

# FY17 Performance Incentive Fund Grants: Executive Summary

The Department of Higher Education released a request for proposals (RFP) on December 7, 2016, under the FY17 Performance Incentive Fund (PIF) Grant Program. The application due date was January 13, 2017. The DHE received 25 proposals totaling \$3,258,005 in grant requests.

While this year's PIF grants continue the tradition of building on the gains and successes of prior year funding, this year's grants also expand and strengthen the Commonwealth's focus on early college programming with a number of excellent proposals. In fact, half of all proposals received prioritize this goal, providing the reviewers with a comprehensive pool of applicants. The reviewers selected five of the twelve proposals for awards. The five proposals, serving over 1,500 students and totaling \$695,000 in funding requests, are recommended below. Each of these proposals offers strong pathways between secondary and higher education and augments these programs with good support systems.

The remaining four recommended proposals address either the RFP's focus on competency-based pathways in early education or on co-requisite teaching models to reduce college remediation. These four proposals seek a total of \$555,000 in funding. Separated out, this sum includes one competency-based proposal at \$180,000 and three co-requisite proposals totaling \$375,000. Combined with the funding requests with the early college programming proposals, this year's (FY17) PIF grant fund requests total \$1,250,000, as shown on the following chart:

Applicant	Program Focus	Requested
Berkshire Community College	Co-Requisite Model	\$125,000
Bridgewater State University	Early College Program	\$ 84,983
Bristol Community College	Co-Requisite Model	\$125,000
Bunker Hill Community College	Early College Program	\$200,000
Mount Wachusett Community College	Early College Program	\$176,711
Northern Essex Community College	Competency-Based	\$180,000
North Shore Community College	Co-Requisite Model	\$125,000
Westfield State University	Early College Program	\$148,322
Worcester State University	Early College Program	\$ 84,984

The PIF program was created to incentivize creative solutions among our public institutions of higher education to advance the Department of Higher Education's Vision Project goals. This year's applications fulfill this mission with their own thoughtful proposals to 1) boost completion rates, 2) close achievement gaps and, 3) attract and graduate more students from underserved populations.

## Grant Awardees

### Early College Programming

#### 1) Westfield State University

The "*Westfield Promise*" is a strategic initiative to inspire college-going aspirations among low-income students, first generation college students and students of color. The program will equip students with the skills they need to be successful in college and produce more college graduates. All students will have the opportunity to obtain between 19 to 36 college credits while still enrolled in high school,

promoting a timely and affordable pathway to college completion. The *Westfield Promise* aims to support students' educational outcomes through multiple channels: remote "stretch" programming, integrated on-campus courses, and intensive student support services. In their junior year of high school, *Westfield Promise* students are enrolled in two college-level "stretch" remote courses that are delivered over the entire academic year rather than in one semester at their high schools, slowing the pace of the course and easing the transition to college-level expectations. In their senior year, students will transition to the college campus and take no less than four courses. Student support is embedded through existing campus and high school resources throughout the two-year program and all students will complete a one-credit student success seminar and summer programming.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** The first cohorts of *Westfield Promise* students (125 total students, 25 students per high school) will enroll in fall 2017, and successful students will be guaranteed admission at Westfield State University.

**Matching funds:** \$54,218

**Grant award proposed:** \$148,322

## 2) Bunker Hill Community College

Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), Chelsea Public Schools and UMass Boston (UMB) propose to build upon the partnership's FY16 PIF initiative, *Latino Student Success: Building Pathways from High School to Baccalaureate*. The initiative will close the achievement gap for Latino students through an evidence-based model that builds on current work in two critical strands from previous PIF projects: 1) *Culturally Relevant Practice*- involves an intensive professional development program for faculty and student service staff to build culturally relevant and inclusive practices, with a series of institutes and workshops and, 2) *Aligned & Accelerated Pathways*- alignment of curricula by BHCC and CHS faculty teams to build college readiness among CHS students. This project will focus on refinement and integration of current activities and will form a template to document and communicate best practices to guide future early college efforts with other high schools/districts. The partners also envision that the community of practice developed through the Latino Student Success Initiative will inform similar initiatives underway at BHCC targeting African-American and Asian students.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** BHCC, Chelsea High School (CHS) and UMB all serve large Latino populations. CHS enrolls over 1,500 students, 84% of whom are Latino. In fall 2016, over 3,100 Latinos were enrolled at BHCC, 23% of the student body; while UMB enrolled 1,796 Latinos, 14% of undergraduates. The project will serve of 1650 students.

