

Proposed “Pilot” Partnership Initiative  
Pacoima Community Youth Culture Center & Target Area Community Colleges  
H.E.L.P. Initiative  
(Higher Education Literacy Project)

Motto:

Literacy is learning; and Learning is for life!

The HELP initiative is designed and being proposed as an early outreach awareness and transition support for youth and their families as it relate to the role and function of the secondary educational pipeline and the various postsecondary segments of higher education in society. The primary goal will be to provide an avenue whereby youth and young adults and matured adults and seniors might create an awareness and understanding of role and relationship of family, school, and community working together as partners; and, how to access and navigate institutions of higher learning through their participation in informational and transitional enrichment and enhancement experiences and programs. To accomplish this goal and objective, the HELP initiative proposes to offer the following services and programs for individuals and their families:

- “Communiversities 101” – Community-to-College Family Literacy Program
- Individual/Group and Online Peer Mentor and Tutoring Program (Middle School – High School)
- Pre-Collegiate Outreach Enrichment Program (Middle School – High School)
- Higher Education Transition/Resource Center

The HELP initiative will be designed as a community-based transition/resource center that will use a holistic family-oriented approach to support middle to high school students (graduates) as they prepare to leave middle school and transition into high school and continuing the transition into institutions of higher learning. The program will also assist community college students who have decided to transfer into the four-year college or university as a viable option in pursuit of their respective career objective. In many instances, the HELP initiative will begin working with students (clients) while they are still attending middle and/or high school or community college and then offer a one-stop resource service center for them and their families as they plan their transition into institutions of higher learning.

Aside from its traditional on-site support staff and volunteers, the HELP initiative will be designed to employ advancing technology to deliver its services and programs, i.e. online peer mentoring, online advising (ASSIST and CAN), and the nationwide college search resource – College Source. College Source will help individual or groups find educational opportunities in all 50 states, as well as in almost any field of endeavor at every degree and certificate level. The online academic-related tools offer a useful and valuable utility for providing student support in terms of enrichment and enhancement activities and services. The initiative also proposes to implement a pre-collegiate outreach enrichment program that will include pre-college admission test prep workshops on-site at the agency location, and offer individual and small group matriculation assessment tests in partnership with local community college/s.

A parenting enrichment component will be implemented to support the interest and awareness of parents of college and university bound students, at both the high school and community college and university levels.

The following provides a brief highlight of each planned component of the HELP initiative:

**Higher Education Resource/Transition Center:** This component will be designed to offer both traditional resource staff and volunteers and a computerized resource college/university self-help service station that will assist students and their parents (aka clients) in locating and accessing college and university resources, including admission and financial aid applications, housing (on-campus or near campus) resources, and other viable student services and student support information and materials. Expertly trained professional and para-professional staff will be recruited to assist clients with discovering and utilizing information and materials, both in the practical and technical sense. The component will offer monthly TIPS (Transition Information Planning Sessions) for a nominal fee to cover supplies and handout guides, which will be published by the program staff. Specialized “How to Navigate the School/College Campus” seminars will be offered for students and their families as an awareness enhancement activity to complement the initiative goals. College/university workshops will be a weekly feature of the HELP initiative, particularly during semester and seasonal recruitment cycles for institutions of higher learning. A unique feature of the HELP initiative will be its design as a web-based and physically situated resource center program.

**Online Peer Mentor Program:** The online peer mentor program will be offered to clients who are seeking enrollment in community college and four-year university programs. The goal will be to work with a cadre of volunteer mentors who are currently enrolled in a partner institution (preferably a field work or internship course for credit) and are willing to be trained as a mentor to help students in their transition awareness and efforts into college or university. Training and certification for volunteer mentors will be conducted on-site at participating colleges or universities, or via a specifically-designed online training module. Training will include roles and responsibilities of mentors and rights and responsibilities of mentees. Additional insights on transition tips will be provided as a link site on the peer mentor webpage which will be constructed as part of the web-based component of the initiative.

**The Tutoring Component:** This component will be designed to recruit volunteers, with a focus on attracting older retired professionals as tutors in critical academic subjects such as math, science, reading and writing (expository and creative), and experts with expertise in personal development areas such as life skills and character education. The goal is to utilize the life experiences of such volunteers as an intergenerational approach to acclimate high school and postsecondary students to the prospects and promises of higher education goal attainment. The methodology will be to use both onsite volunteers, as well as online specialists in serving prospective clients and their families.

**Pre-Collegiate Prep Enrichment Workshops:** The HELP initiative will be designed to offer pre-collegiate prep enrichment activities such as SAT/ACT prep workshops/seminars and other pre-matriculation assessments that are required for community college and/or university admission. The proposer will

utilize its current Saturday Enrichment Program as the venue for implementing these activities and services. The initiative will also collaborate with local community colleges and universities in sponsoring an on-campus tour visitation program, with an emphasis on weekend -programming in order to include more parent participation and awareness. The initiative's web-based component will also house link sites to participating college and university homepages in order to feature respective "virtual tours" of the campus of interest.

**About the Proposer:**

The Pacoima Community Youth Culture Center, Inc. also known as PCYCC has been offering educational enrichment activities such as the one proposed for more than 30 years. The center is organized and incorporated as an educational and charitable youth and family services organization. The proposal conceptor has worked in developing and implementing similar student enrichment and student support programs and services for more than 25 years – having worked on collaborative projects with the local state university and partnering community college in the Los Angeles Community College district and throughout many regions of the state. The proposal conceptor, a recently retired academic professional administrator is a member of numerous national networks that have been designed to support student transition from high school into institutions of higher learning. The conceptor currently holds membership in the Association for the Study of Transfer Students (ASTS), which is a national organization based at the University of North Texas. The proposal concept is designed as a suburban transfer/transition center, which will provide access to higher education information and resources that are unavailable to them in the home or at school due to various factors including, but not limited to work, parenting and care of parent responsibilities, limited resources, and lack of understanding and awareness of the processes involved.

**Proposed Budget:**

Program Director (In-Kind)

Part-time Education Specialist/Recruiter (15-20 hours per week @ \$12-15/hour) x 52 weeks

Space (400 square feet @ \$1.00/foot) = \$400 x 12

Equipment (4 computers to include one laptop and software; projector and screen = \$6500)

Promotional Materials (Fliers, Brochures, and Pamphlets \$500)

Website and Internet Setup/Maintenance \$800)

Telephone (In-Kind)