MHEC
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ONE STEP AWAY
State Grant Program

ONE — MARYLAND STEP AWAY GRANT PROGRAM

Proposals Due Date: **(BOTH Electronic & Hard Copies)**
Friday, June 10, 2016
NO LATER THAN 4:00 p.m.

Deliver Attention to: **Dr. Beneé Edwards**
Office of Outreach and Grants Management
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 North Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201
Phone: 410-767-3377
Email: benee.edwards@maryland.gov

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Grant Program Timetable

Request for Proposals Issued	May 10, 2016
Technical Assistance Webinar	May 19, 2016 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. RSVP to benee.edwards@maryland.gov
Applications Due 4:00 p.m. to MHEC	June 10, 2016
Initial Award Notifications (via email, no later than 12 midnight)	July 15, 2016
Grant Project Start Date	July 18, 2016
Grantee Post Award Data Submission Instructions.	July 2016
First Payment - 50% of Award Funds	July 2016
Institutions forward One Step Away Student List to MHEC to match with MVA records	*no later than* July 29, 2016
MHEC forwards One Step Away Student List with updated addresses to institutions	August 19, 2016 *earlier submissions may receive updated contact information sooner*
Institutions issue initial contact letter or other communication to One Step Away Students	*No later than* September 20, 2016
Re-enrollment of One Step Away Students	Begin Fall & Winter (if applicable) and Spring 2017 Semesters
Interim Progress Report Due	February 20, 2017
Release of Remaining Award Funds	February 2017
Grant Project Ends	September 18, 2017
Final Narrative & Financial Reports Due (Any unspent grant funds to be returned at this time.) Final Data Report Due.	December 18, 2017

INTRODUCTION

The Maryland General Assembly set a statewide completion goal that 55% of adult Marylanders will hold an associate or bachelor's degree by 2025. The current attainment rate is 49.9%. (http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2016/#maryland). In support of this statewide goal, the *College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013*, was enacted. This statute creates a policy framework for improving college completion in Maryland. Likewise, the 2013-2017 State Plan for Postsecondary Education – *Maryland Ready -* established deliverables that include increasing college enrollments and completion (http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/2004Plan/2013%20Maryland%20State%20Plan /MHECStatePlan_2014.pdf). The statewide completion goal, the *College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013*, and *Maryland Ready* inform the State's newest competitive completion focused grant program, the **One Step Away State Grant Program** (OSA). One Step Away provides funds to support public and independent nonprofit two- and four-year institutions' efforts to identify, re-engage, re-enroll, and graduate near-completer students. Near-completers are students who have accumulated a significant number of the credits needed to earn an associate or bachelor's degree, but have stopped out or dropped out before completing that degree.

The successful graduation of near-completers benefits students, institutions, and the State. Students gain a recognized employment credential that may lead to promotion in an existing career, new career opportunities, and the personal intrinsic value of obtaining a college degree. Institutions can increase graduation rates, expand their engaged graduate alumni base, collect additional tuition revenues, and better recognize return on institutional investments in these students. The State benefits from an increased pool of college educated, credential bearing workers with the skills needed to support its growing knowledge-based economy. State investment in higher education is more fully realized when students complete a degree.

Who is a Near-completer?

One Step Away provides seed funds to institutions to identify, contact, re-enroll, and graduate stop-out and/or drop-out students who:

1) Have completed at least 75% of the credits required to earn an associate or bachelor's degree; or have earned enough credits for an associate or bachelor's degree but have not been awarded the degree;

2) Are in good academic standing; and

3)   Have dropped-out or stopped-out for at least 12 consecutive months.

Institutions are encouraged to specifically target near-completers who may be able to graduate within the institution's reported six-year graduation rates e.g. initial enrollment in 2009-2010 academic year or later. **However, institutions may also include near-completers from earlier initial enrollment years, as long as the "six-year graduation cohort" is also included in outreach and recruitment efforts.**

There are two kinds of near-completers --those who are *degree-eligible* and those who are *degree-potential. Degree-eligible* students are students who have accumulated the required number of credits, completed required courses, and hold a grade point average (GPA) above the minimum required for a degree, but who have not received an associate or bachelor's degree. These students may not realize that they have met the degree qualification threshold within their program of study; may qualify for a degree that is different from the one they were initially seeking; or they may not have met residency requirements or non-academic testing requirements associated with degree completion. It also includes students who have earned but not received a degree award due to financial holds or incomplete paperwork. *Degree-potential* students are defined as those students that have completed 75% or more of the credits needed to complete their associate or bachelor's degree program and/or need to fulfill specific course or competency requirements. These students may be "nearly eligible" for the degree they were originally seeking or another academically similar degree.

Promising Practices

Improving college attainment rates has become a national education priority set forth by President Obama. As a result, the U.S. Department of Education developed a College Completion Tool Kit, and most States have set rigorous completion goals. (http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/college_completion_tool_kit.pdf).

Several states have engaged in near-completer programs since 2007. While program specifics vary by state, key findings by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) indicate a series of commonalities among successful initiatives that can be used to inform Maryland's One Step Away Grant Program. In 2011, IHEP published an overview of national completion efforts for three major projects, Project Win-Win (IHEP), Non-Traditional No More (WICHE), and Project Graduate - Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/a-f/(brief)_crossing_the_line-near_completion.pdf).

Two key recommendations emerged from this analysis:

1) Successful initiatives must include mechanisms for efficient identification of near-completers, who may be referred to as "ready adults" or adult learners; and

2) Successful initiatives must include student support systems to facilitate stop-out and/or drop-out students return to the academic environment.

For example, Project Win-Win (http://www.ihep.org/projectwin-win.cfm) uses a robust seven-step system for near-completer identification which involves intra-state data crosschecking to identify and locate students. Degree audits are used to determine program eligibility. Non-Traditional No More (http://www.wiche.edu/ntnm) recommends a concierge service, a single point of contact for re-enrolling students that provides assistance as students re-enter the campus community. Project Graduate (http://www.knowhow2goky.org/pg/index.php) includes services tailored to working adult populations such as expanded distance learning opportunities. These three programs represent effective and efficient outreach and support strategies that are designed to facilitate students' ability to complete their degrees in a timely manner.

