

**HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT
INNOVATION GRANTS
FISCAL YEAR 2009 GRANT ALLOCATIONS**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: This item presents grant recommendations for fiscal year 2009 Innovation Grant projects under the Higher Education Cooperation Act Program (HECA). The HECA program supports innovative, cooperative projects that address higher education goals and priorities throughout Illinois.

While the General Assembly and Governor have not settled on a fiscal year 2009 budget, the Board staff anticipates that the appropriation for the HECA program will be similar to the \$4.0 million included in the Governor's budget proposal, which consists of \$3.8 million for competitive grants and a direct appropriation of \$220,000 for the Quad Cities Graduate Center. Seventy-eight percent of the grant program appropriation, or \$3.1 million, is recommended to support continuation of 19 renewal projects. The remaining 22 percent, or \$697,820, is recommended to support six new Innovation projects.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) approve the fiscal year 2009 allocation of \$4.0 million in Higher Education Cooperation Act grant funds in support of 19 renewal and six 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 February 2008, Board staff released the FY2009 HECA Innovation Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) and the FY2009 Renewal Application for Innovation Grants that were originally approved in fiscal years 2007 or 2008. 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 2009 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
P-20	Promoting high quality teaching and learning throughout Illinois' higher education system to ensure a successful and smooth transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing college readiness among elementary and secondary students ▪ Developing pipeline programs to increase student interest and

	of students from elementary to postsecondary degree completion.	enrollment in STEM and nursing fields <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 51 Innovation Grant proposals, including the Quad Cities Graduate Center, totaling \$8.7 million were received in response to the fiscal year 2009 RFPs. Because available funds are very limited, the Board 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	31	\$4.7	6	\$698K
Renewal	19	\$3.8	19	\$3.1
Quad Cities	1	\$220K	1	\$220K
Total	51	\$8.7	26	\$4.0

¹Dollars in millions except for Quad Cities and new funded figures

Review Process

Proposals were classified by funding category and assigned to three-person teams for review. Each of the three 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.

Innovation Grant Recommendations

At this time, the Governor and General Assembly are expected to appropriate \$3.8 million for the fiscal year 2009 HECA Grant Program and \$220,000 for the Quad Cities Graduate Center. Table 2 presents fiscal year 2009 funding recommendations totaling \$3.1 million for 19 renewal grants and \$697,820 for six 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 Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby approves the fiscal year 2009 allocation totaling \$3.8 million for Higher Education Cooperation Act grants, as well as \$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. Award amounts are dependent upon final budgetary action by the Governor and the General Assembly and any budget reserves imposed.

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2009 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

	Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
<u>NEW APPLICATIONS</u>		
Project: ACT's Intensive Science and Math Experience	120,000	100,000
Co-op Elmhurst College, Eureka College, Illinois College, Lake Forest College, McKendree University, North Central Institutions: College, North Park University, Trinity Christian College, University of St. Francis		
Project: Bridging Opportunities for Teacher Preparation	80,712	80,712
Co-op St. Augustine College and Trinity Christian College* Institutions:		
Project: I SUCCEED: Illinois State Univ./College Can Equip & Enhance Duration	217,830	168,581
Co-op Malcolm X College of the City Colleges of Chicago, Illinois State University*, Chicago Public Schools, Little Institutions: Village Community Development Corporation		
Project: Novel Initiatives for Underrepresented Groups in Engineering (NIUGET)	200,000	155,609
Co-op Illinois Valley Community College, Kishwaukee College, Northern Illinois University*, Rock Valley College, Institutions: and Waubensee Community College		
Project: Pathways to Excellence	37,210	37,210
Co-op Oakton Community College*, North Park University, Roosevelt University, Olivet-Nazarene University, Institutions: West Suburban College of Nursing, and University of Illinois at Chicago		
Project: Responding to the Need for Nurses: Partnering for a BSN Degree	246,517	155,708
Co-op College of DuPage and Roosevelt University* Institutions:		
TOTAL FOR NEW APPLICATIONS (6)	902,269	697,820

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2009 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

		Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
<u>RENEWAL APPLICATIONS (2nd YEAR)</u>			
Project:	100 Males Preparing for a College Education	99,599	99,597
Co-op Institutions:	Northern Illinois University*, Rock Valley College, East Aurora District #131, and Rockford Public Schools District #205		
Project:	A Partnership for Advances in Registered Nurse Education	155,372	90,788
Co-op Institutions:	City Colleges of Chicago and the University of Illinois at Chicago*		
Project:	Brother-to-Brother Program	156,600	149,832
Co-op Institutions:	Governors State University*, Joliet Junior College, Kankakee Community College, Lewis University, Prairie State College, South Suburban College of Cook County, Lewis University, Trinity Christian College, Rich South High School, Kankakee High School, Joliet Central High School, Joliet West High School, and District 205		
Project:	College Transitions Program	62,000	58,726
Co-op Institutions:	Millikin University and Richland Community College*		
Project:	Illinois Homeland Security Education Center	380,744	333,540
Co-op Institutions:	Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University*, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and Western Illinois University		

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2009 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

	Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
Project: SIUC Service Centers for College and Career Planning	398,000	277,760
Co-op Institutions: Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, John A. Logan College, Kaskaskia College, Lincoln Land Community College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Southeastern Illinois College, and Southwestern Illinois College		
Project: Supporting Regional Manufacturing Needs through Career Academies	86,989	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	261,040	184,909
Co-op Institutions: DePaul University, Prairie State College, the University of Illinois at Chicago*, the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE), and the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education		
Project: Training All Teachers to Help English Language Learners Succeed	191,390	148,879
Co-op Institutions: Illinois State University* and Northeastern Illinois University		
Project: Transition and Degree Completion for Veterans with Disabilities	124,041	67,940
Co-op Institutions: Participating institutions are those represented by the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market: 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	125,300	97,137
Co-op Institutions: Chicago State University*, Richard J. Daley College and Olive-Harvey College of the City Colleges of Chicago		
TOTAL FOR RENEWAL APPLICATIONS-2nd YEAR (11)	2,041,075	1,567,118

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2009 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

		Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
<u>RENEWAL APPLICATIONS (3rd YEAR)</u>			
Project:	A Teacher Data Warehouse	85,000	76,500
Co-op Institutions:	Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, and the University of Illinois*		
Project:	ACCESS (Attaining College Credit and Educating Successful Scholars)	13,985	12,354
Co-op Institutions:	Eastern Illinois University* and Parkland College		
Project:	Expansion of the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Database	156,354	135,485
Co-op Institutions:	Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University System, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, and Illinois Community College Board		
Project:	Illinois Course Applicability System: Ensuring Transfer Students' Success	343,400	343,400
Co-op Institutions:	Parkland College and the University of Illinois*		
Project:	Illinois Functional Web Accessibility Consortium	262,407	156,923
Co-op Institutions:	City Colleges of Chicago; Harry S Truman and Wilbur Wright College of the City Colleges of Chicago, College of DuPage; Eastern Illinois University; Governors State University; William Rainey Harper College; Illinois Central College; Joliet Junior College; Kishwaukee College; Southern Illinois University Carbondale; Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*; and Western Illinois University		

**TABLE 2
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT (HECA)
FISCAL YEAR 2009 INNOVATION GRANT ALLOCATION**

	Requested Amount	Grant Awarded
Project: Lake County Latino Student Success Initiative	27,700	27,700
Co-op College of Lake County, DePaul University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Institutions: University Center of Lake County, Waukegan High School District #60, Round Lake High School District #116, Mundelein Consolidated High School District #120, Zion-Benton Township High School #126 , Grant Community High School District #124		
Project: Making College Readiness a Reality	219,420	180,000
Co-op Heartland Community College and Illinois State University* Institutions:		
Project: Minority Student Success in Transfer, Retention and Graduation	608,101	590,000
Co-op City Colleges of Chicago and Northeastern Illinois University* Institutions:		
TOTAL FOR RENEWAL APPLICATIONS-3rd YEAR (8)	1,716,367	1,522,362
 <u>DIRECT APPROPRIATION</u>		
Project: Quad Cities Graduate Study Center	220,000	220,000
Co-op Illinois State University; Northern Illinois University, Saint Xavier University, University of Illinois; Western Institutions: Illinois University; and the following Iowa institutions: Drake University, Iowa State University, St. Ambrose University, University of Iowa, and the University of Northern Iowa		
TOTAL FOR DIRECT APPROPRIATION- (1)	220,000	220,000
 GRAND TOTALS:	 4,879,711	 4,007,300

*Fiscal Agent

APPENDIX A

ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**INNOVATION GRANTS
HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION ACT
FISCAL YEAR 2009
PROJECT SYNOPSES**

June 3, 2008

New Projects

Institution: The Associated Colleges of Illinois

Project Title: ACI's Intensive Science and Math Experience

Project Director: Ms. Cindy Diehl Yang
Executive Vice President
The Associated Colleges of Illinois
20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1456
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 516-2526
cyang@acifund.org

Recommended Amount: \$100,000

Cooperating Institution(s): Elmhurst College, Eureka College, Illinois College, Lake Forest College, McKendree University, North Central College, North Park University, Trinity Christian College, University of St. Francis

Project Synopsis: The Associated Colleges of Illinois' (ACI) Intensive Science and Math Experience (IS-ME) will contribute to building a strong and more diverse national workforce in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by inspiring and engaging low-income and minority high school students in a four-year, hands-on, and intensive out-of-school time STEM program on ACI's partner college and museum campuses. Cohorts of IS-ME students will develop academic and workforce skills and behaviors, STEM content knowledge (including innovative technology skills and scientific methodology), and college access skills, and will build general STEM career cluster and application knowledge through a sequential, freshmen through senior year program implemented on weeknights and Saturdays at partnering college campuses and three of Chicago's premier Museum sites. The IS-ME students also will participate in intensive, residential summer college academies and museum internships that will facilitate the hands-on application of scientific methodologies and innovative technologies.

In *The Quiet Crisis: Falling Short in Producing American Scientific and Technical Talent*, scientist and academic leader Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson suggests that the key to ensuring the breadth and depth of our STEM workforce lies in tapping into our nation's emerging demographics (Jackson, 2002). Our college-age population will soon be made up of traditionally under-represented groups such as non-white Hispanics, African Americans, and American Indian/Alaskan Natives. These underrepresented groups are currently half as likely to enroll in STEM majors and complete a degree (National Science Board, 2004). Simply put, women and under-represented minorities make up half to two-thirds of our nation's population, yet they represent just less than 15 percent of the total U.S. STEM workforce. Nurturing and engaging these under-represented youth in our nation's STEM workforce is a critical strategy in solving our growing economic crisis.

Consequently, the ultimate goal of ACI's IS-ME is two-fold: (1) to inspire and encourage career involvement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields (STEM) among first generation, low-income and minority high school students in Chicago, and (2) to prepare these students for access to and success in rigorous college STEM majors. The ACI's IS-ME objectives

include: (1) to increase students' competencies in information technology skills, including: multi-media presentations, web-casting, pod-casting, and web research skills; (2) to build students' skills regarding scientific methodology, i.e. developing hypotheses, devising methodologies, obtaining and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and presenting research; (3) to expose and engage students in the real-life applications and technologies of STEM fields via working scientists, researchers and educators on-site at Chicago's museums and ACI college campuses; (4) to de-mystify the college selection and enrollment process; and (5) to enhance students' habits of the mind essential for college and workforce success, i.e. communication skills, problem-solving behaviors, conflict management, and leadership skills. At full capacity, IS-ME will serve 100 students annually.

The ACI's IS-ME partners include: the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum/Chicago Academy of Sciences, the Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum, and the Chicago Botanic Garden. Nine ACI member colleges will partner formally on IS-ME, and the other 14 ACI member campuses will be included in college tours and events. The nine primary IS-ME college partners are: Elmhurst College, Eureka College, Illinois College, Lake Forest College, McKendree University, North Central College, North Park University, Trinity Christian College, and the University of St. Francis.

Institution: Trinity Christian College

Project Title: Bridging Opportunities for Teacher Preparation

Project Director: Ms Lori Scrementi
Director of Adult Studies Programs, Adult Studies
Trinity Christian College
6601 W. College Dr.
Palos Heights, IL 60463
(708)239-4842
lori.scrementi@trnty.edu

Recommended Amount: \$80,712

Cooperating Institution(s): St. Augustine College and Trinity Christian College*

Project Synopsis: Greater diversity is needed among K-12 teachers in Illinois; more specifically, there is a great need for Latino teachers. Such diversity benefits all students and is particularly valuable to Latino students. Chicago Public Schools, with one of the most diverse teaching staffs in the state, has only 13.2 percent Latino teachers among its staff of 24,664 while 39.1 percent of CPS's 408,601 students are Latino. But if we are to have more Latinos teaching in our children's classrooms, Latinos need greater access to higher education in general, and to teacher education preparation programs in particular. The barriers are many: inadequate preparation in high school, delay of higher education entrance, family obligations, ESL challenges, and limited finances with demanding work schedules. If we are to meet this need, Latino students need to persist and complete their bachelors' degrees. This project addresses this need in an innovative yet foundational way: building a bridge between a predominantly Latino community college, St. Augustine College, and the accelerated degree completion teacher education program of Trinity Christian College.

