Request for Qualification
College and Career Readiness and Planning

COVER SHEET

Organization Information:

Organization name: YMCA of Greater Seattle

Organization address: 909 Fourth Ave., Seattle, WA 98104-1194

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

Washington State Non-Profit Corporation

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: Erica Mullen
(please print clearly)

Title: Associate Executive Director

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Signature: Date: 2/9/2012

Additional information is provided in Attachment 3.

Key People: The YMCA utilizes full and part time staff, as well as community partners to implement our school based programs. A full time Director of College and Career Preparation is charged with managing the implementation of these programs. The Director has experience in: developing and implementing cohort based college/career prep programs for middle and high school students, developing and supporting large group/school-wide college/career prep activities, school based programming and collaboration with school teams, youth development principles and practices, working with diverse populations with an understanding of the achievement gap and monitoring student based assessments (MSP, MAP, grades, etc.).

Erica Mullen is the Associate Executive Director for the YMCA of Greater Seattle and is the Lead staff for all school based programming in the City of Seattle. Responsibilities include management for early learning, licensed school age care and Community Learning Center (CLC) Programs at 15 Seattle Schools. She has over 18 years of experience in youth development, with 11 years managing school based programming in Seattle. For the past 6 years, Erica has lead a dynamic team of staff implementing school based programs in partnership with Seattle Public Schools and the Families and Education Levy. Under her leadership the YMCA has embraced the use of academic outcomes and indicators to drive program level improvements and has transformed its methodology in working with students and families to support student academic success.

Previous Experience: For the past five years, the YMCA has worked closely with schools and school teams, as well as site based YMCA CLC staff, to deliver both school day and after school college/career preparation programs. Programs have been school based, and focused on low-income and first generation college bound students (over 75% of participants qualify for free and reduced lunch). During the school years, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 we have also implemented weekly school day college/career prep sessions in academic intervention classes at Chief Sealth and West Seattle High Schools. Students in these classes were identified by the 9th grade teams as being at high risk of academic failure and in need of daily intervention.

In 2006, the YMCA received a one year planning grant from College Spark Washington to develop a cohort based college preparation program for first generation college bound middle school students. During that planning period, the Y researched and developed a middle school after school program, called YMCA Prep, and launched the program at two sites in 2008. In 2010, the Y received an additional grant to develop a new program and curriculum for 9th grade students. This program, Nexus 9, has been operating at Chief Sealth and West Seattle High Schools, serving over 130 students since fall 2010 who are at risk of academic failure.

In middle school college and career prep programs that run after school, outcomes have included increased academic performance and college readiness. We utilized teacher surveys in Math and Language Arts to monitor academic performance, and teachers reported that students increased in their ability to complete assigned work, be respectful, display motivation to learn and demonstrate organizational skills. We have used pre and post-tests to monitor college readiness skills. At one school, as a result of

participation in our program, student scores went from 1.73 to 3.23 out of 5, and at another they went from 1.2 to 3.6 out of 5.

In high school, program outcomes have included: increased college readiness skills, awareness and knowledge of the college admissions process and increased academic/study skills.

Results: Increased College Readiness Skills – Students took pre-assessment to determine their understanding of finances and higher education. The mean for participants at two schools was 38% and 34%. After activity sessions, 56.25% of students said they learned "a lot" of financial skills and 43.75% said that they learned "somewhat." At the end of program, students rated an average 4.4/5 that the program was "applicable to their future success."

Results: Student Awareness and Knowledge of the College Admission Process – In pre-tests, students at two schools rated their knowledge on the types of colleges as 2.8/5, and 3/5. Colleges were addressed as they related to individual students' career goals; several students attended College Planning Day at Seattle Pacific University. Students gained significant knowledge not only on the college admissions process, but also on the variety of post-secondary programs that are available to them.