WICHE's publication, *Going the Distance in Adult College Completion: Lessons from the Non-traditional No More Project* reports on completion projects undertaken in Arkansas, Colorado, Nevada, South Dakota, New Jersey, and North Dakota (http://www.wiche.edu/info/publications/ntnmStateCaseStudies.pdf). Arkansas and Colorado are the most similar to Maryland in their State's higher education structure. In Arkansas, the Department of Higher Education successfully partnered with other state agencies to reach out to former students. These institutions also adopted a concierge-type system to guide near-completers through the re-entry process (www.adultcollegecompletion.org/sites/files/documents/ntnmStateCaseStudies.pdf).

ONE STEP AWAY GRANT PROGRAM

Program Summary

Purpose: The purpose of the One Step Away State Grant Program is to increase college completion rates by providing associate and bachelor's degree granting Maryland institutions with seed monies to identify, contact, re-enroll, and graduate near-completer students. Near-completers are those students who have earned a significant number of credits toward an associate or bachelor's degree, or may have enough credits for an associate or bachelor's degree, but stopped-out or dropped-out for 12 months or longer without obtaining a degree.

Grant Applicant Eligibility: All accredited Maryland public and nonprofit independent two- and four-year, associate and bachelor's degree granting colleges and universities.

Target Student Population: For the purposes of this grant, near-completer students are defined as students who have stopped-out or dropped-out from enrollment at the

higher education institution for at least 12 consecutive months, have completed at least 75% of the credits needed to earn an associate or bachelor's degree, and are in good academic standing. Institutions are encouraged to specifically target near-completers who may be able to complete within the institution's reported six-year graduation rate (e.g. initial enrollment in 2009-2010 academic year). However, institutions may also include near-completers from earlier cohorts, as long as the "six-year graduation cohort" is also included in outreach and recruitment efforts.

Near-completer students may be identified as degree-eligible or degree-potential, defined as follows:

Degree-eligible – Students who have accumulated the required number of credits, completed required courses, and hold a grade point average (GPA) above the minimum required for a degree, but have not received an associate or bachelor's degree. These students may not realize that they have met the degree qualification threshold within their program of study; may qualify for a degree that is different than the one they were initially seeking; or they may not have met residency requirements or non-academic testing requirements associated with degree completion. This category also includes students who have earned but not received a degree award due to financial holds or incomplete paperwork.

Degree-potential – Students that have earned at least 75% of the credits needed for an associate or bachelor's degree and/or still need to fulfill specific course or competency requirements. These students may be "nearly eligible" for the degree they were originally seeking, or another academically similar degree.

Grant Period: July 18, 2016 through September 18, 2017 (14 months).

Award Amount: Up to $60,000 may be requested per institution dependent upon the scope of the project, and the number of anticipated near-completers. Five or more awards are anticipated.

Institutional Match: Institutions must provide in-kind or matching funds in an amount equal to at least 1/3 of the total project cost (e.g. $25,000 in match for a $50,000 award for a total project cost of $75,000).

Grant Program Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal of the One Step Away State Grant Program is to increase associate and bachelor's degree attainment rates for near-completers. Institutions are encouraged to develop proposals that will help to improve their six-year graduation rates, but may also include earlier cohorts of near-completers. Proposals must address the overarching grant program goals by including three or more of the following objectives:

Objective 1: Develop new and/or improve existing outreach strategies to inform and encourage near-completers to re-enroll in college.

Objective 2: Enhance student support systems to include academic, financial, and/or social advising and supports that facilitate smooth re-entry into the educational environment and retention through degree completion.

Objective 3: Increase re-enrollment rates of near-completers by offering a track/plan of study which will increase the speed of completion.

Objective 4: Establish and implement prior learning assessments or competency based testing to award college credit for returning adult learners.

Objective 5: Develop a general studies or other type of associate or bachelor's degree program for which students who have accumulated a high number of credits (45 or 75 credits for an associate's or a bachelor's degree respectively), but not necessarily the correct credits for the originally intended degree program may qualify.

Objective 6: Increase re-enrollment rates of near-completers by offering new campus-based sustainable financial aid options using campus or other financial aid resources for support such as text book cost waivers and/or tuition discounts.

Process for Identifying One Step Away Students

A multi-step process to identify, contact, re-enroll and ultimately graduate near-completers was established based on best practices and research on the near-completer work described above. Campuses should use the steps below, which have been adapted for Maryland's One Step Away initiative, to identify and contact near-completers.

1. Using institutional data systems, select students who earned 75% or more of the credits needed for their associate (generally 45 credits or more) or bachelor's degree (generally 90 credits or more), have not been enrolled in the last 12 consecutive months, are in good academic standing (i.e. hold the minimum grade point average required for graduation), and who have not received an associate or bachelor's degree. The resulting list may include both degree-eligible and degree-potential students. Institutions are encouraged to specifically target near-completers who may be able to complete and be included in the reported six-year graduation rates (e.g. initial enrollment in 2009-2010 academic year or later). However, institutions may also include near-completers from earlier cohorts, as long as the "six-year graduation cohort" is included in outreach and recruitment efforts.

2. Compare the list of potential One Step Away students to the National Student Clearinghouse database to determine if any students on the list are currently enrolled in another institution/state or have already received a degree from

another institution/state. Students who are enrolled elsewhere or have already received a degree should be removed from the list of eligible students.

3. Conduct a degree audit for each student identified to reach a final determination on degree eligibility/potential. Remove students that are not in good academic standing and that have not earned at least 75% of the credits necessary for an associate or bachelor's degree. Those students who remain will comprise the "degree-eligible/degree-potential" list. These students shall be known as the "One Step Away students." Some institutions refer to this as the "scrubbed" list.

4. Determine whether there are any administrative holds on degrees for the listed students and resolve as many of these as possible.

5. Forward the One Step Away Student List including student names and most recent directory information available from institutional records to MHEC. <u>MHEC must receive this list NO LATER THAN July 29, 2016.</u>

6. MHEC will compare each institution's "one step away student" list to Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) records to obtain updated addresses for those students with Maryland driver's licenses or identification cards. <u>MHEC expects to return the updated addresses to the institution NO LATER THAN August 19, 2016</u>. Details on how to transmit student information via a secure network will be shared with grant awardees in a post award email or conference call. Some institutions refer to this final updated list as the "super scrubbed" list.

