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Maryland Higher Education Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program
(MD HEOCAP)

December 2019

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Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program



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Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program



Executive Summary

The Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program (MD HEOCAP) was established By Chapters 200/201 of the Acts of 2015 (Section 11-1101, Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland). MD HEOCAP is a State grant program that provides funding for college access focused nonprofit organizations to enhance college and career awareness and college completion for low-income Maryland high school students.

MD HEOCAP supports and aligns with Maryland's college access and completion goals as defined in the State's 2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education, and the *College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013*. Maryland has taken significant measures to move the State forward with enhancing college and career awareness and college completion.

Through this grant, nonprofits receive funds to carry out statewide outreach efforts on college access and completion. These outreach efforts support and encourage low-income high school students to attend and complete college. For buy-in and support of the program, nonprofits provide one-to-one matching funds equal to the grant award.

Program Summary

The overarching goal of MD HEOCAP is to:

- Encourage low-income Maryland high school students to attend and complete college;
- Connect potential college and university students with nonprofit organizations that have a history of successful higher education outcomes for low-income high school students;
- Create a matching fund for nonprofit organizations to increase outreach efforts for low-income students;
- Provide funds for nonprofit organizations that are established and known throughout the community for providing outreach efforts that encourage college enrollment for low-income students;
- Track Maryland high school students from high school to college; and
- Enhance and increase college and career awareness.

An eligible nonprofit meets the following criteria:

- Located in Maryland;
- Have established partnership(s) with a local school system or higher education institution;
- Provide college access activities, communication, and services with a track record of success; and
- Offer services to enhance and increase college access and completion for low-income 11th and 12th grade Maryland high school students.

Grant Funding

The FY 2018 grantees received one-year awards, June 18, 2018, through July 18, 2019. The maximum grant award was up to \$50,000, and payments were disbursed in two increments, at the start and mid-point of the grant period.

The FY 2017 grant period was two-years from September 1, 2016, through August 31, 2018. The maximum grant award was up to \$50,000, and grant payments were disbursed in two increments, up to \$25,000 a year over two-years.

Due to legislation in 2018, MD HEOCAP was extended from a two-year pilot program to a five-year program. However, program funding ended in 2018, so there are no grant awards after FY 2018.

Grantees submitted two reports during the grant period, an interim progress report, and a final report. These reports included outcomes data on the two overall program goals below.

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate a greater awareness of postsecondary opportunities and college admission requirements through surveys and/or pre- and post-assessments.

Goal 2: Students will demonstrate a greater awareness of the FAFSA and financial aid through surveys and/or pre- and post-assessments.

FY 2018 and FY 2017 Grant Awards

The Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued for FY 2018 and FY 2017 in March 2018 and June 2016, respectively.

A peer review panel was convened to review the applications for both funding periods, FY 2018 and FY 2017. The panel representatives were staff from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Each reviewer read the applications independently and attended a review panel debriefing to finalize the funding recommendations.

Grantees received their grant award notification in June 2018 (FY 2018) and August 2016 (FY 2017).

FY 2018

MHEC received six applications for the FY 2018 funding period and successfully funded all six projects

FY 2018 Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Program Grantees (MD HEOCAP).

Grant Number	Organization (Grantee)	Project Title	Award
18101	CASA de Maryland, Inc.	Escalera College Access Initiative	\$47,345.66
18102	College and Career Pathways, Inc.	CCP Scholars Program (Northwestern HS – PGCP)	\$25,000.00
18103	Collegiate Directions, Inc.	CDI Scholars Program	\$42,000.00
18104	The CollegeBound Foundation	Expanded College Access and Completion for Baltimore City Schools' Students	\$47,345.67
18105	First Generation College Bound	College Access	\$47,345.67
18106	Sisters Circle, Inc.	To & Through College: Awareness, Access, Advancement & Advocacy	\$40,963.00

FY 2017

Nine nonprofits applied for the FY 2017 grant period. Of the nine, five organizations received funding.

BDPA Education and Technology Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of Frederick County, Latin American Youth Centers-Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers, and Southern Maryland College Access Network, Incorporated, were not recommended for funding.

There was no waitlist due to the competitive grant process. Nonprofits submit a new application each year.

FY 2017 Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Program Grantees (MD HEOCAP).

