist the Teacher Graduate Assessment Survey and the Educational Administration Survey; (6) working to increase participation by private institutions offering teacher education and to improve the quality of the data; (7) working within the direction and guidelines of the Advisory Committee; (8) evaluating and revising reports as necessary; (9) analyzing and revising reports (B2 & B4) used by institutions for mandated reporting to ensure the format and data content is adequate; (10) completing a series of new reports providing information on students with a community college experience; and (11) providing new teacher supply and demand data for the Illinois State Board of Education .

Project Title: ACCESS (Attaining College Credit and Educating Successful Scholars)

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Recommended Amount: \$12,354

Cooperating Institutions : Eastern Illinois University* and Parkland College

Project Synopsis: The “Project ACCESS” summer program is a cooperative project between Eastern Illinois University (EIU), Parkland College, and the Champaign Unit 4 School District. The program will serve students participating in Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) at Centennial High School and Central High School in Champaign. The AVID is a college preparatory program which improves access to higher education for underrepresented/disadvantaged students in the academic middle who may be the first in their families to attend college. “Project ACCESS” is designed to enhance the academic achievement of these underserved students while informing them and their parents about college enrollment and college funding. High school students will attend a one-week, on-campus experience at Eastern Illinois University that will give students the opportunity to take a university-level sociology course. This course and its related field trips will focus on issues related to cultural diversity in Central Illinois. Prior to arriving at EIU, students and their parents/guardians will participate in a three-part series of workshops at Parkland College focusing on the college admissions process, the financial aid application process, and transfer agreements between institutions. Completion of this program will result in the awarding of two college credits, held in escrow, to those students who pursue their college education at Eastern Illinois University. This program is appropriate for replication at colleges and universities throughout Illinois, improving access to higher education for underserved students in other areas of the state.

Project Title: Expansion of the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Database

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Recommended Amount: \$135,771

Coope rating Institutions : Illinois Community College Board, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville , and the University of Illinois

Project Synopsis: Southern Illinois University is requesting to renew funding under the Fiscal Year 2008 Innovation Grants: Higher Education Cooperation Act to provide services that will continue to support the expansion and enhancement of the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation (SEG) information database and consortium. The SEG system was initially developed in 1991 to provide a data source for monitoring student progress, retention, transfer, and degree completion of Illinois Higher Education students. Currently all public universities, all community colleges, and two private institutions participate in the project and have submitted 15,162,543 student enrollment records and 1,874,713 degrees awarded records.

This proposal, besides addressing innovative new avenues for interinstitutional cooperation, also meets the following IBHE priority for HECA in fiscal year 2008: P-20 – Promoting a continuum of high quality teaching and learning throughout the entire Illinois education system by supporting statewide data integration of student data.

This proposal meets several goals of *The Illinois Commitment*. Teaching, learning, and quality will be enhanced through the collaborative efforts of the participating statewide institutions of higher education by providing a better analysis of the trends and paths students follow to degree completion or non-completion. In addition, students completing education and training programs will benefit from the development of statistical reports and analysis that will identify high-risk scenarios and also area of excellence.

The objectives of this proposal are to: (1) expand participation among all degree granting postsecondary institutions in Illinois; (2) expand the data element collection to include the additional variables as defined by the Shared Enrollment and Graduation Consortium; (3) collect, maintain and secure the shared enrollment and graduation data submitted from the participating institutions; (4) develop reports and analyses of the collected data in a “user friendly”, yet secure, environment to provide a value-added product for distribution to the participating institutions; and (5) support and encourage research projects that will add to the body of knowledge concerning the students who enroll in Illinois higher education institutions.

The ultimate goal of this project is to continue the development of the SEG system to expand statewide data integration and dissemination. To accomplish this will require an enhancement of the research and data analysis component with the goal in mind of providing the colleges and universities of Illinois assistance in tackling issues of programmatic policy and decisions that address student preparation, transfer, persistence, affordability and learning outcomes.