7. After receiving the updated student name/address files from MHEC, initiate contact with the One Step Away students to invite them to re-enroll to complete their degree, or inform them that they may have already earned a degree. Contact letters and/or emails signed by the President, or other senior officials from the campus, have proved effective in getting these students' attention. <u>INITIAL CONTACT SHOULD BE MADE NO LATER THAN September 20, 2016, to ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT in Fall/Winter 2016 (where applicable), Spring 2017, and subsequent semesters during the grant period</u>. Every student may not be able to complete during the grant period, but there re-enrollment should not be discouraged. Institutions should be prepared to provide templates for finishing degrees that include formal class work, credit-by-examination, and/or development and review of a dossier that documents and validates experiential learning.

Fundable Activities

One Step Away grant funds will support evidence-based best practices and initiatives such as, but not limited to, the examples described in this Request for Proposals. Applicants must demonstrate how the proposed activity will support and enhance the re-enrollment and academic progress of near-completers to include their degree completion. Fundable activities might include:

Degree Audit Infrastructure: Efficient and accurate transcript and degree auditing is necessary to provide near-completers with information about the remaining courses and/or possible course equivalents that are required for degree completion. Software enhancements, special computer-aided and/or automated reporting, short term "audit" staff, and/or staff training may be needed to establish a sustainable system for identifying degree completion plans for near-completers. Funds may also be used to establish rapid identification of students who stop-out or drop-out in a kind of "early warning" system.

Degree Program Completion Plan: To guide the degree completion process for returning near-completers, institutions can provide either degree completion plans that are individualized for each returning student, near-completer degree completion templates to offer more generalized pathways for large numbers of students, or a combination of both.

Enhancement/Redesign of Degree Program: Creating a flexible degree program allows adult learners to use existing credits from many institutions toward a credential. Both Metro State in Colorado and South Dakota State Universities (six institutions) created general studies majors with flexible requirements; these helped near-completers with non-aligned credit to re-enroll and obtain a general education degree using their existing credit. Similar to the Oklahoma University System's (nine institutions) organizational leadership bachelor's degree, these customizable degrees play an important role in helping near-completers finish a credential.

Establishment of a "Concierge" or Near-completer Counselor Approach: One of the biggest challenges of re-enrolling near-completers is getting adult learners the information they need efficiently and expeditiously. Potential students are often discouraged and frustrated by institutional admissions, financial aid, registration, and information gathering processes (think voicemails that are not promptly answered, multiple phone transfers, etc.). A trained concierge, dedicated near-completer counselor, or small cadre of trained counselors can provide a "one stop shop" or a single point of contact for returning adult students to expedite the re-enrollment process. A concierge or near-completer counselor does not necessarily have to be a new hire; there are limitations to using short term grant funds to support long term staffing needs. If funds are requested for staffing, applicants should include a sustainability plan for the position when funds expire. A current staff member(s) might also be designated for this role, and receive training to be as effective as possible. The assigned staff member(s) serves to advise near-completers, evaluate their transcripts, and provide instruction on

the re-enrollment process. It is important for this staff member(s) to have the opportunity to provide feedback to the college administration on how the institution can better serve this population.

Faculty and Staff Development: Efforts to support and enrich faculty and staff work, particularly as it relates to student success and college completion, can be supported by the grant. Applicants may propose professional development programs to inform faculty and staff of effective completion strategies they can be implement in the classroom and administrative support areas.

Marketing and Outreach: In order to help One Step Away students complete a degree, institutions must first identify and re-engage students who might be eligible for a degree or who are a few credits short of what is needed to graduate. This process requires available and reliable student tracking data and consideration of the most efficient, accurate, and cost-effective student contact and incentive strategies.

Student Financial Support: Relatively small amounts of money can make a big difference for One Step Away students. Institutions have had success with emergency grants, tuition discounts, book vouchers, small fee and fine forgiveness, waiving testing or graduation fees, funding prior learning assessment portfolio work, transportation vouchers, and even childcare support. Developing payment plans for these returning adults so they can pay monthly, rather than paying for the entire semester up front, is also a win-win proposition. Students who receive more than $2,000 in support per semester, must demonstrate need (e.g. FAFSA completion, Pell-eligible).

One Step Away is not intended to serve solely as a financial aid program. Because this is a short term grant program; it does not provide for a sustainable source of financial aid. Student financial supports exceeding $2,000 per student per semester must be approved in advance by the grantor.

APPLICATION FORMAT & DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS

General Format Requirements

- 8-1/2 by 11-inch page (letter size)
- Arial, Times New Roman, Calibri or similar font type
- 12 point font for text, tables may use 10 point font
- Single spaced
- One-inch margins
- Include the following, though no points are awarded for these:
  - Application Cover Sheet (use the form in Appendix B).
  - Abstract (use form in Appendix B; 250 words or less).
  - Table of Contents.

o   Resumes for key project staff.
- Narrative maximum of 15 pages, numbered. Page number count excludes cover sheet, abstract, budget summary, budget narrative, resumes, and appendices
- See the application check list in Appendix A.

Delivery Instructions

- The original application and five (5) hard copies must be delivered by 4 p.m. on June 10, 2016. Applications may be delivered in person or by mail, but must arrive no later than the deadline indicated.

> Deliver to:
> Dr. Beneé Edwards
> Outreach and Grants Management
> Maryland Higher Education Commission
> 6 North Liberty Street, 10th Floor
> Baltimore, MD 21201

- An electronic copy of the application and budget request must be submitted to benee.edwards@maryland.gov. by 4 p.m., June 10, 2016. ***A copy of the abstract must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.***

REQUIRED APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Application Narrative and Budget

The application narrative includes the following sections in this order: Needs Assessment, Project Objectives and Projected Outcomes, Management Plan, Operation Plan, and Project Evaluation. Points are awarded for each section as indicated. Label the narrative sections with the headings as indicated below:

I. Needs Assessment   (10 points)

Using institution specific data develop a compelling needs statement to support the application. National data may be used as a brief introduction to the problem; however, the emphasis should be on your institution's particular issues. A general overview of the institution's specific graduation rates, retention, and completion agenda may be included to set the context for college completion. **The central focus of the needs assessment should be on the near-completer population based on your institution's data**. Provide any known demographic information including gender, race, age, degree program, Pell eligibility or other relevant characteristics of this population. Indicate the number of possible near-completers that enrolled during the cohort year's to be included in outreach efforts. Describe any current completion efforts and how the near-completers work fits with the institution's completion strategy. This section should not be lengthy but should present a compelling argument supported by specific and

quantifiable local information relative to your institution. Please refer to the Evaluation Section for the data reporting requirement for awardees.

