



October 28, 2015

Keith Connors
Massachusetts Board of Higher Education
kconnors@bhe.mass.edu

Dear Mr. Connors:

Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester respectfully submits a Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for a Training Resources and Internship Networks (TRAIN) program in Central Massachusetts focusing on the multi-faceted workforce development needs of long-term (1 year+) unemployed individuals in our community. Our demonstrated capacity to provide this comprehensive and innovative project builds on the design and implementation of two major initiatives. The first is the 3 year, \$20m US Department of Labor Transformation Agenda, and the second is the Worcester Downtown CONNECT (WDC) model which was developed recently in response to potential funding opportunities.

Our vision for this project is to help long-term unemployed, low-income individuals build their economic self-sufficiency through an innovative service delivery program that includes workforce readiness training, skills training, education, internships, job placement, and comprehensive wrap around support services, centered at QCC's downtown campus and connected through a WDC "campus" network. Support services will be provided through WDC partner organizations and agencies and will include transportation, child care, nutrition, financial literacy, and housing stabilization in a student-centered which will include supportive case management, coaching, individualized service plans, skills training and employment related services.

WDC partners are committed to providing services in a collaborative, comprehensive model coordinated and delivered from a central hub at QCC with enhanced linkage to the core Downtown partners – Workforce Central, the Worcester Credit Union, Worcester Community Action Council, Connections Coalition (WCCC) MASSEDCO, the Worcester Public Library, the United Way of Central Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance. The goal is to provide skills training and education services at the QCC hub with complementary supportive services at partner organizations within a 2-block downtown campus area. Enhancements will occur through a prioritized intake and referral process, intensive case management, and the provision of wrap-around support services.

Project Components will include: Outreach, recruitment, referrals; Assessment; Case Management/Support services; Work Readiness; Skills Training and Education; Internships; Job Search/Job Placement. The project budget will include funds for internships, stipends for transportation, meals, and other appropriate support services to be provided through project partners.

QCC's new downtown Worcester campus houses the School of Healthcare and the Workforce Development and Continuing Education Center and provides a resource for QCC to accelerate coursework and curriculum to prepare low-income students for career oriented employment as well as provide for articulation between non-credit and workforce development programming and credit certificates and degrees. The new state of the art facility has allowed QCC to develop and deliver additional programs that provide a continuum of services that include initial assessment, advising, preparatory and career education, certificate/degree completion and job placement to students who currently are on the college's wait list. It is anticipated that the majority of the programming provided by QCC as a component of the TRAIN initiative will be through this new Center, and will build on the strengths of project partners in terms of wrap around support service provision to the target population.

This project will build upon best practices developed through the 2011-2015 Massachusetts Community Colleges and Workforce Development Transformation Agenda (TA), a \$20m U.S. DOL TAACCCT grant led by QCC. An unprecedented effort in Massachusetts, the TA has drawn national attention for its efforts to build shared systems between community colleges, adult basic education, workforce development systems partners and industry leaders to transform delivery of industry aligned education and training programs, accelerate the attainment of degrees, certificates and industry recognized credentials to prepare students for high wage, high skill employment. Stackable, and flexible certificates developed through the TA and available to students in this project include, but are not limited to: Phlebotomy, CNA/HHA/PCA, Biotechnology, Pharmacy Technician, CSE Network Associate, HVAC, Manufacturing Technology, CSE Network Associate, EMT, and Bookkeeping. Non-credit certificates include: PCA, CNA, Medical Coding & Billing, Computer Technician, and AutoCAD.

Critical to the success of the project will be collaborations with **The Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (CMWIB)** and **Workforce Central One-Stop Career Centers (WCCC)**. The CMWIB is a public/private partnership, serving needs of both employers and employees. The Board collaboratively develops and implements strategies for job readiness and skills advancement, leveraging community resources that promote economic wellness within the region's 38 cities and towns. The primary role of the CMWIB is to convene civic and business leadership, together with area workforce stakeholders, to utilize their insights to direct public funds aimed at building the skills of the workforce in our area to match employer needs. (WCCC) serve communities in Central Massachusetts and have locations in Milford, Southbridge and Worcester. WCCC is part of a network of 33 One-Stop Career Centers throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which form the foundation of the state's delivery system for employment and training services for job seekers, employers, and their staff. The centers also offer an extraordinary variety of employment-related services including coaching on job search assistance, access to online job listings, career counseling, empowerment with workshops on a variety of job search strategies, skill building and personal development, access to resources including a computer resource room with internet service and online tutorials, and training on accessing and utilizing labor market information and other economic data. Along with the career counseling and a host of workshops available to job seekers, Workforce Central will also make available ACT Work Keys online career assessments and customized remedial learning modules.