Project Title: Illinois Course Applicability System: Ensuring Transfer Students' Success

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Recommended Amount: \$366,120

Cooperating Institutions : Northern Illinois University, Parkland College, and the University of Illinois – University Administration*

Project Synopsis: The goal of the Illinois Course Applicability System (CAS) Project is to implement a system of web-based course applicability within the state of Illinois to improve students' transfer experience. The CAS allows many student information system functions to be accessed via a web environment, making information typically available only to students enrolled at an institution also available to those interested in attending the institutions, including potential transfer students. The CAS is a web-based information-access tool that communicates up-to-date information about how coursework from one school will apply toward a degree at another school. The CAS provides answers to users—transfer students, native students with transfer coursework, academic advisors, high school students planning their path through higher education, and others—on course equivalency acceptability and applicability. With CAS, community colleges become more attractive to students wishing ultimately to earn the baccalaureate, and senior institutions become more attractive to students who expect to apply credit from more than one institution toward their degree.

In its first phase of development, all of the Illinois public universities were licensed. In Phase Two community colleges and non-public institutions were invited to submit a signed Intent to Participate Agreement. To date, all public Illinois community colleges and two non-public two-year colleges have committed to participate as Sending Institutions. Those participating as receiving Institutions include all twelve public Illinois universities, one public Illinois community college and four not-for-profit senior institutions. Illinois CAS is ready to embark on Phase Three by expanding the license agreement, targeting community colleges and non-public institutions that: (1) serve large numbers of transfer students; (2) have automated degree audit and transfer articulation systems; and (3) commit to rapidly implementing CAS.

Institutions are at various stages of implementing CAS. Illinois CAS continues to work with institutions on advancing implementation. As community colleges and more four-year institutions fully implement CAS, a significant phenomenon will unfold for the first time in Illinois, i.e., students will be able to plan transfer from many Illinois community colleges to public and private four-year institutions and the reverse. The CAS assists the transferability issue in the state of Illinois by addressing all students, exclusive of their demographic background and transfer pattern.

In summary, as stated in the IBHE Illinois Transfer and Articulation Initiatives Annual Report 2004-2005 (October 18, 2005; p. 17), CAS will promote greater interinstitutional cooperation and information-sharing among Illinois institutions. This, in turn, will increase the likelihood that transfer students will select the most appropriate courses for transfer and degree completion. Several outcomes could result: an increase in the number of students who transfer; efficient use of the resources of Illinois higher education; and a decrease in the amount of time it takes transfer students to complete their baccalaureate degrees. Strengthened by the use of technology, opportunities for success will extend to all transfer students in Illinois, but particularly to students from underrepresented groups who are more likely to begin their postsecondary education at a community college.

Project Title: Illinois Functional Web Accessibility Consortium

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Rehabilitation Education Center
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Recommended Amount: \$156,923

Cooperating Institutions : City Colleges of Chicago, College of Dupage, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Harry S Truman College, Harold Washington College, Illinois Central College, Kennedy-King College, Joliet Junior College, Kishwaukee College, Malcolm X College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, Western Illinois University, Wilbur Wright College, and William Rainey Harper College

Project Synopsis: The IBHE Web Accessibility Consortium is building a statewide network of information technology (IT) professionals, disability service professionals, faculty and other staff to work together to improve the functional accessibility of web technologies to people with disabilities. The consortium enhances the ability of the participants to advocate for the accessibility of administrative and instructional web resources on their campuses. The IBHE has made web accessibility a priority for all higher educational institutions in the state by requiring each institution to report their current state of web accessibility and their plans to improve web accessibility¹ on their campuses. The minimum IBHE web accessibility reporting requirements need to be increased to expand the web accessibility awareness and planning by administrators in higher education institutions.