Grant Number	Organization (Grantee)	Project Title	Award
17103	CASA de Maryland, Inc.	Baltimore Latino College Access Program	\$50,000.00
17104	The CollegeBound Foundation	Expanded College Access and Completion for Baltimore City Schools' Students	\$50,000.00
17105	Collegiate Directions, Inc.	CDI Scholars Program	\$50,000.00
17106	First Generation College Bound	College Access	\$50,000.00
17108	Montgomery College Foundation	ACES Parent Engagement Groups	\$45,183.00

FY 2018 Final Report Summaries

CASA de Maryland, Incorporated

Escalera College Access Initiative (Total expenditures, \$47,345.66) – This project successfully provided direct support to 35 high school juniors and seniors. These students received support at one of four locations in the greater Baltimore region. Additionally, over 500 students, parents, counselors, and administrators participated in educational sessions on college access and financial aid for immigrant students. Students also received intensive case management and assistance in navigating the college application process. Over the summer, 22 students participated in the Escalera summer program, which included internships, career exploration field trips, and college and career readiness sessions. The Baltimore Mayor's Scholars Summer Bridge Program supported 31 students and all of the students enrolled at Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) in the fall semester. Sixteen seniors received direct support and 15 enrolled in college.

College and Career Pathways, Incorporated

CCP Scholars Program (Northwestern HS) (Total expenditures, \$25,000.00) – CCP was designed to help at-risk students achieve educational and vocational success by offering resources and guidance to approximately 56 juniors and seniors. Students participated in FAFSA and college and career readiness workshops throughout the year. CCP senior participants completed over 312 college applications and received 197 college acceptance letters. The 26 seniors in the program received at least one acceptance letter and matriculated to college.

Collegiate Directions, Incorporated

CDI Scholars Program (Total expenditures, \$42,000.00) – Collegiate Directions, Inc. (CDI) successfully supported 308 students with enhancing and increasing their college and financial options. Each student exited the program with tangible resources to assist in their college and career journey. A sample of tangible resources are timelines and checklists to help measure their educational progress. The students participated in college application and FAFSA workshops, and through these workshops, students

increased their awareness of the steps required to complete college and financial aid applications. These students now have comprehensive resources to guide their progress and meaningful plans to achieve their college and career goals. Of the 308 students supported, 83 completed college applications and 46 completed financial aid applications. Over 80 percent of the students eligible to complete the FAFSA and CSS Profile created an account.

The CollegeBound Foundation

Expanded College Access and Completion for Baltimore City Schools' Students (Total expenditures, \$47,346.00) – The CollegeBound Foundation's program had two program priorities, (1) the Roving Advisor Program; and (2) advising Baltimore City Schools' graduates during college through the College Completion Program. In the FY 2018 grant period, 106 students with at least a 2.5 GPA received support. Over the one-year grant period, students participated in several workshops and activities. Activities included FAFSA and financial aid workshops, SAT and ACT prep, and college seminars. The CollegeBound Foundation successfully supported 163 students in the College Completion Program with MD HEOCAP funding, and the 163 students matriculated to college.

First Generation College Bound

College Access (Total expenditures, \$47,345.67) – The College Access program recruited first-generation high school seniors from low to moderate-income families. These seniors worked with college access coaches who follow the student through their post-secondary journey. The students participated in weekly one-on-one sessions with their assigned coaches to reinforce college and career readiness information shared during learning sessions and workshops. First Generation College Bound (FGCB) engaged students in FAFSA, financial aid, and college admissions and access workshops. Before and after each workshop, students completed a survey to assess their college awareness. FGCB served 63 juniors and 182 seniors; 181 seniors were accepted to at least one college. Of the 182 seniors supported, 177 completed the FAFSA by the State's March 1 deadline, with 180 seniors matriculating to college in fall 2019. The remaining five undocumented students completed a Maryland State Financial Aid Application (MFSAA).

Sisters Circle, Incorporated

To & Through College: Awareness, Access, Advancement & Advocacy (Total expenditures, \$40,963.00) – Sisters Circle addressed the increasing need to keep low-income youth, specifically girls, connected to education and the labor market. From January through March, 35 students participated in intensive one-to-one college and financial aid counseling. Session topics included college fit, brainstorming and writing the college essay, and college interviews. In April, Sisters Circle staff held one-to-one financial aid package and award letter review sessions. The 2019 graduates attend Morgan State University, Frostburg State University, McDaniel College, Community College of Baltimore County, Howard Community College, and Coppin State University.