The objectives are straightforward. In order to increase the retention/graduation rates of underrepresented Latino students, we will target entry and persistence in the teacher education track in St. Augustine's Liberal Arts & Science Associate of Arts program and assist their transfer into Trinity's accelerated degree completion program in teacher education. In the first year, our objective is to attract 20 St. Augustine students into their teacher education preparatory track, so that by the end of the first year, at least 10 are ready to begin the Trinity degree completion teacher education program. Then, each year, the objectives are for more students to join the teacher education preparatory track at St. Augustine and more students transfer into and complete the Trinity degree completion teacher education program at its downtown Chicago site.

Our methodology includes: (1) formally adding a teacher education preparatory track at St. Augustine, making it the ninth preparatory track within their Liberal Arts & Sciences Associate of Arts degree program, (2) establishing and staffing a Teacher Education Bridge Center at St. Augustine to provide the information, advising, problem solving, and encouragement needed to draw Latino students into the program, and (3) establishing a part-time Teacher Education Bridge Advisor at Trinity's downtown location who will contribute to the advising of Latino students at St. Augustine as well as assist student as they transfer to Trinity and support students at Trinity's downtown location as they pursue their teacher education degree.

Our outcomes will be evident in two ways. First, over the course of the three-year initiative, 68 Latino students will have selected the teacher education preparatory track at St. Augustine and persisted in it to completion. While their eventual matriculation through the Trinity degree completion teacher education will continue past the conclusion of the three year grant period, we project that of this group of 68, at least 40 will transfer to Trinity and 85 percent will become certified teachers. Second, we believe we will have established a sustainable bridge that will continue to attract Latino students to teacher education, contribute to their persistence, and support them until attainment of a bachelor's degree and teacher certification.

Institution: Illinois State University

Project Title: I SUCCEED: Illinois State University/College Can Equip & Enhance Duration

Project Director: Mrs. Amy Sue Roser, Coordinator
Retention and Academic Services
Enrollment Management and Academic Services
Illinois State University
Research & Sponsored Programs
Campus Box 3040
Normal, IL 61790-3040
(309) 438-2156
asroser@ilstu.edu

Recommended Amount: \$168,581

Cooperating Institution(s): Illinois State University*, Malcolm X College of the City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, and the Little Village Community Development Corporation

Project Synopsis: To effectively serve the state of Illinois in the future, higher education as a whole must adapt to the increasing diversity of the state's college-bound population. The National Center for Educational Statistics reports substantial gaps in educational attainment across income and ethnic groups (Horn & Berger, 2004), and these gaps demonstrate the need for institutions to address both access to and retention in higher education for underrepresented students. Research has identified common obstacles to academic achievement for first generation college students (Brazziel & Brazziel, 1995; Werner-Smith & Smolin, 1995; Terenzini, et al. 1996; Garcia, 2001) and acknowledged a positive correlation between improved student retention rates and holistic, collaborative and integrated approaches toward first-year undergraduate support programs (Evenbeck and Hamilton, 2006; Hunter, 2006).

Funds from this HECA grant will support the expansion of the Teacher Education & Access to College for Highschoolers (TEACH) after-school college preparation program and the Chrysalis summer bridge-to-college program, while furthering the ongoing development of Success 101, a first-year undergraduate student support program, in a manner that will fortify a growing multi-school collaboration among Chicago Public Schools, Little Village Community Development Corporation, Malcolm X College of the City Colleges of Chicago and Illinois State University. In addition to facilitating access to postsecondary education opportunities and supporting the academic and social transitions from high school to college, this collaborative effort will enable the development of comprehensive, adaptable, and replicable two-year and four-year undergraduate case management program models designed to support underserved students from pre-admission until completion of various degree programs at multiple institutions.

Best practices in college student support and retention will be identified by analyzing participating student data from Illinois State University and Malcolm X College, which also may result in alternative models for community college transfer centers. Findings will be presented to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois General Assembly, and other policymakers. Effective practices will also be shared with the Illinois Foundations of Excellence project network (sponsored

by the National Center for First Year Experiences) to test and refine areas for replication at other colleges and universities in the state. Through integrating pipeline projects that recruit underserved students with a comprehensive first-year academic support program to encourage their success and attainment at the undergraduate level, I-SUCCEED will improve college attainment, preparation and retention outcomes among underrepresented, lower-income and first generation student groups at Illinois State University, Malcolm X City College of Chicago and other postsecondary institutions that utilize adapted and replicated two-year and four-year comprehensive transition and matriculation support program features developed during the timeline of this grant.

Institution: Northern Illinois University

Project Title: Novel Initiatives for Underrepresented Groups in Engineering (NIUGET)

Project Director: Dr. Suma Rajashankar
Visiting Assistant Professor, Electrical Engineering
Northern Illinois University
106 Engineering Building
DeKalb, IL 60115
(815)753-9966
rajashankar@niu.edu

Recommended Amount: \$155,609

Cooperating Institution(s): Illinois Valley Community College, Kishwaukee College, Northern Illinois University*, Rock Valley College, and Waubensee Community College

Project Synopsis: The goal of the project is to launch a learning community pipeline initiative in engineering that will include high schools, two-year institutions, and four-year institutions in an effort to recruit women and underrepresented minorities into engineering, and to provide a diverse pool of future engineers. This project will investigate the effect of unique interventions on the engineering educational pipeline that includes two-year colleges. Through the project access and affordability will be increased by developing and implementing a system to increase college-going rates of at-risk students. Persistence and P-20 topics are embedded and also will be addressed. This projects attempts to overcome the educational issues facing the underrepresented groups through the following research objectives:

- To increase the awareness of engineering fields among the students from underrepresented groups in high schools and two-year colleges.
- To raise the self-efficacy of female and underrepresented students in high schools and two-year colleges regarding math, science, and engineering fields, especially students from underrepresented groups.
- To increase the number of underrepresented groups recruited into engineering programs at both the two-year and four-year institution levels.
- To increase retention of underrepresented groups, especially female engineering students to degree completion and beyond.