Most IT professionals, faculty and staff who develop and define the purchasing requirements for web technologies do not understand very much about web accessibility or what they should do to increase functional accessibility and usability of web resources to people with disabilities. The resources requested in this proposal will continue to support participants by providing training and tools to facilitate their understanding and use of accessible design techniques in the IT resources they develop and purchase for their campuses. The resources being developed through this consortium are available online for use by any Illinois community college or baccalaureate institution to support their training and policy efforts to improve knowledge of accessible design techniques and evaluation of functional accessibility features of web resources. Training focuses on a “train-the-trainer” approach to create localized human resources and infrastructure on each campus to provide accessibility training to campus web developers, faculty and staff on how to create and evaluate the accessibility of web resources. Online training resources pertaining to accessible design will be available whenever and wherever they are required.

Consortiums have been organized to improve the accessibility of purchased web resources for course management systems (Blackboard), library resources (CARLI, EBSCO, ExLibris) and communications (webMail). New consortiums are planned to address other course management

systems like Angel and Moodle, and communication tools such as pod casting services like iTunes University.

Tools continue to be developed and enhanced to make it easier for people to evaluate their web resources for accessibility. The Functional Accessibility Evaluator (FAE) and the Mozilla/Firefox Accessibility Extension are being enhanced to make it easier for individuals to evaluate and use the reports on the functional web accessibility features of both static and dynamic web content. The combination of FAE and the Firefox Accessibility Extension are the first freely available web testing tools to check dynamically generated web resources. The FAE is already being used by seven of the 13 baccalaureate institutions to report on the accessibility of their web resources. Microsoft Office continues to be a major authoring tool for instructors, staff and administrators for creating electronic documents for sharing with students, faculty, staff and the general public, and are consistently inaccessible when they are published in either their native format, as Adobe PDF files or as HTML documents. It is impractical to train all of these people to learn how to use Office to create accessible documents and expect them to retain the information without some type of feedback. This proposal requests resources to develop a tool to provide direct feedback to authors on the accessibility of their documents before publishing them or converting them to other formats. An automated tool, along with on-line training materials, provides an opportunity for people to learn about accessibility and publish accessible version when they are creating the documents.

¹Public University Web Accessibility Evaluation, Plans for Improvement, and Annual Reporting Requirements, <http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/URG/Reports/2006/WebAccessibility/guidelines.pdf>

Project Title: Illinois Homeland Security Education Center

Project Director: Dr. Anne Kaplan, Vice President
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Recommended Amount: \$333,540

Cooperating Institutions : Northern Illinois University* and Western Illinois University

Project Synopsis: Northern Illinois University (NIU) and Western Illinois University (WIU) have initiated the Illinois Innovative Delivery of Education Alliance for Homeland Security (hereafter, the Illinois IDEA HS or simply the Alliance), an alliance of universities that collaborate in entirely new ways to meet the urgent need to prepare professionals and the public for both natural and human-made disasters of all kinds. Pockets of homeland security expertise and educational offerings exist across the state, but are not available everywhere. Illinois IDEA HS partners are developing a model that is unique and unprecedented in Illinois for development and delivery of academic offerings by a critical mass of expert faculty, seamless course-sharing across institutions, and dissemination of essential information. This Alliance focuses on homeland security; the interinstitutional degree development and course-sharing model also can be available to other fields.

Eleven Illinois public universities have signed on to explore and plan a homeland security education alliance with the following intent: (1) to create and maintain a seamless system for administration of registration, course sharing, and revenue-sharing for homeland security courses across all participating institutions; (2) to develop a multidisciplinary, interinstitutional framework for homeland security education; (3) to deliver credit and non-credit homeland security education that combines best practices in instruction and cutting-edge research in this multidisciplinary field; (4) to develop a clearinghouse of information for the public, professionals, researchers, and policymakers; and (5) to provide leadership for grant writing and other initiatives to sustain the work of the Alliance

The Alliance is adapting a model created by the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GP IDEA) that offers joint programs in multidisciplinary subject areas. Faculty members from GP IDEA institutions in eleven states develop courses and curricula together for students who take courses at any of the institutions. Students pay a negotiated common price per credit hour, which is shared by formula with the “home” and the teaching institutions, and the GP IDEA. By collaborating across institutions in a similar manner, the Illinois IDEA HS will both address unmet needs and maximize higher education’s efficiency and effectiveness. In this time of severe financial constraints, higher education institutions lack resources to develop new and comprehensive programs. The Illinois IDEA HS will reduce duplication of effort and maximize access to quality resources. By convening faculty talent and developing joint programs, the Alliance will coordinate delivery of innovative homeland security education to underrepresented and place-bound students statewide.

