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Yuba

College is an Option

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION
IMPACT ON SYSTEMWIDE NEED
SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM BEING ADDRESSED
SPECIFIC PROBLEMS BEING ADDRESSED
POPULATION TO BE SERVED
OBJECTIVES
WORKPLAN NARRATIVE
EXPECTED OUTCOMES
EVALUATION PLAN
DISSEMINATION
BUDGET NARRATIVE
[No information provided in this document for this section.]
[No information provided in this document for this section.]
Yuba

Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

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Yuba College is a community college district incorporating all or part of eight rural counties in a 4,200 square mile area of northern California (Map, Appendix A). The district has a population of more than 225,000, most of it in the twin cities of Marysville and Yuba City (Yuba and Sutter counties) where the main campus is located. Yuba is technically a single college district, but we have four outreach campuses in addition to the Marysville campus. Approximately 12,000 students are enrolled in our classes, 5,500 here on the Marysville campus. Of those students enrolled, about 32 percent are ethnic minorities, and this percentage is growing.

Because of its largely agricultural base, the Yuba-Sutter-Colusa area has had a declining economy, with resulting unemployment and related problems, for the past dozen years; in addition, a large, substandard housing area attracts many unemployed and low-income people. The median income is now among the lowest in the state. In 1990, Colusa County ranked 57th of 58 counties for married couples filing jointly, with a median income nearly $17,000 below the state average; Yuba County ranked 55th, with a median income more than $13,000 below the state average. Sutter County's median was $8,800 below state average, ranking 41st.

Unemployment rates are among the highest in the state. For example, in January of 1993, Colusa had an unemployment rate of 30.5%, the State's highest. Yuba Sutter's rate of 20.3% was more than double California's statewide unemployment rate of 9.8%, and nearly triple the national rate of 7% (EDD). A large number of the District's residents receive some form of public assistance. In 1990, of Yuba County's 16,701 children, 6,535 (39.1%) were receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children; 3,217 of Sutter County's 17,904 children (18%) were receiving AFDC.

Yuba College's minority student population is largely Hispanic (18.1%), with the next highest group being Asian (Appendix B). Many of these students come from the Yuba County area just south of Marysville, in the unincorporated communities of Olivehurst and Linda. It is to this group that this grant is directed.

A recent report published by the National Education Commission of the States, "Assessing progress in Minority Access and Achievement in American Higher Education," states that approximately 40% of Latinos below the age of 18 live in poverty,
compared to 15% of their white peers (NCES, 1990). The poverty rate in Yuba County for all races is estimated at more than 27%.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Nation’s Report Card for Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science, reports that, as a rule, Hispanics attend relatively poor schools; are, more frequently than not, enrolled in non-academic tracks at their high schools; have lower levels of academic achievement; and often drop out altogether. The 1990 NAEP trial assessment revealed that students attending urban advantaged schools significantly outperformed their disadvantaged counterparts. (Appendix C, Table 3). Hispanics hold the national record for high school drop out rate at 53%, compared to 12.4% for white students (NCES, 1991). Yuba College’s retention statistics for Hispanics during a five semester period (Fall and Spring), which includes transfers from three local high schools, show a drop out rate ranging from 40% to as high as 77%.

Other data from the office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, show that minority college students make a much higher proportion of need-based federal aid recipients than they represent of the general college student population (Appendix D, Table 8). Yuba College has the fourth highest number of financial aid recipients in the State within its overall student population.

Information from the U. S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census shows that between 1980 and 1990 the total population in the United States increased by 9.8%. The Hispanic population jumped by 53%. (Appendix E, Table 1) The breakdown of underrepresented groups within the area served by Yuba College shows Hispanics making up the largest ethnic group at 18.1%. up from 13.5% in Fall, 1990.

It is clearly important Yuba College find a way to serve these underrepresented students, and that we encourage them to pursue an education, both by completing their pre-college schooling and then by completing college training. Michael Nettles reports on the topic of "Assessing Progress in Minority Access and Achievement in American Higher Education," that:

... changing demographics and higher minority representation will have a greater immediate impact upon the educational institutions than on any other sector of society. . . . The success
of the nation's schools in educating minority youth will determine the quality of American life, particularly the make-up of its work force and colleges and universities, in the decades to come.

One of Nettles' conclusions is that students who experience favorable and frequent interaction with faculty and other college staff have a strong commitment to their education.

