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Executive Summary

Washington Campus Compact/Western Washington University will have 56 AmeriCorps members serving in the College Access Corps. Members will recruit, train and place 500 college student volunteers to serve as College Access Coaches for economically disadvantaged (ED) K-12 youth in the states of Washington and Oregon. AmeriCorps members will 1) increase academic engagement, 2) increase academic preparedness for post-secondary education, 3) increase knowledge about how to apply to and pay for post-secondary education among participating ED K-12 youth. Specifically, members and coaches will deliver a minimum of 15 hours of the following interventions to each of the 3,612 participating ED K-12: 1) provide academic coaching, 2) engage youth in service-learning, 3) teach study and test-taking skills, 4) provide information about post-secondary educational benefits and financial aid opportunities, 5) assist with college and financial aid applications, 6) coordinate campus visits, 7) coordinate FAFSA workshops, and 8) facilitate college fairs. At the end of the first program year, at least 70% of participating ED K-12 youth will report improvement in academic engagement, academic preparedness for post-secondary education, and knowledge about how to apply to and pay for post-secondary education per a pre- and post-survey. Additionally, the AmeriCorps members will recruit 1,580 volunteers (including ED K-12 youth) who will be engaged in national days of service. The College Access Corps program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area of EDUCATION. The CNCS investment of \$672,000 will be supported by non-CNCS public and private resources.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

a. Problem Need

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT is at the core of a vibrant and healthy future for Washington (WA) and Oregon (OR) communities. Success from kindergarten through college is a key factor in lifelong well-being, yet many students are not reaching their full academic potential, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged (ED). The proposed AmeriCorps College Access Corps (CAC) program will address the deficiency in academic achievement of ED K-12 youth by placing CAC AmeriCorps members on college campuses to recruit and train college student volunteers to serve as College Access Coaches. The CAC program will 1) increase academic engagement, 2) increase academic preparedness for post-secondary education, 3) increase knowledge about how to apply to and pay for post-secondary education among participating ED K-12 youth.

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Economically disadvantaged K-12 youth face significant barriers to academic success on the pathway to college. Input gathered via surveys and interviews with higher education representatives in Washington and Oregon, along with national research studies, identified major obstacles to academic achievement including low-income, insufficient guidance and support, low educational aspirations, and deficient academic engagement. The following statistics demonstrate the extent and severity of this problem:

* The number of K-12 youth eligible for free or reduced-price lunches provides a common measure of children's economic well-being. The percentage of students eligible in Washington is 46.1% and in Oregon it is 54% (Washington State Report Card 2012-13, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Oregon Dept. of Education 2012-13).

* The percentage of ED K-12 youth not graduating from high school in Washington is 34% and in Oregon it is 39% (U.S. Department of Education, 2010-2011). These striking statistics illustrate the challenges that ED K-12 youth encounter when accessing post-secondary education.

* In WA the graduation rate for all students is 76%, but the graduation rate for Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students is 66%. In OR, which has the fourth lowest graduation rate for all students in the nation (68%), ED youth fare dramatically worse with a 61% graduation rate (U. S. Department of Education, 2012).

* Poverty level also correlates to college enrollment rates. High schools with a higher percentage of low income students had lower college enrollment rates than schools with predominantly higher income students, regardless of the number of minority students or geographic category (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. REPORT: High School Benchmarks 2013).

* According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2013), the low graduation rates of ED youth highlight the importance of interventions such as school-based college access coaching.

Completing high school and post-secondary education pays off. Research has established that there are many benefits for college graduates. Not only do they earn more money in the course of their careers, they are also less susceptible to lay-offs and down-sizing. College graduates also enjoy other benefits, such as better health, higher levels of well-being, and more job fulfillment. (Howard Johnston. 2010. Pathways to College: What High Schools Can Do To Prepare Students for College Admission And Academic Success In Higher Education. Educational Partnerships, Inc.).

Those who stay in high school are less likely to require social services than those who do not (Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2008). A study by researchers at Northeastern University

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found that with dropouts between the ages of 16 and 24, incarceration rates were 63 times higher than among college graduates. In addition, a high school dropout will cost taxpayers an average of \$292,000 over a lifetime, due to lower tax revenues and other factors (The Consequences of Dropping Out of High School: Joblessness and Jailing for High School Dropouts and the High Cost for Taxpayers. 2009. Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University). It is also interesting to note that community service experiences and diversity-related activities associated with college attendance can help develop long term social action and community engagement among youth (Kim Misa, Jody Anderson, and Erica Yamamura. 2005. The Lasting Impact of College on Young Adults' Civic and Political Engagement. Higher Education Research Institute.).

