

# **Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions (Competitive Grants) Program**

## FY 2009 Project Abstracts

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## **BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE**

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Bloomfield College is a fully accredited, four-year, liberal arts institution that has a total undergraduate enrollment of 2,524 students including 50.8 percent who are African-American, of these 58 percent are low-income or first-generation students and 14.6 percent are African-American males. The Bloomfield College project will implement activities in support of the following goals and objectives:

1. Establish a state-of-the art Teacher Preparation (TePrep) Resource Center by June, 2010 to increase enrollments. At least 115 teacher preparation students including at least 55 African-American students and other disadvantaged students will demonstrate knowledge of the purposes and uses of the Teacher Preparation Resource Center.
2. Increase the weekly and biweekly tutoring workshops for at least 30 STEM/TePrep students, including at least 10 African-American students as well as other students, so that by September 2010 the percent of African-American STEM/TePrep students with grade point averages greater than or equal to 2.75 will increase from 31 percent to at least 50 percent.
3. Increase the weekly and biweekly tutoring sessions in subject areas for at least 75 non-STEM/TePrep students, including at least 50 African-American students as well as other disadvantaged students, so that by September 2010 the percent of African-American Non-Stem/TePrep students with grade point averages greater than or equal to 2.75 will increase from 56 percent to at least 66 percent.
4. Provide global language instruction to at least 30 teacher preparation students including 20 African-American students so that by September 2010 at least 20 teacher preparation students including at least 15 African-American students will have passed the CLEP exam in a global language and will have earned three college credits.
5. Provide tutoring and mentoring so that by the summer of 2010, at least 20 additional African-American males will have declared themselves as TePrep or health education majors.
6. Provide tutoring and mentoring so that by the September 2010 at least 80 percent of students in a group of 30 African-American male students will remain in college.

The above goals and objectives relate directly to strengthening Bloomfield College, its teacher preparation program and the needs of Bloomfield College's African-American and disadvantaged students.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA

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The Community College of Philadelphia (the College) is an open-access associate degree-granting institution with an enrollment of almost 28,000 degree-seeking students. It is the second largest institution of higher education in Philadelphia and the sixth largest in Pennsylvania. With an African-American student population of over 51 percent, the College is the largest single point of access into higher education in Pennsylvania for minorities. At the College, 70 percent of full-time students and 60 percent of part-time students received financial aid. Of all the students who apply for financial aid, 64 percent qualify for need-based aid, and 56 percent of the student population is offered some form of need based aid.

The Predominantly Black Institutions Program will allow the College to focus on improving the educational outcomes of African-American male students through the creation of the Center for Male Engagement (CME) at the Community College of Philadelphia. The CME will provide a community where males are supported by peers and mentors, and encouraged to take advantage of the myriad academic and social opportunities in their new college environment. Through this grant, the CME will target 300 full-time, first-time-in-college African-American male students and provide them with support coaches, counseling, academic support, life skills workshops, cultural enrichment activities and financial assistance as needed. Additionally, a Summer Enrichment Program will be offered in the summer of 2010 for 60 prospective male students to prepare them for college success and provide scholarships. The goals of the program are:

- To achieve higher levels of academic performance and persistence rates of African-American male members of the Center of Male Engagement at the Community College of Philadelphia as compared to those of comparable non-member African-American males.
- To increase student engagement and social responsibility of African-American male students at the Community College of Philadelphia.
- To provide a summer enrichment program for African-American males who are recent high school graduates entering college for the first time in 2010.

Key measures of success for this program include:

1. increases in the fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall persistence rate, and percent passing grades in college-designated 'gatekeeper' courses for African-American males;
2. increase in life skills among African-American male members of the CME; and
3. decrease in the percentage of African-American males facing adverse action through the College's judicial process.

An external evaluation will assist with measuring these outcomes, as well as provide a formative and summative evaluation of the success of the entire program. At the completion of the project, the College will disseminate key outcomes of the program that contributed to the success of male students at the College through conference presentations, literary articles and presentations to College faculty and staff.

## ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE

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Essex County College (ECC) in Newark, New Jersey, proposes a project that will establish a learning environment that will attract and help Black American males become confident, productive, stay in school and achieve their academic and career goals for the future. Named the “Stay-in-Step Academy” (SISA), the project will address the needs of the Black American males enrolled at the college, which is a lifeline to poor urban residents in Essex County, New Jersey. The four urban areas targeted for the proposed program (i.e., East Orange, Irvington, Newark, and Orange) represent 55 percent of the county’s population and 85 percent of its Black population. Key social indicators for this service area reveal a preponderance of factors with negative implications for the population’s academic achievement.

The project will orientate and link 300 Black American males who are first-time students to the academic programs, tutoring, student advisors, mentoring, career opportunities, and other support services available at ECC and facilitate and encourage their use. By the end of the project, the “Stay-in-Step Academy” will enhance the college experience of program participants and maintain the cohesiveness and effectiveness of the cohort that is being served by this grant from the Predominately Black Institutions (PBI) program. The project expects to increase success rates in remedial math for participants from 52 percent to 65 percent, in remedial English from 73 percent to 80 percent, and in key major-related courses from 68 percent to 75 percent, by ensuring participation in workshops and tutorial programs. The project’s objective is also to increase the fall-to-spring retention rate for PBI participants from 73 percent to 80 percent and the fall-to-fall retention of the PBI participants from a baseline of 50 percent to 60 percent. A comprehensive evaluation by Rutgers University will document lessons learned and best practices that will be sustained after the conclusion of the project.

## **MALCOLM X COLLEGE**

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Malcolm X College is one of the seven colleges located within the city limits of Chicago in Community College District 508, known as the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC). CCC is a comprehensive, public community college system dedicated to serving the educational needs of Chicago's diverse population. Located on the West Side of Chicago, Malcolm X College provides affordable education in transfer and career-oriented programs designed to enhance the quality of life of an economically, educationally, culturally, and socially diverse community.

Malcolm X will implement two interrelated projects:

1. the Nursing Simulation Learning Center, designed to increase the success and persistence rates of students enrolling in the College's Nursing Program; and
2. the provision of professional development to train Nursing faculty to incorporate virtual/simulated clinical experiences into their instruction.

Project activities have been designed to address the following objectives:

- enrich lab capabilities through the construction of a state-of-the-art Nursing virtual skills lab;
- train Nursing faculty and staff to integrate enhanced lab experiences into their teaching;
- train IT staff to operate equipment in the virtual laboratory;
- supplement hospital-based clinical hours;
- improve student pass rates on board certification examinations; and
- expand curriculum/programmatic initiatives in the nursing program and adherence to accreditation curriculum guides and outlines.

## MISSISSIPPI DELTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Mississippi Delta Community College (MDCC), founded in 1926 is a two-year public, rural, residential and commuter community college, with a fall 2008 enrollment of 3,186 students. The seven-county primary service area, which MDCC serves, documents that two-thirds of its population is identified as living at the 200 percent poverty level and over one-third have an annual incomes of less than \$8,794. Unemployment levels run over 200 percent above other parts of the state and nation.

MDCC will assess, develop, and implement educational support and mentoring strategies to consistently increase the persistence rate among African-American males especially in the field of mathematics. PATHMAKERS, a new program at MDCC, will be established to meet student needs in the following areas:

- financial aid;
- mathematics curriculum and instruction;
- academic support services; and
- student social services.

The program activities are designed to meet the following objectives:

1. a minimum of 100 full-time African-American males will be selected to participate in the PATHMAKERS of MDCC Program with 90 percent successfully completing the semester;
2. MDCC persistence rate among African-American males will increase from the current rate of 16 percent to a rate of 33 percent;
3. increase in the course completion rates and average grades earned in all levels of mathematics at MDCC among African-American males from the current 33 percent rate to a 46 percent rate;
4. increase the utilization by African-American males in academic counseling by five percent and the College Learning Center by two percent;
5. increase the participation in social counseling by over 100 percent;
6. increase institutional enrollment of African-American males by two percent;
7. provide a dedicated learning and study space nurtured with access to high technology equipment software, and supplies; and
8. develop and implement a summer pre-college program for African-American males to support and promote a more seamless transition to the college environment.