II. Project Objectives and Projected Outcomes   (10 points)

All applications must demonstrate their institution's contribution to the overarching program goal to increase associate or bachelor's degree attainment rates for near-completers. The application should also list the selected supporting objectives (see Project Objectives and Projected Outcomes, page 8-9). Three or more of the grant objectives must be included. Applicants may add additional objectives including institutionally defined objectives as long as the minimum criteria as specified by this Request for Proposals are met.

For each objective, identify one or more projected outcomes. Projected outcomes should be quantifiable and measurable. Include baseline data for comparison to convey that your goal is both reasonable but ambitious. Please refer to Section V: Project Evaluation for required data reporting.

III. Management Plan (15 points)

The Management Plan supports the implementation of the project. In other words, the Management Plan does not contain direct service activities, but rather describes the key personnel and the administration of the project (e.g. communications, overall guidance, establishment of timelines & benchmarks). Describe and explain direct service activities in the Operation Plan. Consider including representatives from institutional research, academic advising, the provost's office, admissions and/or the registrar's office as part of the management team. The Management Plan should address the items noted below.

1. Identifies key personnel and their general roles and responsibilities for the project. Provides a clear organizational structure, a timeline for management actions, and milestones for accomplishing the management actions. You may wish to present key personnel roles and major management activities in a chronologically ordered table or as a narrative.

2. Includes activities such as planning and progress report meetings, and establishment of project timelines and progress benchmarks. Project management duties should be clearly linked to the budget and to the Operation Plan. **Include resumes/CVs for all key project staff in an appendix.**

3. Demonstrates that the project director and other key staff have sufficient time to conduct the grant project effectively and in accordance with the established timeline. Demonstrate the adequacy of the project team to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget.

4. Discuss how the institution will sustain a near-completers initiative after the grant ends – particularly for those students that are initially impacted by the grant but have not yet completed by the grant end date.

5. Refer to the Timetable on page 3 of this Request for Proposals for any due dates specified by the grant program. These due dates should be reflected in the Management Plan as appropriate.

IV. Operation Plan (30 points)

The Operation Plan describes the activities that will achieve the project objectives and outcomes. The Operation Plan answers the who, what, when, where, and how questions about the proposed project activities. The Operation Plan will:

1. Describe when, where, and how each activity will be implemented, and the key personnel responsible for each activity. Provide detailed information about what students and supporting faculty and staff will be doing during each activity.

2. Provide an activities timeline with tentative dates.

3. Explain how the services to be provided are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients of those services and to the project objectives.

4. Include specific information on how, when, where, and by whom the target student population will be recruited and retained. Recruitment and retention are essential elements of project success and must be planned carefully and implemented rigorously.

5. The Operations Plan should be presented as a narrative. A table should be added to support the narrative.

6. Refer to the Timetable on page 3 of this Request for Proposals for any due dates specified by the grant program. These due dates should be reflected in the Operation Plan as appropriate.

V. Project Evaluation (20 points)

The Project Evaluation is an integral part of the project's design and implementation, not something to be done after the project is completed. The evaluation plan should be clearly tied to project objectives and projected outcomes and provide both formative and summative information. The Evaluation Plan is a systematic means for monitoring and evaluating the program throughout the grant period, as well as a measure of the projects final results. The Project Evaluation describes how the baseline data was established and how the baseline data will be used to measure change associated with the project activities. Describe how the overall effectiveness of the project

implementation will be assessed. Describe how data will be collected and analyzed to determine if projected outcomes were achieved. Show how the evaluation plan will be developed through cooperative planning with representatives from all departments involved in the institution's completion agenda (e.g. provost's office, admissions, registrar, financial aid, institutional research, academic advising, and student affairs).

Evaluation results will be reported in the interim progress and final project reports. The interim progress report will indicate what activities have occurred during the reporting period, the intended objectives and outcomes for these activities as originally identified in the application, and the degree of progress to date. If the objectives and outcomes were not met, the evaluation report should discuss why and what modifications to the program will be made. The final report will include a comprehensive evaluation of the entire project. Much like the interim progress report evaluation, it should describe the activities conducted, the corresponding objectives and outcomes. Discuss how the actual objectives and outcomes were measured against the proposed objectives and outcomes. An overall assessment of the project should also be provided with recommendations for improved procedures and sustainability of assisting the near-completers effort. **In addition, a final cumulative data report on the measures indicated below will be reported to MHEC as part of the interim progress report and final reporting for the project.**

Data Reporting Requirements

All grant awardees must report the following:

Degree-Eligible Near-completers

➢ The number of degree-eligible students identified to include gender, race, age, and degree program aggregated demographic data.

➢ The number of degree-eligible students successfully contacted (email and/or snail mail that is not returned).

➢ The number of degree-eligible students awarded an associate or bachelor's degree during the grant reporting period by degree program.

Degree-Potential Near-completers

➢ The number of degree-potential students identified to include gender, race, age, and degree program aggregated demographic data.

➢ The average number of credits toward degree of degree potential near-completers.

➢ The average length of time (in months) that degree-potential near-completers have been stopped-out or dropped-out.

➢ The number of degree-potential near-completers successfully contacted (email and/or snail mail that is not returned).

➢ The number of degree-potential near-completers that re-enroll to include gender, race, age, and degree program aggregated demographic data.

➢ The number of credit hours earned by degree-potential near-completers upon re-enrollment for the grant reporting period.

➢ The number of credit hours awarded to degree-potential near-completers via prior learning assessments or competency-based credits (where applicable).

➢ The number of degree-potential near-completers awarded an associate or bachelor's degree during the grant reporting period by degree program.

➢ The number of re-enrolled degree-potential near-completers who received financial aid through the One Step Away grant program and the average amount of aid received through the grant.

