SELECTED BEST PRACTICE RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR MINORITY STUDENTS

Highland Community College’s Enrollment Management Team has developed a multifaceted approach to recruitment. The Team has dedicated local operating funds to a half time position to staff an Inquiry Response Center. The Center ensures that all requests for information are received in a timely fashion and, if possible, the follow up is handled personally by the staff person who can best relate to the student’s background and address his or her needs. Additionally, an Enrollment Management Team member who is an African American works particularly closely with the Freeport schools which have the college district’s largest concentration of minority students. The contact person spends a good deal of time at Freeport High School and delivers all of the information and makes all of the visits to this school for maximum exposure and positive role modeling to the African American student population.

Highland Community College’s Enrollment Management Team has also targeted recruitment of working adults at their places of business to try to get additional employed adults to enroll and improve their skills. Weakness in the local economy have made this a more challenging task. Highland Community College officials also continue to work with local business partners and adults who come to the college for retraining through the Workforce Investment Act.

Highland Community College has also actively recruited recent GED completers. This initiative is coordinated across multiple departments to help GED completers make a successful transition to college. This project is beginning to show positive results after the first year of implementation. Similarly, the Enrollment Management Team is pursuing Upward Bound Program participants since these individuals have developed skills and support systems to successfully make the transition to college. The Enrollment Management Team has implemented new recruitment strategies and expanded data tracking techniques to more fully evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts. Future recruiting efforts will be guided by results from existing initiatives.

In partnership with other community agencies, Illinois Valley Community College’s Hola, Mendota English as a Second Language (ESL) class was created to attract ESL students from Hispanic families living and working in the Mendota, Illinois area – particularly seasonal migrant workers. Collaboration with key individuals from the Mendota community helped promote the success of Hola, Mendota. The superintendent of the elementary school district provided an easily accessible site already set up for childcare. The president of the local Hispanic Partnership Council spearheaded recruitment for the Mendota ESL class. Various support services such as bilingual instructors and childcare professionals as well as a free meal on-site encouraged participants to attend class.
Hola, Mendota was highly successful, with 41 Hispanic adults enrolled for the eight-week summer session and childcare provided for an average of 40 children each week. Eventually two additional bilingual teachers and one volunteer were added to handle the influx of students. Positive word-of-mouth in the community regarding the summer class has carried over into the current fall semester. Fall enrollment for Hola, Mendota has held steady at 40-45 adults and an almost equal number of children. Many students have continued from the summer, with many new students joining. However, the best evidence of success is seen in what the students have learned. Nearly half (17) of the 41 summer session students have gained a whole level on the Basic English Skills Test (BEST). The remaining students have gained points within the existing level.

At Malcolm X College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago, administrators each adopt an area high school and bring teams of college staff to the adopted school. Participating high schools are selected using several criteria including a desire to attract a more diverse group of students to the college. Recruitment sessions are conducted with the principal, counselors, and high school seniors. In an effort to increase minority and underrepresented student migration to the local community college the teams establish a close professional relationship with school representatives and extend outreach efforts to potential students. They provide personalized and timely information on college programs, the application process, scholarship opportunities, and provide insights about financial aid resources. One of the follow-up activities is to invite area high school principals and counselors to the college campus for a breakfast meeting. High school officials are provided with aggregate information regarding recent high school graduates enrolled at the college. College staff also share the latest information concerning college programs and services. Five principals from those high schools with the highest numbers of recent graduates attending the college receive recognition and an award. The college also partners with the owners of a local sports complex to award neighborhood scholarships. Neighborhood Scholarship nominations of high school seniors are made by counselors. These initiatives have contributed to additional enrollments of a more diverse group of students at the college among recent high school graduates.

The College of Lake County incorporates several programs into their minority student outreach and retention efforts. The Conversation Café was created in response to requests by ESL students that the college provide opportunities for English language learners to have meaningful, in-depth discussions in English with native and/or fluent speakers. This forum gives students the chance to practice English in a natural, yet structured, fashion. Moreover, these discussions allow ESL students to be more than recipients of information; they have the opportunity to be experts, providing information that their listeners want to know. The Conversation Café also gives college faculty and staff and other community members a venue for meeting English language learners to help them practice English language skills. This program has resulted in more proficient cross-cultural communicators. The warmth and
friendship started at the Conversation Café has provided positive diversity experience for participants and the community. Students also have been able to make valuable contacts with faculty and staff while beginning their academic careers.