More importantly, college seems to benefit disadvantaged youth the most. A recent study reported in Education Week, found that college graduates whose demographic and academic backgrounds suggested that they would be among the least likely to go to college, including low-income students, received the largest financial benefit from their degrees (Jennie Brand and Yu Xie, 2010. Who Benefits Most from college? Evidence for Negative Selection in Heterogeneous Economic Returns to Higher Education).

At the January 16, 2014 Expanding College Access Summit, President Barack Obama reaffirmed his priority for opening the door to college for low-income Americans by stating "We want to restore the promise of opportunity and upward mobility that's at the heart of America, the notion that if you work hard, you can get ahead...We have to make sure there are new ladders of opportunity to the middle class." At the Summit, college and university presidents along with leaders of non-profit groups focused their action plan on four areas: 1) helping low-income students connect with colleges; 2) reaching out to elementary, middle and high school students to engage and encourage them to pursue higher education; 3) boosting remedial programs and 4) seeking to ensure lower-income students aren't disadvantaged by lack of college access to college advisers and inability to prepare for entrance exams (ABC News 2014).

b. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems

The 56 AmeriCorps members will recruit and train college student volunteers to serve as College Access Coaches who will 1) increase academic engagement, 2) increase academic preparedness for post-secondary education, and 3) increase knowledge about how to apply to and pay for post-secondary education among participating economically disadvantaged (ED) youth. The program will expand the capacity of participating schools to support the success of ED K-12 youth. The AmeriCorps members and College Access Coaches will provide the support and guidance ED K-12 youth need to

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succeed. In order to participate in the CAC program, K-12 schools and student sub-groups must be at least 50% eligible for the federal free/reduced price lunch program.

INTERVENTIONS

A.1. AmeriCorps members will recruit, train and place college student volunteers to serve as College Access Coaches for ED K-12 youth.

B. AmeriCorps members and College Access Coaches will deliver the following interventions to ED K-12 youth:

B.1. provide academic coaching

B.2. engage ED K-12 youth in service-learning projects

B.3. teach study and test-taking skills

B.4. provide information about educational and financial aid opportunities

B.5. assist with college and financial aid applications

B.6. coordinate college campus visits

B.7. coordinate FAFSA workshops

B.8. facilitate college fairs

The interventions selected to meet the program objectives were chosen based on evidence-based and evidence-informed studies and evaluations effective for meeting the CAC program outcomes. Below are the studies and evaluations and the corresponding intervention activities.

Reaching college remains a challenge for ED students who are not academically prepared and/or lack knowledge about how to apply to and pay for college (Melissa Roderick, Jenny Nagaoka, Vanessa Coca, and Eliza Moeller, 2008. *From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College*). Melissa Barnes, Chair of the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions, states "There are 6.7 million 16-24 year olds who are disconnected from school and work. Previous research has shown that, despite many challenges, opportunity youth remain hopeful about and accept responsibility for their futures. Developing relationships with caring and supportive adults...is a key tool through which we can help these young people achieve their dreams. The promise of a generation depends on our efforts to reconnect these young people to education and career opportunities." (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014)

- Intervention supported by this research include: A.1.

There is compelling evidence that school-based college access coaching produces positive educational aspirations and engagement outcomes for youth. In a 2011 research analysis and synthesis published

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by the Pathways to College Network, the impacts of established, supportive relationships with youth which provide information, guidance and encouragement were documented. These include: 1) increased grade promotion and reduction of school absences and tardiness; 2) greater motivation toward achieving learning goals; 3) enhanced interest in going to college; 4) and increased knowledge about college preparatory courses, financial aid and the college admission process (Research Practice Brief, Pathways to College Network, 2011).

- Interventions supported by this research include: A.1., B.1., B.4., B.5.

Further, a comprehensive and rigorous meta-analysis of nearly 30 YEARS OF RESEARCH on factors affecting college attendance was conducted by G. W. Tierney and colleagues in 2009. Findings of this study revealed that the following interventions help improve college access for economically disadvantaged youth:

* Surround K-12 students with adults and peers who build and support the goals to attend college; effective activities include academic coaching by college students, improving time management and study skills, and providing college role models.