FY 2017 Final Report Summaries

CASA de Maryland, Incorporated

Baltimore Latino College Access Program (Total expenditures, \$49,997.00) – The program was successful. CASA engaged 56 students in afterschool programming and over 1,100 in workshops on college and career readiness and financial aid over the two-year grant period. Of the 17 seniors who participated, 14 matriculated to college. Through the program, 35 juniors and seniors completed the year-long Escalera college readiness curriculum and intensive case management in navigating and completing college applications. Additionally, 256 high school counselors were educated on college readiness and financial aid.

The CollegeBound Foundation

Expanded College Access and Completion for Baltimore City Schools' Students (Total expenditures, \$50,000.00) – The CollegeBound Foundation expanded its scope in two ways under this project; (1) broadened its advising efforts to assist more city school students by way of the Roving Advisor Program; and (2) developed and implemented the College Completion Program to advise graduates during college. The Roving Advisor Program was implemented during the 2016-2017 school year, and the College Completion Program was officially implemented in the 2017-2018 school year.

Over the two-year grant period, a total of 231 seniors received support and advising through the Roving Advisor Program. As a participant of the Roving Advisor Program, students were encouraged to complete college applications. As a result of the program, students submitted 368 college applications in 2016-2017 (approximately three applications per student) and 562 college applications in 2017-2018 (about five applications per student). Of the 368 applications submitted by 120 students, 32 students reported receiving 57 acceptance letters to 23 “selective colleges.” CollegeBound advises 99 students who matriculated to college through the College Completion Program. On average these students receive a \$2,938.00 CollegeBound Last Dollar Grant.

Collegiate Directions, Incorporated

CDI Scholars Program (Total expenditures, \$50,000.00) – Collegiate Directions, Inc. provided services to 251 students in 6 Montgomery County high schools and 2 Prince George's County high schools. Students participated in group sessions and workshops on financial literacy and financial aid, career readiness, and SAT and ACT Prep. Of the 251 students, 43 were selected for the CDI Scholars Program. This wraparound program works closely with select students on a year-round basis. These students receive additional support and receive continued engagement throughout college. While in college, a Collegiate Directions counselor visits the students' college campuses for personal check-ins, and they have monthly phone conversations. Outstandingly, 100 percent of the scholar program students matriculated to college with over \$32,000.00 each in grants and scholarships; 97 percent of the 251 students served are on track for high school graduation.

First Generation College Bound

College Access (Total expenditures, \$50,000.00) – First Generation College Bound (FGCB) provided services to 358 seniors and 130 juniors over the two-year grant period. During the first year of the grant, 217 seniors matriculated to college. In the final grant year, 136 students entered college in fall 2018 and two students will start in spring 2019. Students attend two- and four-year colleges and universities in Maryland; 60 percent attend a four-year university, and 40 percent attend a two-year college.

As participants of the program, students participated in weekly college access coaching sessions, workshops on completing college applications and the FAFSA, which including creating an MDCAPS account (Maryland College Aid Processing System), and SAT awareness sessions. FGCB also offered evening workshops to accommodate various school and work schedules.

Montgomery College Foundation

ACES Parent Engagement Groups (Total expenditures, \$45,183.00) – The Montgomery College Foundation provided resources and services to over 1,309 students during the two-year grant period. In the 2016-2017 school year, 99.1 percent (561 of 566) of the seniors who participated graduated high school, and 94 percent (528 of 561) reported their plans to attend college. In the next year, 2017-2018, 98 percent (754 of 769) graduate high school, and 93.4 percent (704 of 754) reported their plans to attend college.

Parents and students attend workshops on Parental Involvement Enhancing Academic Success, College and Career Readiness, Final College Decision, and Summer Transitions. Based on participants' evaluations and feedback, workshops were in Spanish and English.

Conclusion

MD HEOCAP is a State grant program that provides funding for college access nonprofits to enhance college and career awareness and college completion for low-income high school students in Maryland. In FY 2018, six nonprofits received a total of \$250,000.00, and in FY 2017, five nonprofits received a total of \$245,183.00.

Over a three-year grant period, MD HEOCAP afforded nonprofits the opportunity to successfully impact over 4000 students, 1200 parents, and 200 counselors and administrators. To achieve this success, Nonprofits engaged students through FAFSA completion workshops, college care package stuffing parties, one-to-one coaching and mentoring, and summer tutoring and targeted programs. Counselors and administrators attended training and workshop sessions to ensure that students received accurate and up-to-date college admissions and financial aid information.

As a result of the MD HEOCAP funding and the dedication of the nonprofits, over 680 seniors matriculated to college. Also, more than 90% of the students impacted by the program reported increased college admissions and financial aid awareness.