Budget and Cost Effectiveness (15 Points)

The application requires a Budget Request Summary and a Budget Narrative. Submit the Budget Request Summary using the excel spreadsheet provided in Appendix B or downloadable at http://www.mhec.state.md.us/Grants/CCM/OSA.asp. It includes columns for the budget request (grant funds), institutional match, and total project costs by expenditure type (line item). There should be a clear link between all costs and the project activities that are detailed in the Operation Plan and all management activities in the Management Plan.

At least 1/3 of the total project cost must be in-kind or a matching cash contribution. Institutional match can be provided as in-kind, such as staff time dedicated to the project or other supports. This grant does not support indirect costs. However, applicants may claim up to 8% of the total project cost as indirect costs in-kind match. Institutions may also provide cash match, including support from institutional funds or

other grant funds. **Please note that the budget request spreadsheet should be submitted separately electronically as well as in hard copy with the full application package.**

The Budget Narrative explains the rationale for each line of the Budget Request Summary, both for grant expenditures and matching funds. This narrative must show, in detail, how the amounts were determined (e.g. 6 units at $100 per unit). The Budget Narrative should be labeled in the same order as the Budget Request Summary. These budget guidelines apply (arranged by line item corresponding to the budget summary):

A. Salaries and Wages
Note on Personnel: Personnel costs are the most likely source of in-kind matching funds for the institution. Request for grant support for staff will be carefully considered given that the grant is short-term in nature and cannot sustain new staff. If funds for new staff are requested, the applicant must demonstrate how the position will be sustained after the grant ends. Requests for short-term hires, faculty release time, etc. will be considered with the sustainability question in mind. Estimates of personnel time should be justified in terms of the tasks to be performed. Salaries are to be a function of regular appointment (% time commitment) for the academic year or the summer session, if applicable. Salaries cannot be drawn at a higher pay rate than that which the individual normally receives.

1. Professional Personnel
    List all key personnel individually and the requested or matching salary amounts by indicating what percent of the individual's annual time will be committed to the project. Actual instructional compensation, if requested, is restricted to one course load equivalent for academic semester courses and/or one summer course equivalent.

2. Other Personnel
    List individually all support personnel by support category and the requested rate of pay or in-kind match. Support personnel must be clearly justified and may include clerical and graduate or undergraduate student assistants. If effort is committed as an in-kind institutional contribution, that should be noted in column

B. Fringe Benefits
    These are calculated at the costs normally paid by the institution for the salaried members of its faculty and staff who will be involved in the project (the amount is calculated for the percentage of effort in the project). Fringe is a good source of institutional in-kind match as is salary.

C. Travel
    Enter travel costs, if necessary, for key personnel to conduct off-campus activities. Mileage allowances may not exceed the State's approved rate for mileage reimbursement at the time of travel. Currently this rate is $0.54 per mile. All travel funding must be specifically designated by place and position,

approximate date, distance, and method of travel. **Conference travel will be supported on a limited basis and only as professional development for the near-completer "concierge" or the staff member responsible for establishing a "one stop shop" for near-completers.** The requested conference needs to be identified and discussion about how attendance will directly impact the institution's near-completer program must be included in the justification.

D. Equipment
    Equipment means an article of non-expendable tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost per unit that is consistent with institutional policy. Equipment that is necessary to perform project activities should be leased or rented unless the cost to purchase is less or otherwise justified.

E. Materials and Supplies
    Non-expendable supplies, including but not limited to books, computer software, office supplies, marketing and promotional materials, postage, copying, etc. that are necessary for the effective implementation of the funded activity, may be purchased only if they are necessary and appropriate to the project activities.

F. Consultant and Contractual Services
    Use of program consultants must be justified and reasonable, and their pay should be a reflection of instructional time or time spent delivering other direct services (e.g., software programmer, external marketing firm). Travel and per diem expenses for consultants should not exceed the institutional or State rate, whichever is most restrictive. Preparation time for consultants will not be paid by the grant. Properly documented contractual agreements for expenditures to consultants or outside agencies for fees, travel, and routine supplies must be filed per institutional policy; and contractual payments cannot exceed institutional salary levels for similar work. Documentation for consultant services performed should be filed showing:
    • Consultant's name, dates, hours, and amount charged to grant;
    • Names of grant participants to whom services were provided; and
    • Results of subject matter of the consultation.

    Contractual services might include design costs for marketing materials, contracted finder services, outsourced marketing, etc.

G. Other (specify)
    Other may include communications, subsistence for workshops, open houses, or any expenditure item not fitting expenditure categories in A-F. If food/beverages are requested, the applicant should demonstrate how the purchase benefits the project. If meals are provided, State regulations apply and require that an agenda and an attendance list be supplied. Provide specifics and adequate justification for each expenditure item in this category.

H. Total Direct Costs
Enter sum of Items A, B, C, D, E, F, and G.

I. Indirect Costs
The grant request does not support indirect costs. However, up to eight (8%) percent of the total project cost may be claimed as indirect costs for matching purposes.

J. Total
Enter sum of Item H and I. Observe that the Total (Item J) in Column 1 for "Funds Requested" is the amount of the grant being applied for. Be sure to reconcile the total in each line and each column.

The application's budget and cost-effectiveness will be evaluated on the extent to which:
- The budget is adequate to support the project; it should be clear that all activities are accounted for in the budget;
- The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives and design;
- The costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students to be served;
- The budget complies with the requirements and guidelines spelled out in this Request for Proposals;
- In-kind contributions are identified and included such that there is adequacy of support - including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources - from the institution; and
- Administrative costs are kept to a minimum.

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES   (required - no points)

Each grant application must be accompanied by a Statement of Assurance signed by the President or the Provost/Chief Academic Officer. Letters of Support from the leadership of the departments from which key personnel are drawn are encouraged but not required. Use the form in Appendix B.

APPLICATION RECEIPT & REVIEW PROCESS

Applications (signed original and five hard copies) must be received by the deadline and include all requisite forms. The application and budget summary request must also be submitted electronically as indicated. Applicants will be notified via email that their application has been received.