**Matching funds:** \$60,407

**Grant Award Proposed:** \$200,000

## 3) Bridgewater State University

A consortium team consisting of Bridgewater State University (BSU), Massasoit Community College (MCC), Brockton Public Schools (BPS), and Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School (SERVT) representatives has agreed to work together to create the Brockton 100 Males to College (B100MTC) Program. This grant will be used to complete program planning and to launch activities. The program's objective is to facilitate access to services and resources to increase the number of low income males (LIM) and males of color (MOC) from BPS and SERVT who attend and graduate from college. Key activities the grant funding will support include: 1) Developing a three-year B100MTC Program curriculum for implementation beginning in AY17-18, 2) Recruiting up to 50 eligible LIM and/or MOC students from BPS and SERVT for program launch activities as part of a cohort model, 3) Cultivating partnerships with community groups to identify community resources that B100MTC participants and

their families can use to increase academic success, and 4) Developing and delivering high impact activities for family engagement to support student success.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** In the post-grant period, the program will reach 100 eligible high school students who are low income males (LIM) and/or males of color (MOC) who reside in Brockton. The program will also involve up to 25 college student mentors from BSU or MCC.

**Matching funds:** \$29,269

**Grant Award Proposed:** \$84,984

#### **4) Mount Wachusett Community College**

The “*English Modeling and Student Success Academy*” is comprised of two inter-related components that have been designed to increase the college-going and completion rates for students from under-represented and under-served backgrounds, including students of color and those of low-income or first-generation to college status. This innovative project melds two highly successful MWCC programs, STEM Starter Academy and the Math Modeling Initiative, and adapts them for the vast number of incoming students who choose to pursue non-STEM majors in fields such as business, liberal arts, and social sciences. Project objectives are: 1) Increase college readiness in reading and writing in the graduating high school classes as evidenced by placement testing scores upon enrollment at MWCC and, 2) Increase the college-going participation rates of high school graduating classes among underrepresented students who enroll at MWCC in non-STEM programs. Proposed activities and services are the following: 1) Implement an English Modeling initiative in which college faculty and high school teachers collaborate to align reading and writing curricula between the community college and the high schools, and 2) Implement a College Success Academy where seniors clarify career pathways; enroll in a college course; and engage in a wide array of activities that promote college readiness and success.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** Underserved students from Fitchburg, Leominster, and Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School district. Sixty (60) students across the three participating schools will be served.

**Matching funds:** \$60,617

**Grant Award proposed:** \$176,711

#### **5) Worcester State University**

This program will include initiatives and activities designed to encourage college attendance and completion of 100 male students from the Worcester Public Schools, with a specific focus on under-represented, under-served, low-income, and first-generation to college students. This project, a partnership between Worcester State University, Worcester Public Schools, Quinsigamond Community College, and Becker College, will bring mentoring, dual enrollment, remediation, wrap-around services, and more to 100 male junior and senior students from area high schools. The initiative uses a positive youth development model to promote post-secondary enrollment and success by increasing college readiness through academic development/student support at the high school with workshops in math remediation, critical thinking, college life, and time management skills. Students take credit-bearing entry-level college courses to advance their academic trajectory, gain skills and confidence, and make earning a postsecondary credential more affordable.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** 100 students will be served by the program from the Worcester Public Schools (WPS), which serves 25,076 diverse students, from varied backgrounds.