The CMWIB and WCCC will provide outreach and recruitment and referral services, assessments through WorkKeys and ACT, work readiness workshops and related services through its nationally recognized Bounce Program, collaboration with local employers for internships, and job search and job placement services. In addition the CMWIB is coordinating the 3-year, \$300,000 Worcester Jobs Fund on behalf of the City which seeks to build a stronger pathway for residents to local employers. This Fund will leverage the existing services offered through Workforce Central as well as the training available through QCC and others, and will also be used to establish new training programs where needed. The award-winning Bounce readiness training to help participants conceive and execute a more positive approach to personal and career goal attainment. The CMWIB will also offer Labor Market Information (LMI) through state and federal sources, as well as real-time hiring demand data available through the CMWIB's state-funded Help Wanted Online analytics tool will be available to help WDC staff and partners better understand past, current, and future employment trends.

WDC partners are well positioned and have years of experience in providing quality wrap around support services for the target population. WDC partners include:

Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. WCAC provides a comprehensive menu or wrap around support services to meet the diverse needs of at-risk, low-income populations in our community. One of 24 community action agencies in Massachusetts and 1,000 across the nation, WCAC provides education for infants, children, youth, and adults; employment training and placement; asset development programs (EITC, Individual Development Account-IDA, SNAP, and financial literacy); family support; and individuals and families with heating assistance and energy efficiency. W CAC has identified increased in financial knowledge/experience as an area to be prioritized, strengthened, and woven into programs in order to successfully transition families into the world of work. Most have never earned a paycheck, opened a bank account, or needed to plan a budget. Working with the full support of – and for – the partners in this proposal, self-sufficiency will also be the focus of this application, and specifically financial literacy.

Worcester Credit Union (WCU) has been serving members in the greater Worcester community since 1934. Our commitment to benefit and serve our members is grounded in the belief that access to affordable deposit and loan products helps to build financial security. Over the past 10 years, WCU has provided Financial Literacy training for numerous community and student groups, and workshops on budgeting, building and maintaining good credit.

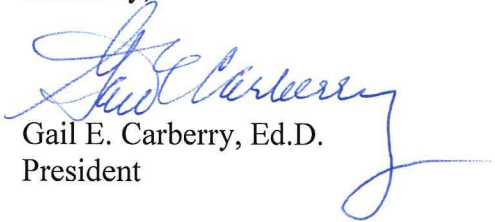
Central MA Housing Alliance (CMHA) is the lead agency for the provision of prevention funds and emergency shelter for at-risk and homeless families, CMHA brings an average of \$6 million in funding into the county to support over 25 programs that provide transitional and permanent housing to those at risk.

MassEdCO, Inc. provides education access, retention, and success services to a state-wide low income population, enjoying a 40 plus year track record of success. It is the largest single private non-profit provider of career and education advising in the state, serving over 14,000 individuals each year. MassEdCO acts as an “education broker,” ensuring the best fit for a student with an academic program, based on their individual career goals.

United Way of Central MA More than 95 years ago, United Way of Central Massachusetts (UWCM) continues to foster community collaboration to help people of all ages with immediate needs such as food, housing and crisis, while ensuring children and families have the education, family stability and health they need to succeed, and connecting people and resources to improve the community.

The **Worcester Public Library** serves as a gathering place that actively supports education and makes information and services available to all people while fostering intellectual freedom, protecting privacy, encouraging personal growth and enrichment, and celebrating our diverse community culture and heritage. WPL, a busy and community-oriented urban library located in downtown Worcester, welcomes over half a million visitors a year, ranging from all socioeconomic backgrounds. As a referral partner, WPL is perfectly poised to continue connecting community resources to job seekers and students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gail E. Carberry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right and loops back under the name.

Gail E. Carberry, Ed.D.
President