A panel of qualified reviewers will read each application and score each according to the grant selection criteria described. Each application will be reviewed by at least four-reviewers. Reviewers may be from Maryland or from other states and will have suitable qualifications to review the applications. Reviewers will provide constructive written comments to be shared with applicants. Reviewers may recommend project adjustments, including budgetary changes. Review panel funding recommendations

are forwarded to the Secretary of Higher Education (or designee) for final approval. Geographic distribution of grant awards along with reviewer recommendations will be considered in the final awarding process. If a grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of a previous MHEC grant and/or has outstanding grant requirements from previous grants with MHEC, MHEC may deduct 10 points from the total.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

A grant award will be issued after approval of awards. Preliminary notification of awards will be made no later than midnight on July 15, 2016 by email. Formal award letters will be issued once the final grant project and award are mutually agreed to by the grantor and grantee.

FISCAL PROCEDURES

All State funds under this program must be assigned to a specific account. If an institution receives more than one grant award, separate accounts must be established for each. For this grant cycle, grant awards will be disbursed in two payments. The first payment will be 50% of the total grant award. The second payment for the remaining balance will be made after the project's interim progress report has been received, reviewed, and approved. Projects may have award amounts adjusted based on the interim progress report. Expenditures in excess of approved budget amounts will be the responsibility of the recipient institution.

APPENDIX A

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Every application should contain an original and five (5) hardcopies of the application packet, which must include the following, in the order indicated:

_____ Cover Sheet*

_____ Abstract*

_____ Application Narrative (maximum of 15 pages)
      _____ Needs Assessment
      _____ Project Objectives and Projected Outcomes
      _____ Management Plan
      _____ Operation Plan
      _____ Project Evaluation

_____ Budget and Cost-Effectiveness
      _____ Budget Summary*
      _____ Budget Narrative*

_____ Statement of Assurances*

_____ Project Staff Resume/CVs

*Use the application forms included in Appendix B. Forms are also available in electronic format at http://www.mhec.state.md.us/Grants/CCM/OSA.asp.

All applications must be ***received*** (not postmarked) by 4 p.m. on Friday, June 10, 2016. An electronic copy of the application and budget summary request must be sent to benee.edwards@maryland.gov by the same deadline.

<div align="center">

Deliver or Mail Hard Copies to:

Dr. Beneé Edwards
Outreach and Grants Management
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 North Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201

</div>

APPENDIX B

APPLICATION FORMS

- Cover Sheet
- Abstract
- Budget Summary
- Budget Narrative (example format)
- Assurances
- Interim Progress Report Form

One Step Away
Complete College Maryland State Grant Program

FY 2016 APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Project Title:

Higher Education Institution:

Project Director(s) Name and Title:

Campus Telephone:

FAX Number: E-mail Address:

Campus Mailing Address:

_____

Grants Office Post-Award Officer Name and Title:

Email address: Phone number:

Campus Mailing Address:

_____

Finance or Business Office Contact:
Name: Title:

Email address: Phone number:

Campus Mailing Address:

_____

Certification by authorizing official Name and Title (V.P. level or above):

Signature: _____

One Step Away
Complete College Maryland State Grant Program

Abstract

Project Title:

Higher Education Institution:

In 250 words or less, describe (for an educated general audience) your project activities. (Note that this may be reproduced as is or edited by Commission staff for inclusion in press releases and other publications describing the grant program.)

ONE STEP AWAY Complete College Maryland State Grant

BUDGET SUMMARY (use this Excel format)

Higher Education Institution: _____

Project Title: _____

SOURCE OF FUNDS				
	COLUMN 1 **Grant Funds REQUESTED**	COLUMN 2 ****INSTITUTION CONTRIBUTION**	COLUMN 3 *****OTHER CONTRIBUTION**	COLUMN 4 **TOTALS**
A. Salaries & Wages				
Professional Personnel				
[List each by name followed by title in brackets]				
1				
2				
3				
4				
Other Personnel (list categories & # of each in brackets)				
5. [ ]				
6. [ ]				
7. [ ]				
8. [ ]				
Total Salaries and Wages				
B. Fringe Benefits				
C. Travel				
D. Equipment				
1				
2				
E. Materials and Supplies				
F. Consultant and Contractual Services				
G. Other (specify)				
1				
2				
H. Total Direct Costs (A through G)				
I. Total Indirect Costs (max. 8% of H)				
J. Total (H and I)				

*Include all grant-funded expenses.

**Include any contributions from applicant institution in this column. Include both cash and in-kind contributions, distinguishing in the budget narrative which type of contribution is provided for a given item.

***Include any contributions from other partners in the grant project in this column.

BUDGET NARRATIVE (use this format)

Provide a detailed description of each expenditure in the budget summary spreadsheet. The description should include how the budget amount was computed as well as provide a clear description of the purpose of the expenditure relative to the project proposed in the grant application. *Refer to the budget narrative example below as a model.*

A. Salaries & Wages
1. Nathaniel Chase [Co-Project Director] will spend 10% of his time on project activities during the 2014-15 academic year. Maryland University requests the cost the university will pay an adjunct to replace him in one course ($4,500). The university will contribute the difference between the $4,500 requested and 10% of his annual salary as in-kind valued at $3,500.

2. Jill Smith [Co-Project Director] – will spend 10% of her time on project activities during the program period. Salary in the amount of $4,500 **is** provided as in kind contribution. ($45,000/annual salary x .10/percent = $4,500)

3. Jo Daniel [Program Manager] will spend 30% of her time on project activities during the program period. Salary in the amount of $10,800 is requested. ($36,000/annual salary x .30/percent = $10,800)

4. Administrative Assistant: to be hired. $8.00/hour x 5 hours/week x 36 weeks Request =

   $1,440.

B. Fringe Benefits
Fringe benefits for Jill Smith and Jo Daniel are provided as in kind - are calculated at 18% 4,500 + 10,800 x .18 = **$2,754**

C. Travel
Travel for program manager to offsite meetings with branch campuses for training of admissions staff
   Request = $0.54 cents per mile x 10 trips x 30 miles/trip = **$162.00**

D. Equipment
   No equipment requested.

E. Materials and Supplies
Guide to Succeeding in College (book) for students' to use during orientation, Request - $20/per book x 50 students = **$1,000**

F. Consultant and Contractual Services
Shore Remedial Education Inc. hired to assess developmental math courses.
   Request = 30 hours x $40/per hour = **$1,200**

G. Other
Information brochures on the re-enrollment program, 5,000 x .63 = **$3,150**.
Postage for direct mail recruitment, 5,000 X .44 = **$2,200**

H. Total Direct Costs – sum total costs by column for requested funds and institutional match.

I. Indirect Costs – Eight percent of total project cost may be claimed as matching fund/institutional contribution; no indirect cost will be paid by the grant.