Project Title: Increasing Access to Supply Chain Management Instruction

Project Director: Dr. John Thomas Drea
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Recommended Amount: \$74,700

Cooperating Institutions : John Wood Community College and Western Illinois University*

Project Synopsis: The purpose of “Increasing Access to Supply Chain Management Instruction” is to take a degree program in high demand by employers (Western Illinois University’s [WIU] B.B. in Supply Chain Management) and develop a partnership with Illinois community colleges through the use of technology.

In year one, two online courses were created: SCM 211 - (Introduction to) Supply Chain Management (SCM) and SCM 330 - Warehouse Management. The introductory course also was distributed to John Wood Community College to be made available to other community colleges through the ILCCO network. Articulation agreements for supply chain management are underway with several Illinois community colleges. A brochure explaining supply chain management has been created, and will be distributed later this summer.

In year two, two additional online SCM courses will be developed: SCM 411 - Global Supply Chain Management, and MKTG 475 - Customer Relationship Management). These two courses delivered online directly from WIU (as is SCM 330 from year #1). The project also involves the development of 2+2 agreements between WIU and interested Illinois community colleges in the area of Supply Chain Management. Making these course available online allows a student to enroll in supply chain management without being physically present on the WIU campus in Macomb.

Expected outcomes for the project:

1. Community college students would become aware of excellent career opportunities in SCM within their districts.
2. Community college students could start SCM preparation while enrolled at a community college.
3. Upon transfer to WIU, an SCM student could remain in his/her home district for an additional semester, taking online WIU SCM courses. This would provide sufficient preparation for a subsequent SCM internship during the following semester.
4. Students could complete the entire WIU minor in Supply Chain Management online, thereby increasing access to this high demand program to a larger population.

We believe the project to be innovative.

- It involves the use of a public university to create online course that is provided to a community college so that all community college students can enroll directly in a supply chain management course.

- It allows each community college to assist its students in accessing excellent job opportunities in their home district, while allowing a public university to reach a student population that is difficult to reach (since few students know what “supply chain management” is).
- It allows the IBHE and WIU to reach a larger audience with an in-demand program, as opposed to creating new programs to meet needs.

In summary, the project is truly a partnership between a university and community colleges to meet the needs of students and employers through cooperation and an innovative use of technology.

Project Title: Lake County Latino Student Success Initiative

Project Director: Stephanie L. DeCicco
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Recommended Amount: \$35,730

Cooperating Institutions : College of Lake County*, DePaul University, Grant Community High School District 124, Mundelein High School District 120, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Round Lake High School District 116, University Center of Lake County, Waukegan High School District 60, and Zion-Benton Township High School District 126

Project Synopsis: The Lake County Latino Student Success Initiative at the College of Lake County in Grayslake will embark on a second year of creating an innovative and comprehensive model of intensive student support services, training, information, career guidance, and parental involvement to assist Latino students with succeeding in high school, graduating and enrolling in postsecondary education.

The initiative provides students with the opportunity to be in a small and safe group environment outside of the traditional classroom setting, to increase college readiness by managing their own issues of growth and change, learn new problem-solving and decision-making techniques, explore career options, develop a sense of self efficacy, and succeed and graduate from high school and matriculate into postsecondary education. The program also provides bilingual and/or bicultural assistance and services to increase attendance and school retention and provide career and/or college guidance. A key component of the project is intensive information about post-high school graduation opportunities, visits to two- and four- year postsecondary institutions, and assistance with applying for admission and financial aid.