The intellectual merit of this project is to fill two voids currently found in the best practices of the literature regarding (1) interventions at the two-year college institution and the effects that they may have on the engineering educational pipeline and (2) the effect of interventions on the female Hispanic population to increase their participation in educational and career opportunities in the field of engineering. This project is of interest to scholars, practitioners, and the population at large, including the business community. The U.S. must work to increase the innovative capacity of its entire people. This includes tapping into the talent of the minority population who have the potential to succeed in engineering, especially those from minority, immigrant families, and who are the first in their families to pursue a four-year college degree. Financial constraints and cultural issues often limit these student's educational opportunities to community colleges close to home. The role of the

two-year community college will be essential to the recruitment of STEM related professionals on a national level, and it is imperative to foster synergistic relationships between two-year and four-year institutions.

The broader impact of the project is that it may have substantial effects in STEM education, specifically through the work proposed with parents, teachers, and counselors in an effort to raise awareness about the field of engineering. It also may have a societal impact, with the participants, their parents, and teachers all now becoming ambassadors of the importance of STEM education and career pathways to the sustainability of the U.S. as a world leader.

This project is consistent with the mission of the HECA innovation grant program to assist the underrepresented groups to consider careers in the STEM fields. The project does this by addressing (1) individual student perceptions about the educational and career pathway of engineering (2) self-efficacy as related to STEM courses (3) societal impact and importance of increasing the number of engineering graduates and (4) the potential of a career in engineering to provide monetarily for a family, thus helping to overcome cultural barriers.

Institution: Oakton Community College

Project Title: Pathways to Excellence

Project Director: Anne Laurence, Grants Coordinator
Grants and Alternative Funding
Oakton Community College
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Des Plaines, IL 60016-1268
(847) 635-1791
alaurenc@oakton.edu

Recommended Amount: \$37,210

Cooperating Institution(s): North Park University, Oakton Community College*, Olivet Nazarene University, Roosevelt University, West Suburban College of Nursing. The University of Illinois at Chicago also has indicated its intent to participate in Pathways to Excellence.

Project Synopsis: Pathways to Excellence provides a dual admission agreement between Oakton Community College and five baccalaureate institutions that will allow students entering the Oakton ADN program to be simultaneously accepted into a BSN program at a partner institution. Prior to and during the course of their ADN studies, the students will be able to take qualifying general education and non-clinical pre-requisite courses at Oakton or through Oakton's online courses, paying Oakton tuition and fees. These courses will be accepted for credit toward a BSN degree at the chosen partner institution. Upon receipt of their ADN degree and passing the NCLEX exam to become an RN, the student will be able to seamlessly continue studies toward a BSN degree at the partner institution, with the expectation that the BSN degree could be earned in a shorter period. The goal of this project is to increase the number of Oakton ADN students who pursue a BSN degree through one of the Pathways to Excellence partner programs during the three-year grant period. While associate degree nurses are well-prepared for direct patient care, attainment of a bachelor's degree paves the path to a career in management or education, a benefit to both the student and the nation's healthcare sector.

Institution: Roosevelt University

Project Title: Responding to the Need for Nurses: Partnering for a BSN degree

Project Director: Dr. Vickie L Gukenberger, RN
Director and Professor of Nursing Education
College of Professional Studies - Nursing Education
Roosevelt University - Schaumburg Campus
1400 N Roosevelt Boulevard
Schaumburg, IL 60173
(847) 619-8754
vgukenberger@roosevelt.edu

Recommended Amount: \$155,708.00

Cooperating Institution(s): College of DuPage and Roosevelt University*

Project Synopsis: In order to respond to the demand for licensed nurses, and the need for nurses trained at the baccalaureate level, Roosevelt University and the College of DuPage will develop and implement a joint program in nursing, leading to RN licensing when the students complete their associate degree with College of DuPage, and a BSN degree upon completion of the required coursework beyond the associate degree.

The program will be designed to provide a BSN from Roosevelt University that will incorporate and build on the ADN program offered at the College of DuPage. However, the joint program will be distinct from both COD's ADN program and Roosevelt's BSN completion program and will be identified as a BSN program with the BSN degree conferred by Roosevelt University.

Thirty students will be admitted to Roosevelt University and College of DuPage's nursing program in January 2009. The intent is that these students would complete the associate degree by December 2010, and enroll in the BSN degree completion program at Roosevelt University in January 2011. This pattern of admission and program completion would be continued if deemed successful and with continued support of participating institutions.

Tuition and fees will be set for the entire length of the program – presenting to students a cost combining all the charges of both COD and Roosevelt. As an incentive to retention and graduation, students will be assured that the cost will not change as long as they stay continuously enrolled two semesters each academic year. Payments will be distributed evenly over the four years of the program. In keeping with retention measurement standards, students would be required to complete the program in a maximum of six years for the assessed tuition and fees. Capitalizing on existing programs (COD's associate degree program and Roosevelt's BSN degree completion program) and existing resources (i.e. established curriculum, learning lab equipment and supplies, existing clinical affiliation agreements) allows for a 20 percent reduction in Roosevelt University tuition for this BSN.

Evaluation of the initiative would consider, at a minimum, successful completion of AAS degree, RN licensure pass rates, employment rates and completion of the BSN.

Renewal Projects

Institution: Northern Illinois University

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) 753-6953
fbohanon@niu.edu

Recommended Amount: \$99,597.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Northern Illinois University*, Rock Valley College, East Aurora District #131, Rockford Public Schools District #205

Project Synopsis: African American and Hispanics 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, and 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 course work 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.

Basic activities are:

- (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 and required academic course work; 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.

(5) Socialization and leadership training. College students and adults from similar backgrounds will serve as role models, provide tutoring and mentoring and participate in mentoring and counseling training workshops.

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.

Institution: University of Illinois at Chicago

Project Title: A Partnership for Advances in Registered Nurse Education

Project Director: Dr. Patrick Robinson
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Recommended Amount: \$90,788.00

Cooperating Institution(s): 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, 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.

Institution: Governors State University

Project Title: Brother-to-Brother Program

Project Director: Ms. Genevieve Boesen, Executive Director
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Recommended Amount: \$149,832.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Governors State University*, Kankakee Community College, Joliet Junior College, Lewis University, Prairie State College, South Suburban College of Cook County, Trinity Christian College, University of St. Francis, Rich South High School, Kankakee High School, Joliet Central High School, Joliet West High School, and District 205

Project Synopsis: Over the past decade, the relative absence of male students, especially minorities, in higher education has become a national crisis. The South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium (SMHEC) is implementing the Brother2Brother Program (B2B) with the goal of creating an environment for minority male students that supports high school graduation, promotes community college transfer and degree attainment. The B2B program 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. In 2007 the Grand Victoria Foundation granted SMHEC \$58,000 seed money to begin this program.

