

City of Seattle Families and Education Levy

**Request for Qualification
College and Career Readiness and Planning**

COVER SHEET

Organization Information:

Organization name: Making Connections Program

Organization address: University of Washington Women's Center

Describe your legal status and, if applicable, state of incorporation (for example, Washington State non-profit corporation, Washington State partnership, sole proprietorship:

University of Washington is a governmental tax exempt entity under Internal Revenue code 115(1)

Application Components and Checklist (submit in this order)

- Cover Sheet
- Key People
- Previous Experience
- Tracking to Success
- Women and Minority Inclusion; Non-discrimination

Contact Information:

Contact person: Senait Habte

(please print clearly)

Title: Assistant Director UW Women's Center

Mailing address: Box 353070, Seattle WA 98195-3070

Day/Work phone: 206-851-8396

Email address: senait@uw.edu

Signature: (submitted electronically)

Date: February 8, 2012

Overview

The Making Connections (MC) program, run by the University of Washington (UW) Women's Center, has a 14-year history of working collaboratively with the Seattle Public School District. The program is the only after-school enrichment program in Washington whose goal is to help first-generation, low-income girls graduate from high school on-time, build an interest in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) career, enter college and receive the financial support they need for their studies.

Key People

1. Sutapa Basu, Ph.D. is the executive director of the UW Women's Center. She is known nationally and internationally for her work in girls' education issues. Dr. Basu has been the executive director of the Women's Center for 18 years. She oversees all programming at the Center.

2. Senait Habte is the Assistant Director of the Women's Center and has been the MC program manager since 2006. She knows personally of the challenges of being a first-generation, underrepresented student. Fleeing from Eritrea with her family, she came to Seattle in third grade with no English proficiency. She graduated from WSU in 1997 in microbiology. She has previously worked in the Seattle Early Scholars Outreach Program and the WA State GEAR UP program. Ms. Habte coordinates with Seattle Public School staff to identify girls who might be interested in the program. She supervises the three part-time, work-study graduate students who support the MC program. In addition, she works with the volunteers who serve as tutors, mentors and workshop leaders.

Previous Experience

1. Demographics: The program recruits girls from Seattle area public high schools that have ethnically diverse student populations, large numbers of immigrant and refugee youth and low-income households. Each year, a total of 100 girls in 9th through 12th grades participate.

Criteria that are considered when accepting girls into the program include being from a low-income, first-generation college family, having a need for an enriched after-school experience, being interested in STEM fields and considering attending college. There is no screening against GPA for acceptance into the program.

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Total number of girls 9 th – 12 th grades	100	100	100	100	100
% students of color	98%	90%	95%	96%	94%
% who qualify for free/reduced price lunch	70%	70%	68%	77%	76%
% first-generation college	81%	63%	57%	88%	72%
% who speak 2 or more languages at home	68%	54%	78%	89%	81%

2. Experience & Results

MC has a track record of significant success for the past five years:

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
% on-time high school graduation	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% who enroll in college (2- or 4-year)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total scholarship dollars	NA	NA	\$450,000	\$560,000	\$430,676

On-time High School Graduation

- The MC manager collaborates with teachers and staff at each high school to help recruit girls for the program.
- Each girl has her own “educational plan” which the program manager uses to track the students’ academic progress. Girls who are not showing good progress are treated as a high priority. The program manager works with these girls’ families to ensure they are involved and supportive.
- After school tutoring sessions are held Monday through Thursday at the Women’s Center. Attendance is required for students with a GPA under 2.5.
- Juniors and seniors are paired with a mentor who provides advice, guidance and support.

An Interest in a STEM Career

- Three, day-long career exploration workshops are conducted at the University of Washington to gain exposure to STEM careers.
- Sites visits are conducted at STEM-based regional settings (e.g., Boeing, Fred Hutchison) where underrepresented professionals talk about their careers.
- Summer internships in a STEM company are identified for girls to pursue.

Enrolling in College

- Monthly information sessions are held at each high school to coach the girls through the college and financial aid application.
- Girls are required to participate in SAT preparation. Education Access Network provides free attendance in an intensive SAT/ACT prep program.
- Workshops are held with parents to explain the college application process.
- Campus visits are made in the junior year to four institutions of higher learning: one public urban, one public rural, one private; and one community college.
- Extensive assistance is provided to improve writing skills and revise applications.

