

2017 -2108 AEBG Request for Proposal

Program Name:

Career Skills Institute: Jail

1. Executive Summary

The students we will serve in this program come from the streets, from drug addiction, from jail, and from prison. Many of their lives started in poverty. Some are one strike shy of life in "the system". Others don't even remember life on the "outside". To break this cycle, leave their past behind and start anew, they need two things: proper job skills training, and a high school and/or college education.

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) is requesting AEBG funds to develop and implement two programs, both of which will provide these two essential pathways they need to ensure their legal and ethical success.

Program I: We will develop a program so that every inmate who doesn't already have a high school diploma or GED, will be able to get one. And for those who already do have a high school diploma or GED, we will forge a path for them to achieve a college degree through year-round bridge programming to Santa Barbara City College.

Program II: We will develop 4 new badges to address the areas and skill sets the current population is lacking to successfully transition from inmate to productive and law abiding community citizen. These classes will range from "soft skill" classes like values based communication and decision making, to parenting classes, to entrepreneurship and business building classes.

To achieve Program I, we will have to significantly strengthen our GED program to include a staff member whose job it is to not only identify those inmates who don't yet have a high school equivalency degree and channel them into GED classes, but they will also have to reestablish the ability for inmates to actually take the GED exam at the jail. This will include figuring out why the system once in place for taking the GED in Jail, stopped working and will also include hiring a proctor and purchasing the computer hardware and software necessary to take the GED exam.

For those inmates who already have their high school diploma or GED, we will funnel them into an expanded Transitions program. Transitions is the SBCC summer bridge program, recently recognized by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office with the Rice Diversity & Equity Award. The summer 2015 cohort of participants had a 100% success rate – all 28 students enrolled at SBCC in the Fall semester. Transitions effectively prepared formerly incarcerated individuals for college.

To accommodate the more than 4,000 inmates who are released throughout the year into this program, Transitions will have to grow exponentially; with two cohorts each fall and two cohorts each spring, in addition to summer – the number of students served multiples five-fold.

We are requesting funding to serve this population during the Fall and Spring semesters within the Career Skills Institute. By including a consultant to provide support to this population during this time, we are ensuring student success and assisting students in making the bridge from incarceration into college.

Curriculum Development

To achieve Program II, we propose creating four new CSI badges each of which will target a particular general skill area currently lacking in this population. These badges will consist of 3-4 classes each and will encompass 96 hours of training over two 16 week semesters.

The digital badge and/or certificate classes include:

- 1) Values Based Communication and Decision Making Badge

- 2) Parenting Badge
- 3) Entrepreneurial Badge
- 4) Business Building Skills Badge

An expert with incarcerated and post-incarcerated individuals will be hired to speak with the faculty and staff of both SBCC and the County jail to ensure that as many people as possible are on board and working toward the success of these students.

Building A Business/Entrepreneurial Badge

Catherine Hoke, a prison reform specialist (www.defyventures.org - a landmark program with an amazing 5% recidivism rate), calls inmates the best untapped entrepreneurial market in the country. Many of these people have solid sales and marketing skills, they have just used them in the merchandising of illegal products and activities. If we tap into the entrepreneurial spirit many of them already possess, and give them the opportunity to learn legitimate business building skills, many could succeed by starting their own companies or by bringing a more creative and entrepreneurial mindset to an already established company.

2. Integration

Our proposal includes a consultant who will be hired to help facilitate the GED and Transitions programs to other noncredit programs and or credit programs. While this is not an ongoing position it affords the ability to identify the needs of this population and to work with the Santa Barbara County Inmate Services staff to assist in the development of the needs so that going forward SBCC staff can facilitate the transition of these students. The consultant hired to support this population will help move students from the Transitions Program via assessment that is already in place. Students will move through our CSI Transitions program and onto either Adult Basic Skills, Adult High School or GED and then on to College programs. Or they may move directly to College credit programs.

3. Justification

More than 4,000 inmates are released throughout the year into this County, necessitating growth from a six-week summer program to year round program. With expansion to a year round program - two cohorts each and two each spring, in addition to summer - the number of students served through this proposed program multiples five-fold. At 71%, Santa Barbara County's recidivism rate is the 15th highest in the state. Educational programs are proven to reduce recidivism and in-prison education has been shown to improve inmate 'attitude,' yet this County lacks sufficient educational opportunities for individuals during incarceration and post-release. Adding more and specialized skill building classes and offering an expanded Transitions program can mitigate these insufficiencies.

4. Outreach & Marketing

The Director of the Career Skills Institute along with the Lead Jail Faculty and the consultant hired through this proposal, will work with the Santa Barbara County Jail staff to identify education levels of inmates and work with discharge specialists at the Jail to develop processes and procedures to facilitate enrollment of post-incarcerated individuals. Marketing and outreach will also be done with local businesses to see which would be a good match for employment opportunities for recently released inmates.

5. Alignment

Our proposal aligns with Goal 2 of the AEBG Consortium, We have designed a comprehensive program that expands offerings within our area by meeting the unmet needs of post-incarcerated individuals.