The College of Lake County’s student retention program has been in existence for three years and helps special population students successfully achieve their academic goals. The success of the program is due in large measure to the efforts of two retention specialists who work with underrepresented students, focusing on African-American and Latino students. During the 2001-2002 academic year the retention specialists visited basic skills classes in Math and English (40 class visits), organized study groups (20 student participants), advised the Latino Club (30 students) and the Black Student Union (28 students), ran a campus-wide mentoring program for special populations students (25 students and mentors), met individually with faculty and students, referred students to college support services (over 300 referrals), assisted with the recruitment and enrollment of Spanish-speaking students, played multiple roles during new student orientation (had contact with over 900 students), worked closely with at-risk student athletes, and supported campus-wide student activities. The retention specialists are broadly involved at the college and come into contact with a large number of students, faculty and staff.

The College of Lake County’s Cultural Day of Sharing is an annual event occurring in April that exposes the student population to various cultures around the world. Each year a new topic is selected to be the common tie that bridges all of the cultures invited to participate. The most recent topic was Religion. The Cultural Day of Sharing “Religions of the World” introduced students to various culturally-related religions and faith-based beliefs. International religious organizations were invited to participate in fair, structured seminars, and several panel discussions on relevant topics dealing with religion and quasi-religious issues. Other programs included activities showing the commonalities between various religions and efforts to create world peace through religious organizations. The Cultural Day of Sharing assists the college in providing diversity and multicultural programs to engage students in understanding themselves and the people around them, thus teaching the students valuable lessons in civility and acceptance.

As part of Rend Lake College's Retention Management System, the decision was made to move from "early alerts" (student intervention forms sent by faculty members to counselors for follow up) to a more proactive instrument. The College Student Inventory by Noel-Levitz was selected as a means to assess new students' individual academic and personal needs and to identify students who are at-risk for difficulties in either area including those who may dropout. Additional personal contact with students before classes begin or early in the term can link them with campus resources early in their college career. The goal is to improve the odds of success with their educational plans and career aspirations among individuals who appear to be “at risk”.

After Rend Lake College’s students participated in an on-line pilot project with Noel-Levitz during the Spring 2001 semester, it was determined that students' needs were better served by using the paper/pencil survey. This paper survey was given to all first-time, full-time students (excluding career/technical students) as they registered for Fall
2001 classes. Of the 243 students who participated in the survey, 40 students were determined to be dropout prone. To establish contact with at-risk students, a letter was mailed to each of the 40 dropout prone students, signed by the counselor who registered them. Rend Lake College officials invited these students to make an appointment with their counselor to review the survey results. Counselors attempted to make telephone contact with each student who did not respond to the letter. A post card was sent to the 40 students inviting them to make an early registration appointment with their counselor for the following semester. Thirty-two of the 40 dropout prone students (80 percent) enrolled for the next semester – Spring 2002.

Initiatives at Highland Community College, Illinois Valley Community College, the College of Lake County, Malcolm X College, and Rend Lake College represent only a small number of the many successful approaches Illinois community colleges have instituted in recruiting, preparing and retaining minority students. Providing effective outreach and retention programs for minority and underrepresented student populations are important parts of the community college mission.

**SELECTED BEST PRACTICE RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR FEMALE STUDENTS**

The purpose of Lake Land College’s “Totally Tech” initiative is to introduce nontraditional careers to young women while they are still in high school. The initiative aims to allow participants to broaden their view of potential technical career options. “Totally Tech” was offered for the first time in March 2001. Based on positive evaluations, the one-day event was offered twice in fiscal year 2002. The College’s Perkins Postsecondary Program Grant Office, Eastern Illinois Education for Employment Systems and the three nontraditional career and technical education programs collaborated to offer the sessions on the Lake Land College campus. The three nontraditional occupational programs focused on were Telecommunications, Electronics Technology and Radio/TV Broadcasting. In 2002, a total of 60 high school age young women from 9 area high schools attended this event. This is up from 13 student participants representing 6 high schools in 2001. Sessions focused on team building and problem-solving using a hands-on, interactive format. Attendees participated in activities that used technical and workplace skills in the college’s telecommunications, electronics and radio-TV facilities. Sessions were facilitated by Lake Land College faculty and staff as well as nontraditional workers in the three disciplines. Funding for this event was through the Tech Prep and Perkins III grants. Lake Land College’s Tech Prep office is monitoring the high school to college transition of students who participated in “Totally Tech”; however, since the program is relatively new most of the participants are still enrolled in high school.

