



THE COUNCIL OF
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES



Walmart College Success Awards

Awards of \$100,000 and \$50,000 will be made to 30 competitively selected CIC Institutional Members for use over a two-year period to extend, deepen, or strengthen efforts to help first-generation students succeed in college.



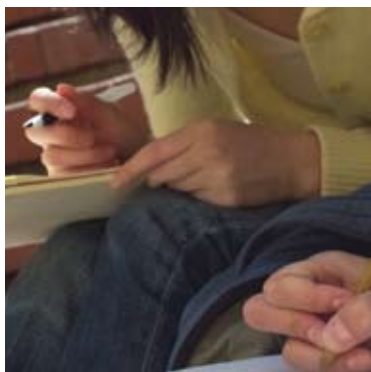
APPLICATION DEADLINE:
February 12, 2010
(5:00 p.m. EST)

Walmart College Success Awards

Much attention has been focused recently on higher education as a key to making the United States workforce stronger and the country more competitive in the 21st century world economy. As the federal government, philanthropic leaders, and others call for increased access to higher education, many have turned to community colleges and large public universities for solutions despite the deep budget cuts that both sectors are experiencing. Small and mid-sized private institutions are rarely mentioned in this conversation, yet unlike community colleges, they confer baccalaureate degrees; they also enroll comparable or higher percentages of lower-income and first-generation students than public institutions.

Most importantly, small and mid-sized private institutions have moved beyond a focus on access to a record of unparalleled success in retaining and graduating lower-income and first-generation students. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, more than six million students each year enroll for credit in courses offered by the nation's community colleges. However, only 26 percent actually transfer to a four-year college. In addition, the six-year graduation rate of first-generation students at public four-year institutions is only 44 percent compared with 61 percent at private colleges and universities. In short, if we are to achieve the ambitious national goal of increased numbers of college graduates, the lessons learned from the experiences of private colleges will need to be heeded by national policymakers and others. In a continued effort to help private colleges and universities build upon their successes in serving first-generation students, the Council of Independent Colleges announces a call for proposals for the 2010 Walmart College Success Awards, made possible by a generous grant from the Walmart Foundation.

The Walmart College Success Awards will support 30 competitively-selected Council of Independent Colleges Institutional Members to extend, deepen, or strengthen efforts to help first-generation students succeed in college. Awards in the amount of \$100,000 each will be made to 20 institutions, and awards in the amount of \$50,000 each will be granted to another ten institutions. These funds will be used for projects that are likely to increase the retention and graduation rates of first-generation students. Projects with a primary focus on recruitment will not be funded. The newly selected 30 institutions and the 20 initial College Success Award recipients (selected in June 2008) will work together as a network to assist first-generation college students, learn from one another, and serve as models for other colleges and universities.



“At most small colleges—and Bay Path College is one of them, I’m pleased to say—the percentage of low-income students is greater than at large public universities. More importantly, a higher percentage of low-income and first-generation students graduate from private colleges—and in less time—than from state universities.”

— Carol Leary, President, Bay Path College (MA)

Background

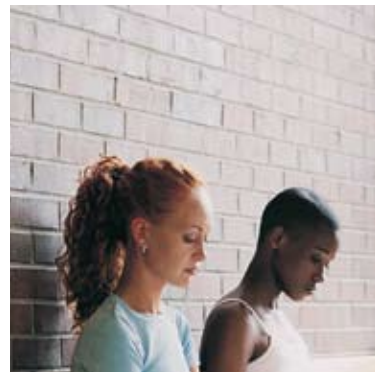
Receipt of a baccalaureate degree not only provides an individual with better life opportunities but also produces the educated citizenry that is fundamental to the success of the American economy and a democratic way of life. Nevertheless, too many young people are discouraged from considering college as an option, and this is particularly true of those whose parents have not attended college.

First-generation college students are often less well prepared academically and lack support from family members familiar with the collegiate experience. Consequently, these students often are not prepared to find and use financial, informational, and social resources, which frequently results in badly informed decisions about the college application process, college selection, and financial aid options prior to college attendance. Once enrolled, these students often make poor choices of courses and co-curricular offerings.

Many private colleges and universities have risen to the challenges of retaining and graduating first-generation students. Contrary to stereotypes, approximately one-third of the undergraduate students enrolled in CIC's member colleges and universities are first-generation students. Moreover, the success rate of first-generation students in independent colleges is significantly higher than in public institutions. CIC institutions may be particularly well positioned to help first-generation students succeed because they 1) promote a climate of personal attention to the individual student; 2) involve students in shaping their own learning; and 3) maintain strong connections between the campuses and the surrounding communities.

Eligibility

CIC Institutional Members with an undergraduate enrollment that includes at least 30 percent first-generation students among the most recent classes of new first-year students are eligible to apply.



Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Demonstration of commitment to first-generation college students**

What efforts has the institution made to recruit first-generation students? Has the institution provided scholarships or assisted students in finding financial assistance? Has the percentage of first-generation students at the institution increased or remained consistent over the past five years? What measures has the institution taken to ensure that first-generation students succeed once they have enrolled? How does the institution track the successes and failures of these students? What kinds of programs and services are offered to increase the likelihood that first-generation students will graduate within four years? How successful have these programs been?

- **Demonstration of the likely effectiveness of the proposed activities in retaining and graduating a substantial number of first-generation students**

If the proposed activities extend the work of an existing program, what is the evidence that the program has successfully increased the number of first-generation students enrolled at the institution? Have the retention and graduation rates of these students increased as a result of the program already in place? How will the proposed activities build upon past successes? How many first-generation students will be helped by the new program?

- **Demonstration that the proposed program targets first-generation students**

Does the proposed program demonstrate a clear understanding of the challenges confronted by first-generation students? Will the award be used exclusively for first-generation students?

- **The promise of successful and lasting results from these activities**

In what ways will the proposed activities improve the retention and graduation rates of first-generation students? How will the institution assess the effectiveness of the proposed program? How will the institution ensure that first-generation students continue to succeed once the two-year grant period has ended?



Consideration will also be given to supporting a variety of types of institutions in different regions of the country as well as to diverse programmatic strategies for educating first-generation students.

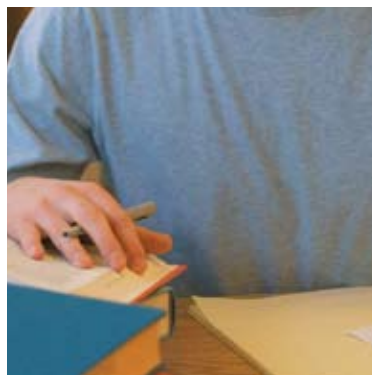
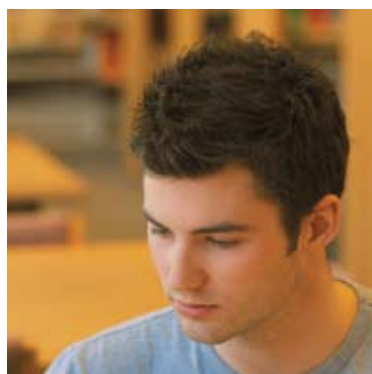
Application Guidelines

Institutions that wish to be considered for a Walmart College Success Award are asked to submit the following items. Applicants should consult the application guidelines and download the required forms on the CIC website at www.cic.edu/CollegeSuccess. All applicants should normally apply for a \$100,000 Award.

1. An **Application Summary Form**
2. A **cover letter** from the president that affirms the institution's commitment to the proposed activities and agreement to comply with Award expectations
3. A **proposal**, no more than five pages in length (single-spaced, 12-point font)
4. A detailed **budget** and accompanying narrative for the proposed project
5. A **Retention and Graduation Data Form** that documents prior success in educating first-generation college students
6. An **Institutional Team Information Form** that lists the names and contact information for the three-person team who will participate in the 2011 summer conference. The team must include the chief academic officer, one full-time faculty member who is directly involved in the proposed activities, and one other staff or faculty member who will work with the proposed program. Institutions will be required to send these specific team members to the conference. Substitutions will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances.

The deadline for submitting application materials is February 12, 2010, 5:00 p.m. (EST). CIC will announce the Award recipients by March 26, 2010.

Please direct all questions to Sarah Stoycos, CIC Director of Programs, by phone at (202) 466-7230 or by email at sstoycos@cic.nche.edu.





Expectations of Award Recipients

Institutions that receive a Walmart College Success Award will be expected to:

1. Send a three-person team—including the chief academic officer, one full-time faculty member who is directly involved in the proposed activities, and one other staff or faculty member who will work with the proposed program—to participate in a meeting on July 17–19, 2011 (travel, lodging, and meals for participants will be covered by CIC).
2. Submit a written interim narrative and financial report in July 2011 and a final report in August 2012. Payment of the Awards will be made in two equal annual installments. Receipt of the second installment is contingent upon satisfactory progress.
3. Share periodic progress reports with CIC and other Walmart College Success Award recipients as requested by CIC staff.
4. Permit the inclusion of information about its project in publications about best practices in recruiting, educating, and graduating first-generation college students, including a report to be released at the conclusion of the project in 2013 as well as in other publicity materials including press releases, articles, and online resources.
5. Continue to maintain and share data with CIC until all first-generation students in the program graduate.
6. Identify the funded activities as supported by the CIC/Walmart College Success Award in all project materials and publicity.



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For more information and application materials, please visit:

www.cic.edu/CollegeSuccess

Council of Independent Colleges

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