# OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF HIGHER EDUCATION NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY (NGO) NEW JERSEY'S "DISENGAGED ADULTS RETURNING TO COLLEGE" INITIATIVE

Notice of Funds Availability: November 21, 2011

**Application Deadline: February 8, 2012** 

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Appendices (application forms are available for download on the Commission website):

- Technical Training Workshop Registration Form
- Application Cover Sheet (Attachment AA)
- Budget Summary Form (Attachment AB-1)
- Budget Narrative (Attachment AB-2)
- Accounting of Personnel Time (Attachment B-1)
- Sample Survey Monkey instrument

#### Anticipate Schedule

•	NGO Released	November 21, 2011
•	Technical Training Workshop	December 9, 2011
•	Application Due	February 8, 2012
•	Grant Awards Announced	April-May 2012
•	Contracts Issued	June 2012

#### I. Introduction and Background

Increasing the numbers of New Jersey students who return to college to complete their degrees is a goal with a large return on investment, for institutions of higher education, for the state's educated workforce, for the business community, and most importantly for the individual who can now qualify for a better job or a promotion based on the achievement of this important credential. To this end, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) intends to fund not-for-profit New Jersey institutions of higher education to identify, contact, re-enroll, and graduate adults who have left New Jersey colleges in good standing but without earning the intended associate's or bachelor's degree.

The "Disengaged Adults Returning to College" Grant Program is funded by the federal College Access Challenge Grant. The purpose of the program is to create and grow programs that could be self-sustaining after the grant cycle. Anticipated grant cycle is two years and dependent on federal funding. The first year of funding, FY2013, will begin July 1, 2012 and end June 30, 2013. The second year of funding, FY2014, runs July 1, 2013 thru June 30, 2014.

The target population for the grant is adults, aged 20 and older, who left a New Jersey institution within the past 10 years (since 2000), in good standing, without earning an undergraduate degree. They should have earned at least 50% of credits toward a degree.

Priority will go to applicants who demonstrate the capacity of the institution to treat candidates flexibly (i.e., to be willing to consider that the student's best option may not be to return to the host institution); to participate in intra-institutional cross-disciplinary teams that will explore the issues involved in re-engaging this population; to streamline re-entry by simplifying the application process and removing institutional barriers; to develop a comprehensive, student-friendly, campus-wide message to participants to encourage a positive experience; and to commit to working toward sustainability.

The individual, institutional, and societal benefits of encouraging disengaged adults to return to college to earn their degrees include: individuals can find a better position or earn a promotion because they have earned the appropriate credential; increased tuition revenue; potential new market of students as the number of high school graduates declines over the next decade; increased number of degrees earned; enhanced public perception of the institution; opportunities to explore new ways to work with faculty and revise structure and policies; opportunity to examine accelerated degree programs based on results; and reclaiming an earlier investment made in an individual's education.

#### II. Funding Policies

**Institutions that were previously awarded a DARC grant are not eligible to apply**. The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education anticipates funding up to five grants at \$75,000 annually each as a result of this competitive Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO). A 50 percent cash or in-kind matching contribution is required; this means that for every dollar requested from the grant, \$0.50 must be provided as a matching contribution from cash or in-kind sources. Only one proposal per institution will be accepted. Pending funding availability and documented progress, grantees may be eligible for an automatic renewal for a second year based on completion of contract requirements, including all reports. Level funding is anticipated for second year; applicant will need to submit continuation information.

Funds (and the match) may be used to partially fund the staff designated as the grant coordinator and/or other employees who will be involved in implementing the grant, and to reimburse employees directly involved with the grant implementation for travel and/or for additional staff hours worked outside the traditional workday. A maximum of 25 percent of the total grant award may be used to support personnel salaries. Funds may also be used to support planning and recruitment activities, including marketing to the target audience; to assist students in resolving outstanding financial obligations that pose a barrier to returning to school; to provide instructional materials for students; and purchase limited software/hardware.