**Matching funds:** \$59,685

**Grant Award Proposed:** \$84,984

## Competency-Based Pathways in Early Education

### 6) Northern Essex Community College

Northern Essex Community College (NECC) and Middlesex Community College (MCC) propose to collaboratively address factors that have the potential to decrease time to degree for early childhood educators. The project objectives are to more tightly align early childhood education accreditation standards, core competencies and college courses, as well as provide competency-based education opportunities to students. The initiative will also increase the capacity of early childhood faculty to address 1) the academic support needs of early childhood education students who require developmental education in reading, writing, and math, 2) the academic support needs of dual language students, and 3) the need for students to master instructional technology professional competencies. Project activities will focus on early childhood education faculty PD in competency-based education, competency alignment and validation, new accelerated and co-requisite models of developmental and ESL education, accelerating students' subject area literacy, refining rubrics used to assess students' mastery of learning outcomes and sharing new knowledge with faculty from other community college early childhood education programs from across the state. The proposal includes funding for a formal evaluation and the partnership will share lessons learned more broadly with the community college segment.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** First implementation phase is professional development of early childhood faculty. In the second phase, the target population will be early childhood education students, primarily female, of approximately 150/semester.

**Matching funds:** \$64,967

**Grant Award Proposed:** \$180,000

## Co-Requisite at Scale

### 7) Bristol Community College

*“On-Ramps to Completion”* will focus on scaling and building capacity for co-requisite models in both English and Math to highlight BCC’s commitment to decreasing the number of students who are unnecessarily placed into developmental education courses and to reducing the amount of time students who require remediation spend completing non-credit bearing coursework. *On-Ramps to Completion* will include: 1) Building institutional capacity to scale Co-Requisite models in Math and English, and 2) Scaling of Test Preparation Workshops to include face-to-face as well as online options for students preparing for the college placement tests. Activities and services will decrease the number of students who are unnecessarily placed into developmental education courses through Proactive Advising and Test Preparation Workshops. Additional activities will increase the number of students who transition successfully through developmental education by bringing Math and English Co-Requisites to Scale through planning, pilot programming such as a developmental education ‘boot camp’ and integrated academic support models, the development of Open Educational Resources (OER) to reduce textbook costs, and capacity building through faculty and staff professional development.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** the program will serve 160 students focused on students at BCC’s two largest campuses in the cities of Fall River and New Bedford. Students at these campuses reflect the following demographics: 53% part-time, 62% female, 54% over the age of 21, 57% work more than 21 hours per week and 27% identify as minorities, with over 30% speaking languages other than English at home.

**Matching funds:** \$58,878.43

**Grant Award Proposed:** \$125,000

## **8) North Shore Community**

This project proposes to build on existing innovative co-requisite and early college models to provide academic and college readiness opportunities for under-served populations. To that end, NSCC will use PIF funds to support the following: 1) development of co-requisite courses for ESL students, 2) a targeted ten-week summer bridge program for rising junior and seniors in the academic middle, 3) a strategy to bridge the existing non-credit ESL program to the credit ESL program, and 4) a Culturally Responsive Teaching professional development program for faculty and staff. These activities will reduce the amount of time students spend in developmental courses, thereby increasing college completion rates and closing achievement gaps for the targeted population. This strategy will also help students graduate on time and reduce the amount of money used to cover the cost of non-credit bearing coursework. By focusing on ESL students and Hispanic and Latino populations in particular, the initiative will attract and graduate more students from under-served populations.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** Under-served ESL students with particular focus on the Latino/Hispanic population in NSCC's service area including ESL students who require developmental course work, and rising junior and seniors in the academic middle. The target populations for the Culturally Responsive professional development are NSCC faculty and staff. The program will serve 125 students.

**Matching funds:** \$48,670

**Grant Award Proposed:** \$125,000

## **9) Berkshire Community College**

Project proposes to scale-up and fully implement a co-requisite course model, beginning with developmental English and Reading, and eventually moving to Mathematics. This project will build upon current efforts to adopt a co-requisite model while providing intensive faculty professional development and training as well as opportunities for faculty collaboration. Funds will be used to cover the cost of tuition and fees for students enrolled in the pilot course. One of the ultimate goals of this initiative is to eliminate non-credit bearing coursework at the institution and replacing developmental courses with co-requisite courses.

**Target Population and Numbers Served:** Initially all incoming BCC students who score at the developmental writing level on Accuplacer (about 26% of incoming students). Once the co-requisite model is scaled-up, all developmental students (Reading, Writing, and Mathematics) will be impacted by co-requisite courses. It is anticipated that 120 developmental students per semester will be served. Once fully established, 300 students per semester will be impacted.

**Matching funds:** \$59,829

**Grant Award proposed:** \$125,000