Project Title: Making College Readiness a Reality

Project Director: Ms. Lynne M. Curry
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Recommended Amount: \$189,540

Cooperating Institutions : Illinois State University*, Heartland Community College, Lincoln Land Community College, and University of Illinois at Springfield

Project Synopsis: Despite many effective school reforms over the past two decades, achievement gaps still persist, especially for minority and low-income students. Students living in poverty have few role models for attendance at postsecondary institutions, nor for work and careers. It has become incumbent upon local school districts not only to prepare students, but also to instill a vision for their future. Students cannot dream of a future, set goals, or work towards attainment if they have never seen a college campus nor understood the connection between secondary success and admittance to postsecondary education, with, ultimately, the opportunity to succeed financially and contribute to the community. It is imperative to create the technical structures and adaptive supports across the P-12 and higher education sectors to prepare and support first-generation and underrepresented college attendees.

This three-year P-20 project (now completing its first year) has three goals: (1) to expand a successful college readiness program for non-traditional students at Springfield's Lanphier High School to the other two high schools in the district, so that the program becomes district-wide; (2) to adapt and replicate the Springfield model in two other large unit school districts with similar demographics, in order to establish college preparation programs in conjunction with higher-education partners and to develop a replication "toolkit" for use by other districts in the state; and (3) to provide the state with research and data analysis to inform policy-making related to effective college preparation.

The project has accomplished all of its first-year objectives. Springfield has established program structures and personnel at its two additional high schools and begun implementation there. Bloomington District 87 and McLean County Unit 5 districts have developed replication plans, identified cohorts of participating students, and established project infrastructures and personnel for implementation in the 2007-08 school year. Project personnel have established quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis protocols, and have begun both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Toolkit components are being defined and artifact collection has begun.

In the second year of the project, districts will begin to institutionalize their pipeline programs through redefining job descriptions and making budget commitments and providing services to students and parents with their higher education partners. Both process data and outcome data will be collected and analyzed. Preliminary data should be available by the end of the second project year. The project staff also will begin to engage the Large Unit District Association (LUDA), which includes Chicago 299, with project presentations and a symposium for recruiting additional districts and schools to begin planning for model adoption/adaptation.

Project Title: Minority Student Success in Transfer, Retention and Graduation

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Recommended Amount: \$596,529

Cooperating Institutions : City Colleges of Chicago and Northeastern Illinois University*

Project Synopsis: One of the most significant issues facing higher education today is the consistently low number of minority students completing a baccalaureate degree. The growing importance of a college education coupled with the increasing population of minorities in Illinois calls for innovative programs and partnerships to ensure minority students obtain their educational goals. The Minority Student Success in Transfer, Retention, and Graduation project is designed to help students move successfully through the higher education pipeline to complete at baccalaureate degree. The project has three components, each of which has an extensive evaluation plan developed collaboratively with IBHE.

The first component is a community college transfer initiative designed to increase the number of minority students who successfully transfer from a community college to a four-year institution. The City Colleges of Chicago have collaborated with IBHE to develop a comprehensive transfer initiative based upon specified criteria, including development of a comprehensive Transfer Plan, creation of a Transfer Advisory Committee, partnerships with four-year institutions, and a common set of indicators to assess transfer readiness and actual transfer. In addition, the transfer initiative places an emphasis on advising and academic support services for minority students to enhance academic success and preparation for transfer.

The second component provides recruitment and enrollment assistance to minority students wishing to transfer from the City of Colleges of Chicago (CCC) with either an AA degree or 60 credit hours to Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). A Minority Student Success Transfer Program Coordinator (hired 4/10/07) and a Minority Student Success Recruiter Specialist (hired 6/01/07) will develop and implement program systems and services to foster the transfer process, retention, and baccalaureate degree completion. Northeastern Illinois will identify a cohort of transfer students from the City Colleges of Chicago and provide them with intensive advising in both academic and non-academic aspects of their student experience.

The First-Year Experience Program (FYE) is the third component of the HECA grant. The FYE program is a multi-faceted, university-wide initiative that engages students in a comprehensive series of activities designed to ensure their success in higher education. There are four basic areas that the FYE attempts to address: Future Planning, Academics, Self-discovery, and Transitions. Comprehensive advising and support services are an essential part of each section. The FYE targets freshmen students, with an emphasis on minority students.