Grant funds may NOT be used to hire full-time project staff, as this is not sustainable; for meals or banquets; for fringe benefits of full-time employees; for indirect costs; or to support activities not directly related to the mission of the project. Grant funds may not be requested to cover the cost of tuition.

Matching funds can include personnel and any costs directly related to activities that support the mission of the project. The institution may not include tuition waivers or credits as part of match.

#### III. Participants Served

Primary participants to be served should be adults (aged 20 and above) who left a New Jersey institution within the past ten years (since 2000), in good standing, without earning an undergraduate degree. They should have earned at least 50% of credits toward a degree. Participants may be former students of the applicant institution or some other New Jersey institution.

*Optional* criteria that applicants may apply to further narrow their target population include but are not limited to:

- Student loan default status
- Amount of money owed by the individual to the institution
- Limitations on certain majors based on such criteria as accreditation requirements, state licensing standards, or the need to be more current than ten years
- Other institutional requirements

Such optional criteria should be clearly explained in the grant proposal narrative.

IV. Program Priorities and Permissible Activities

Priority will go to applicants who demonstrate the capacity of the institution to move quickly from the grant planning stage to advising and re-enrolling students. Programs should streamline re-entry for students by simplifying the application process and removing institutional barriers. To promote a positive student experience, the applicant may want to establish a comprehensive, student-friendly, campus-wide message to participants.

Another priority of this grant is to ensure sustainability of successful activities once the funding cycle is over. The engagement and support from intradepartmental offices across the institution to better serve this population should assist in the institutionalization of practices. Interested applicants must also be flexible in advising potential students and consider the student's best interest which may not be re-enrollment at the host institution.

Permissible activities include but are not limited to:

<u>Professional meetings to establish flexible policies and procedures</u>. Time should be spent after the award on identifying the necessary data steps for establishing the contact pool; working with faculty; establishing the institutional policies and procedures that will guide decisions made about the population; determining how such students should be identified in the institution's data systems; and determining what clear and concise message will be used to market and respond to these students. All relevant departments should be involved. Wherever possible, institutions should seek ways to offer students flexible options. Some issues related to assisting returning adults will have implications across institutions. Applicants should specify how they will work on intra-institutional teams to resolve these issues as much as possible in favor of the best course of action for the returning adult. Applicants should plan to utilize such meetings to guide the project and to evaluate it over time.

<u>Recruitment activities</u>. Applicants should identify what recruitment and marketing activities they will undertake and the timeframe for conducting activities that will inform the target population about the opportunity, conduct interviews with them to discuss their needs, and determine a re-enrollment plan. Advisement should take into account that re-enrollment in the host institution may not be the most appropriate action and other options should be considered.

<u>Counseling/academic advisement</u>. It is assumed that working with returning adults will require highly individualized attention to students' unique academic and personal needs. Applicants should demonstrate how academic counseling or advisement will be delivered and how the institution plans to provide it in flexible ways.

<u>Personalized student services</u>. Returning adults should not only be counseled as to the availability of traditional student services, but provided specialized student services based on their demonstrated needs.

<u>Instructional materials</u>. Returning adult students may be given a bookstore credit or other assistance in purchasing instructional materials.

<u>Limited software/hardware</u>. Applicants may designate some grant funding for limited hardware/software purchases that will facilitate the identification, contacting, and serving of the population.

<u>Resolving financial obligations</u>. Applicants may use grant funds to help students resolve financial obligations that pose a barrier to them returning to college. Grantees will be required to fully document the nature and amount of grant funding utilized in this manner. [See page 2 for limitations.]

<u>Specialized materials</u>. The cost of developing specialized materials for the academic benefit and use of returning adults is a permissible activity.

<u>Development of new degree options</u>. Applicants may indicate whether they will utilize time during the grant period to explore new opportunities to develop and award industry-recognized credentials and/or preliminary degrees to accelerate the pace at which returning adults can realize the benefits of returning to college.