Results: Increased Academic/ Study Skills - The pilot of the High School Life curriculum unit at Chief Sealth last spring allowed us to gather some data about what students understand about academic skills and the relation to GPA. For example, 57% of students were surprised by the experience of starting with a given GPA at the end of first semester freshman year and how much effort and study time it takes to improve it by graduation.

Students also provided us with valuable feedback through their completion of a Y Program survey, which includes multiple choice and open ended questions. For the High School Life curriculum, 58.7 % of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their participation helped them make plans for what they want to do when they finish high school.

Participant comments included:

- "High school determines the rest of your life."
- "A GPA is a fragile thing."
- "Your freshman year affects everything!"
- "Don't mess up your grades because you won't be as successful as you want to be. I didn't like the choice of minimum wage jobs [I had] at the end." (of the real life game)

References:

Contact Name, Title	Contact Information	Relationship to Organization
Heather Gingerich, Sr. Program Officer College Spark Washington	heather@collegespark.org 206.461.5326	Funder
Lauren Divina Head Counselor Madison Middle School	ldivina@seattleschools.org 206.252.9121	School partner with Navigation 101 and Middle School programming
Regina Carr Academic Intervention Specialist West Seattle High School	rmcarr@seattleschools.org 206.252.8827	School partner with Nexus 9 and High School Programming

To address challenges and barriers, YMCA staff work in collaboration with our schools to develop a clear strategy for engaging our focus students. Y staff bring a youth development perspective to the school's work which provides flexibility and the ability to adapt models and innovative strategies to drive academic success.

Challenges & Barriers for Students	YMCA Activities to Address Challenges
Low skill level requires extra academic support time, often limiting the time available for after-school college and career prep	• Offer both in-class and after-school activities to accommodate more students' schedules • Create activities for college/career prep that are relevant and fun to increase overall school engagement. This has helped increase the perceived value of this work.
Students view college/careers as a long way off, thinking that they have plenty of time to prepare.	• Offer a semester long career workshop for 9th graders that focuses on getting a first job, assistance with job applications, job fairs, etc. We use resources to help students in career exploration and occupational outlooks. • Illustrate connections between higher education, training and greater economic opportunities. • Created High School Life curriculum to help 9th graders explore the choices they make throughout high school and the impact on their future.
Transition from Middle School to High School – often less individualized	• Integrate college/career prep into CLC or existing after school models. • For 8th grade students, curriculum includes high school visits, discussion about the transition and

support/connection in HS, increased need to self-advocate	organizational skill building • For 9th grade students, teach the importance of maintaining high attendance, homework completion and understanding of GPA and credits.

Tracking to Success: YMCA staff are utilizing the following data in order to focus students and their needs, assess program offerings, identify interventions, make necessary course corrections and collaborate with schools to meet program outcomes and indicators.

Data/data source	Use by YMCA staff/teams
Core Course Grades/GPA	Identify focus students, monitor courses taken and passing grades. Work with students on impact of GPA on future options.
Program Attendance	Monitor program attendance as proxy for interest/engagement. Track days attended in both College/Career prep programs and other academic and support programs with the goal of increasing extended learning opportunities.
School Day Attendance	Target students with attendance concerns, monitor/support students who are beginning to have attendance issues, monitor short term and long term student and school level attendance goals.
Unit pre/post test	Identify student skill building in each unit (high school graduation requirements, types of colleges, financial aid system, etc.) Make course corrections or extend sessions if students haven't acquired skills
Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)	Continuous Program Quality Improvement process. Assess point of service program quality, identify areas for improvement, implement changes and re-assess.
Program Evaluation	Make program changes/adjustments based on student feedback
Pilot Survey (See below)	Pre test - Identify skill gaps and adjust curriculum. Post test – Identify growth areas, make course corrections if skills are not attained.

College Spark Washington invited the YMCA to conduct a set of pilot surveys for both middle and high school participants. These surveys include topics such as: post-secondary options, types of financial aid, required high school courses for college admission, test requirements and the connection between types of careers and educational paths. Students are also asked whether or not they are thinking about attending college (on a spectrum of certainty) and then select reasons why they will or will not attend college.