The B2B program is an interinstitutional collaboration between four high schools, a multi high school district and eight post-secondary institutions. 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.

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.

The project objectives include: (1) strengthen existing B2B chapters by increasing the program enrollment by 20 percent over May, 2008 levels and enhancing support to B2B advisors; (2) create a plan to address the barriers minority male students face when transitioning from high school to

college and within post-secondary institutions; (3) recruit 68 project mentors by June 2009; and (4) develop a communication strategy that connects B2B participants, advisors and mentors.

Institution: Richland Community College

Project Title: College Transitions Program

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

Recommended Amount: \$58,726.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Millikin University and Richland Community College*

Project Synopsis: The College Transitions program was established in October of 2007 as an innovative program that assists students from underrepresented groups access and enroll in higher education institutions, assists currently enrolled students from underrepresented groups with persistence, graduation and transfer from Richland Community College to senior institutions, and creates 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 will continue to focus its efforts specifically on the category of persistence, even though some focus will be paid to access to higher education institutions. The program will run year long and each summer have a High School/College Transition Program/Summer Camp. College Transitions also will assist students with accessing appropriate academic and transfer information, training counselors, advisors and students to use the Course Applicability System (CAS), and assist students in appropriately using the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). The College Transitions program will devote its efforts to working with and enrolling students from underrepresented groups as defined by IBHE. Finally, the College Transitions program will work with staff, faculty, and students, particularly from underrepresented groups, to develop a better understanding of graduation, transfer 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 FY2009, new baseline data will be established for enrolled students including tracking through high school graduation and enrollment in college; baseline data of students (from underrepresented groups) enrolled will show an increase from year to year; baseline data will be established/compared for

students from underrepresented groups enrolled in traditional and non-traditional (e.g. online or bachelor completion) programs in FY2009.

Institution: Northern Illinois University

Project Title: Illinois Homeland Security Education Center

Project Director: Dr. Anne C. Kaplan, Vice President
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Northern Illinois University
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Recommended Amount: \$333,540.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University*, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and Western Illinois University

Project Synopsis: Students across eight Illinois public universities soon will have access to greatly increased course offerings in homeland security thanks to the Illinois Innovative Delivery of Education Alliance Homeland Security (IL IDEA HS or simply the Alliance). The third year of funding for the Alliance will focus on three themes: independence, outreach, and assessment and evaluation. The Alliance must be able to operate independent of grant funding and of the Grant Steering Committee. This independence requires having policies and personnel in place to guide the Alliance toward its continuing goals. The Board of Directors (BOD), composed of representatives from each member university, has chosen Northern Illinois University (NIU) the lead university. The policy and procedure manual will be completed during the next few months. On the eight campuses, registrars and other administrators are preparing to implement the Alliance processes, which must be fine-tuned during this third year. The budget of the current proposal allots a larger portion of the time of the NIU campus coordinator in order for him to assist the BOD chair as the board becomes more active.

Independence also refers to the Alliance becoming financially independent. We can expect some lean times until the offered courses are fully enrolled. Funds in the attached proposal have been invested in continued online course development. At the end of the grant period, there will be approximately 30 online courses ready for offering. Most of these will be courses developed specifically for the Alliance. We understand that we must offer courses in order to fully develop the demand. To that end, we intend to avoid course cancellations by providing supplements to the tuition generated if initial enrollments are low.

Up to this time, the Alliance has developed courses suitable for degree programs already in place. The member universities, however, offer very few degree or certificate programs in homeland security. During the upcoming year we will explore the need and feasibility of new degrees and/or certificates on a variety of topics related to homeland security.

The outreach theme involves sharing the 'Alliance story' through presentations at professional meetings and articles in relevant professional journals. As the faculty group completes much of its essential curricula work, more opportunities for acquiring new skills in teaching online and in

homeland security research will be provided. The expertise developed in online homeland security education will be the focus of a conference for other educators. We will submit proposals for projects that utilize the strengths of the Alliance.

Finally, we will turn our attention to assessment and evaluation. The Alliance faculty group is developing a unique approach to assessing the achievement of learning objectives in all Alliance courses. Beyond evaluation of student learning, the Alliance will take stock of progress in meeting our goals. Our outside evaluator will provide perspective not only on the current year's strengths and weaknesses, but also on the entire three-year project.

We see a bright future for the Alliance. Careful consideration has been given to the curriculum, the organizational structure, and the finances in order to make easy the transition of this young collaboration to independence. We foresee expanding the IDEA concept of shared courses to degree and certificate programs and beyond homeland security to other fields.

Institution: Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Project Title: SIUC Service Centers for College and Career Planning

Project Director: Ms. Becky S. Robinson, Project Director
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Recommended Amount: \$277,760.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, John A. Logan College, Kaskaskia College, Lewis and Clark Community College, Lincoln Land Community College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Southwestern Illinois College, Southeastern Illinois College, and Southwestern Illinois College

Project Synopsis: Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) seeks continued IBHE FY2009 HECA Innovation grant funding to provide individualized coursework planning for thousands more Illinois community college students who enroll in a 2+2 or transfer program through SIUC. The HECA funds will be used to continue to implement effective strategies, services, and interventions designed to enhance the ability of students to plan, prepare, and persist through to timely baccalaureate degree completion.

The SIU System Service Center network plans to expand to ten Illinois community college campus locations by August 31, 2009. Community college campuses for the FY2009–2010 period will primarily serve southern and central Illinois students, including John A. Logan College; Rend Lake College; Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, Kaskaskia College, Southwestern Illinois College, Illinois Eastern Community College, Lincoln Land Community College, and Lewis and Clark Community College.

The SIU System Service Center staff will work in close partnership with the community college transfer support staff services to help provide community college and high school students with a seamless transition to the university experience. The SIU Center staff assist with the admissions application process, provide key contacts for SIU college-specific advisement, and help students access free college and career planning resources. The SIU faculty, staff, and students also will host workshops and discussions on persistence and progress through the SIU College Showcase Series designed to link SIU majors to 21st century career opportunities.