Financial Support to Attend College

- Girls are taught how to find scholarship opportunities and given assistance in completing their applications.
- Parents participate in a FAFSA workshop led by the UW Office of Student Financial Aid in which every parent of a graduating senior submits a FAFSA.

3. Contact Information

- Linda Coleman, founder, Education Alliance Network, linda.coleman@educationaccessnetwork.org, (206) 484-8974.
- Karl Smith, Associate Director, UW Office of Admissions, kds@u.washington.edu, (206) 616-4818.
- Kim Sciarrone, Science Teacher, Ingraham High School, kjsciarrone@seattleschools.org, (206) 252-3952.

4. Challenges

Challenges	How MC Addresses Challenges
Girls in 9 th grade aren't thinking about high school graduation or applying to college at this age.	The MC manager starts in 9 th grade to educate girls about how competitive college is. Beginning in fall 2012, the 9 th grade acceptance process will be strengthened to reduce early drop-outs.
Girls' cripple their chances of a STEM career with the attitude, "I'm not good at math."	A multitude of services are dedicated to changing this attitude: mentoring, advising, exposure to program alumni, tutoring, careful academic coaching and advocacy with school staff.
Transportation is an issue for girls and their parents to attend activities at the UW.	All girls and family members are given Metro bus passes. The program pays for parents' parking. Vans are occasionally used to transport girls.
Parents mistakenly think that meeting high school minimum requirements is sufficient to be accepted to college.	The MC manager is clear with parents that the minimums are not enough. She communicates this in parent workshops, individual meetings, on her business card and in the reviews done with each girl every semester about her academic progress. The message is they must take rigorous coursework to be accepted to college.
Low-income and underrepresented families tend to overestimate the cost of tuition and underestimate available aid.	Parents are educated about the financial aid process by the UW Office of Student Financial Aid. The UW's Husky Promise is explained in detail. They are closely assisted in completing their FAFSA. A significant focus of the program is ensuring that the girls identify and apply for scholarships.

A graduating high school senior recently sent the email below to the MC manager:
“Thank you so much for all of your dedication to making all of us successful! Your encouragement and wise words got me through the toughest times of my academic life. You didn't always tell me what I wanted to hear, but you always told me what I needed to hear which is what helped me grow into a successful student. Thank you once again.”

A parent in 2009 offered the following thanks:
“There is a saying that it takes a village to raise a child. I'd like to amend that by saying that it takes a village to help a parent maneuver through the college entrance maze. Making Connections has been that village for me.”

Tracking to Success

1. Data points that are tracked to monitor program success:

Outcome Data

- % on-time high school graduation
- % who apply to college
- % accepted to college
- % who enroll in college
- Total scholarship dollars
- % who graduate from college

Indicator Data

- Satisfaction with program activities from girls, parents and mentors
- Academic progress each semester
- Participants' career interests
- Interest in pursuing a STEM career after college
- Annual retention rate in the program
- % of parents who apply for financial aid

2. Outcome Data Used to Continuously Improve the Program

In 2010, a statistical study was conducted to identify how the program impacted STEM involvement and retention rates at institutions of higher education. MC alumni at the UW were studied because the majority of girls go to the University. Of the 300 MC graduates (2000-2010), 126 attended the UW. This group was studied against a comparable cohort who enrolled in the UW but who did not attend MC.

The results indicated that MC graduates who had higher high school GPAs were more likely to pursue STEM careers. MC alumni were statistically more likely to pursue a technology major than the cohort. There was a slightly higher dropout rate (10%) for MC due to finances but a comparable rate of graduation; 81% of MC alumni graduated in four years compared to 84% for the cohort. The results are being used to:

- Stress the importance of a strong high school GPA to be successful in a STEM major.
- Encourage mentors to work with their mentees to achieve top grades.
- Increase the amount of help to secure financial aid and scholarships.
- Strengthen the exposure to technology internships and site visit opportunities.

Indicator Data Used to Continuously Improve the Program

- The retention rate for the 2010-11 academic year was 93%, with 9th graders most at risk of dropping out of the program. The application process is being strengthened to provide follow-up once a girl has indicated an interest in joining.
- In the “MC Participant Questionnaire,” girls are asked to identify their career interests. The feedback is used to plan the three, day-long career exploration workshops at the UW, pick regional STEM industries to visit and tailor the recruitment of mentors to match the girls’ interests.
- At each tutoring session, girls indicate on the sign-up sheet the topics they need help with. This information is used to recruit tutors with the needed skills.

