Financial Aid Project Proposal Form  
2011-12

College: _____ Windward Community College ____________________________

Project Title: ___ Excellence in Financial Aid ________________________

Proposer’s Name and email address: __ Ardis Eschenberg ardise@hawaii.edu ___

Proposal Period: __ FY2012 ________________________________

Year 1 ___ X ___

Budget request: ______ $20,000 ________________________________

Complete the following sections:

1. 250 word description of the proposed project or service. Include data supporting the need for the project or service. (30pts)

This project seeks to maintain WCC’s current standard of excellence in financial aid on campus and grow our financial aid services in the community. Through this, we will maintain current office hours for servicing WCC constituencies while providing for additional time needed for processing our rapid increase in applications and awarding (20-30% increase in applications to date for FY2012). WCC Financial Aid has seen a large rise in number of applications (258% increase from 2007 to 2011) and awards (259% increase 07 to 11) but maintained level staffing during this time. In order to account for the additional processing and meeting times required, the project proposes to provide overtime for existing financial aid officers (400 hours for 2 staff). In recent years, WCC has led Hawaii community colleges in percent of enrolled students receiving financial aid. This has been accomplished only through hard work and overtime, which must be compensated.

Furthermore, WCC has consistently increased the percent of students awarded and the numbers of applications only through strong outreach initiatives. Our previous initiative has provided dedicated financial aid outreach at the Windward Mall site that Kamehameha Schools allows us to use free of charge for such work and at our distance education sites, such as Waimanalo. Overtime (160 hours) would be provided to our Outreach Coordinator to serve in this capacity.

Our past initiative was extremely successful, as can be seen from our above statistics. This new initiative serves to continue and grow our financial aid effort, based on our past initiative and best practice.
2. Refer to research that influences or serves as foundation for the project, if any. (10pts)

Retention and persistence are both major obstacles at community colleges in general. Makuakane-Drechsel and Hagedorn (2000) provide an account of issues with persistence specifically for Native Hawaiian community college students at community colleges on the island of O’ahu. The find that financial aid is one of four major factors affecting persistence. Dynarski (2008) and Scott-Clayton (forthcoming) also both found positive correlations between financial aid and persistence. This corresponds to the fact that students who do not have adequate financial resources face greater barriers to college success. WCC’s internal surveys (e.g. FALL 2010 IS103 student surveys) consistently find that students’ primary obstacles include hunger, transportation, and childcare. These obstacles can be directly related to students’ access to financial aid support. Thus, WCC consistently works to specifically increase the numbers and percentages of those receiving financial aid in order to promote student success.

However, this becomes increasingly difficult as our enrollment has skyrocketed while financial aid office staffing has stagnated. Between FY2007 and FY2010, WCC displayed record enrollment growth. However, financial aid access grew at an even quicker rate than enrollment ($2 million to $7 million). This was achieved through establishment of a financial aid One Stop at Windward Mall and financial aid fairs throughout our service area. These initiatives were begun to directly impact student success by removing financial barriers through providing financial aid information throughout our community.

The current project builds upon this model by providing additional hours of compensation for existing staff to service our growing enrollment (2.9% increase in enrollment in Fall 2011) in multiple venues.

References cited:


3. List partners in the CC system or explain how the design lends itself to export. (10pts)
While there are no specific partners, the results obtained by WCC place us as top in the UHCC’s for percentage of enrolled students receiving financial aid. The events and efforts sponsored by this group could be easily incorporated by other institutions. If desired, we could present about this at the AtD Strategy Institute to better disseminate best practice.

4. Refer to the Campus and the System strategic plan section that demonstrates the relevance of this project. (10pts)
Addresses UH Strategic Outcome 1 Native Hawaiian Educational Attainment through the related CC System Action Outcome 1.2 Native Hawaiian financial aid participation rates and through WCC’s outcome 1.3: promote low-income NH success...by increasing Pell Grant Participation.... Approximately 40% of Windward CC students are Native Hawaiian. Our service area has a large NH populations that this proposal addressed.

It further addresses UH Outcome #2 ‘Hawaii’s Educational Capital’ through CC outcome 2.2: increase PELL aid participation and disbursement and WCC’s outcome #2.2 to increase PELL participation and disbursement.

5. Discuss how this project will sustain itself after system funding ends . (10pts)
WCC will seek to fund an additional financial aid officer position within the next two years, given availability and funding. Administration is fully aware of the urgency of this need.

Currently, we have made a preliminary plan to allocate grant (TIII) funding for a financial aid officer to fill this gap in the interim until a position can be obtained through either allocation of a new position or reallocation of a current position is possible. We are working to hire this position by late spring 2012. Thus, this request allows us to function until we can create this position.

6. Indicate the way in which the success or failure of the project will be visible through measurable and reportable outcomes. (25pts)
Success of the project will be demonstrated by increasing participation in the Pell grant and other financial aid programs. The target for all campuses is to have 48.6% of enrolled students receiving some form of financial aid and to have 38% of enrolled students receiving Pell grants by 2015. These goals have been set by the UHCC System Office. In FY2010, WCC met these 2015 goals. This project seeks for us to continue to meet and surpass goals given increased enrollment with level staffing. We will seek to surpass our FY2010 49% FA recipients and 38% Pell awarded in FY 2012 (2011 data is still not official).

7. Describe how this project reduces time to certificate or degree for students. (15pts)
Without financial aid funding, students may take fewer classes in a semester to accommodate a work schedule, work more hours (less time for study), load up on too many classes to try to (often unsuccessfully) complete more quickly, not have adequate money for food, transportation etc., and not go to college at all. All of these obstacles serve to slow time to degree.

By providing financial aid, students can concentrate on their studies by reducing their work load and taking a full class load in a semester. They have resources to provide for food, transport, childcare and other obstacles to degree completion. This shortens time to degree. Preventing failure also prevents repeating courses, which extends time to degree.

8. Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Title</th>
<th>Employee Name</th>
<th>OT Hours Requested</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Director</td>
<td>Steven Chigawa</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Officer</td>
<td>Dayna Isa</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Coordinator</td>
<td>Gus Cobb-Adams</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Request**  **$20,000**

_X_ The campus is committed to sustaining the project in year 4 if evidence of its success is warranted and funding is available.

Signed:

_________________________________________________  ______________
Chancellor                                      Date

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Signed:

_________________________________________________  ______________
Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs               Date
Criteria

- Projects receiving between 80-100 points will be supported for funds.*.
- Projects receiving 60-79 points will have an opportunity to revise and resubmit.
- Projects receiving below 60 points will not be supported for funds.

*final approval of projects made by VP Morton

8/2/2011