* Engage and assist students in completing critical steps for college entry: 1) help students prepare for college entrance and admission exams, 2) coordinate college visits, and 3) assist students with completing college applications.

* Increase families' financial awareness and help students apply for financial aid. Organize workshops for parents and students about college affordability, scholarship and aid sources and financial aid processes.

(W.G. Tierney, T. Bailey, J. Constantine, N. Finkelstein, and N. F. Hurd. 2009. Helping Students Navigate The Path to College: What High Schools Can Do: A Practical Guide. National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.).

- Interventions supported by this research include: B.1., B.3., B.4., B.5., B.6., B.7., B.8.

The Washington Student Achievement Council's "Road Map: A Plan to Increase Educational Attainment in Washington" declares two goals for increasing educational attainment of Washingtonians by 2023: 1) all adults in Washington will have a high school diploma or equivalent and 2) at least 70% of Washington adults will have a post-secondary credential. A challenge in meeting these goals, particularly among individuals from underrepresented groups - including those who are from low-income families - is the lack of timely, accurate and relevant information about post-secondary education opportunities. Among the strategies for preparing to meet this challenge of

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overcoming the roadblocks to access, persistence and completion of post-secondary education is to provide adequate information about academic preparedness, post-secondary education alternatives, the costs of post-secondary education, financial aid options and how to complete the enrollment application process. (J. Engel. 2007. Postsecondary Access and Success for First-Generation College Students; J. Engle, A. Bormeio, C. O'Brien. 2006. Straight From the Source: What Works for First-Generation College Students).

- Interventions supported by this research include: B.1., B.3., B.4., B.5.

Research has shown that service-learning has a positive effect on increasing the self-esteem and self-efficacy of K-12 youth, helps students acquire academic skills and knowledge, increases their engagement with school and motivation to learn, helps them become more knowledgeable and realistic about careers and develops positive work attitudes and skills (Shelley Billig. 2000. Research on K-12 School-Based Service-learning: The Evidence Builds). Further, according to evidence included in the Corporation for National and Community Service's National Service Knowledge Network (2007), students with quality service-learning experiences show statistically significant increased motivation to learn, more cognitive engagement, and score higher on certain content areas on state tests. Students also had a stronger set of job and career-related skills and aspirations, including a desire to pursue a post-secondary education. Additionally, service-learning has positive effects on civic skills and dispositions.

- Interventions supported by this research include: B.1., B.2., B.3., B.4.

The following are examples of the wide variety of programs that will be supported by the CAC. Seattle University's "Middle College High School" is a program that works with 11th and 12th grade ED urban youth in an innovative alternative school for college and careers as they work toward high school graduation requirements. Meeting with coaches twice a week for a year, the youth will participate in a "college choice" class and visit classes on campus to experience the college environment. Big Bend Community College will target ED Latina/o youth in local rural schools to create and support a pipeline to higher education. Gonzaga University will promote Spokane area ED K-12 youths' persistence to high school completion and engagement with their academic work while demystifying the college experience. Oregon's Multnomah County "9th Grade Counts" program for ED academic priority youth - including those in foster care - will expand efforts to build academic skills, enrich high school orientation, and offer college/career exposure. Green River Community College will host the CAC as part of the South King County College Access Network, working with six area school districts to expand postsecondary access programming and support college readiness for ED K-12 youth. The

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Evergreen State College's Gateways for Incarcerated Youth program will engage incarcerated youth in high school completion and college access coaching. While behind bars, Gateways youth will be matched with college coaches to strengthen academic performance, set goals and participate in college level seminars with college students and faculty.

c. Member Training

Members will receive both individual and team training and support. At the beginning of their term, members will learn about school-specific culture and resources, roles and responsibilities, volunteer management, and community partnerships from their individual site supervisors. Prohibited activities (and corrective action) will be clearly outlined in their program orientation and are included in their member contracts, which they sign at the start of the program year.

Initially, they will view a mandatory webinar on prohibited activities and also attend an intensive four-day team orientation. The CAC orientation will provide a framework for the program and outline AmeriCorps policies and procedures. Additional topics will include effective academic coaching techniques, service-learning, planning for college fairs and campus visits, public speaking, basic financial literacy, student leadership development, volunteer and project management, conflict and risk management, and AmeriCorps branding. At the start of the service year, members and their supervisors will create Personal Development Plans, outlining training and professional opportunities. Mid-year, members will receive a second intensive training, further emphasizing the need for compliance with all program policies and procedures. Integral to the agenda will be opportunities for deeper reflection and sharing of best practices and lessons learned. Members will also meet virtually via periodic web-based training modules.