In summer of 2002, Illinois Eastern Wabash Valley College began an initiative to increase enrollment of non-traditional students and underrepresented groups by promoting additional partnerships with and among social service agencies who provide support to underrepresented groups. Individuals employed at area social service agencies who have a direct impact on the support structure provided to women, minorities, disadvantaged, and low-income individuals were invited to a meeting. The college
provided a resource manual highlighting all of the services available to students and the necessary qualifications for listed services. The purpose was to bring area support agencies together so they could learn more about the college’s resources as well as the resources of other participating agencies, and, subsequently, bring all resources to bear on the support structures available to their clients. Additional linkages and cooperation across agencies are occurring.

The Danville Area Community College Foundation obtained a $400,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to fund a scholarship program entitled, “21st Century Scholars: Putting Computer Science, Engineering and Mathematics to Work.” The grant enabled the College to support enrollment and completion among students who have been underrepresented in high-tech fields, particularly female and minority students. Through the grant, college officials award 30 annual scholarships to students pursuing Associate degrees in computer science, computer technology, engineering, engineering technology or mathematics. The program also supports internship opportunities for scholarship recipients by providing them with a stipend. The program encourages and enables academically talented students with financial need to enter the high technology workforce upon completion of a computer science, engineering or math related degree.

A program at Illinois Valley Community College entitled “The Math and Science Camp for Boys and Girls” offered in conjunction with Starved Rock Vocational and Technical Education (SRAVTE) introduces high school students to nontraditional careers. Illinois Valley Community College female faculty teach at the camp which is held on the college campus. The students meet with professional women working in technical fields that require strong math and science skills and participate in a variety of hands-on activities. A similar program centered around electronics is also offered, in which participants are introduced to nontraditional careers in that field. For example, attendees participate in exercises to disassemble, perform basic maintenance/upgrades, and reassemble a microcomputer.

Sample initiatives that provide special support services for specific groups of women are those offered by Danville Area Community College. The College provides transitional and support services programs for predominantly young females receiving financial assistance through the Department of Human Services. The Teen Parent Services (TPS) program covers a variety of student expenses for non-high school, non-GED, low-income, female students up to the age of 20. The Youth Employment and Education Program (YEEP) provides at-risk youth with financial assistance and support to continue their education in a post-secondary setting. TPS students who complete their high school diploma or GED are easily transitioned into the YEEP program and receive financial assistance and support to continue their education in a post-secondary setting.

In a similar initiative, Illinois Valley Community College cooperates with Starved Rock Vocational and Technical Education (SRAVTE) partners to recruit cohorts of pregnant and parenting female high school students into college career programs. Student cohorts enter Certificate and Associate in Applied Science degree programs which are designed for immediate employment upon completion. Staff meet with and support pregnant and
parenting teens in ten district high schools. The goal is to assist teens in becoming self-sufficient through enrollment and completion of college career programs. Approximately 30-35 females have been served yearly through this program.

Lake Land College, Illinois Eastern Wabash Valley College, Danville Area Community College and Illinois Valley Community College represent only a few of the many successful approaches Illinois community colleges have instituted in recruiting and preparing female students into nontraditional fields and for successful transition into the workplace.

Friendship started at the Conversation Café has provided positive diversity experience for participants and the community. Students also have been able to make valuable contacts with faculty and staff while beginning their academic careers.

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including those who may dropout. Additional personal contact with students before classes begin or early in the term can link them with campus resources early in their college career. The goal is to improve the odds of success with their educational plans and career aspirations among individuals who appear to be “at risk”.

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**SELECTED BEST PRACTICE RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Lincoln Land Community College** reaches out to students with disabilities by visiting high school resource classrooms, speaking at Agency Representative Nights hosted by Springfield Area and Four Rivers Special Education districts, and holding a program on the college campus specifically for high school seniors with disabilities. This program, entitled “Mission Impossible”, has become so popular that high school counselors and special education teachers are requesting it by name. The program incorporates a tour of the college campus and features sessions with key college personnel who are important to a successful college transition for entering students with disabilities. Later in the day, students are then given the task of locating and investigating specific offices and must return with the necessary information for enrolling in classes at the college. This participatory approach has stimulated interaction, placed more responsibility on the potential student, and empowered them to take additional steps toward independence and college enrollment. Theses students are much more comfortable on their next campus visit after participating in this series of orientation sessions.