<u>Other activities</u>. Applicants may suggest other innovative activities they plan to undertake that are pertinent to the achievement of the objectives of the grant program.

V. Application Information

The proposal application must contain the following information:

- A. Completed Cover Sheet (Attachment AA).
- B. Proposal narrative (maximum 15 pages double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point font). The proposal narrative should address:
  - Description of the intended population the applicant will serve, including any additional criteria used to narrow the definition supplied in this NGO; and the target numbers of students who will be re-enrolled and are served the first and second year;
  - Description of how the applicant will locate and contact the population of students it intends to serve;
  - Description of the strategy the applicant will use to prioritize students on the contact list;
  - The methods the applicant will employ to achieve agreement across departments and intra-institutionally regarding how the population will served;
  - Description of how applicant will work to establish flexible institutional policies for this population, including academic, financial aid, student services, and communication policies, or modify existing policies;
  - Marketing and recruitment strategies that will be utilized;
  - Counseling/advising/retention strategies to be developed/used;
  - Use of innovative methods to contact and serve a population with unique needs;
  - Activities timeline, including time for policy discussions; to identify data needs, get names/addresses, enhance addresses for current contact info; to recruit participants; to re-enroll participants; to provide counseling/advisement; to evaluate efforts; and
  - Evaluation plan specifying measurable outcomes. Applicants should describe the institution's capacity for collecting and reporting the data elements and outline its plan for evaluating the impact of its efforts on the students and the institution [text taken from reporting section.] Refer to the Reporting Requirements section for more information about data elements that applicants will likely be required to capture and use as part of evaluation.
- C. Detailed summary of requested funds and match (Attachments AB-1 and AB-2).
- D. Accounting of Personnel Time Form (Attachment B-1).
- VI. Reporting Requirements

Each year, funded projects will be required to submit an interim and final report. The reporting package will consist of three components: narrative summary about grant activities, program assessment based on evaluation information, and fiscal expenditures. Typically the interim report contains information about the fall semester and is due in March. The final report contains cumulative data for the fiscal year and is usually due in July.

The narrative summary should include but is not limited to a description of grant activities that covers the following:

- Calendar of events with numbers of participants served;
- Description of professional meetings that took place to guide project implementation and to collaborate with other institutions;
- Description of process of getting the list of names, from identifying the parameters to enhancing it with better contact info to using it to contact students;
- Description of marketing, recruitment, and orientation efforts;
- Summary of specific counseling, student services, financial aid, data, and communication strategies that were developed or revised to address the needs of the population;
- Use of innovative methods to meet population's needs.

The evaluation component of the report includes a requirement to complete an online survey. A sample Survey Monkey instrument is included in the appendices. The program must also report on the following evaluative information:

- Progress made on evaluation plan.
- Implementation of the recruitment plan (number of students identified, number of students contacted, number showing interest through attendance at recruitment/orientation events, interest meetings, website survey completion, etc.);
- Implementation of the re-enrollment plan (number of interviews of potential re-enrollees, number of referrals to other institutions or other options, number of students re-enrolled, by full- or part-time status);
- o Demographics of re-enrollees (race/ethnicity, gender, age, number of years out of school);
- Previous credits earned (at grantee institution and at other institutions, and where);
- Results of participant surveys which indicate the extent to which individual factors affected student withdrawal, such as cost of college attendance, academic issues, employment, military, family/personal, other/not cited;
- Employment (current employer, if any, and full-/part-time employment status);
- Progress to degree (number of "new" and "returning" enrollees by term, number of credits attempted by term, number of credits earned by term, number of associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees earned by term, number of students still enrolled by term, number of withdrawals by term);
- Status of non-enrollees (number that may enroll in the future, number that dropped out of pool, etc.);
- Services offered (specific counseling, financial aid, career, mentoring, academic, and/or other services developed or revised to address needs of the population, and extent of usage of each service); and
- Summary of lessons learned and as a result, adjustments/improvements planned for the second year.
- VII. Application Submission and Award Schedule