Finally, at the end of their term, members will convene again for reflection and review of outcomes at a graduation and recognition ceremony. Members will receive training on post service employment opportunities through workshops on career paths, networking strategies, resume writing, and interview techniques. In addition, members will reflect and be recognized for their service and impacts created through their participation in the CAC. Members will also discuss ways to maintain their connection with their fellow AmeriCorps members and how to continue with their civic leadership and community engagement.

d. Member Supervision

Each member will be assigned a site supervisor (at their host organization) who will provide daily guidance, training, and support. Site supervisors will meet weekly with their members, monitor work

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hours through the Encorps reporting system, and conduct mid-year and end-of-year performance evaluations.

During program orientation, site supervisors receive in-depth information and training on AmeriCorps policy and procedures (including prohibited activities), the CAC program design, intended outcomes, and expectations of their role in supervising AmeriCorps members and meeting program objectives. WACC will conduct semi-annual site visits to monitor the program and provide additional training to the site supervisors (and members). In addition, WACC will maintain a comprehensive CAC program website that includes: all AmeriCorps policies and procedures; program management tools and procedures; training modules; relevant research and assessment resources; AmeriCorps and CAC program branding and marketing materials; program impacts; and all program media coverage.

e. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

AMERICORPS MEMBERS will begin to identify with the AMERICORPS EXPERIENCE from the moment they respond to the call to serve and begin the recruitment process. Once enrolled, members will take the AmeriCorps oath and commit to their term of service. At orientation AmeriCorps members will receive AmeriCorps gear, which they will be required to wear when representing the program in the community, including on national days of service. This requirement will be monitored and reinforced during site visits and trainings. Members will also participate in team development activities to help them create local and statewide AmeriCorps support networks.

Members will establish an ESPRIT DE CORPS through the national ANNUAL AMERICORPS LAUNCH and CAC AmeriCorps team building activities throughout the year. The program marketing and management materials, including the PROGRAM WEBSITE, will help establish and strengthen members' sense of identity as an AmeriCorps member.

All program partners will be required to display the AmeriCorps logo in their offices, on their websites, and in their program materials.

Organizational Capability

a. Organizational Background And Staffing

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING: Established in 1992, Washington Campus Compact (WACC) is a consortium of higher education institutions that 1) help students become engaged citizens, 2) further the civic and public purposes of higher education, and 3) strengthen communities. WACC is affiliated with the national Campus Compact network of 35 state offices and over 1,200 higher education institution members throughout the United States.

Washington State higher education presidents formed WACC, and Western Washington University

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has hosted the organization since inception. WACC currently serves a growing membership of more than 33 higher education institutions, representing two-year public, four-year private, four-year public institutions, and tribal colleges. Oregon Campus Compact (ORCC) was established in 1996 and has 19 college/university members. Over the past 20 years, WACC has developed and implemented numerous sustainable programs with hundreds of partners. Program areas have included educational success, environmental sustainability, leadership development, strengthening communities, and volunteer mobilization.

WACC ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT: WACC organizational management includes an EXECUTIVE BOARD of nine university and college presidents. The board oversees WACC's governance, budget, policies, and strategic direction. The ORCC Board and presidents are encouraged to promote the program to their stakeholders (policymakers, community leaders, media, etc.).

ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL GRANTS: WACC has extensive experience administering federal grants including AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Learn and Serve America (LSA) programs. WACC has served as the intermediary in numerous multi-site/state programs: Retention Project (2007-2013), VISTA (2004-present), the multi-state EAP AmeriCorps program (1997-2012), the five-state LSA program (1997-2000), the three-state LSA program (2000-2003), the two-state LSA program (2006-2009), and the three-state LSA (2010-2011). WACC has also managed grants from the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, Washington Service Corps, the Ford Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, College Spark, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Pew Charitable Trust.

In addition, WACC is developing a partnership with the Washington State Legislature to address college access, persistence, and completion issues. There is currently a bill being introduced that, if funded, would further leverage AmeriCorps funding.