This survey has been a valuable tool to establish a baseline of knowledge in each participating program and identify a list of topics frequently missed by students, enabling

Y staff to build curriculum to specifically address these issues. Overall, across middle school sites, questions regarding financial aid and required tests were the most frequent topics incorrectly answered. Among high school sites, types of financial aid and courses required for high school graduation were the top two incorrect answers. Through OST programs, staff are creating plans to improve college readiness knowledge through a series of activities to take place in the spring. Students will then take a post assessment to identify acquired skills.

The Y has used data as part of our program planning and continuous improvement process. In our College/Career preparation programs, we have used data to identify skill or knowledge gaps and adjust curriculum to address those issues. For example, we found that many 9th graders did not understand how GPA was calculated and how failing a class in 9th or 10th grade would impact their overall GPA. Y staff then created lessons and practice sessions on how to calculate GPA, including a "High School Life" Curriculum that takes students through a simulation of their four years of high school. At the end of the simulation, students calculate their GPA based on their yearly achievement, identify the extracurricular activities their "character" participated in, and then see their post-secondary options.

Through monitoring participant attendance and engagement levels, staff found that 9th graders were inconsistent in their after school participation in the college prep program, identifying that they felt they didn't need to plan for college yet. As a result, the focus of the school-day curriculum became more about college and the after-school curriculum focused on career, and helping students get their first summer job or significant volunteer opportunity. An incentive of a small stipend, tied to program attendance and participation, helped to dramatically increase participation as well. Students were able to connect jobs and career with the need to do well in school and increased their post-secondary aspirations.

YMCA staff have utilized daily and weekly data in several areas. Y staff working in collaboration with schools have access to the Source, school teams and individual teachers to assess student progress and address areas of concern. Staff delivering school day programs meet regularly with the teacher to make adjustments in weekly curriculum based on student level assessments and needs. Staff have access to school day attendance and monitor focus students to utilize incentives and interventions as appropriate.

Women and Minority Inclusion: The YMCA is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to workplace diversity, which includes an emphasis on utilizing recruiting practices geared towards engaging individuals of all backgrounds, which includes women and minority staff, contractors and subcontractors to work in our programs. The YMCA of Greater Seattle has launched an Association-wide effort to increase the cultural competency of its staff, volunteers and contractors. The successful implementation of this initiative is critical to the Association's long-term ability to fulfill its mission and meet its program goals.

YMCA College and Career Prep Programs
Sample Data Reports

YMCA Prep Higher Education Action Plan – Students in program complete this during the program

Survey Results Format – Used to tract scores from College Prep Survey

College Prep Post Survey Results – Used to tract Post results, assess additional skill gaps

Data Report from College Spark Survey – Information from the Pre/Post survey, used to develop program plans to meet needs/skills of students.

YMCA Prep Higher Education Action Plan

"You must learn day by day, year by year, to broaden your horizon. The more things you love, the more you are interested in, the more you enjoy, the more you are indignant about, the more you have left when anything happens." -Ethel Barrymore

Current Middle School:

Classes You are Getting A's and B's in:

Activities Outside of School You are Involved In and Enjoy:

High School You'd Like to Attend:

High School Classes You Will Need to Succeed in Your Major:

2-year or 4-year college:

Preferred Location:

