

Docket Item:

“Talent, Innovation, and Equity” Subgrant Awards Update

Summary:

In 2018, the Lumina Foundation awarded HECC a \$689,000 “Talent, Innovation, and Equity (TIE)” partnership grant to help eliminate disparities in postsecondary success rates between Oregon’s overall student population and historically underrepresented students of color. The grant supports a suite of state leadership activities aimed to improve postsecondary success in Oregon for African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander learners, with a particular focus on adult learners of color.

HECC’s grant agreement with Lumina commits to dedicating approximately \$220,000 of the overall award to subrecipients. As a result, HECC staff launched a competitive process to identify 2-4 Oregon postsecondary institutions that were willing to undertake promising practices in support of the completion of credentials for students of color. Priority was placed on institutions that proposed to partner with culturally-specific community organizations to support students’ completion, while elevating these institutions as exemplars within the state. The maximum award amount per institution was \$110,000.

HECC received 15 applications from Oregon post-secondary institutions proposing partnerships with a culturally specific community organizations. Applicants included community colleges, universities, public and private, and one trade school. A panel of HECC staff reviewed the applications and selected five to move into the second and final phase of the competition. During the second phase of the competition, the review panel conducted virtual site visits to garner further insight into the sustainability and commitments of the proposed partnerships. The panel considered whether the proposals demonstrated strong leadership support, equity-minded and equitable intervention strategies built into the institutional framework to improve student services from access, recruitment, engagement, to student diversity and cultural programming, etc. In addition, the panel sought to identify a demonstrated commitment to structural planning shifts to build equitable racial and ethnic recruitment and retaining practices for the student body, staff and faculty and demonstrated clear reciprocal communication, relationship authenticity, procedures for program sustainability and reporting metrics among the partnership.

From among the finalists, three proposals received the highest ratings:

Portland Community College (PCC) will be awarded \$90,000 to collaborate with Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center and Rosemary Anderson High School (POIC + RAHS). POIC + RAHS is a minority-led nonprofit organization in NE and SE Portland providing education, mentoring, family outreach, employment training, and job placement. The grant to PCC will support activities focused on key transition pathways from high school to college through a Scholars Program designed for students of color, as well as relationship building with students, staff, and faculty.

The Indigenous Nations Studies Department of Portland State University (PSU) was awarded \$75,000 to collaborate with the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health and the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA). NAYA is a Portland-based nonprofit organization providing culturally-specific, inclusive programming for Native American community members. This cross-institutional and community-based collaboration will uplift Native students through frameworks centering Indigenous Traditional Ecological & Cultural Knowledge (ITECK). The

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grant will provide intentional support for re-envisioning university work from an Indigenous center, focusing on resurgent intersections of Native culture and education to increase college exposure and enrollment of Native students while developing inclusive and equitable learning environments at PSU for all students.

Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) in Ontario, Oregon, was awarded \$55,000 to collaborate with Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization/Four Rivers Welcome Center (IRCO/FRWC). IRCO is a nonprofit organization serving the holistic needs of Oregon's immigrants, refugees, and community members, and FRWC specifically assists refugees/immigrants in Malheur County to find the resources they need to build successful futures in our community. The grant to TVCC will support critical wrap-around services, relationship-building, and data-driven best practices to increase the completion of degrees and credentials and eliminate barriers for students of color.

Staff Recommendation:

This is an informational and discussion item only.