WACC has experienced staff (noted below) who can effectively plan and implement the proposed program.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Jennifer Hine, will provide vision and leadership for the program. Serving as the Executive Director since 1995, she has a strong track record of regional and national leadership. She has extensive experience in organizational management, and program and staff development; she has also successfully directed several multi-million dollar budgets and multi-state programs. Ms. Hine has a M.A. in Psychology.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR, Patrick McGinty, will serve as the CAC Director and oversee the program in WA. He has managed multiple AmeriCorps national service programs and has almost 20 years of

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program management experience in higher education. He has trained staff and campus partners on compliance issues, and worked extensively with program and fiscal management. Mr. McGinty holds a MBA in Finance and a M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration.

ORCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Josh Todd, will oversee the program in OR. He has overseen many regional and national service programs and projects, and has served Multnomah County for over ten years, most recently as Director of the Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Community. Currently, he manages a 23-member VISTA team and a 120 minimum time member AmeriCorps team. Mr. Todd holds a B.S. in Social Work and a M.A. in Public Affairs.

CAMPUS PARTNERS will be selected through a competitive request for proposal process. Their identified site supervisors will be required to demonstrate strong supervisory and program management experience. Site supervisors will be responsible for supervising members, building K-12 school/community partnerships, managing the program at the local level, collecting and disseminating assessment data, building local stakeholder support, and meeting program objectives. WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY (WWU) will provide fiscal and grant administrative oversight and serve as the legal applicant.

WACC will provide financial and programmatic orientation and training/ technical assistance to program staff at all levels.

WACC has strong ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY to PROVIDE TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR MEMBERS. WACC has been offering trainings on community service programs for 20 years. Trainings occur regularly during the service year, beginning with orientation focused on program management, policies and procedures, prohibited activities, volunteer recruitment, conflict resolution, leadership, and team development. Members learn how to navigate the website to access program information. Throughout the year, WACC offers a series of webinars and conference calls, tailored to members' and site supervisors' training needs. Additional program information is readily available to campus partners, site supervisors, and AmeriCorps members on the WACC website, and via listserv and newsletters. Other WACC events help develop member skills, including an Annual Network Meeting and the Annual Continuums of Service Conference, now in its 17th year.

b. Compliance and Accountability

WACC will require compliance with AmeriCorps policies and procedures by entering into a comprehensive sub-grant with each sub-grantee. Sub-grants will be approved by Western Washington University's legal department and the Assistant Attorney General's office. Sub-grant clauses include

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the identification of project and program goals, scope of work, PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES, sub-grant management, reporting and record retention, adherence to legal clauses, compliance with CNCS AmeriCorps program Provisions and Policies, and consequences for non-compliance.

WACC will centralize management of member files, enrollment and exiting documents, time-logs, and criminal record checks.

WACC will require CAC site supervisors to be professional staff or faculty members. They will receive extensive training on program expectations, AmeriCorps and CAC program policies and procedures, and member supervision. The trainings will thoroughly cover the prohibited activities and will ensure that no AmeriCorps members displace employees. Periodic phone calls, webinars, and semi-annual site visits will enable WACC to monitor for compliance and accountability. Campus partners and members will stay current with any compliance changes during the program year through email, conference calls, and the WACC program website. All members will receive a standard position description clarifying acceptable and prohibited activities.

WACC will address any policy violations immediately by issuing written documentation that specifies the policy violation and the required corrective action. The sub-grantees will implement the corrective action and then clarify how they will prevent future occurrences. If necessary, WACC will conduct a site visit and provide further training. If warranted, CNCS guidance will be sought and the sub-grant may be terminated. ORCC is also well-versed in AmeriCorps policies and procedures and will follow WACC protocol when training sub-grantees on AmeriCorps compliance.

During the last full year of CNCS AmeriCorps program operations, no compliance issues or areas of weakness or risk were identified for WACC (or ORCC).

c. Past Performance For Current Grantees And Former Grantees Only

WACC has substantial experience administrating multi-state AmeriCorps programs and has consistently performed very well in past audits and program reviews. WACC has 1) been financially responsible with budgeted dollars, 2) continuously strengthened program compliance, 3) shown exceptional strength in recruiting program participants and volunteers for National Days of Service, and 4) made steady progress in meeting program performance measures. WACC has responded immediately to any concerns about program design, compliance, or member issues.

