Welcome to the latest in a series of periodic publications from the Office of Grants Development. The goal of this publication is to provide basic information to faculty and staff about the grants process at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) and to disseminate samples of the types of grant funding that are available. Future topics include the status of various pieces of legislation involving grants for community colleges and various grants applied for and received at NOVA. If you have any suggestions about topics to include or would like answers to specific questions, please contact Deborah Rosen, the director of grants and special projects, at drosen@nvcc.edu or at 703-323-3440 or Robert Henderson, college grants writer at rhenderson@nvcc.edu at 703-323-3493.

NOVA Wins Prestigious State Department Grant Supporting Foreign Students

NOVA has been awarded a $2 million per year Community College Initiative grant by the U.S. Department of State, funded through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Its primary goal is to bring students from underserved countries to the United States for one year of coursework. Applications for the grant were only accepted from consortia of community colleges, and NOVA successfully formed an alliance among some of the largest colleges in the U.S. - Miami Dade College, the Maricopa System and the City College of San Francisco. NOVA is now the lead institution of the new Community College Consortium. The initiative has been initially funded for three years in the amount of $2 million per year, and 51 students will be distributed through the Consortium institutions in the first year. 17 students will come to NOVA, most beginning in June, to study Engineering, IT, Media and Tourism. Associate Vice President Paul McVeigh, Global Studies and Program, formed the Consortium and worked with Rob Henderson from the Grants Office and Dr. Syedur Rahman, the newly hired director of the project, to shape the member colleges’ roles. He points out that NOVA specifically sought out colleges that were well-equipped with and experienced in serving international communities. Being well-versed in the needs and challenges of international students was essential. The grant award helps to ensure that there continues to be strong ties with the State Department, one of the key goals in NOVA’s internationalization plan. The Community College Consortium member institutions also plan to continue working together for future grant opportunities.

NOVA’s MEC Provides National Leadership in Health Information Technology Grants

The Medical Education Campus (MEC) will be participating in the federal government’s effort “to advance the widespread adoption and meaningful use of Health Information Technology (HITECH)” nationwide. The MEC has been awarded funding from three federal grant programs to assist in the planning to expand education opportunities in Health Information Management and Technology at

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Northern Virginia Community College. The MEC is a participant with 19 other community colleges in the northeast region (Maine to Virginia) Community College Consortium Program lead by Tidewater Community College. This project will establish intensive, non-degree training programs that can be completed in six months or less. Through the project the MEC expects to train 300 persons for health information management and technology positions in the healthcare delivery workforce. NOVA was awarded $1,130,292 in grant funds from the Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology (ONC) for this project through Tidewater Community College.

In addition, the MEC will lead a $6,000,000 collaborative effort to develop and administer the initial competency examinations for the training programs developed by the community college consortium. The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), which has vast experience with preparing and administering certification examinations for a variety of occupations, will collaborate with Pearson VUE, a leading developer and administrator of computer-based competency tests. Pearson VUE will provide psychometric expertise for the project. Other collaborators include Tidewater Community College, the University of Pittsburgh, Houston Community College and NO-VAHealthFORCE. Funding for this project is also provided by HHS-ONC.

A third project funded through a federal appropriation of $500,000 will be used to recruit and train 40 students. The education programs offered include an associate degree in Health Information Management, a career studies certificate in Clinical Data Coding, and a Patient Administrative Specialist program offered through the MEC’s Workforce Development and Continuing Education Division. This program will be administered through the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education program.

Results of The Virginia Community College System Professional Development and Mini-Conference Grant Applications, February 2010 Application Round

The Office of Grants Development is pleased to announce the faculty whose projects were funded in the latest round of the Virginia Community College System Professional Development and Mini-Conference Grant Applications. The following faculty and projects were funded:

- Julie Allen, Justin Pilla and Will Schutz (AN): Podcasting Supplemental Writing Lessons.
- Callen Bentley (AN): Geology Vodcasts.
- Adam Howard (LO): Developing Students’ Critical Thinking Skills Through Primary Source Multimedia in the Classroom.
- Walerian Majewski (AN): What the Physics Research Was Doing While I Was Teaching Here.
- Susan Sherry (AN): Resource Development for Learning Community Mentorship and Website.
- Karen Taylor (AN): Common Final Exams and Exit Criteria for Campus Developmental Reading Classes.

