D.R.E.A.M. PARTNERSHIP
DREAMS REALIZED THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION MODEL

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Access College- Employment Success (ACES) Project

GRANT PROGRAM RFP

www.dreampartnership.org

DREAM Partnership on Social Media-

September 10, 2014

Dear Colleagues:

The *D.R.E.A.M Partnership* (DREAM) is pleased to announce that grant applications currently being accepted for the development of ***inclusive model postsecondary education (PSE) programs for students with intellectual disabilities.***

An Access College- Employment Success (ACES) Project grant provides funding to an institution of higher education (IHE) in Pennsylvania who is interested in making college possible for students with intellectual disabilities, and wants to facilitate the mission of DREAM. **Our mission** is to develop a selection of postsecondary educational opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities that include independent and supported dormitory options.

Through our extensive research of existing PSE programs across the country, DREAM has developed guidelines to assist in the development in what we believe to be a successful inclusive model PSE program. Grants will be awarded to an IHE if they:

1. do not have an existing program, but would like to start one
2. have an existing program, but would like to expand*
3. have received funding from DREAM in the past, and continue to meet the criteria for funding**

Please note that completed applications must be received by <u>October 20, 2014.</u> One original and six copies should be mailed to Sherri Landis, Executive Director, *D.R.E.A.M Partnership*, Capital Area Children's Center, 44 South 38th Street Camp Hill, PA 17011. Please direct any questions regarding grant preparation to Sherri Landis, Dream Partnership, 717-975-0611, or slandis@dreampartnership.org.

*programs that would like to expand must be inclusive and be working towards achieving comprehensive transition program status to be eligible for funding.
**existing DREAM programs must have satisfactory 6-month review scores to be eligible to reapply

We look forward to your response,

Sherri Landis
Executive Director
D.R.E.A.M. Partnership

Initiated in July 2014, the Access College- Employment Success (ACES) Project will be accomplished with D.R.E.A.M. Partnership's current infrastructure, which includes an Executive Director, 12-member Board of Directors, and four committees (Advisory, Program, Transition, and Scholarship). The ACES funding will enable DREAM to **develop curriculum and program guidelines, provide expanded technical assistance to IHE's, expand our footprint of funding for colleges, and provide a state-wide conference on PSE for students with intellectual disabilities (ID).**

DREAM will establish a network of colleges and universities throughout the state of Pennsylvania that will provide inclusive postsecondary education (PSE) opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities between the ages of 18 and 26 through a two-year certificate program that leads to competitive employment and independent living.

DREAM's **three primary objectives** include:

1. Provide start-up funding to institutions of higher education in PA for the development of a PSE program for students with intellectual disabilities that leads to competitive employment and independent living. *[Programs will be eligible for two subsequent years of funding based on performance and funding availability]*
2. Build the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of colleges to provide PSE while simultaneously generating awareness among consumers, family members, educators, and the community at large that college is an option for individuals with Intellectual Disabilities.
3. Provide scholarship opportunities for students with Intellectual Disabilities.

DREAM staff, Board, and Committees will facilitate the development of employment outcomes from PSE programs funded by DREAM through support and technical assistance that enables sub-grantees to:

- Provide a focus on integrated work experiences, career skills, academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, financial literacy, and self-advocacy skills that lead to community-integrated, customized and/or competitive employment.
- Develop and supervise job internships for participating students during their final term of enrollment.

DREAM's *outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities* include:
1. Increased access to PSE programs for students
2. Attainment of competitive employment as a result of the certificate program
3. Increased independent living skills as a result of dormitory living
4. Enhanced socialization as a result of increased peer interactions and extracurricular opportunities
5. Academic enrichment

Outcomes for all programs will be measured through the Think College Evaluation System (TCES) which will enable ACES funded programs to document student and program activities, and benchmark program data against the aggregate national model demonstration program Transition Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) data.

The TCES provides easy access data on the programs funded by DREAM and will allow us to evaluate the programs independently, as a group, and against the aggregate (other PSE programs participating in Think College). The data will provide evidence of each program's successes to program funders,

potential students, and other stakeholders. The TCES is currently being used by programs at over 50 colleges and universities. The availability of the aggregate data (1,000+ students) will be very beneficial for benchmarking Pennsylvania's programs against the national average and established best practice.

All colleges and universities who receive funding from DREAM will be required to use the TCES, and will be able to benefit from the vast resources available. Each awardee will be required to input information on the attributes and operations of their program and information on the students who attend their program. Together, the program and student data provide a complete picture of the program operations and student outcomes.

The TCES is designed so that data entered cannot be linked to a particular individual via personally identifiable information (PII). Students are identified by a system-generated ID number that is not linked in any way to PII for that individual. Programs are responsible for maintaining files that allow them to recall which student has been assigned the system-generated ID number. The storage and security of these files are the responsibility of the subscriber and should be done in accordance with institutional policies and practices.

The following elements of PII are NOT included in the TCES:
- Name (either of student or of student's relatives)
- SSN
- Address
- Date of Birth

The TCES does collect the following information on students with intellectual disability who attend postsecondary programs:
- Racial or ethnic background
- Disability status
- Age at a given point in time, e.g. age in years on 10/1/2013
- Educational experiences
- Employment and career development experiences
- Sources of funds for education (types of funding, not actual account information)
- Income support program and health care information (Benefits and types of supports received, not specific provider information)

Again, this information is NEVER linked to the PII listed above within the TCES. It is de-identified for each individual.

The success of the ACES Project will rely on the DREAM infrastructure and key stakeholders who have been instrumental in the implementation of the objectives to date. The project partners include AHEDD/Business Leadership Network, Goodwill Keystone Area, The Hershey Company, and UCP Central PA.

DREAM has developed this RFP to create high-quality, inclusive model, PSE programs for students with intellectual disabilities at two or four year colleges or universities in Pennsylvania. The ***desired outcomes*** of the PSE program include academic enrichment, enhanced socialization, increased independent living skills, and most importantly the attainment of competitive employment.

Eligible Applicants
The grant is open to IHE in Pennsylvania. Each applicant should identify a Program Director, who will be the primary contact for the IHE during the grant application process.

Grant Funding Period
Grants will be awarded for one year for a period between December 1, 2014 and November 30, 2015, and upon evidence of successful outcomes, and availability of funding, may be renewable up to two additional years.

Grant Guidelines
The *D.R.E.A.M Partnership* established an Advisory Committee of experts from a diverse representation of key stakeholders from Central PA who have extensive knowledge of transition, PSE, and students with intellectual disabilities. The Advisory Committee endorses the **Think College Standards, Quality Indicators, and Benchmarks for Inclusive Higher Education** for use when developing a model inclusive PSE program.

The Standards are designed to provide the IHE a framework from which to build an individualized narrative of your IHEs strategy for implementation and establishment of the program. The proposal should be approached as a coherent outline of how your program design addresses the major elements outlined by the **Think College Standards, Quality Indicators, and Benchmarks for Inclusive Higher Education** and D.R.E.A.M Partnership, and how you will plan your implementation. The narrative should be as detailed as possible and describe how you will initiate the ideas and processes included in your proposal, including establishing partnerships, identifying funding sources, and obtaining the necessary state/federal approval(s), if any.

THINK COLLEGE STANDARDS, QUALITY INDICATORS, AND BENCHMARKS FOR INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION Think College at the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston has developed Standards, Quality Indicators, and Benchmarks for Inclusive Higher Education. Institutes of higher education adopt and/or individualize these standards to create, expand, or enhance high quality, inclusive postsecondary education to support positive outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID). Additionally, these standards can be used to as a basic structure to individualize local research on issues related to supporting students with ID in higher education. They are aligned with the definition of a comprehensive postsecondary and transition program for students with intellectual disabilities and reflect institutional and instructional practices that support a Universal Design for Learning framework as outlined in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

THINK COLLEGE STANDARDS, QUALITY INDICATORS, AND BENCHMARKS FOR INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION include the following:

STANDARD 1: ACADEMIC ACCESS
Facilitate quality academic access for students with intellectual disabilities

STANDARD 2: CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Facilitate career development leading to competitive employment for students with intellectual disabilities.

STANDARD 3: CAMPUS MEMBERSHIP:
Facilitate campus membership for students with intellectual disabilities.

STANDARD 4: SELF-DETERMINATION
Facilitate the development of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities.

STANDARD 5: ALIGNMENT WITH COLLEGE SYSTEMS AND PRACTICES
Facilitate alignment with college systems and practices for students with intellectual disabilities.

STANDARD 6: COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION
Facilitate collaboration and coordination.

STANDARD 7: SUSTAINABILITY
Facilitate sustainability.

STANDARD 8: ONGOING EVALUATION
Facilitate quality postsecondary education services for students with intellectual disabilities.

Proposal Outline
>   Please utilize the standards as indicated above as the framework for developing your narrative in response to this RFP.

Proposal Scoring
>   Please utilize the following scoring rubric as a guide as you develop your detailed narrative in response to this RFP.

Think College Standards for Quality Indicators and Benchmarks for Inclusive Higher Education	*Rubric Min Score*	*Rubric Max Score*	*Yr. 1 Max weighted*	*Yr. 2 Max weighted*
A. Academic Access	16	48	144	48
B. Career Development	7	21	42	105
C. Campus Membership	4	12	42	24
D. Self-Determination	15	45	45	45
E. Alignment with College Systems and Practices	22	66	94	94
F. Coordination and Collaboration	9	27	54	68
G. Sustainability	8	24	36	84
H. Ongoing Evaluation	6	18	18	36
	87	261	475	475

When evaluating each of the proposals the review team is going to be paying close attention to your institutions ability to address the following key areas:

- Application/admission process and program size.
- Sustained and meaningful partnerships with any relevant agency serving students with disabilities, such as vocational rehabilitation, county ID program, or local educational agency.

- Ability to provide or facilitate finding community-integrated and/or college/university owned or operated housing options for students with disabilities that are also available to their peers without disabilities.
- Involvement of businesses that have demonstrated a willingness to hire people with disabilities with which the qualified eligible college or university have established partnerships and working relationships.
- Anticipated program outcomes as a result of the completion of the program.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is available to college and universities based on the guidelines for program development. Assistance may be provided on-site and via phone/web conference and may include:

- Applying to be a sub-grantee
- Creating a planning team
- Developing the program that fits their individual needs
- Implementing the program in years 1 and 2

Targeted technical assistance may be available on a variety of topics including: obtaining buy-in and permissions, establishing the scope and focus of the program, developing a program proposal, obtaining university approval for the program, hiring and training program staff, recruiting and training peer mentors, recruiting and interviewing students, communicating with families, applying to become a Comprehensive Transition Program, communicating and negotiating with school districts, and seeking additional sources of funding.

There are certain steps programs must take to be eligible for technical assistance. Please contact the Executive Director, Sherri Landis, at slandis@dreampartnership.org or 717-975-0611 to see if you qualify.

In addition, in March, 2015 DREAM will provide an interactive and informative symposium, *Join our Journey: A Roadmap for Making the Dream of College a Reality for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in PA.* This will provide interested colleges and universities an opportunity to learn more about the initiative and learn more about how to get started with a program in your area.   All grantees will be required to attend the symposium.

Progress Monitoring & Reporting

Grantees will submit quarterly performance reports that will report a narrative of your grant activity, including services provided, outcomes, challenges, and/or barriers and strategies to address those challenges. Grantees will participate in teleconferences with DREAM as requested (no more than quarterly) and will coordinate with DREAM and the DREAM Advisory members for 6-month and 1-year site visits.

Application Procedure

Please note that completed applications must be received by <u>**October 20, 2014.**</u> One original and six copies should be mailed to Sherri Landis, Executive Director, *D.R.E.A.M Partnership*, Capital Area Children's Center, 44 South 38th Street Camp Hill, PA 17011. All copies should be collated and all attachments should include the Program Director's name and the IHE.

Applications *must* include the following, in this order:

1. Letter of Intent — this letter should include background on the lead applicant; the mission of the school; why your institution has an interest in this program; brief summary of past programs/ experience; and why you think your institution would be able to successfully create a transition and postsecondary program for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Please limit the synopsis to one or two (1 or 2) typed page(s), single-sided, single-spaced, one-inch margins and minimum of 12- point font.
2. Detailed proposal following the Proposal Outline above. The length of this proposal should not exceed ten (10) typed, single-sided, single-spaced, one-inch margins and minimum of 12-point font.
3. Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV) for all known individuals who will be working on the program and information as to their role(s) in this project.
4. Annual Budget of proposed program—Include explanation of how the requested award would be used, in addition to any in-kind or matching contributions.
5. Letter of commitment—Include a letter from each active partner that states their proposed role and responsibilities (including financial) in the partnership, their agreement to their role, and that they understand and support the program that is being proposed. This letter should be on letterhead and should be signed by the head of the institution/organization (i.e. institutions of higher education- President; School district(s) - Superintendent; Service providers and others- Executive Director, etc.)

The review committee reserves the right to request additional information from the IHE and their active partners, including a site visit.

Application/Award Process
Applicants will be notified of their award by November 14, 2014. Site visits, if the IHE has not previously been visited by DREAM, will be scheduled to meet with project leaders and other key personnel (i.e., President of the IHE) and review the RFP. All printed materials and publications resulting from work carried out during the term of the award must carry a statement that the program is supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

Resources

Think College
www.thinkcollege.net

Guidance for Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)
http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1101.**html**

Information related to colleges who are approved as a CTP
http://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/intellectual-disabilities

The D.R.E.A.M. Partnership is modeled after an initiative in South Carolina. All five of their funded schools post their program design and application materials online.
http://collegetransitionconnection.org/

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