During the last three-year cycle, the AmeriCorps Retention Project had a 100% enrollment rate each year and averaged a 92% retention rate. Furthermore, the program had 100% compliance rates for the 30-day enrollment and exit policies. Meeting performance measure goals steadily improved; by Year Three, 75% of the goals were successfully met. During the same three year time period, the

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Retention Project showed strength in recruiting volunteers and participants for National Days of Service, with 28,305 volunteers contributing a total of 535,134 hours of service to their local communities.

WACC's AmeriCorps Retention Project showed steady progress in improving the academic engagement of K-12 disadvantaged youth. In the pilot project, 79% of K-12 disadvantaged youth who participated and completed surveys indicated that participation in the AmeriCorps Retention Project improved their academic engagement. In the overall program, 70% of the K-12 disadvantaged youth surveyed indicated improved academic engagement. The K-12 disadvantaged youth reported an 82% increased desire to do well in classes, 81% increased ability to access resources to help find a college of interest, and 89% increased preparation to apply to college.

WACC's plan for improving the retention rate of AmeriCorps members in the proposed CAC program includes the following: 1) increase the AmeriCorps candidate pool; 2) expand opportunities for AmeriCorps members to bond during orientation training; 3) create supportive cohort groups by region; 4) recruit a strong AmeriCorps leader with one year of AmeriCorps experience, strong people skills, and excellent customer service skills; 5) provide more resources for AmeriCorps members to improve program effectiveness; and 6) encourage and facilitate strong working relationships between site supervisors and members.

d. Continuous Improvement

To track progress toward program objectives, WACC will implement strategic, ongoing mechanisms for assessment, evaluation, and improvement. WACC program staff will provide comprehensive orientations to all program participants including program partners and members. WACC will use existing systems such as email, websites, social media sites, and listserves to disseminate program information. Ongoing feedback will help assess progress toward program goals. State and regional meetings will foster reflection, encourage the exchange of ideas, and solicit feedback. By collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, WACC will evaluate the program's progress toward the performance measures outlined in this proposal. Methods will include semi-annual progress reports, member activity logs, and surveys completed by members, College Access Coaches, and ED K-12 youth. Program staff will regularly review and analyze the data to inform program planning and improvements. Information about best practices and assessment results will be reported to participants, stakeholders, and CNCS.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

The College Access Corps (CAC) is cost effective in supporting college intervention strategies for 4,500

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economically disadvantaged youth by 1) leveraging talented volunteer college students as college access coaches in schools, 2) leveraging cash and in-kind match to support the program, and 3) implementing CAC in the rural and low-income regions of the Northwest where college access resources and support are lacking. WACC is requesting only \$12,000/MSY for a new grant program. The AmeriCorps funding will provide new and established college access programs support that supplements the resources colleges, schools, and local communities have to run the much needed programs in their communities. Local communities and school systems serving economically disadvantaged youth are struggling with state funding cuts, overwhelmed teachers with larger class sizes, and schools that are understaffed. The CAC program is a cost effective way to support school systems, their teachers and staff that serve economically disadvantage youth by leveraging local college resources, knowledge, skills, and talented, motivated college students to act as college access coaches in their schools. The average cost per economically disadvantaged youth served using federal dollars (CNCS funds) is just \$149/youth served ($\$672,000/4,500$ youth served = \$149/youth served).

WACC has a diverse and sustainable cost structure to effectively operate a 56-member multi-state AmeriCorps team. The \$672,000 CNCS funding for the College Access Corps will help support 56 AmeriCorps member's living allowance, health insurance, criminal record checks, and training. It will also help support all program management, monitoring, administration, evaluation, and dissemination expenses while assuring that the CAC operates according to all AmeriCorps policies and procedures.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

WACC will convene a program-wide evaluation team to formulate common data points to assess the 1) increase in academic engagement, 2) increase in academic preparedness for post-secondary education, 3) increase in knowledge about how to apply to and pay for post-secondary education among participating economically disadvantaged K-12 youth. Data will be collected through a College Access and Readiness pre-survey and administered to the students at their first meeting with the College Access Coaches. At the end of the program term, students who have received a minimum of 15 hours of intervention will complete a College Access and Readiness post-survey to determine changes from the pre-survey data. After a minimum of 15 hours of program intervention, at least 70% of the ED K-12 youth surveyed will show an increase in 1) academic engagement, 2) academic preparedness for post-secondary education, and 3) knowledge about how to apply to and pay for post-

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secondary education.