J. Total Cost – total by column/ fund type

ASSURANCES

The Applicant hereby affirms and certifies that it will comply with all applicable regulations, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and the state of Maryland as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of One Step Away Complete College Maryland State Grant Program funds in this project. Also, the Applicant affirms and certifies that:

1. It possesses legal authority to apply for the grant; e.g., an official act of the applicant's governing body has been duly adopted or passed, authorizing filing of the application, including all understandings and assurances contained therein and directing and authorizing the person identified as the official representative of the application and to provide such additional information as may be required.

2. It will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) prohibiting employment discrimination where discriminatory employment practices will result in unequal treatment of persons who are or should be benefiting from the grant-aided activity.

3. It will comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and any and all amendments to the ADA.

4. It will comply with all relevant federal and state laws.

5. It will expend funds to supplement new and/or existing programs and not use these funds to supplant non-grant funds or for any purpose other than those specified in this grant.

6. It will participate in any statewide assessment program or other evaluation program as required by the MHEC.

7. It will give the MHEC and/or the Legislative Auditor, through any authorized representative, the right of access to, and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant. It will maintain all records pertaining to this grant for a period of five years.

8. It will comply with all requirements imposed by the MHEC concerning special requirements of law and other administrative requirements.

Institution: _____

_____
Signature of Authorized Institutional Authority   (President or Provost)   Date

_____
Name and Title, Printed

Interim Progress Report (Due February 20, 2017)

Grant #:
Project Title:
Project Director: Institution:

Please complete each of the sections below. Attach additional sheets as needed. Please feel free to include any additional information that is pertinent to your project progress.

1. Overview of Project Progress

Please provide an overview of how your project is progressing. Your narrative should address the following issues.

   a. Did the project start on time? If not, please discuss why.
   b. Has the project recruited the projected number of participants? If not, please discuss the difference.
   c. What is working well? What went as planned? Which activity has shown the best results so far? Discuss.
   d. Discuss any challenges encountered to date and how those challenges are being addressed. What did not go as planned? What isn't working and needs revising?
   e. What is the impact of challenges encountered? What is the impact on your timeline? If your project is behind schedule, explain the factors contributing to the delay.
_____

2. Progress toward Objectives

Discuss progress toward the objectives outlined in your approved application. All projects must address at least two of the objectives listed below. Describe the major project activities and outcomes to date for each of *your* project's objectives. Indicate whether progress toward objectives is ahead of, on, or behind schedule.

Objective 1:   Develop new and/or improve existing outreach strategies to inform and encourage near-completers to re-enroll in college.

Objective 2: Enhance student support systems to include academic, financial, and/or social advising and supports that facilitate smooth reentry into the educational environment and retention through degree completion.

Objective 3: Increase re-enrollment rates of near-completers by offering a track/plan of study which will increase the speed of completion.

Objective 4: Establish and implement prior learning assessments or competency based testing to award college credit for returning adult learners.

Objective 5: Develop a general studies or other type of bachelor's degree program for which students with a large number of credits (e.g. 120 or more) but not necessarily the correct credits for the originally intended degree program may qualify.

Objective 6: Increase re-enrollment rates of near-completers by offering new campus- based sustainable financial aid options using campus or other financial aid resources for support such as text book cost waivers and/or tuition discounts.

_____

3. Preliminary Results

Provide preliminary results for the following data elements. You may wish to present these results in a table format in some cases. Provide any additional data and narrative as needed.

Degree-Eligible Near-Completers
- The number of degree-eligible students identified to include gender, race, age and degree program aggregated demographic data.
- The number of degree-eligible students successfully contacted (email and/or snail mail that is not returned).
- The number of degree-eligible students awarded a bachelor's degree during the grant reporting period by degree program.

Degree-Potential Near-Completers
- The number of degree-potential students identified to include gender, race, age and degree program aggregated demographic data.
- The average number of credits toward degree of degree-potential near-completers.
- The average length of time (in months) that degree-potential near-completers have stopped-out or dropped-out.
- The number of degree-potential near-completers successfully contacted (email and/or snail mail that is not returned).
- The number of degree-potential near-completers that re-enroll to include gender, race, age, and degree program aggregated demographic data.

- The number of credit hours earned by degree-potential near-completers upon re-enrollment for the grant reporting period.
- The number of credit hours awarded to degree-potential near-completers via prior learning assessments or competency-based credits (where applicable).
- The number of degree-potential near-completers awarded a bachelor's degree during the grant reporting period by degree program.
- The number of re-enrolled degree-potential near-completers who received financial aid through the One Step Away grant program and the average amount of aid received through the grant.

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4. Budget Expenditures

Prepare an Interim Progress Budget Expenditure report (xls form attached) and include with your narrative annual progress report. Use this space to provide any narrative regarding the status of expenditures to date.

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5. Project Amendment Plans

a. Do you plan to request a programmatic project amendment?
b. Are you considering requesting a one-time no cost extension?
c. Do you plan to request a budget amendment/reallocation?
d. If so, when do you expect to make this/these requests? See attached project amendment form. Use this form for all project amendment requests.

Thank you for all the work you are doing to help Maryland students complete their degrees!

Submit electronic copy of the Narrative and Budget Expenditure Report to
benee.edwards@maryland.gov

Submit hard copy of signed Budget Expenditure Report to:
Dr. Beneé Edwards
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201

APPENDIX C

POST AWARD GRANT MANAGEMENT GRANTEE PROCEDURES

Post Award Changes

The grant recipient shall obtain prior written approval for any change to the scope of the approved project. To request changes, use the Project Amendment Request Form. Contact the MHEC grant manager for a copy of the form. The request must include an explanation of the specific programmatic changes and a revised budget, if applicable. If project activity dates have changed significantly since the application submission, you must submit a revised calendar of activity dates. The grant recipient shall also obtain prior written approval from the Office of Outreach and Grants Management to continue the project during any continuous period of more than three (3) months without the active direction of an approved project director; to replace the project director (or any other persons named and expressly identified as a key project person in the application); or to permit any such person to devote substantially less effort to the project than was anticipated when the grant was awarded; to make changes resulting in additions or deletions of staff and consultants related to or resulting in a need for budget reallocation; and to make budget changes exceeding $1,000 or 10% in any category, whichever is greater.