**Joliet Junior College**’s Student Accommodations and Resources (StAR) Department provides accommodations and support services to credit students with documented disabilities and limited English proficient students. StAR staff have stepped up recruitment efforts and in 2002 and served 869 students. StAR counselors and advisors logged approximately 6,672 hours of direct services to students. Tutoring and extended time testing are provided for limited English students. In Spring 2002, StAR provided services to 52 limited English proficient international students from over 25 foreign countries. Additionally, in an effort to provide additional outreach and share costs, Joliet Junior College entered into a formal cooperative agreement with the Office of
Rehabilitation Services (ORS) for mutual students. Under the agreement, ORS pays one-half of the college’s cost of tutoring, note-taker services, interpreters, readers, and Braille services. StAR also refers students to ORS and other community service providers such as Will County Mental Health. Strong ties with community service providers extends opportunity to additional individuals and ensure more efficient delivery of services and more effective transitions.

Kishwaukee College officials implemented an approach to serve students with learning disabilities better by delivering timely and cost effective in-house learning disability assessments. Kishwaukee College supported the training of its disabilities services professional to receive certified administrator status for the Woodcock/Johnson learning disabilities assessment instrument. Having a trained person on staff has allowed the college to conduct its own professional assessments, properly document learning disabilities, and provide appropriate accommodations for students. Additionally, the objective to be no or low cost to the student was met by using grant funds to pay for the staff member’s assessment time. Now that this trained professional has retired, a modest fee is paid by the college ($20 per hour) for each assessment. As the number of students with a learning disability increases, the college may have to require students to pay assessment costs ($65 to $100) which is still well below what area psychologists charge for comprehensive assessments.

The impact of Kishwaukee College’s sponsored assessment for students with learning disabilities has been substantial. For the past 10 years, between 5 to 10 adults and some traditional age students without assessment documentation have been tested annually. As a result, each of these students now possess legal documentation of a learning disability and have a record of their specific learning strengths and weaknesses. This allows for special accommodations to be implemented that improve opportunities for success. While some community colleges have used area psychologists or had an Office of Rehabilitative Services Office (ORS) nearby to conduct assessments, Kishwaukee College discovered that it was too costly for the undiagnosed adults to use area psychologists and the distance to the nearest ORS offices was too great so college officials provided this needed service in-house. Over 60 students have benefited from the in-house assessment program.

Four years ago officials from the Illinois Eastern Community College District’s Olney Central College began implementing a four step plan to better identify and serve students with disabilities. Initially eleven staff were trained as Resource Specialists for Special Learning Needs to assess and inventory student’s special learning needs and devise strategies and accommodations to help them succeed in the classroom (Step one). Step two involved implementing related training for a broad cross section of faculty and staff on several topics including Learning Styles, Brain Dynamics, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Legal Accommodations and Strategies, and Understanding Learning Disabilities. In FY 2002, Vocational faculty, Dislocated Workers staff and Learning Skills Center (LSC) faculty and staff attended further learning disabilities training. Step three placed additional emphasis on referring students for assessment. Advisors screened school records, test results, agency referrals, and self-disclosure to refer individuals to the
Learning Skills Center for in-depth assessment. ABE/GED and Developmental instructors conduct brief interviews with all students in their classes and refer students to the LSC for further assessment as needed. Learning Skills Center staff conduct additional assessments with appropriate tools such as Payne Learning Need Inventories, SATA, WRAT, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Tests, and the Woodcock-Johnson III. Step four was to hire a Developmental Support Specialist to perform testing and assessment for Olney Central College and the other three Illinois Eastern Community College campuses. Test results, school records, and individual education plans are used to design strategies and accommodations to promote classroom success. With the students’ permission, specific strategies and accommodations are sent to student’s instructors who implement the recommendations with assistance from the LSC.

Over the past two years, identification of and service to disabled students has risen dramatically at Olney Central College. Approximately one-third of adult education (ABE/ASE) students were identified with special learning needs. Course completion rates for these students receiving assistance for FY 2002 were extremely high. About one-fifth of the Developmental students in flex-option classes were identified with special learning needs. The overall completion rate for Developmental students receiving special support rose 15% from FY 00 to FY 02. The comprehensive, institution-wide nature of the special learning needs program for disabled students has helped make it so successful.

Richland Community College’s comprehensive Disability Accommodation Services (DAS) program began in FY 1999 and has rapidly evolved to meet the growing population of students with disabilities. Services and outcomes are closely monitored by staff. The number of students served through the DAS has grown from 70 in Fall 1998 to 156 in Fall 2002. The course completion rates for DAS students have consistently been between 90 and 93 percent each semester. The return rate has grown from 69 percent for Fall 1999 to 82 percent for Spring 2002. The number of graduates has increased from 7 in Spring 1999 to 13 in Spring 2002. Currently 160 students are receiving services, up 23 percent from 1999. Students receiving appropriate supportive services have exhibited grade point averages that are consistently competitive with students without disabilities. The within semester retention and between semester return rates are higher for individuals receiving services than students without disabilities. Carefully developed accommodation plans which are effectively implemented have made a difference for individuals with disabilities at Richland Community College.

Illinois Valley Community College’s Office of Special Populations participates in several transition activities for persons with disabilities. In cooperation with Starved Rock Area Vocational and Technical Education (SRAVTE), visits are made to high school seniors with disabilities. Topics at these highly interactive meetings include knowing and understanding student disabilities; understanding support services available at the college; and becoming acquainted with the skills needed to effectively make the transition to college. The Office of Special Populations also participates in regional in-service programs and transition fairs that focus on helping students make the adjustment from high school to college. The Special Populations coordinators also attends exit
staffing meetings of high school seniors interested in attending the college to administer placement examinations while offering appropriate accommodations. An orientation is also held each year for students with disabilities. This “Special Needs Orientation” is held in the fall, prior to the start of the semester and is a required activity for first time students with disabilities. Students receive information on tutoring and study groups and learn how to accurately describe their disabilities to instructors. Paperwork for accommodations is distributed and explained, and icebreaker activities are conducted to foster camaraderie among the students.

**Faculty/Administrative/Staff Recruitment**

Highland Community College continues its ICCB Performance Based Funding Initiative in a continuing attempt to improve the climate, diversity, and opportunities for underrepresented faculty and staff. This college-wide goal targets a variety of issues and groups, encompassing minority representation, female representation, and the recruitment of staff with disabilities. This continuing effort – which grew out of their ICCB Performance Based Incentive System initiative – is tied to institutional planning and intended to be the initiative that coordinates all college-wide diversity efforts.

Lake Land College continually strives to diversify the makeup of its faculty and staff by diversifying college search committees. Members of minority groups are included on selection committees whenever possible. Female representatives sit on all search committees for faculty replacement, and all search committees are encouraged to recommend finalists from both genders and minorities whenever possible. As a result, either minorities or candidates from both genders have been interviewed as finalists for most of the college’s recent general education openings.

Progress has been made in recent years at Southeastern Illinois Community College in employing individuals from underrepresented groups. Seven years ago the first woman was employed as a senior level administrator. Today four of the six senior level administrators are female. The Dean of Instruction, Associate Dean for a branch center, and the Director of Institutional Research and Developmental Education are all female. In Community Education, an African-American female has filled the Displaced Homemaker Advocate position. Females with disabilities are also employed on campus in the library and business office. College officials have broadened their recruitment practices to attract additional highly qualified individuals from underrepresented groups to the institution.

Triton College’s Academic Success Center has actively recruited minorities, individuals from other countries who reside in the area, and females to serve as tutors. Overall, the diversity found in the staff of the Academic Success Center reflects the diverse population of students on the college’s campus. The Academic Success Center is attempting to provide a welcoming environment for students seeking assistance with their study skills and other college coursework.

Black Hawk College’s Faculty Internship/Mentoring Program (FIP) assists individuals from underrepresented groups gain access to full-time faculty positions in higher
education. At the same time, the College cultivates additional qualified faculty via a “grow your own” candidate approach to minority faculty recruitment. Interns team-teach two courses per semester in their discipline area with a faculty mentors (approximately 40% of a regular, full-time teaching load). While teaching a reduced load, interns simultaneously pursue a graduate degree part-time at a university of their choice. Faculty interns are responsible for completing a master’s degree within three calendar years. Interns pursuing a doctoral degree can be eligible for additional college support. Faculty interns receive competitive full-time salaries; fringe benefits which parallel those of full-time faculty; stipends to pay for graduate school (tuition, fees, and books); and are eligible to apply for faculty status upon completion of their internship and graduate degree. The FIP has existed at the College for several years and three people have successfully completed the program. Two interns completed their Master’s degrees in English. One has already achieved tenure and is applying for promotion. Another intern received his Master’s degree in counseling. All three were hired by and are currently employed at Black Hawk College.

Similarly, the City Colleges of Chicago’s Daley College actively participates in internship programs and faculty exchanges to identify and mentor graduate students interested in community college teaching or administration. Daley College has a dual interest in the Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program (IMGIP) http://www.imgip.siu.edu/ and Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunities Program (ICEOP) programs. First, the programs provide a valuable source of candidates for future teaching and administrative positions. Second, IMGIP and ICEOP encourage minority students to plan for graduate study toward careers in higher education. Additionally, the College has its own internship program. Interns participate along with non-tenured faculty in monthly professional development meetings coordinated by Daley College faculty member Constance Mixon. Professor Mixon is the current Illinois Professor of the Year and active nationally in the Preparing Future Faculty program of the American Political Science Association. Relatedly, the College hosted the annual meeting of Faculty Exchange Minority Recruitment Interns, with many of Daley faculty attending to meet potential candidates. At present, Daley College has two interns teaching in academic departments (child development and humanities) and one as a staff person in Institutional Development. In Spring 2002, the College employed an additional intern in Institutional Research. These programs provide a valuable opportunity for qualified candidates to further strengthen their skills and for the college to identify potential future full-time faculty.

Lewis and Clark Community College was successful in hiring a candidate through the Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program (IMGIP). This new hire is now a tenure-track psychology faculty member and continues to work with the IMGIP and is providing assistance with the 2003 fellows program. His efforts are an asset in the college’s ongoing effort to increase its workforce diversity.

Last year, the Danville Area Community College Board of Trustees appointed the college’s first “visiting scholar” who provided additional leadership to the college-wide initiative aimed at enhancing the recruitment and retention of faculty, professional staff,
and students. The College is striving to more fully reflect the diverse population of the district in its employees and the student body. Project outreach efforts have strengthened linkages with the minority community and expanded contacts with minority organizations on the local, regional, and national levels. Presentations and work sessions on campus and in the community were conducted to increase tolerance, promote understanding, and create an inclusive climate. The visiting scholar, who is a recognized educational leader in the community, spent over 400 hours over 6 months (January - June, 2002) collaborating and developing strategies for recruiting and retaining faculty, staff and students from diverse backgrounds and strengthening relationships. As a result of the initiative, several recommendations have been implemented already and additional recommendations are scheduled for action in the near future. For example, a resolution on fostering inclusion college-wide was developed for adoption by the Board of Trustees. An Advisory Committee on Access, Equity and Diversity was formed and initially met in late 2002. A Faculty Internship Program aimed at attracting a more diverse candidate pool is in its final stages of development. Sensitivity to increased diversity representation on search committees has been heightened and search committee procedures revised in an attempt to strengthen and diversify the applicant pool and hiring process.

John A. Logan College is leading a project during 2002-2003 to improve faculty, administrator, and staff diversity on campus and across southern Illinois through an initiative entitled the “Minority Faculty and Staff Enhancement Project.” This Higher Education Cooperation Act (HECA) grant funded project involves a partnership with eleven community colleges in southern Illinois and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in conjunction with the Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program (IMGIP). The project aims to: (1) increase the number of minority full-time and term faculty, non-teaching professional staff, and operational staff by identifying and actively recruiting higher education minority students with an interest in teaching or non-teaching professional careers; (2) enhance awareness within community colleges in southern Illinois of the shortage and need for full-time minority staff and faculty; (3) reduce the dropout rate of students from groups who have had historically lower graduation rates and improving persistence and degree completion; and (4) increase the general knowledge of cultural diversity among faculty, non-teaching professional staff, and operational staff locally at John A. Logan College. College officials have established specific objectives for the project including the following. Hire ten minority faculty, staff, and operational staff employees in FY 2003-04 and strive for ten percent minority representation among all 2003 new hires. Produce a faculty/staff brochure and three media releases focused on minority faculty and staff recruitment. Introduce eleven community colleges in southern Illinois to the informal minority recruitment arrangement between Southern Illinois University and John A. Logan College. Include a majority of John A. Logan College full-time and part-time faculty, non-teaching professional and operational staff in a minimum of three hours of diversity training. It is anticipated that the project will allow minority graduate students the opportunity to obtain professional community college teaching experience while completing their advanced degrees. The College will benefit by having a more diverse faculty. Faculty and staff minority identification forms on file in the personnel office will verify the increase in diversity. Diversity training will help create an environment that is more inviting for minority
students and be beneficial in the recruitment and retention of an increasingly diverse faculty and staff.