## **PRAIRIE STATE COLLEGE**

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Prairie State College (PSC) is a comprehensive community college in Chicago's south suburbs, that serves the most geographically, socio-economically, and racially diverse population of all Illinois community colleges (*Illinois Community College Board Data and Characteristics of the Illinois Public Community college System, 2007*). The PSC student body is over 50 percent African-American, a population that struggles more to enroll, persist, and complete their studies when compared to other student populations. The program at PSC will achieve the following goals:

- Increase the college-going rate of African-American males in the district; and
- Increase the persistence rates of African-American males at PSC.

To achieve the first goals, PSC will partner with three, predominantly African-American high schools to create a Pipeline to College program. High school students will be invited to participate in a college awareness/readiness program that will increase college familiarity for both the students and their families, offer career exploration services, and provide positive educational and professional role models. While, students in the senior class will create the cohort for tracking and accounting of program objectives, a 30 percent increase in the number of African-American males who choose to enroll at PSC is anticipated.

To achieve the second goal, Prairie State will establish a holistic program to address the academic, social, and personal needs of its African-American male students. During 2009, strategic academic advisers will place a cohort of African-American males with fewer than 15 credit hours in a college success seminar that will focus on the unique challenges facing them. Students will have access to tutoring, advising, and early alert services in a new Learning Achievement Center. Students will also participate in cultural experiences, leadership workshops, career exploration, and college tours. The cohort persistence rates will be tracked, both from fall-to-spring and from fall-to-fall, and in each case, an increase of 15 percent of participating students will be retained.

## SOJOURNER-DOUGLASS COLLEGE

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Sojourner-Douglass College (S-DC) will develop a new project entitled “Developing the BSN Infrastructure by Enhancing Science and Distance Learning,” to establish the science foundation needed to successfully launch the Bachelor’s in Science Nursing (BSN) program. S-DC is Maryland’s only private, nonprofit, four-year, minority-serving institution. The college’s main campus is in East Baltimore, Maryland, with three other campuses located in Annapolis, Cambridge, and Salisbury, Maryland.

The S-DC project has four main goals:

1. Increase science courses to meet the needs of the new BSN program and future STEM programs.
2. Increase BSN nursing student enrollment and success.
3. Increase student success in science courses required for the LPN (licensed practical nursing) and BSN programs.
4. Strengthen the S-DC distance learning infrastructure to include a course/learning management system (Blackboard) and educational technology support.

The project meets the PBI objectives of:

- increasing the number of full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates enrolling at a PBI, and
- increasing the persistence rate for students enrolled at a PBI.

The S-DC program will expand opportunities in nursing education to include preparation as registered nurses (RNs). It will also increase the success of students in core science courses needed for the LPN and BSN programs by establishing two new science courses, Chemistry and Microbiology, and two new labs, one for Chemistry and one “swing” lab for Biology, Anatomy and Physiology and Microbiology, at the main S-DC campus. S-DC currently does not offer Chemistry or Microbiology and does not have fully functional science labs that can accommodate each of these core science courses required for nursing students.

In addition to establishing new science courses and labs, the project offers tutoring support to nursing students to ensure their success and increase their persistence. Cumulative average science scores on the nursing entrance exam should be approximately 65 percent, but the most recent exam reflects cumulative science scores of 50 percent. Among the three sciences tested, chemistry is the most difficult for students with an average score of 47 percent.

The S-DC project aligns with the Maryland Hospital Association’s 2007 goal to double the number of graduates from associates and baccalaureate nursing programs in Maryland. The project’s broader impact is that it addresses the critical nursing shortage faced by the state and the nation by preparing additional registered nurses with a strong science foundation.



## TECHNICAL COLLEGE OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

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The Technical College of the Lowcountry will establish Project “Improving Basic, Advanced, and Applied Mathematics (BAAM) Skills of African-American Students” to strengthen the institution’s capacity to achieve the following project goals:

- Improve the college’s capacity to serve African-American students by providing technology and services to increase success in developmental and college-level mathematics;
- Prepare African-American transfer students for success in advanced applied mathematics;
- Use measurement devices, precision instrumentation, and electronic training equipment to develop basic, applied mathematical as skills used in industrial and engineering technologies; and
- Provide standard multimedia capabilities in classrooms to increase faculty understand and use of instructional technologies.