CAC site supervisors will collect the pre-survey data and convey the findings in a mid-year report to WACC. The supervisors will also gather post-survey data for an end-of-year report. The Qualtrics online survey system will be used for both pre- and post-survey evaluation data collection.

The interim and final evaluation results will help improve program development and identify best practices and program design. The program will share successes and challenges with stakeholders (including local, state, and federal elected officials), interested constituencies, and potential supporters. Findings will be disseminated to local school partners and college campuses around the nation, through conferences and the national Campus Compact network. In addition, program impacts will be disseminated through a variety of media channels.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Washington Campus Compact

College Access Corps

CLARIFICATION ITEMS

Due: April 11, 2014

a. Budget clarification items: Please respond to the following items in the clarification summary field of the narrative and in the budget narrative as is appropriate.

* Please remove all reference in the budget narrative to anything other than program request (do not add calculations in the source of funds or anything else). Otherwise, such information is subject to audit.

RESPONSE: All calculations, and specific numbers, for cash and in-kind match have been removed from the a) Budget Section II -- "Source of matching funds", b) Budget Narrative -- "Budget/Cost Effectiveness", and the "Executive Summary".

* The CCR Registration is scheduled to expire 7/30/14. Please remember that the registration must be current and active to receive an award from CNCS.

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RESPONSE: Western Washington University/Washington Campus Compact is aware that the CCR Registration expires on 7/30/14. We will renew our CCR Registration before the 7/30/14 expiration date.

b. Programmatic clarification items: Please respond in the eGrants narrative field labeled "Clarification Summary".

1. Clarification Items:

* The applicant provides substantial data supporting the need of mentors to assist with improving high school graduation rates. Please describe how much of the program is focused on academic improvement and how much is dedicated to post-secondary opportunities and financial aid.

RESPONSE: Washington Campus Compact issued a Request for Letters of Interest in November 2013 to potential grantees. Based on the information we received during that process, we estimate that approximately 92% of our campus programs will be working on academic improvement and 100% of them will be dedicated to post-secondary opportunities and financial aid. Most subgrantees will utilize several interventions as part of their comprehensive programs. We issued the Request for Proposals in February 2014 and will complete the proposal review process in mid-April 2014. We anticipate the proposals will reflect similar percentages.

* Please describe corrective action plan for ensuring that future performance measures are met.

RESPONSE: Ensuring that future performance measures are met began with our proposal process. First, we formulated our Request for Letters of Interest and subsequently our Request for Proposals on the performance measures, ensuring that potential subgrantees submitted proposals that aligned with the proposed performance measures. Next, we have established an evaluation team to develop assessment tools that will track performance measure data. Additionally, we will require a comprehensive orientation for both the site supervisors and AmeriCorps members to help guarantee a thorough understanding of program goals, performance measures, and assessment tools. This information will be further reinforced through additional training and at least one site visit per year for sub grantees.

Should a subgrantee fail to meet performance measures, the corrective action plan is as follows:

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- 1) WACC will submit a letter to the subgrantee identifying unmet performance measures and the corrective action required.
- 2) The subgrantee will be required to submit a written corrective action plan within 30 days of receiving the letter.
- 3) WACC will discuss the submitted corrective action plan with the subgrantee to determine whether the plan will result in improved performance.
- 4) If WACC determines that the subgrantee can improve performance, we will approve the corrective action plan and monitor the subgrantee regularly via phone calls, email, and additional site visits as needed.
- 5) If WACC determines that the subgrantee cannot improve performance, we will not renew their subgrant the following year, but will provide additional training to them so that they may be ready to participate in the program in future years.

* Please describe a corrective action plan for resolving compliance issues.

RESPONSE: The corrective action plan for resolving compliance issues also begins with utilizing prevention strategies. We inform all potential subgrantees of AmeriCorps policies and procedures before they are selected as a program partner. We will provide training to supervisors and members on all AmeriCorps policies and procedures including prohibited activities and displacement. The subgrantee contracts include language that requires subgrantees to comply with all AmeriCorps policies and procedures. AmeriCorps members sign a Member's Agreement at the beginning of their terms which lists all policies and procedures.