The SIU University Immersion Experiences will be held throughout the year on both the SIUC and SIUE campus. Special invitations will be mailed to community college and high school students interested in a 2+2 transfer path for timely baccalaureate degree completion. More than one hundred SIU students, faculty, staff, and alumni are currently serving as an SIU Advocate for incoming students who seek support or assistance through either face-to-face or electronic communications.

Through the SIU System Service Center, community college students can select their own team of SIU Advocates after viewing photographs and reading student stories of persistence and progress towards college, career, and life aspirations.

Through this initiative Illinois students and community members can participate in a series of SIU College Showcases to be held on each partnering college campus throughout the year. Community college students can meet with visiting faculty, staff, students, and alumni from SIU Colleges to learn more about every aspect of their chosen baccalaureate degree options. University Immersion Experiences will help provide both incoming and current SIU students with a friendly, supportive atmosphere to meet other students, take tours of university classrooms, tour laboratories, and explore libraries. Students will be given assistance and tips for persisting through financial, social, and academic issues which may arise, and will be encouraged to link to a SIU Advocate student to learn about resources available on campus and in the community to help them persist and progress to a timely and successful baccalaureate degree completion.

Institution: Lewis & Clark Community College

Project Title: Supporting Regional Manufacturing Needs through Career Academies

Project Director: Ms. Kathy Del Turner
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Recommended Amount: \$58,010.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Lewis and Clark Community College* and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Project Synopsis: Lewis and Clark Community College (LCCC) is requesting renewed funding for a Career Academy program for students in local high school that will focus on the areas of mathematics and science. The program, in its second year, will expand to include four new high schools in addition to those already involved in the first year. School districts include: Edwardsville, Roxana, Alton, East Alton-Wood River, Bethalto, Alton Marquette, Carlinville, and Jerseyville. The program offers introductory courses, field experiences and academic support for students in the 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, students are introduced to post-secondary degree and/or certificate programs in the areas of Water and Wastewater Processing (Environmental Resources Training Center, SIU Edwardsville, Certificate program), Process Operations Technology (Lewis and Clark Community College AAS program), or Engineering, specifically, the Southwest Illinois Area Manufacturing (SIAM) program of SIUE that targets manufacturing fields through engineering degrees.

In its first year, this program has been designed to offer 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 presents a multitude of options available at the post-secondary level which lead to careers in high growth jobs within the region.

The project focuses on a two-week summer Career Academy program for area high school students. The curriculum is team-taught by representatives from LCCC, ERTC, and SIUE. In support of the summer program, students participate in school-year-long programs that enhance the summer learning experience and target mathematics and science. Students work with district teachers in a team-building program focusing on Trebuchet development and Bridge Building, again targeting the mathematics and science fields during the experience. Students take part in competitions with other schools during the regular academic year to enhance their experience.

This program falls within several of the funding categories identified by IBHE and is most closely aligned with the P-20 focus. The objectives of this project are: to develop interest in employment

opportunities within the region, to expose students to realities of these professions, to strengthen the academic skills needed for success in these fields, and, to provide bridges of support and articulation agreements to facilitate smooth transition from high school to higher education. It is anticipated that the program will enroll 6 to 8 new students from each of the districts for a total of approximately 50 students in the Career Academies. Participating institutions are LCCC and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Institution: University of Illinois at Chicago

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

Project Director: Dr. Michael Toney
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Recommended Amount: \$184,909.00

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

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 post-secondary institutions in the state of Illinois. The project, the first of its kind funded by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), approaches continuing barriers by: (1) enhancing African American and Latino faculty, administrator and staff professional development; (2) increasing cultural awareness of the unique experiences and contributions of African Americans and Latinos in Illinois; (3) increasing African American and Latino faculty-student research collaboration and opportunities; (4) increasing the level of monitoring and accountability of Illinois postsecondary institutions toward greater diversity and equity; and (5) advancing leadership potential and peer relationships among African American and Latino students.

The goals of the Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (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 post-secondary 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: (1) 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); (2) an African American and Latino faculty, administrator, and staff newsletter (online and print) and list-serv; (3) a documentary tracing the history and struggles of African Americans and Latinos in higher education in the United States and Illinois; (4) 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; (5) an African American and Latino Faculty and Student Research Forum; (6) an annual joint African

American and Latino institutional access and equity report card; and (7) an annual African American and Latino Student Leadership Conference.

Institution: Illinois State University

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

Project Director: Dr. George Padavil, Associate Professor
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Recommended Amount: \$148,879.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Illinois State University* and Northeastern Illinois University

Project Synopsis: The regular teachers have a very important role to play in helping English Language Learners succeed in the mainstream classroom. Their overall attitude and teaching approaches can make a big difference for the English Language Learners (ELLs). There is wide agreement that when the overall climate in the classroom is welcoming toward the ELLs and when they are made to feel that they belong in the classroom learning community, learning will take place at the optimum levels. Teachers can use intentional approaches to include ELLs in learning activities, to be accepted by their peers as part of the learning community. Practices related to content-based instruction have shown that both content and language can be learned simultaneously.

The overall goal of this project is to understand and identify the professional development needs of teachers and work with them to achieve those needs through a series of training and support sessions. The professional development needs of teachers will be identified by having teachers participate in the needs assessment survey designed and carried out in collaboration with the superintendent, curriculum directors, principals and research and evaluation consultant of the school districts involved in this project. Based on the results of the needs assessment survey, a plan of action will be made, to provide training workshops and follow up support sessions to help teachers implement those ideas they have learned from the training sessions. The follow up support in small groups will be designed to help teachers feel ready to implement positive changes in the mainstream classroom to help ELLs become successful.

Institution: Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Project Title: Transition and Degree Completion for Veterans with Disabilities

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Recommended Amount: \$67,940.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market: John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Project Synopsis: In response to Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) priorities regarding promoting degree completion and facilitating transition to baccalaureate institutions, the Transition and Degree Completion for Veterans with Disabilities program was created by the cumulative efforts of Disability Support Services and Information Technology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) with the support of collaborating institutions in the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market. It is a statewide, three-year project to provide essential peer-directed training opportunities for veterans with service-connected injuries from the Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Wars who are preparing to attend any postsecondary institution in the state. This project, originally developed with significant input from newly returned veterans, remains unique in the state of Illinois. Inquiries from out of state, New Jersey and Florida among others, seem to indicate that we are developing a model project at the national level.