Grantees must also request written approval to extend the expiration date of the grant if additional time beyond the established termination date is required to ensure adequate completion of the approved activity within the funds already made available. A single extension, which shall not exceed 6 months, may be made for this purpose and must be requested no less than 1 month prior to the originally established expiration date. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the un-obligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. The fact that unobligated funds may remain at the expiration of the grant is not in itself sufficient justification for an extension. The plan must adhere to approved objectives of the project.

Project Closeout, Suspension, Termination

Closeout: Each grant shall be closed out as promptly as feasible after expiration or termination. In closing out the grant, the following shall be observed:
- The grant recipient shall immediately refund, in accordance with instructions from MHEC, any unobligated balance of cash advanced to the grant recipient.
- The grant recipient shall submit all financial, performance, evaluation, and other reports required by the terms of the grant within 90 days of the date of expiration or termination.
- The closeout of a grant does not affect the retention period for State and/or federal rights of access to grant records.

Suspension: When a grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of a grant, MHEC may, upon reasonable notice to the grant recipient, suspend the grant in

whole or in part. The notice of suspension will state the reasons for the suspension, any corrective action required of the grant recipient, and the effective date. Suspensions shall remain in effect until the grant recipient has taken action satisfactory to MHEC or given evidence satisfactory to MHEC that such corrective action will be taken or until MHEC terminates the grant.

Termination: MHEC may terminate any grant in whole or in part at any time before the date of expiration, whenever MHEC determines that the grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of the grant. MHEC shall promptly notify the grant recipient in writing of the termination and the reasons for the termination, together with the effective date. The grant recipient may terminate the grant in whole or in part upon written notification to the Commission (MHEC) setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial terminations, the portion to be terminated. However, if in the case of a partial termination, MHEC determines that the remaining portion of the grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made; MHEC may terminate the grant in its entirety.

Closeout of a grant does not affect the right of MHEC to disallow costs and recover funds on the basis of a later audit or review, nor does closeout affect the grantee's obligation to return any funds due as a result of later refunds, corrections, or other transactions.

Records

A grant recipient shall retain the following records for a period of five (5) years after the completion of the grant project:
- records of significant project experience and evaluation results;
- records that fully show amount of funds under the grant, how the funds were used, total cost of projects, all costs and contributions provided from other sources, and other records to facilitate an effective audit (note that timesheets should be kept for volunteer hours, as well as for all paid hours); and
- participant data (which students, faculty members, etc. participated in which activities; specify names, dates and places).

Reporting Requirements

To ensure accountability and sound fiscal management, the Office of Outreach and Grants Management serves as the State monitor of grant activities for all MHEC institutional grant award programs. In addition to requiring an interim progress report and a final report, MHEC staff may conduct monitoring visits, undertake telephone interviews, or request written materials for this purpose.

Formal interim progress and final reports are required from all grantees. At the end of the grant, both a financial and a narrative report will be due to the Commission (MHEC). The project evaluation should be an integral part of the narrative report.

Interim Progress Reports

An Interim Progress Report Form will be provided. For the report to be acceptable, it must address all questions in the Interim Progress Report Form which may include but is not limited to:

- progress toward project goals, objectives and projected outcomes to date as defined in the original approved application;
- specific data / metrics required by the grant;
- a roster of participants for each activity if required;
- an "activity and participant information" chart if required by the interim progress report form;
- a summary of challenges and their impact on the project timeline;
- a fiscal report that shows how much of the grant has been spent and how much remains in each line item of the original accepted budget application;
- responses to the all questions posed on the annual progress report form; and
- evidence that the project is progressing sufficiently to continue.

See Appendix B for the annual progress report form.

Final Reports

Final reports will address items on the interim progress report but for the full term of the grant; the report includes a narrative and fiscal section. Failure to submit a final report may make the project director ineligible to apply for future grants under MHEC's purview. The final report includes the comprehensive evaluation of the grant. This evaluation will include the evaluation plan components from the accepted application. The evaluation should restate the objectives included in the application and discuss how the project outcomes compared to those stated in the application and the evaluation instrument(s) used. Final reports should include a participant chart if required but report the information for the full term of the grant (not just the second half of the grant).

The *Financial Report* should be structured like the approved budget, with both a budget summary and a budget narrative (see Appendix B for forms). It must be signed by a financial officer at the institution serving as the fiscal agent. Grantees should keep records indicating how funds were expended, the total cost of project activities, the share of the cost provided from other sources (in-kind or otherwise), and any other relevant records to facilitate an effective audit; such records should be held for five (5) years after the grant ends. Any unspent grant funds should be returned to MHEC with the financial report.

The *Narrative Report* includes the results of the evaluation plan outlined in the project application and document the project outcomes. These reports will:

- address the goals, objectives, and projected outcomes of the project, comparing those that were named in the application to the actual results, and explaining how and to what extent project activities were successful in meeting the project objectives and outcomes;

- provide any specific data metrics to date as required by the grant;
- include the full results of the evaluation plan (see Application Narrative, Evaluation Plan); this will include the results of the evaluation plan described in the application—and include the results and report of any evaluator paid by the grant;
- note where or how the project activities might be improved; and
- indicate the number of participants that were served if required. Include the participant table in the annual progress report form, updated for the full extent of the project, if required.

Acknowledgement of Support and Disclaimer

An acknowledgment of the Maryland Higher Education Commission must appear in any publication of materials based on or developed under this project. Materials must also contain the following disclaimer:

"Opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and no official endorsement should be inferred."

All media announcements and public information pertaining to activities funded by this grant program should acknowledge support of the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

At such time as any article resulting from work under this grant is published in a professional journal or publication, two reprints of the publication should be sent to the Maryland Higher Education Commission Office of Outreach and Grants Management, and clearly labeled with appropriate identifying information.