

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The Awards for Innovation in Higher Education support innovation in California's colleges "that is expected to reduce the time it takes students to complete degrees and credentials, reduce the total cost of attendance for students, or do both." The proposed consortium includes Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC), Bakersfield College, Irvine Valley College (IVC), Long Beach City College (LBCC), MiraCosta College, and Sierra College. The consortium will focus on the innovative strategy of a guided pathways model that removes barriers to degree completion and transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. This approach addresses the various "choke points" that students may encounter from the transition from high school through completion of a degree and/or transfer to a four-year college or university.

The consortium's colleges are at different stages of implementing a guided pathways approach. Each institution brings unique strengths to this partnership. Three of the colleges are members of the AACC Pathways Project – Mt. SAC, Bakersfield, and IVC. Teams from each of these colleges have participated in four training institutes and have begun to implement guided pathways on their campuses. While not a member of the AACC Pathways Project, Sierra College has begun implementing the model on its campus as well. LBCC brings to the consortium its Long Beach College Promise, a national model that promises a college education to every student of Long Beach Unified School District. MiraCosta, an Achieving the Dream (ATD) college, has completed its analysis of student data structured around ATD metrics and is currently in its second year (planning) of the ATD project.

With funding from the College Futures Foundation, Bakersfield College is leading the effort to create the California Guided Pathways initiative, which will tailor the institutes facilitated through the AACC Pathways Project to the unique needs of California's community colleges. This initiative will provide training to 20 community colleges throughout the state, including LBCC, MiraCosta, and Sierra College. Bakersfield, IVC, and Mt. SAC, as well as the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI), will serve as resources to these California institutes.

The proposed grant project will build upon the training received through the AACC Pathways Project and the California Guided Pathways initiative. Grant funds will enable the colleges to implement guided pathways on their campuses, including costs such as research staff to analyze student data, staff and faculty time to revise curriculum and integrate career counseling into the student intake process, information technology staff to incorporate meta-majors into educational planning, resources to facilitate the implementation of educational planning, and other related needs among the consortium's colleges.

Throughout the three-year project, the partners will collaborate on implementation, sharing through technology and periodic face-to-face meetings on topics such as basic skills, program mapping, and placement. They will document interventions that reduce barriers at specific choke points, with particular emphasis on students from groups that are historically underrepresented in higher education (e.g., low-income students, first-generation college students, students from underrepresented minorities, current/former foster youth, students with disabilities, veterans). This documentation will lead to the creation of a guide, with a flexible menu, which will be distributed to the California Guided Pathways' participating colleges.

The Chancellor's Office is moving in the direction of an integrated planning process for the Student Success, Student Equity, Basic Skills, and Strong Workforce initiatives, and a guided pathways model provides a unique framework to integrate these sources of funding and align funding requirements and accountability reporting. Thus, the proposed project is timely not only among the six consortium colleges but also across the state. The consortium's plans to leverage existing resources with new grant funding in order to improve student outcomes and degree completion, particularly among underrepresented students, through guided pathways is in strong alignment with the review criteria for the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education.