Seven out of eleven applications were awarded! Congratulations to the faculty awarded the VCCS professional development and mini-conference grants. We wish you the best of luck with your projects! To improve your chances of funding, we encourage all faculty to contact the Office of Grants Development. We are happy to work with you.

Office of Grants Development Welcomes a New Grant Writer

Debra Wiener joins NOVA from Cleveland, Ohio, where she served as Executive Director of a number of nonprofit organizations in social services and the arts. Debra holds a Master’s degree in Nonprofit Organizations from the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio; a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Humanities from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. She has held an Ohio License in Social Work and is an Ohio Certified Prevention Consultant. Debra recently served as Executive Director of the Arizona Quality Alliance in Scottsdale, Arizona in 2008, and spent 2009 consulting with several nonprofit boards to create their strategic plans.

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For over 30 years, Debra has been a fundraiser, including the writing of many successful grant proposals. Debra has served on numerous community boards in Ohio and Arizona, serving agencies in the areas of substance abuse, criminal justice and cultural arts.

In 1992, Debra received the Point of Light award from President George Bush Sr. for exemplary volunteerism for the work of the nonprofit she founded, ESTEEM, INC., that served the homeless in Cleveland. She is currently a graduate student in the Doctor in Management program, an independent study program at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Her research focus is the study of earned income ventures and social enterprises of nonprofits organizations as strategies for sustainability, and she hopes to publish her research findings over the next few years. On a personal note, Debra enjoys spiritual studies, theatre, dance, art museums and many types of music. She particularly enjoys international travel. Debra can be reached at dwiener@nvcc.edu or 2-3541.

Feature: Gerry Hofler and Sara Stoller

Occasionally the Grants Newsletter will publish a brief profile and conversation with faculty and staff of the College who have been active in the pursuit of grants. These are informal surveys to provide some insight into the rich intellectual endowment we enjoy at NOVA and also to share the excitement that comes with winning in public competition the resources to realize your ideas.

Names: Gerry Hofler and Sara Stoller

Department: Medical Education Campus

Brief description of most recent grant: The U.S. Department of Labor Community-Based Jobs Training Grant to expand and develop the Diagnostic Imaging Department at the MEC.

What is the most important thing you hope to learn as a result of your most recent grant?

Gerry Hofler: Getting the grant is only the beginning. It’s the work that you do to sustain the project that really counts. Good process counts towards good product.

Sara Stoller: What can we do to help facilitate incorporating new initiatives into college processes, with minimal disturbance, while enhancing accountability?

What gave you the idea to pursue the grant?

Gerry: The idea came from the NoVaHealthFORCE CEO Roundtable. This group consists of the Presidents of the colleges and universities in the northern Virginia region as well as the hospital CEOs. They meet twice each year to discuss the healthcare workforce shortage issues important to them. At one of the meetings the CEOs were discussing their shortage of radiation oncologists and sonographers. This struck a chord with the educators and Provost Foley, and when the RFP [Request for Proposal] came out, it appeared to be a good match with what we wanted to accomplish.

Can you offer any tips to other faculty about the grant writing process?

Gerry: I have worked on grants most of my career. I have written for Washington D.C. consulting firms and I have reviewed for the Department of Labor and Department of Education. I have learned:

- factor review and revision into your writing timeline,
- answer the questions accurately and completely and don’t try to retrofit a project into a proposal. If it fits, you will win it. If it doesn’t fit, they will see that you have tried to put a square peg into a round hole. Also, if you say that you are going to do it, they will be expecting you to actually do it.
- You will be held accountable for what you promise. Grants are not free money. You are expected to perform and stay on task.