Washington Campus Compact also trains subgrantees and AmeriCorps members to use the program website as a resource for following program procedures and policies and as a training tool for assessment procedures, time sheets, enrollment/exit procedures, and general program compliance. While our initial efforts are aimed at prevention through strong training programs, use of our program website, and review of position descriptions, we also provide periodic training calls/web seminars, one-on-one touch base calls, campus visits, and progress reports. Campus visits, especially in the beginning of the grant year, provide a vital opportunity to evaluate the administration of the program and provide additional specific training to ensure no AmeriCorps policies and procedures are being violated, especially prohibited activities and displacement. Additionally, the visit provides the occasion to determine whether the AmeriCorps member has appropriate supervision and is in a position to thrive in their service to their local community. Our site visits are carried out by the

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Program Director and AmeriCorps leader.

If a subgrantee is determined to be violating a program or AmeriCorps policy, they will be verbally requested to stop the violation and will be informed that corrective action will need to take place immediately. Follow-up will take place through phone calls, emails, or a second campus visit. If a subgrantee fails to rectify a compliance issue after a verbal warning and/or the compliance issue is negatively affecting the performance of their subgrant requirements we will follow a more formal written corrective action plan as detailed above.

2. Grant Start Date and Member Enrollment Period:

Grant Award Start Date: August 1, 2014

Member Enrollment Period Start Date: August 15, 2014

c. Strategic Engagement Slots Clarification:

1. What percent of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

WACC will provide training and encouragement to subgrantees to recruit disabled applicants. Colleges and universities already have the support systems in place to assist students, staff, and volunteers with disabilities. We will encourage subgrantees to contact their human resources department, disabilities support services offices, and veteran support services as part of their recruitment strategies. They will also be required to list non-discriminatory language in their position descriptions. As part of subgrantees recruitment strategies, we will encourage them to recruit through organizations (such as those Workforce Development, Employment Security, and agencies supporting veterans) in their communities. WACC will not identify a target for members with disabilities. However, in previous years, we have been successful at recruiting, retaining, and graduating members with disabilities. One of the challenges is that it is illegal to ask potential members if they have a disability and often members will not disclose a disability unless they need specific accommodations. Therefore, while we completely support the efforts and train subgrantees to recruit members with disabilities, we cannot ask potential members if they have a disability and therefore cannot track this particular demographic of members.

2. Additional slots.

RESPONSE: WACC is not requesting additional slots.

d. Healthcare Clarification Items

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1. Please provide the name of the health insurance provider you are proposing to use to insure your AmeriCorps members.

RESPONSE: Washington Campus Compact is a member of The Corps Network and has contracted our past AmeriCorps member medical insurance needs through Summit America Insurance.

2. How did you select the provider?

RESPONSE: We selected Summit America Insurance because of their relationship with The Corps Network, their experience working with AmeriCorps programs, their ability and interest in meeting AmeriCorps requirements, and their excellent customer service.

3. Does your proposed budget for member healthcare provide for Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC), as defined by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), for your full-time members?

RESPONSE: WACC has budgeted a conservative amount of funds that will meet MEC required member healthcare coverage. We have heard that medical premiums could increase by up to 20% if The Corps Network were able to provide insurance that meets the MEC requirement and we have budgeted adequate funds to meet this potential increase. WACC will also strongly encourage members under 26 to remain on their parent's healthcare plan and encourage married members to remain on their spouse's coverage. If members have not done so already, they will be encouraged to apply to the Health Exchange to see if they qualify for Medicaid, and to provide basic health plan coverage through The Corps Network that meets CNCS requirements. WACC has outreached to the Washington State Commission to collaborate on strategies that will ensure that all members receive MEC. We are currently evaluating the coverage of the plan we have used previously. We understand that The Corps Network is in negotiations with the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a policy that complies with MEC. Should it not meet MEC requirements, we are committed to doing whatever is necessary to provide MEC to our AmeriCorps members.

4. If not, what adjustment to your budget is necessary in order for you to provide MEC?

RESPONSE: At this time we believe we have a good plan and have budgeted adequate funds to provide the needed medical coverage that meets the MEC requirement for all of our AmeriCorps members.

5. If you do not have enough information to answer question (4), please explain why not and/or what prevented you from being able to obtain the necessary information.

RESPONSE: WACC is working with the Washington State Commission and The Corps Network to assure that all members receive MEC. WACC understands the situation remains fluid and will

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respond appropriately as we receive more information. However, our main goal is to work with CNCS, our State Commission, and The Corps Network to ensure that all of our AmeriCorps members receive MEC while serving with our program.

e. MSY with No Program Funds Attached Clarification (No Cost MSYs):

RESPONSE: WACC does not intend to apply for No Cost MSY slots at this time.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics