



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

Reference Grant Award Number: #P044A210069
KANSAS

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS CENTER FOR RESEARCH, INC. has been selected to receive funding under the TALENT SEARCH PROGRAM (84.044A). This grant will be in the amount of \$517,027.00 for the first budget period (09/01/2021 through 08/31/2022). It is anticipated that the grant will be for a total of 5 year(s). Please see the attached abstract for a brief description of the activities that will be funded under this grant.

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Purpose of the Program TALENT SEARCH

The Talent Search program identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their postsecondary education. The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assist participant with the postsecondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or postsecondary level to enter or reenter and complete postsecondary education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enroll in and complete their postsecondary education.

ABSTRACT

The University of Kansas Talent Search (TS) project proposes to serve Wyandotte County, which is located in the northeastern part of Kansas and is one of the poorest counties in the state. The target schools to be served will include seven middle schools and four high schools in the Kansas City Kansas Public School (KCKPS) district, located in the urban area of Wyandotte County. TS proposes to serve **932** middle and high school students including secondary and postsecondary school re-entry students. The target area and target schools are in dire need of a TS project: **83%** of adults do not have a baccalaureate degree; **84%** of the students receive Free/Reduce Lunch; high student to counselor ratio (**422:1**); high school persistence rate at a low of **62%**; only **73%** of seniors graduate from high school and only **18.6%** complete a rigorous program of study; low college going rates (**48%**); and extremely low (**15%**) college completion rates.

The five mandatory objectives address the baseline data as presented in the Need Section, showing that the target area and target schools are in desperate need of a TS project. The five objectives are attainable based on TS's extensive plan of operation, appropriate resources, trained and experienced personnel, and cost-effective budget and are complemented by a strong evaluation plan that will provide the basis for programmatic changes and improvement. Program services will include both *required* and *permissible* services designed to address the specific needs of the students. Services will include, but are not limited to: college preparation activities (e.g., college entrance exams, admissions/financial aid processes), assistance with succeeding in rigorous program of study, financial literacy/financial aid services, connections to high quality tutoring services, assistance with course selection, assistance with secondary/postsecondary school reentry, mentoring, tutoring, STEM activities, summer programs, academic workshops/advising, college visits, family activities, and career exploration activities. All services are designed to increase secondary school persistence and graduation rates, rigorous program of study completion, and postsecondary education enrollment and degree attainment.

Qualified and trained personnel along with a cost-effective budget (\$555/per participant), efficient management plan, and generous commitments from target schools, community partners, and the host institution will ensure ample resources to provide the most cost-effective services that best meet students' needs. A comprehensive evaluation plan (both formative and summative processes) will ensure that the goals and objectives are met each project year. In accordance with GEPA, TS will include appropriate considerations regarding status-recognized types of barriers that can impede equitable access, participation, or employment. In order to comply with GPRA, this proposal plans to evaluate program success in service delivery and student outcomes.

This proposal will address each of the three (3) Competitive Preference Priorities:

Competitive Preference Priority 1: *Fostering Knowledge and Development of Skills*

Competitive Preference Priority 2: *STEM Education*

Competitive Preference Priority 3: *Demonstrate a Rational* *Informed by Research

*Castleman, B.L., Page, L.C., & Schooley, K. (2014). The forgotten summer: Does the offer of college counseling after high school mitigate summer melt among college-intending, low-income high school graduates? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 33, 320–344. doi:10.1002/pam.21743. Retrieved from: http://www.aefpweb.org/sites/default/files/webform/Castleman%20and%20Page_The%20Forgotten%20Summer_AEFP_2012.pdf

WWC: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single_study_reviews/wwc_boston_032415.pdf