The following is the anticipated schedule of activities for "Disengaged Adults Returning to College" Grant:

NGO Released	November 21, 2011
Technical Training Workshop	December 9, 2011
Application Due	February 8, 2012
Grant Awards Announced	April-May 2012
Contracts Issued	June 2012

#### Address to which proposals must be submitted:

EMAIL SUBMISSION**	iduffield@che.state.nj.us
Applications submitted via email should be in PDF format as one document.	**Header information/subject line should indicate "DARC III Application"
REGULAR MAIL	Ms. Iris Duffield Disengaged Adults Returning to College Grant Program Office of the Secretary of Higher Education P.O. Box 542 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0542
<b>OVERNIGHT MAIL</b> <sup>*</sup> *Priority/Express Mail through the United States Postal Service is NOT delivered directly to our offices and takes the same amount of time as regular mail.	Ms. Iris Duffield Disengaged Adults Returning to College Grant Program Office of the Secretary of Higher Education <b>20 West State Street - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor</b> <b>Trenton, New Jersey 08608</b>

Questions about the grant program or NGO process may be directed to Ms. Iris Duffield at <u>iduffield@che.state.nj.us</u> or (609) 292-2955. If warranted, additional information in a "Questions and Answers" format may be published on the Commission website following the technical assistance workshop.

VIII. Review Process and Criteria

The grant opportunity is competitive and will be reviewed by a panel. Up to five grants will be awarded based on the following factors:

CRITERIA	POINT RANGE
The proposal narrative articulates a feasible plan to identify, recruit, and serve the identified population.	0-35
The proposal demonstrates a commitment to serving students in innovative ways and ensuring that students successfully complete the program.	0-30
The proposal demonstrates the institution's commitment of resources and collaboration across departments at the institution.	0-20
The proposal contains an evaluation plan that will yield the requested outcomes and data.	0-10
This score asks the reviewer to reflect on the overall quality and completeness of the application.	0-5
Total Score	0-100

#### **REGISTRATION FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP**

Friday, December 9, 2011 @ 10:00 a.m. Mary G. Roebling Building, Trenton, NJ

Institution:

The following individuals will attend the technical assistance workshop:

1.			
	Name	Title	
	Email	Telephone	
2.			
	Name	Title	
	Email	Telephone	
3.			
	Name	Title	
	Email	Telephone	
4.			
	Name	Title	
	Email	Telephone	
5.			
	Name	Title	
	Email	Telephone	

NOTE: Confirmation email will be sent to each individual listed along with directions to the workshop.

FAX COMPLETED FORM TO (609) 292-7225 ATTN: Iris Duffield by December 5, 2011

Date & Time Received:

#### FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

Code#:

#### DISENGAGED ADULTS RETURNING TO COLLEGE GRANT

#### **APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

Institution		
Address		
Project Title		
_		
Project Director(s):		Phone #:
		Fax #:
E-Mail(s):		
	<u>2012</u>	
Grant Request		
Institutional Support		REMINDER: Total of Institutional Support and Other
Other Funding		Funding must be equal to or greater than 50% of the Grant Request.
TOTAL BUDGET	\$-	Matching Percenteage Calculation = #DIV/0!

ANNUAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	2012	2013
Anticipated target population (unduplicated headcount) Size of the total population of students that institution plans contact		
Number of returning adults to be served (unduplicated headcount) Anticipated # of students that institution will contact and provide some services		
Number of re-enrollees (unduplicated headcount) Anticipated # of students that will re-enroll in at least one course for credit		

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the information contained in this application is accurate.