Traditionally, because a higher proportion of minority youth are born in areas of poverty, most underrepresented Hispanic students do not consider a college education to be an option in their future. It is quite common for young Hispanics to work in the fields as a family unit in our community, often dropping out of school altogether to work longer hours. This behavior is passed down from parents to children with little or no change taking place between generations.

Besides a consistent effort to convince students at an early age that education is important, educators at different levels need to bridge resources and provide students with an educational path through which they can easily transition from elementary, middle and high school into college. There is also a lack of role models among underrepresented students for them to follow into their footsteps, in particular in the educational area.
This grant will target 133 underrepresented Hispanic students from low socioeconomic backgrounds who traditionally do not consider college to be an option in their future. This project will work with this particular student population at the middle and high school levels, as well as at the college level. In addition to focusing on retention rates through tutoring, mentoring and student-family-school connections, the project will address access and transfer to two four-year higher education institutions.

COMPONENT I - Retention through tutoring goal
Objective # 1: To develop, coordinate and establish a tutoring program that will serve 95 potentially at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students at the middle, high school and college levels.

COMPONENT II - Retention and academic success goal through mentoring and school-family linkages
Objective # 2: Develop and coordinate a mentoring and family bridge program that will serve 70 at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students at the middle and high school levels. and retain them in school by providing them with the opportunity to participate in an elementary-college student and staff mentoring program.

COMPONENT II - Access and success in college goal through special academic support
Objective # 3: Develop and pilot two adjunct courses to provide academic support to 20 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic college students.

COMPONENT IV - Access and academic success in college through linkages and financial support from private industry.
Objective # 4: Identify one or more companies that are willing to provide scholarships to 10 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students who transfer from high school to Yuba College an/or from Yuba College to Sacramento/Chico State University.

COMPONENT V - Addressing educational barriers through multicultural awareness
Objective 5: Expand the cultural awareness and sensitivity of students, staff and faculty at Yuba College.
Based on the low retention rate among this Hispanic population, Yuba College is proposing to pilot the "Intervention Approach" described by Dr. Meredith A. Whiteley, Ph.D., Senior Research Analyst at the University of Arizona's Office of Institutional Analysis. Dr. Whiteley suggests that increasing the outreach and recruitment through special efforts for underrepresented minority students could increase significantly the high school graduate pool. By increasing the academic achievement of minorities through tutoring and mentoring, more at-risk students would be successful.

In order to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of existing resources, Yuba College proposes the "College is an Option" program to develop an interlinking tutoring and mentoring partnership to serve at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students. This partnership would include Migrant Education, two intermediate schools (Alicia and Yuba Gardens), one high school (Lindhurst), the parents of the participating at-risk students, California State University-Sacramento, and private industry (P. G. &E. and others). This educational partnership would emphasize:

- improving the retention rate of the Hispanic student population at the middle school, high school and college level;
- increasing the success rates of underrepresented students 'at the 7th through 14th grade levels by improving their academic skills through tutoring and mentoring;
- providing access to the college to an increased number of underrepresented Hispanic students;
- improving the academic success experiences of the Hispanic college students to increase the numbers of students transferring to a four year university;
- involving parents in the responsibility of educating their children;
- expanding the cultural awareness of the faculty and staff at Yuba College;
having private industry provide support to create a skilled pool of future potential employees through mentoring and the establishment of a scholarship program.

The "College is an Option" program has five main goals and it is divided into five different components, which are: (I) Retention and Academic Success Through Tutoring and Mentoring; (II) Retention and Academic Success through Mentoring and Family Linkages; (III) Access and Success in College Through Special Academic Support; (IV) Access and Academic Success in College Through Linkages and Financial Support from Private Industry; and, (V) Addressing Educational Barriers Through Multicultural Awareness.

The first objective within Component I proposes to develop and coordinate a tutoring program that will intertwine tutoring programs that will overlap among the middle schools, the high schools and the college level. The at-risk underrepresented students at the middle schools will be tutored by trained high school students and by tutors from Migrant Education (Mini Corps). The at-risk underrepresented students at the high school will be tutored by the Yuba College Future Teachers of America (FTOA).

The Future Teachers of America club has as its main goal the recruitment, pre-professional training and financial support of ethnic minorities for teacher preparation. Yuba College Education 1 course (Introduction to Teaching) will provide the required field work for freshmen and sophomore college students. Acceptance into a teacher credentialing program includes volunteer classroom time in a K-12 classroom. Most important, the participation of the FTOA students will have a positive impact on the at-risk underrepresented students since they themselves might have experienced difficulties while attending grammar school. The tutoring partnership between the high school and the Future Teachers of America has dual benefits; that is, at the time that at-risk underrepresented students are receiving the benefits of being tutored, these FTOA students are participating in a real world teacher student relationship. This is an invaluable experience that will enhance their skills as future teachers.

The college students will be tutored by experienced college tutors, clustered into groups of five students each, divided into area of need. The benefits of having group tutoring for at-risk students is that these students will not only benefit from the tutoring services, but they will in turn participate in a collaborative learning process and, again, benefit from (1) the advantages of having a support group, and (2) working as a team towards a shared goal. All the proposed tutoring classes will
be coordinated in a participatory fashion in conjunction with Migrant Education, the targeted schools and Yuba College.

The second objective within Component II proposes to develop and coordinate a mentoring and family bridge program that will serve 70 at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students at the middle and high school levels. Utilizing the assistance and support of Migrant Education, this project will coordinate family evenings to explain the purpose and benefit of the "College is an Option" tutoring and mentoring program and why their children should participate. Migrant Education is an agency that focuses, among other things, on the building and establishment of strong ties with the parents of the student population it serves, in order to achieve school retention and success. Migrant Education works under the premise that as a rule, Hispanics have more than one child, and therefore, if one trains the parents of at-risk students the benefits will reach more than one student.

The third objective within Component III proposes to develop and pilot two adjunct courses to provide academic support to 20 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic college students. These courses will assist at-risk students, who traditionally have trouble passing required courses, improve their chances of obtaining a "C" or better grade. In addition, these courses will provide additional support for the students to be able to complete an educational plan that has as a goal to transfer to a four year academic institution. This objective will also address the needs of the Limited English population (LEP) in an attempt to develop a support academic program that will serve the already large LEP student population living within Yuba College's area of service. These adjunct courses will be developed at the main campus. If successful, they will be re-created at the other two Yuba College campuses serving large numbers of at-risk underrepresented students, such as the Woodland campus. Furthermore, the two courses we pilot will serve as a measuring tool of the effectiveness of the approach for future use.

The fourth objective within Component IV proposes to identify one or more companies that are willing to provide scholarships to 10 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students who transfer from high school to Yuba College an/or from Yuba College to Sacramento/ Chico State University. The purpose of this objective is to provide an incentive as well as the recognition for having accomplished an educational goal. By involving private industry participation in the project, the companies shares in the task of educating and training at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students.
The fifth and last objective of the project within component V proposes to expand the cultural awareness and sensitivity of students, staff and faculty at Yuba College. The reason for this objective is to expose everyone to the differences among each of the cultures represented in the student population. The most important aspect of this objective would be to point-out how cultural differences, labels and stereotypes become barriers for the ethnic minority groups. Yuba College, as well as the community within its service area is primarily composed of whites.
The Project Director will be hired based on the attached Job Description (Appendix M). This person will have responsibility for the project under the Dean of Language and Arts Student Services and the supervision of the EOP&S Assistant Director who will serve as a Co-Director of the project. Mr. Jim Prager, Coordinator for the Study Skills Center, will have responsibility for coordinating the tutoring services in conjunction with representatives from the different college and non-college educational entities participating in the program.
a. Project Objectives
The expected outcomes of the project activities for each of the objectives are as follows:

COMPONENT I - Retention through tutoring and mentoring, goal

Objective # 1: To develop, coordinate and establish a tutoring program that will serve 95 at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students at the middle, high school and college levels.

Expected Outcomes: At least 80% of the potentially at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students at the middle/high school and college levels will remain in school and will increase their scores by at least one grade, as measured by the tracking systems to be in place by September, 1993.

COMPONENT II - Retention and academic success goal through mentoring, and school-family linkages

Objective # 2: Develop and coordinate a mentoring and family bridge program that will serve 70 at-risk underrepresented Hispanic students at the middle and high school levels, by providing them with the opportunity to participate in an elementary-college student and staff mentoring program.

Expected Outcomes: At least 90% of the at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students as well as their parents, will benefit from the mentoring program, as measured by an attitudinal survey to be with "prior" and "after" program participation questionnaires.

COMPONENT III - Access and success in college goal through special academic support

Objective # 3: Develop and pilot two adjunct courses to provide academic support to 20 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic college students.

Expected Outcomes: At least 75% of the at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students will complete the targeted courses with a "C or better grade, as measured by the student tracking system which will be in place by the beginning of the program (September, 1993).

COMPONENT IV - Access and academic success in college through
linkages and financial support from private industry.

Objective # 4: Identify one or more companies that are willing to provide scholarships to 10 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students who transfer from high school to Yuba College an/or from Yuba College to Sacramento/Chico State University.

Expected Outcomes: 10 at-risk, underrepresented Hispanic students will benefit from receiving a scholarship when they transfer from High School to Yuba College and from Yuba to CSU,, Sacramento/Chico,, as measured by the tracking system.

COMPONENT V - Addressing educational barriers through multicultural awareness

Objective 5: Expand the cultural awareness and sensitivity of students, staff and faculty at Yuba College.

Expected Outcomes: An attempt will be made to expand the cultural awareness and sensitivity of students, staff and faculty at Yuba College, thus resulting in a better understanding of cultural differences as they affect academic performance and success,, to be measured by a "before" and "after" attitudinal survey.

b. Impact of the Project

Through its different components, the proposed educational partnership will address the high drop out rate among at risk, low income underrepresented Hispanic students, as well as access, retention and transfer from high school to two and four year educational institutions.

Through its tutoring services, the project will create educational habits which will provide them with positive results, such as improving their grade point average, thus improving their academic skills, self-confidence and self-image.

The interaction taking place among the students participating in the program, the staff, advisors, teachers, counselors will translate into a specific message: "College is an option... and you can do it'!'

The project will address weakness areas among middle and high school students such as low self-esteem, lack of motivation, career awareness, and study skills'.
The project will allow the educational agencies to build a strong coalition with the students’ parents to address school retention and academic success.

The linkage of human and financial resources with other agencies is an effective way of addressing a series of problems affecting different levels of the educational system.

The project will increase the eligible underrepresented student pool from which the community colleges and four year institutions draw, ultimately resulting in an increased number of students staying in school and continuing on to college.

The project will increase the success and retention rates of underrepresented Hispanic students at the college level through the proposed adjunct courses and group tutoring.

The development of a scholarship program will encourage students to succeed and be recognized for their efforts, providing private industry to be part of the education and training of a future workforce.

The project will increase the awareness and sensitivity of staff, students and faculty as it relates to understanding different ethnic groups, in a campus with an increasing number of minorities.

C. Potential for Continued Support

Every participant in the partnership has expressed support to continue with the project after the grant expires. The attached flow chart clearly depicts the services bridging at-risk students through retention, access and academic success. (Appendix F). There is a great need and desire on the part of each and every educational institution to address the problem areas described in this proposal. The grant would provide the opportunity to develop and pilot the proposed access and retention approaches and to implement the described coalition. Once the coalition is in place there is a strong commitment to continue forward, as attested by the letters of support which are part of Appendix G through L.
d. Potential for adaptation to other institutions or programs
This proposal may be easily adapted at other institutions or programs since it addresses a common problem within the educational system. The creation of coalitions or partnerships fall right down the line of shared governance outside of the institution. The Yuba College would gladly work with other colleges to develop and implement a similar project. If funded, Yuba College should be able to pilot the project, iron out any glitches and provide the Chancellor's Office with a final report that explains the program step by step.
Formative evaluation will consist of statistical information about the number of students identified, tutored, and retained in school at the middle/high school and college levels, as well as information of their course and grade progress; records of the scholarships awarded; parents participating in the project; students transferring to two and four-year educational institutions; students participating in the "Future Teachers of America Club. An advisory committee will be formed to evaluate the project at the beginning, mid-way and at the end. Representatives from all educational entities will participate in the committee. Data will be collected by the Program Director to be presented to the different participating entities. A monthly progress report will be written, as well as a final report. The educational partnership and collaborative effort will continue after the grant expires.

Summative evaluation will be composed of advisory committee feedback, and "pre" and "post" student surveys. These surveys will measure student attitudes towards education prior to participating in the "College is an Option" program, as well as at completion of the grant.
Following completion of the grant, a final report will be written and forwarded to the Chancellor’s Office, to each of the 107 community colleges, and to all the educational entities participating in the project. A press release will be developed and a request to present the results will be made to the CLCC. The final report will include detailed information regarding the strengths of the program, an analysis of the results of the attitudinal survey.
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