In its first year the project has almost met 100 percent of its goals in the first five months, but project staff quickly learned (and “adapted and overcame”) that our original conception would have to be significantly altered in order to meet the highly individualized needs of returning military personnel. For example, staff envisioned offering a group experience in a single time frame in summers. We learned that returning military personnel are often given only a day or two to come to campus while they are still on active duty. They do not have the luxury of time for a group experience and cannot commit to a given timeframe. Thus, we individualized the program—veterans sign up and give us their timeframe and project staff arranges housing, food, and sponsors to provide individualized responses to their needs.

Some need assistance even at the admissions level. Most need help identifying housing and adapted computer options. All need introduction to the intricacies of financial aid (particularly as it applies to Chapter 30 and 31 GI benefits), advisement, orientation, the physical environment, and adapted recreation. Many, given their new injuries, are seeking medical and/or psychological assistance. Fellow veterans from the campus and community act as sponsors to the new students. Project staff has found that veterans need each other, having forged bonds of trust that they uniquely understand. Using the Transition & Degree Completion Program allows veterans to arrive at university with a

comprehensive plan for success. And succeed they have in the short time frame since receiving funds (last fall); all the veterans who matriculated through this program are in academic good standing with GPAs ranging from 2.4 to 3.75 in disciplines as demanding as microbiology, civil engineering, and kinesiology. Many have moved almost immediately from being recipients of assistance to sponsoring and mentoring others.

Souther Illinois University Carbondale has a history of excellence in serving the needs of individuals particularly in the area of transition and retention. In the last six years of a fall transition program for disabled students 80 percent were retained from year one to year two, as compared with an institutional average of 70 percent. A more in-depth summer transitional program for high school youth, which was offered for four years, resulted in the inclusion of 80 percent in higher education programs. Yoest and Adams (2007) anticipate that the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan will result in more disabled and injured veterans than any other war in U.S. history. Staff at SIUC appreciates the vision and support at IBHE that has made this very necessary and gratifying work possible.

Institution: Chicago State University

Project Title: Transitional Allied Health Educational Partnership

Project Director: Dr Joseph A Balogun
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Recommended Amount: \$97,137.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Chicago State University*, Richard J. Daley College and Olive-Harvey College of the City Colleges of Chicago

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 [Olive Harvey College (OHC) and Richard Daley College (RDC)] hereby propose to continue the transitional allied health educational partnership (TAHEP) designed to increase the number of ethnic/racial minorities in health disciplines. The project supports the Illinois Board of Higher Education's (IBHE) Innovative Higher Education Cooperation (HECA) grant under the "Persistence" funding category.

The project goals are to: (1) continue providing academic support to improve academic performance of students enrolled at CSU, OHC, and RDC to ensure retention and on-time graduation; (2) strengthen and expand the guidance and counseling services to student at OHC 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 OHC and RDC to ensure appropriate course selection and sequencing; and (4) develop practical and credible project sustainability plans.

Methodology:

The Dean of College of Health Sciences at CSU is the fiscal officer and oversees the implementation of the project. Personnel at CSU, OHC and RDC will continue to 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. Chicago State University'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 OHC and RDC forms

the Coordinating Committee. This committee will continue to meet once every semester to review activities and progress of TAHEP. The aligned science, math, and allied health courses offered at OHC and RDC has been entered into the CSU's Curriculum Advising Planning Program (CAPP) computer software and the software and aligned courses publication made available at the Transfer Centers at CSU, OHC 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 OHC 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 OHC 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 OHC 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 OHC and RDC to allied health programs at CSU and other four-year colleges and universities in Illinois. The 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.

Institution: University of Illinois - University Administration

Project Title: A Teacher Data Warehouse

Project Director: Mr. Kristopher D. Smith
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Recommended Amount: \$76,500.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, and the University of Illinois*

Project Synopsis: The Teacher Data Warehouse (TDW) combines student data from Illinois teacher education institutions with teacher employment and certification data from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). This integration of data sources provides valuable information on the teacher education supply pipeline as well as certification and employment outcome data for teacher education program completers. The TDW allows program completers to be tracked to determine the State certification(s) 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.

The TDW accepts data from Illinois colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs, from the Illinois State Board of Education, and other entities such as the Shared Enrollment and Graduation data files. It uses these data to provide information and reports to the teacher education programs, ISBE, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) thereby supporting P-20 education in Illinois. An advisory committee composed of representatives from Illinois teacher education institutions, ISBE, and IBHE provides advice and direction of TDW activities.

In addition, the TDW supports the Teacher Graduate Assessment (TGA) and the Educational Administrative Graduate Assessment (EAGA) projects. The TGA surveys 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. Similarly, the EAGA surveys newly trained administrators and their supervisor to determine if the new graduates of the administrative programs were adequately prepared to be an administrator. Survey populations are drawn from the TDW and the TDW plays host to the survey instruments. By assisting the institutions as they incorporate a continuous improvement model, the TDW is helping to improve the preparation of new Illinois teachers. Institutions also may use these data to meet accreditation requirements.

In FY2009, the TDW would like to continue providing these valuable functions. In addition, the TDW proposes to build on its current success by enhancing the services it offers and the support it provides to IBHE, ISBE, and teacher education institutions in Illinois. Specifically, the TDW

proposes to increase participation by private institutions, improve the quality of the data, and to evaluate/redesign its website to increase functionality to allow institutions to create custom reports. Staff also would like to provide ISBE with a mechanism to assess new teacher supply data by becoming a portal for data from Illinois teacher education institutions. Lastly, the TDW has been funded through a series of HECA grants which must be renewed each year. In order to provide consistent support and continued success in meeting the needs of participating institutions and agencies, the TDW also will continue to work to obtain a permanent funding source.

Institution: Eastern Illinois University

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

Project Director: Ms. JoEllen Hickenbottom
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Recommended Amount: \$12,354.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Eastern Illinois University* and Parkland College

Project Synopsis: The “Project ACCESS” summer program is a cooperative project between Eastern Illinois University, 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 program 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 Eastern Illinois University, 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 expectations of college life. 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.

Institution: Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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

Project Director: Mr. Larry E. Schilling, Director
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Recommended Amount: \$135,485

Cooperating Institution(s): Illinois State University, Illinois Community College Board, Southern Illinois University System, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale*

Project Synopsis: Southern Illinois University is requesting funds under the Fiscal Year 2009 Innovation Grants: Higher Education Cooperation Act to provide services that will support the expansion and enhancement of the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation (ISEG) 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 15,871,049 student enrollment records and 1,912,321 degrees awarded records.