Project Director

Date

President

APPLICATION PACKAGE DUE: February 8, 2012 no later than 4:00 pm

Date

#### **BUDGET SUMMARY FORM**

Institution:

	Grant Request		Institut Commitn		Othe Fundir	
1. Personnel <sup>1</sup>						
2. Fringe benefits <sup>2</sup>						
3. Professional services <sup>3</sup>						
4. Travel (\$0.31/mile maximum)						
5. Limited hardware/software						
6. Instructional materials						
7. Recruitment/marketing/dissemination						
8. Resolving financial obligations						
9. Other (specify in narrative)						
SUBTOTAL	\$ -		\$	-	\$	_
Indirect Cost	N/A					
TOTAL	\$ -		\$	-	\$	-
Matching Calculation <sup>4</sup>		#DIV/0	)!			

<sup>1</sup> May not account for more than 25% of the total grant request.

<sup>2</sup> Limited grant funds may be requested for fringe benefits of part-time employees working on the project.

<sup>3</sup> For professionals from outside the institution.

<sup>4</sup> The total amount of Institutional and Other funding must be equal to or greater than 50% of the grant request. For example, if \$75,000 in grant funds is requested, institutional and other funding combined must equal at least \$37,500.

NOTE: Every funded line allocation, regardless of funding source, must be described in the budget narrative.

# **BUDGET NARRATIVE**

#### **USE WHOLE DOLLAR AMOUNTS**

			USE WHOLE DOLLAR AMOUNTS		
	Budget Line	Description/Calculation	Grant	Institution <sup>4</sup>	Other <sup>4</sup>
1.	Personnel <sup>1</sup>				
2.	Fringe Benefits <sup>2</sup>				
	Professional services <sup>3</sup>				
3.	Professional services				
4.	Travel (\$0.31/mile maximum)				
5.	Limited hardware/software				
6.	Instructional materials				
7.	Recruitment/marketing/dissemination				
8.	Resolving financial obligations				

#### **BUDGET NARRATIVE**

#### USE WHOLE DOLLAR AMOUNTS

	Budget Line	Description/Calculation		Grant	Institution <sup>4</sup>	Other <sup>4</sup>
9.	Other (specify)					
		TOTAL	\$-	\$-	\$-	
IND	<b>IRECT COST -</b> <i>Describe</i> what expenses a		N/A			
		TOTAL	\$-	<b>\$</b> -	\$-	

Matching Calculation<sup>4</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_

#DIV/0!

*If applicable, identify Other Funding source(s):* 

<sup>1</sup> May not account for more than 25% of the total grant request.

<sup>2</sup> Limited grant funds may be requested for fringe benefits of part-time employees working on the project.

<sup>3</sup> For professionals from outside the institution.

<sup>4</sup> The total amount of Institutional and Other funding must be equal to or greater than 50% of the grant request.

For example, if \$75,000 in grant funds is requested, institutional and other funding combined must equal at least \$37,500.

#### **ACCOUNTING OF PERSONNEL TIME**

Institution:

				Amount Charged to			
Name & Title	FT/PT* (Full/Part Time)	Annual Salary	% Time Working on the Grant	Grant	Inst.	Other	Total
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
							\$ -
							\$ -
							\$-
							\$ -
							\$ -
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							\$-
							\$-
							\$-
GRANI	) TOTAL PR	ROJECT P	ERSONNEL	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-

\*Indicate individual's job status with the institution, not the contribution of time to the grant project.

## **1. Grantee Information**

The report period for the following questions, unless otherwise indicated, is July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. This form is due with the Final Report on August 16, 2011

You are allowed to exit the form and return to it at any time. However, prior to exiting, click the "Next" button to save the most recently completed page. Only the person to whom the link was sent will be able to access the form through his/her email address.

#### **Institution Name**

# **Contact Name Contact Email Address Contact Phone Number**

Number of st	udents identified
Proposed	
Actual**	
al number is si	gnificantly less (50%), please explain.
	tudents contacted
Proposed	
Actual**	
al number is si	gnificantly less (50%), please explain.
Number of st	tudents showing interest through attendance at
	events, meetings, etc.
Proposed	
Actual**	
al number is si	ignificantly less (50%), please explain.