Project Title: NIU Regional Development Model for Community College Partnerships

Project Director: Ms. Marilyn McConachie, Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Administration and University Outreach Northern Illinois University
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Recommended Amount: \$274,500

Cooperating Institutions : Northern Illinois University* and Waubonsee Community College

Project Synopsis: The fate of a region's economic vitality is closely identified with responsive higher education networks that prepare and sustain a highly skilled workforce. During Year Two of this project, Northern Illinois University (NIU) and Waubonsee Community College (WCC) will continue developing the WCC-NIU educational partnership to address issues of economic, social, and cultural enhancement. The partners will work within the wider community to link talent, information, technology, and entrepreneurial resources in order to facilitate educational and workforce innovation. Close ties between community colleges, universities and community organizations help train specialized talent, refine research agendas and deploy new knowledge more quickly and efficiently. This project addresses primarily the IBHE priority of persistence, but also student empowerment.

Building on a shared commitment to expand access to baccalaureate degree completion programs, the WCC-NIU partnership has launched initial academic programming; worked to integrate academic programs, advising and student support services; and begun developing a framework for a public higher educational response to regional development issues. During Year Two, the partners will focus on four key areas: (1) delivery of upper division courses that increase matriculation, enrollment, and the number of bachelor's degree holders in the district's workforce; (2) development of new online courses in four baccalaureate completion programs linked to workforce needs; (3) broadening regional economic development activities; and (4) increasing community support for the partnership.

While the WCC-NIU partnership is about more than increasing access to upper division courses, this remains a core activity. At least two upper-division courses will be delivered each semester in Health and Human Sciences, Industrial Management and Technology, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Nursing. The NIU faculty will be working with NIU's eLearning Services unit to create eight new "blended" online courses during Year Two. This learning format combines online and face-to-face instruction to increase NIU's capacity to deliver "anytime, anywhere" courses; reduce faculty travel expenses; and increase convenience for adult learners balancing school, work, and domestic responsibilities.

The partners will engage local organizations, business and industry, health care and social service agencies, local government, and alumni to identify and address economic development issues facing the WCC district. This discussion, along with research contributed by NIU and WCC, will yield a strategic education agenda that enhances regional development. The project's foundational needs assessment data remains relevant but will be refreshed to maintain effective planning. Year Two

regional development activities will focus on: (1) enhancing community, economic, and workforce development; (2) promoting higher levels of educational aspiration and access; (3) encouraging district-wide support for programs that motivate students to pursue higher learning; and (4) stimulating new business planning. These activities are essential to firmly anchoring the partnership, bolstering the region's economic vitality, and developing the quality of life that attracts and retains human resources.

The WCC-NIU partnership will continue developing and implementing a replicable, regionally-focused partnership model. Strong presidential leadership remains vital for ensuring maximum collaboration. Strengthened by this support, the partnership coordinating committee and partnership task force will develop and maintain strong community-based relationships that support partnership students and programs. New programs, both credit and noncredit, are being discussed for implementation during Year Two. Outreach and public relations activities will promote tuition reimbursement programs, work release, internships, promotion and/or hiring of graduates, and new funding for research and projects. Finally, the partners will aggressively seek new sources of funding to sustain and expand the partnership.

Project Title: ENLACE Fellows: Higher Education Leadership for a Global Society

Project Director: Dr. Santos Rivera, Senior Executive Director
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Recommended Amount: \$79,212

Cooperating Institutions : Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership Development of Chicago, College of Lake County, Northeastern Illinois University*, Richard J. Daley College, and St. Augustine College

Project Synopsis: The ENLACE Fellows: Higher Education Leadership for a Global Society initiative's mission is to address the underrepresentation of Latino enrollment in graduate programs, a leading factor that contributes to the critical shortage of Latino tenured faculty and senior administrators at colleges and universities across the nation by preparing a cadre of change agents that will influence institutional policies and practices that affect the enrollment and achievement of Latinos from K-20. The initiative proposes to invest in the preparation and representation of a new generation of Latino leadership in higher education that will create transformative change responsive to the educational challenges of an increasing U.S. Latino community that is position to contribute to bringing change on a global perspective.

The program will recruit and enroll two cohorts of 12 Latinos who demonstrate a strong interest in pursuing or maintaining careers in higher education and in the development of leadership for the Latino community through education. The first cohort began in January 2006 and the second in January 2007. The duration of each cohort is two years. Hispanic candidates will primarily be recruited from those currently employed in higher education as well as those working for not-for-profit associations whose mission engages them with educational programs and services involving high school and college students and their families.

The educational leadership graduate program will assist the ENLACE Fellows to develop the knowledge and skills they need to become leaders in higher education and its diverse communities. The two-year graduate program stresses the relationship between practical and theoretical knowledge; management and leadership skills; and expertise in analysis, communication, team building, decision processes, and project management. The Fellows will go through the program together as a cohort but will be in courses with other higher education graduate students. They will afford the opportunity for sharing and learning diverse perspectives. For Fellows looking to move into a doctoral program in educational leadership, additional help focusing on a research agenda will be made available.

In addition to their graduate studies, bi-monthly seminars and on-going mentoring sessions will support the efforts of the ENLACE Fellows that will strengthen their chance to successfully complete the program and transfer their experiences to the workplace and the community. Through a series of monthly one-day seminars, the Fellows will participate in lectures and dialogues conducted by the ENLACE Scholars that include educators, practitioners, and researchers who will share their

expertise with the Fellows. These seminars will provide them the foundation for conducting action research agendas in Latino higher education. These on-going learning opportunities and lectures will help create a vital “critical mass” between the Fellows and help bring into partnership the academy and the general community. Another important objective of the seminars is to provide the Fellows the opportunity to be mentored by ENLACE Scholars. Mentoring is a major area of strategy for effective development that the initiative will continuously reinforce.

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) leads the initiative in collaboration and cooperation with other two- and four-year institutions and community-based-organizations whose mission engages them with educational programs and services involving high school and college students and families. Several of the colleges/universities involved are Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and active members of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). In partnership with the two- and four-year institutions and community-based-organizations, NEIU will be able to develop a system that can influence a long-term strategy to align colleges and universities for improving faculty diversity in Illinois higher education.

Merging the ENLACE Fellows Program with Northeastern Illinois University’s graduate curriculum in higher education and leadership development and with the external communities will strengthen the goal to build long-term capacity to increase Latino representation at the higher educational administrative levels and therefore, increase institutional responsiveness to the growing Hispanic population. The Initiative will significantly improve the educational conditions of Latinos in the United States and in a global society.

Project Title: Graduate Study Center

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Recommended Amount: \$220,000

Cooperating Institutions : Drake University, Saint Xavier University, Illinois State University, University of Illinois, Iowa State University, University of Iowa, Northern Illinois University, University of Northern Iowa , St. Ambrose University, and Western Illinois University

Project Synopsis: The mission of the Quad-Cities Graduate Study Center (GradCenter) is to facilitate and support graduate-level educational opportunities to the Quad Cities area. The GradCenter, a bi-state academic consortium, was created in 1969 by members of the business, government, and education communities to increase access to high quality graduate-level programming and foster local economic growth.

Each year, the GradCenter projects and activities are based upon planning goals that have been developed and approved by the Center's Governing Board. These planning goals support the GradCenter's mission, guide the Center during the fiscal year, provide direction for staff, and support *The Illinois Commitment* and the strategic plan of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa.

The GradCenter's fiscal year 2008 planning goals are as follows:

Goal I. To expand access to high quality graduate programming in the Quad Cities by marketing the programs provided by member institutions.

Goal II. To serve the needs of the GradCenter's customers including current and prospective students, member institutions, and area employers.

Goal III. To facilitate local economic growth by ensuring that graduate education and post-baccalaureate training needs are met by GradCenter member institutions.

Goal IV. To maintain a strong, mission-driven consortium that is productive, efficient, accountable and which demonstrate effective stewardship of its resources.