This proposal, besides addressing innovative new avenues for interinstitutional cooperation, also meets the following IBHE priority for HECA in FY2009:

- 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 also meets the following 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.

Increase the number of citizens completing education and training programs will also benefit by the development of statistical reports and analysis that will identify high-risk scenarios and also area of excellence.

The multiple objectives of this proposal are: (1) expand participation among all degree granting post-secondary institutions in Illinois; (2) expand the data element collection to include the additional variables as defined by the Illinois 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; (5) support and encourage research projects that will add to the body of knowledge concerning the students who enroll in Illinois higher education institutions; and (6) assist in the construction and maintenance of a statewide enrollment data system.

The ultimate goal of this project is to continue the development of the ISEG 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.

Institution: University of Illinois – University Administration

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

Project Director: Ms. Marilyn M. Marshall, Director
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Recommended Amount: \$343,400.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Parkland College and the University of Illinois*

Project Synopsis: The goal of the Illinois Course Applicability System Project (CAS) is to implement a web-based course applicability system 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 Illinois 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 Illinois 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 12 public Illinois universities, one public Illinois community college and four not-for-profit senior institutions. In the current grant cycle, Illinois CAS embarked on Phase Three by expanding the license agreement. In this proposal we seek funding to continue that effort, to expand the course download project -- primarily aimed at the community college system where a disproportionate share of minority students enroll, and seek to increase greatly participation at the sending level by Illinois private institutions.

Institutions are at various stages of implementing CAS. Illinois CAS continues to work with institutions on advancing implementation and, in some cases, in order to maintain participation in CAS, on adapting to changing institutional systems. As community colleges and more four-year institutions fully implement CAS, students will be able to plan transfer from many Illinois community colleges to public and private four-year institutions and the reverse. Illinois 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. Students need very specific and individualized data to select the most appropriate courses for transfer and degree completion. Yet the course-taking pattern often spans many years and typically crosses several institutions – not the type of information provided from a single institution. Illinois CAS is the tool that can bridge institutional systems and 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.

Institution: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Project Title: Illinois Functional Web Accessibility Consortium

Project Director: Jon Gunderson, Ph.D., Coordinator of IT Accessibility
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Recommended Amount: \$156,923.00

Cooperating Institution(s): City Colleges of Chicago; Harry S Truman and Wilbur Wright College of the City Colleges of Chicago; College of Dupage, Eastern Illinois University, Governor's State University, William Rainey Harper College, Illinois Central College, Joliet Junior College, Kishwaukee College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardville, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* and Western Illinois University

Project Synopsis: The Illinois Board of Higher Education (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 to meet the new Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act (IITAA) requirements. 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. This reporting becomes even more important as a means to help universities measure their compliance with IITAA requirements. The work of consortium has had a major impact at the University of Illinois by stimulating a Provost's Initiative to add four new positions at the university to improve the accessibility of administrative web resources.

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, more importantly, publically available tools to facilitate their understanding, evaluation and use of accessible design techniques in the web resources they develop and purchase for their campuses. The resources being developed through the IBHE 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. The training resources of the consortium support the development of localized human resources and infrastructure on each campus for web developers, faculty and staff to create and evaluate the accessibility of web resources. The focus is to integrate accessibility into mainstream web development training materials so that all developers learn about accessibility as a part of their

standard coursework. Online training resources pertaining to accessible design will be available whenever and wherever required.

Consortiums have been organized to improve the accessibility of purchased web resources for course management systems (Blackboard, Desire2Learn), library resources (CARLI, EBSCO, Elsevier), HTML Design Best Practices and communications (webMail). In Year Three, the IBHE group will specifically look at content management systems and provide information on the accessibility features and template options to improve accessibility.

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 Firefox Accessibility Extension are being enhanced through improved evaluation rules, reporting features and the ability to analyze dynamically generated web resources. 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 the people that use Office on accessibility techniques and expect them to retain the information without some type of feedback. This proposal requests resources to support the development of an add-in to Microsoft Office 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 online training materials, provides an opportunity for people to learn about accessibility and publish accessible versions 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>

Institution: College of Lake County

Project Title: Lake County Latino Student Success Initiative

Project Director: Stephanie L DeCicco, Ed.D.
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Recommended Amount: \$27,700.00

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

Project Synopsis: The Lake County Latino Student Success Initiative at the College of Lake County in Grayslake will embark on a third 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 will provide 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 will be 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.

The following Lake County high schools will assist in the recruitment of 150 students for the project: Waukegan High School District #60, Round Lake High School District #116, Mundelein High School District #120, Zion-Benton Township High School District #126, and Grant Community High School District #124. The College of Lake County will be the project initiator and fiscal agent.

Institution: Illinois State University

Project Title: Making College Readiness a Reality

Project Director: Ms. Lynne Curry
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Recommended Amount: \$180,000.00

Cooperating Institution(s): Heartland Community College and Illinois State University*

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 post-secondary 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 second 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- and second-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. Implementation in these two districts began 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 created and refined, and artifact collection is in progress.

In the third year of the project, districts will continue to institutionalize their pipeline programs through refining job descriptions, making budget commitments and providing services to students and parents along with their higher education partners. Both process data and outcome data will be

collected and analyzed. Toolkit components will be made available through a project website. Project staff will engage the Large Unit District Association (LUDA) with project presentations.

Institution: Northeastern Illinois University

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

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Recommended Amount: \$590,000

Cooperating Institution(s): Northeastern Illinois University and City Colleges of Chicago

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 calls for innovative programs and partnerships to ensure minority students succeed and graduate from college. The objective of the Minority Student Success in Transfer, Retention, and Graduation project is 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 (CCC) 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 and a Minority Student Success Recruiter Specialist have developed systems and services to foster the transfer of students from the CCC to Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). The Coordinator and Recruiter also will continue to develop and implement a specialized support and advising programs to respond to academic and non-academic needs of students transferring from CCC to NEIU.

The First-Year Experience Program (FYE) is the third component of the Minority Student Success in Transfer, Retention, and Graduation project. 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/Institution: Quad-Cities Graduate Study Center

Appropriation: \$220,000

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 FY2009 planning goals are summarized as follows:

Goal I: To expand access to graduate programming offered in the Quad Cities by GradCenter member institutions

Goal II: To facilitate win/win partnerships between GradCenter member institutions and Quad Cities employers.

Goal III: To provide consultation to prospective students as well as employers seeking staff development opportunities for their employees.

Goal IV: To support member institutions in assessing the need for and marketing new graduate programs and in targeted marketing of existing graduate programs.