# 3. Implementation of the Re-enrollment Plan

#### Implementation of the re-enrollment plan

Number of interviews of potential re-enrollees	The set of
Number of referrals to other institutions or other options	
Number of students still interested, but not yet enrolled	

#### Nummber of students who participated in the DARC program. [NOTE: If student status was not consistent, select the status that was most common for the student or the most recent.]

Number of students re-enrolled full-time (unduplicated)

Number of students re-enrolled part-time (unduplicated) Total number of students (unduplicated)

# 4. Demographics of Re-Enrollees

NOTE: Please check that for each question the sum of students is the same as the total number of students who participated in the DARC program for the previous question.

#### Ethnicity

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ial withdrawal from college	
	ial withdrawal from college.

Number of	f years since initial withdrawal from college.
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Credits previously earned at grantee in	nstitution.
0-12	
13-24	
25-36	
37-48	
49-60	
61-72	
73-84	
85-96	
97-108	
109-120	
over 120	
Credits previously earned at other in	stitutions.

## 0-12 13-24 25-36 37-48 49-60 61-72 73-84 85-96 97-108 109-120 over 120

# Current Employment Status.

### Please maintain employer names in your records.

Not Employed	
Part Time	
Full Time	
Multiple Jobs	
Do not want to say	

#### **5. Progress to Degree**

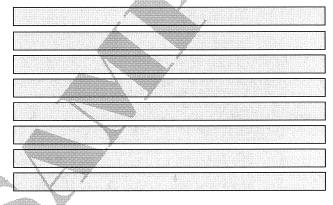
For this report, please report on fall 2010, spring 2011, and summer 2011. A returning student is one who has previously enrolled due to the efforts of your DARC program. A new student is one who is enrolling for the first time after being contacted through your DARC program.

Number of credits attempted by term for students in the program. If any of the information previously reported on the interim report has changed please indicte updated information.

Fall 2010 - Returning	
Fall 2010 - New	
Updated (answer yes or no)	
Spring 2011 - Returning	
Spring 2011 - New	
Updated (answer yes or no)	
Summer 2011 - Returning	
Summer 2011 - New	

Number of credits earned by term for students in the program. If any of the information previously reported on the interim report has changed please indicte updated information.

Fall 2010 - Returning Fall 2010 - New -----Updated (answer yes or no) Spring 2011 - Returning Spring 2011 - New -----Updated (answer yes or no) Summer 2011 - Returning Summer 2011 - New



#### Number of degrees or credentials earned by term.

- Fall 2010 Certificate Fall 2010 - Associate Fall 2010 - Bachelor's Fall 2010 - Other (please describe) -----Updated info (answer yes or no)
- Spring 2011 Certificate
- Spring 2011 Associate
- Spring 2011 Bachelor's
- Spring 2011 Other (please describe)
- -----Updated info (answer yes or no)
- Summer 2011 Certificate
- Summer 2011 Associate
- Summer 2011 Bachelor's
- Summer 2011 Other (please describe)

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#### 6. Grant Activities

# Please comment on the extent to which the following activities were developed or revised to meet the needs of the re-enrollees.

	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal	Not applicable
Academic Courses		0		
Admissions/Registration	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Advising	$\mathbf{O}$			
Financial Aid	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Faculty/Peer Mentoring	0	$\bigcirc$		0
Student Services	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\land$ $\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Other (describe)	0	0	C Q	0

#### Please indicate the extent to which the following activities were used by re-enrollees.

	No changes were made	Modified exisiting service/process	New service created for DARC students
Academic Courses		0	
Admissions/Registration	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$
Advising	0		
Financial Aid	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$
Faculty/Peer Mentoring		$\wedge$	0
Student Services	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Other (describe)		V O	0
	And a second		

If any new service was created, please describe below.

Given your work to date, please comment on the extent to which the following individual factors affected students' initial withdrawal from college: Cost of college attendance, academic issues, employment, military, family/personal, or other factors not cited. Indicate how you are collecting this information. For example: surveys, individual counseling, self identification.