Sara: Visualize the best possible outcome of being awarded, and write towards that vision. Also, as the proposal is developed, consider sustainability plans each step of the way, i.e., if awarded, what will it take for the grant to sustain itself? Also, check out this link prior to submitting a DoL proposal: http://www.doleta.gov/sga/applyinggrants.cfm

How long have you taught at NOVA, and what subjects do you teach?

Gerry: I have worked at NOVA since 2001 on a variety of grants related to healthcare workforce issues. When I began working on the NoVaHealthFORCE project, I saw it as a perfect fit for the two issues that I am professionally enthusiastic about. The education piece was a bonus.
Can you tell us a little about your professional background, and how you began teaching?

Gerry: I have a Bachelors in Secondary Education and a Masters in Economics. My master’s thesis was an analysis of cost control and quality control problems in healthcare delivery. I have worked in private industry (one of the Beltway bandits), state government (Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health), county government and I was the only female economist in the Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Research in the U.S. Dept. of Labor. All of this was either workforce or healthcare related in some way.

Sara: Since graduating college with my degree in Business, I have worked for several diverse businesses (Pepperidge Farm, Nordstrom, General Motors and Footstar), in many different roles such as Retail Sales and Management, Customer Service, Marketing, Finance, Product Development & Distribution, Buying, Administration and Project Management.

What is the most impressive thing we should know about your students?

Gerry: When I taught in secondary school, I did not like teaching to a captive audience. I wanted to work with students who really wanted to be in my class. I was much happier when I taught Economics at West Virginia University; my students wanted to be there and wanted to learn. Even though I do not teach at NOVA, the students that I see at NOVA and the Medical Education Campus are among the most motivated I have ever seen.

Sara: The majority of them appear compassionate and dedicated to succeeding in their rigorous programs.

What activities outside of work and teaching do you enjoy?

Gerry: I swim distance, a lot; averaging 8-10,000 yards a week. I have worked with the adapted aquatics programs in Fairfax County. I kayak, but not whitewater. I walk, bike and spend time with my three daughters and husband; and chase my new granddaughter. I have several elderly neighbors and I enjoy helping with little repairs, shoveling, and shopping for them.

Sara: Family, food, swimming, art and history.

How has technology changed the nature of your work and study?

Gerry: As a graduate student, I spent months in the library doing research and wrote my master’s thesis on a manual typewriter! Need I say more? Words cannot express my appreciation of technology both in business and on a personal level.

Sara: As is generally discussed, the pace is much faster. Also, I think it is easier to obtain information, if one has a trustworthy source.

What publications do you regularly read and what websites do you check to keep up in your field?

Gerry: I go to a variety of websites regularly... way too many to mention here. With the NoVaHealthFORCE project it seems like I am always researching something depending on what aspect of the project I am working on. Kathryn Willis at the MEC library is my angel. When I need help finding something, she will come up with a variety of timely articles almost immediately.

Sara: I enjoy the Washington Times (http://www.washingtontimes.com/) and will try my hand at http://www.doleta.gov/grants/resources.cfm, prior to asking our Federal Project Officer specific questions, though I usually do ultimately go to her for my answer.

What is the most interesting book you’ve read in the past year, and why?

Gerry: Pleasure: The Ditchdigger’s Daughters by Yvonne S. Thornton, M. D. I love historical fiction and history. This is a true story about how a parent’s love and devotion inspired six daughters to success. Non-fiction: Leading Change by John P. Kotter. Seems like I am always going back to this book.

Sara: Mark Levin’s Liberty and Tyranny. Prior to reading this book, I did not realize how far our country has strayed from our founding constitution. I highly recommend the book.

For more information on any of the programs mentioned above please contact Deborah Rosen, Rob Henderson, or Debra Weiner of the Office of Grants Development.