The **College of DuPage** developed a Faculty Minority Hire Contingency Fund. This program promotes equal employment opportunity and takes affirmative action against barriers that adversely affect the employment of minority applicants to faculty positions. Through this initiative, the College more fully capitalizes on the time and effort dedicated to advertising and recruiting faculty. College officials also have an expanded ability to hire qualified minority candidates. As part of the College’s commitment to minority hiring, this program was approved by the college administration and incorporated into the College of DuPage Affirmative Action Plan in January 2001. The program provides an annual contingency fund to hire up to three well-qualified minority candidates outside and/or in addition to the usual hiring process where growth exists or replacement faculty are needed. A portion of any remaining dedicated funds not used to hire minority candidates can be used for recruitment outreach initiatives including direct contact with minority faculty candidates living outside of the district. In its first year of operation, the maximum of three positions were identified and filled by minority faculty applicants, using the contingency fund. As of September 2002, the College hired two qualified tenure track minority faculty members through this program.

**HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE READINESS AND TRANSITION PROGRAMS**

The Bridge Scholarship Program is designed to assist students from underrepresented, disadvantaged, or low-income groups in their transition from GED or high school credit classes to college level coursework. The Bridge Scholarship Program at **Black Hawk College** is a Summer Orientation Program providing college-wide support for the successful transition of students into college. The Financial Aid Office, Enrollment Services, Advising and Counseling Services, Bookstore, Tutorial Services, Recruitment Services, and the Office of Intercultural and Community Affairs all assist students with the transition into college. The community also supports this program; with high school teachers and counselors, community agency personnel, community organizations and church leaders recommending students for the program. Students who qualify for the Bridge Scholarship Program include first-time enrollees in college, students of color, students who are indecisive about attending college, students with a desire to improve their academic record, and students who are college-bound and need additional assistance entering college. All tuition, fees, and books are provided by this college program. The Summer Bridge Program is limited to 60 students annually. Ninety-five percent of the students who complete the program enroll at that community college the following Fall. Eighty-five percent return for the Spring semester and following Fall.

The Early School Leavers program at **Joliet Junior College** offers job preparation training and education to students who drop out of high school. The mainstay of the program is to establish students in viable career paths and educational programs. The program provides a structured, cooperative work situation for participating students. In addition, the V-TECH Reporting System allows the program coordinators to monitor participants’ work behavior, including employment stability and advancement. The program has also developed a holistic career services package that assesses students’
educational and vocational needs and abilities while helping students articulate their occupational goals. Through this program students can complete their secondary studies while defining their occupational aspirations. In addition, interested students are also instructed in entrepreneurship skills. Thirty-eight students participated in the Early School Leaver program at Joliet Junior College in 2002.

**Triton College’s** “If I had a Hammer” initiative is an interactive program that turns youth into contractors as they learn the connection between lessons learned in the classroom and life outside of school. This nontraditional program which introduces female student to the construction trades received a 2002 Award of Distinction from the Illinois State Board of Education’s Connections Project. Developed by carpenter-turned-educator Perry Wilson, “If I Had a Hammer” has been named by *the New York Times* as one of the top new education programs in the country. Using real tools and techniques, students apply math, science, social science, and language arts skills to constructing an 8 by 10 foot house complete with windows, door and front porch in 2 ½ hours. Curriculum is provided for teacher lesson plans prior to the building of the little house. “If Had a Hammer” has served 841 students at this college since the first build in December 2001. Three hundred and fifty-three female students have been exposed to construction technology as well as math and science enrichment activities. The college anticipates it will reach more than 1000 students and their families by the end of the first year. Students come from feeder school districts consisting of public and private elementary, middle, and high schools. Community outreach groups such as the area Boys & Girls Clubs have also participated in this project. “If I Had A Hammer” has served as a service learning credit vehicle for scholars, ESL, GED and Literacy programs at Triton College.