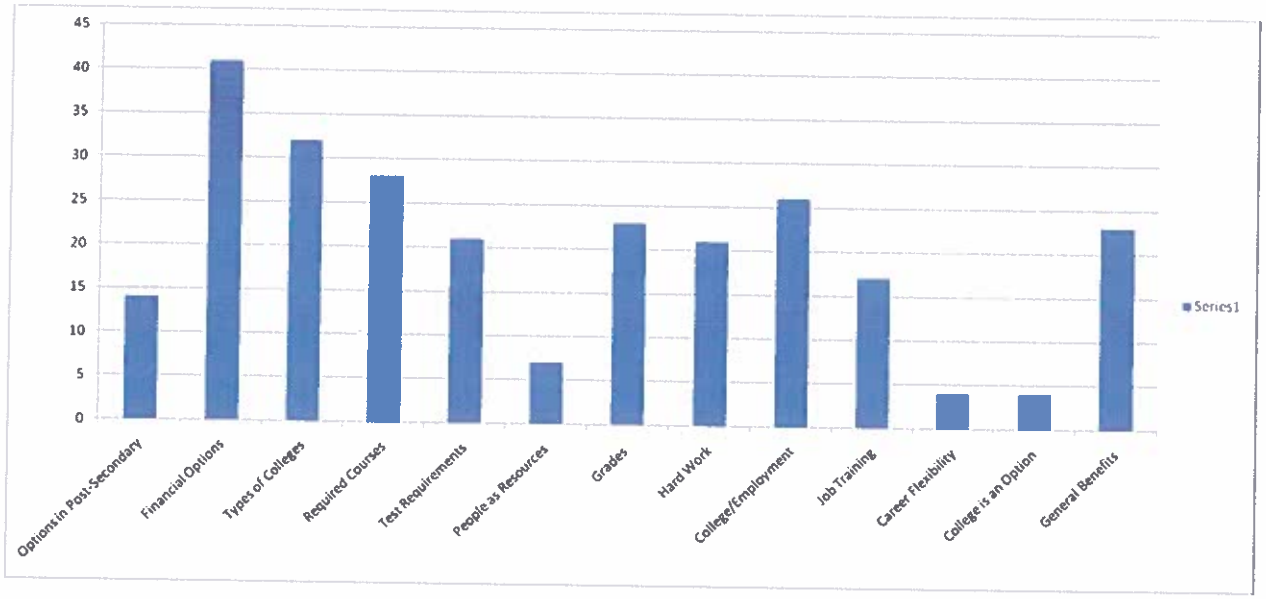
Major(s) You're Interested In:

Careers You Might Consider: (Rate 1 to 5 on how interested you are in each career, with 5 being the most interested).

Survey results format for College Prep Programs

Name	Grade	Raw Score	Total	Percent	Plan to Go College?	Strands to Work On	Parent Attended College?

College Prep Post Survey Results

School	Job Skills Help (1-5)	Consider Own Talents and Skills	Other Topics and Services Wanted	Applicable to Future Success	Leadership Skills	Financial Skills	Career Info
WS	4	4	presentations, working with groups	4	somewhat	a lot	a lot
WS	3	3	more info on jobs available, ways to find one	4	a lot	somewhat	somewhat
WS	5	5		5	somewhat	a lot	a lot
WS	4	4	visit to giant corporation	4	a lot	a lot	a lot
WS	5	5	play games	5	a lot	somewhat	a lot
WS	5	5	play games sometimes would be sweet	5	a lot	a lot	a lot
WS	4	5	more real life like games	4	a lot	a lot	a lot
WS	5	4	field trip	5	a lot	somewhat	a lot
Sealth	5	4	more mock interviews	3	a lot	a lot	a lot
Sealth	4	5		5	somewhat	somewhat	a lot
Sealth	4	4	everything was pretty much covered	5	somewhat	a lot	a lot
Sealth	5	5	meeting people outside of school		a lot	somewhat	a lot
Sealth	5	3	military career preparedness	3	somewhat	somewhat	somewhat
Sealth	5	5		5	a lot	a lot	a lot
Sealth	5	5		5	a lot	a lot	a lot
Sealth	4	5	service project or service learning	4	a lot	somewhat	a lot
Mean Scor	**4.5**	**4.4375**		**4.4**	**68.75% a lot, 31.25% somewhat**	**56.25% a lot, 43.75% somewhat**	**87.5% a lot, 12.5% somewhat**

Example of Data Report from College Spark survey, to use for program planning