To support these goals, enhanced technology such as new computers and specific mathematics software for both developmental/basic and advanced math skills will be placed in labs for instructional and individual student use. The software applications will expose students to multiple delivery options outside of traditional instruction, including computer-assisted instruction and self-paced, individual student work plans. Faculty will be trained to integrate software applications and other instructional methods and formats to improve student success. Applied mathematics skills will be “embedded” into industrial technology and engineering technologies courses to provide the opportunity for students to learn by doing. By integrating basic math skills instruction with technical content, the student is prepared for many career paths that require a highly-skilled workforce.

## WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE

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West Los Angeles College (West), a two-year, public community college in Culver City, California, serves a highly-diverse community and enrolls about 12,000 students, of which 44 percent are African-American students. Over 87 percent of the students are minorities, and 83 percent are low-income or first-generation in college.

The PBI program at West will increase the number of African-American and other low-income students in Aviation Technology, a program, listed in the “National SMART Grants-Field of Study.” Inadequate funding to keep equipment up to date has limited enrollment, thus denying students access to training for high-pay/high-demand jobs. Aerospace (commercial and defense) is a major area industry in Los Angeles County, employing approximately 50,000 workers.

The West project will add training equipment, computer labs, and education technology for training students in the Aviation Technology field. Program enrollment will increase by 50 percent, positively affecting the number of full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students. With better equipment and technology, West expects to increase the semester and year-to-year persistence rate for students. Because Aviation Technology typically appeals more to males, West expects that expanded access and improved resources will attract and retain an increased number of African-American males.

The one-year project is focused on infrastructure development and not on creating positions or processes requiring continuing support. The program objectives are:

- to upgrade Aviation Technology equipment and training aids;
- to create two, new up-to-date computer labs for computer-assisted instruction in technical skills;  
and
- to equip two classrooms with instructional technology to bring digital resources into instruction and address students’ diverse learning styles.

As a result of the PBI support, West will remove the enrollment cap, allowing program enrollment to increase from 150 students to 225 students by the end of 2010.

## YORK COLLEGE

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York College is a public, four-year commuter college enrolling approximately 7,157 students. York is a senior college in the City University of New York (CUNY) system, the nation's largest urban, public university, with 11 senior colleges, six community colleges, and several graduate colleges and specialized institutions. Located in Queens, New York, one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the nation, York has 95 percent minority students, including 55 percent African-American, 24 percent Hispanic and 15 percent Asian (*York College Fact Book, Academic Year: 2008-2009*).

York College has designed a comprehensive, integrated institutional approach to the PBI program, with four major goals, each with specific activities to carry out the goals:

1. Recruit and retain African-American and other minority students, by providing enhanced instructional support.
2. Improve six-year graduation rates of African-American students, by providing an enhanced and coordinated academic support system, from initial entry through graduation, including proactive advising on appropriate course selection leading to career choices, supplemental instruction, summer bridge programs, tutoring and mentoring, and peer-led learning communities.
3. Increase the number of African-American students graduating with degrees in STEM or STEM-related, health and medical disciplines, by developing a comprehensive program for student research of discovery, a new initiative in quantitative reasoning, and a minority high school summer research program to build a STEM pipeline.
4. Provide enhanced institutional support, including library facilities and services, and special tutoring and mentoring programs designed to enhance overall success for African-American students.

Each goal is based on research, best practices, and successful programs at other predominantly black institutions, historically black colleges and universities, and predominantly white institutions. The goals also reflect York's annual performance goals set by the president, Dr. Marcia V. Keizs, with specific targets and measures: one-year retention rate of full-time freshmen, six-year retention graduation rate of full-time, first-time freshmen, total enrollment, mean SAT score of regularly admitted first-time freshmen, and student satisfaction with academic support, student services, and computer technology. The four project goals will be supported by specific activities to be conducted over one year. Although they are described as separate service, the activities are crucial to African-American student achievement and inter-connected to overall project success. The successful fulfillment of the goals will enable York to increase the number of African-American students who are retained, graduate and enter the technological and health/medical workforce or who seek advanced degrees in STEM and health-related disciplines.