3. Academic, Grade and/or Attendance Data

- Girls who have a GPA below 2.5 are required to attend at least two tutoring sessions a week. Attendance is monitored.
- Each girl’s progress for being on-time to graduate is carefully monitored. Any girl who is not making good progress toward graduation is treated as a high priority and receives intensive academic coaching.
- The course selections are closely monitored to ensure the girls are taking the most rigorous classes possible for them. The manager stresses that the girls must demonstrate they can master demanding course work in order to be a competitive college applicant.

4. Sample Data Report:

The “Making Connections Participant Questionnaire” is conducted at the beginning and end of each academic year for all participants in the program. The Questionnaire tracks:

- Demographic & family information
- Likelihood of attending college
- STEM classes taken outside school requirements
- Likelihood of pursuing STEM career

The questionnaire is attached to the RFQ.

Woman and Minority Inclusion; Non-discrimination

1. Yes, MC anticipates hiring an additional full-time staff member for the program.

From the UW Human Resources website: “The University of Washington reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or military status. This policy applies to all programs and facilities, including, but not limited to, admissions, educational programs, employment, and patient and hospital services. Any discriminatory action can be a cause for disciplinary action.”

The recruitment process at the UW is administered through UWHIRES—the online applicant tracking system. Human Resources professionals are available to advise on where and how to post new position openings to achieve the widest exposure to the position.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Participant Questionnaire

This survey is anonymous and confidential. Please create a unique "Student ID," which will only be used by Making Connections' staff. In the space provided, write the second and third letter of your first name and all six (6) digits of your birth date (if you do not have a third letter in your first name, use an "X" as your third letter).

Examples:

Jane Doe December 1, 1986 Student ID: **AN120186**

Jo Anderson March 16, 1974 Student ID: **OX031674**

Your Making Connections Student ID (**not** your school ID): _____

Today's Date: _____

I. Background Information

1. What is your current grade level in school?

9th 10th 11th 12th

2. Which racial or ethnic group do you identify yourself as? Please mark only one:

African American Asian American Pacific Islander

Hispanic/Latina Native American Caucasian

Multi Racial (please list): _____

Other (please list) _____

3. What languages are often spoken in your household? _____

4. How long have you participated in the *Making Connections* program?

1st year in the program 2nd year 3rd year 4th year

5. Which high school do you currently attend? Please mark only one:

- Ballard Cleveland Garfield Franklin
 Ingraham Rainier Beach Roosevelt Sealth

Nathan Hale ***West Seattle*** ***Other (please list)*** _____

6. Please list the jobs that the adults in your household have:

7. Please list people in your immediate family who have obtained a degree from a 2-year or 4- year college:

8. Please list people in your immediate family who are currently working towards a degree in a 2-year or 4-year college:

9. Please list any math courses you have taken outside of the required courses:

10. Please list any science courses you have taken outside of the required courses:

11. Please list any technology courses you have taken outside of the required courses:

II. College

Please circle the number that best answers the following questions, where 1=Very Unlikely, 2=Unlikely, 3=Unsure, 4=Likely, and 5= Very Likely

	Very Unlikely ▼	Unlikely ▼	Unsure ▼	Likely ▼	Very Likely ▼
12. How likely is it that you will pursue a 2-year college degree?	1	2	3	4	5
13. How likely is it that you will pursue a 4-year college degree?	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle the number that best answers the following questions, where 1=Not Much, 2=Unsure, and 3=A Lot

	Not Much ▼	Some ▼	A Lot ▼
14. How much do you know about selecting a college?	1	2	3
15. How much do you know about applying to college?	1	2	3
16. How much do you know about finding funding for college?	1	2	3

III. Careers

Please circle the number that best answers the following questions, where 1=Very Unlikely, 2=Unlikely, 3=Unsure, 4=Likely, and 5=Very Likely

	Very Unlikely ▼	Unlikely ▼	Unsure ▼	Likely ▼	Very Likely ▼
17. How likely is it that math will be an important part of your career?	1	2	3	4	5

18. How likely is it that science will be an important part of your career?	1	2	3	4	5
19. How likely is it that technology will be an important part of your career?	1	2	3	4	5

20. At this point, what careers interest you? Please list up to 3 careers:

Thank you for completing this survey!