



The Council of State Governments
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2010 Innovations Awards Application

Deadline: March 1, 2010

ID # (assigned by CSG): **10-S-13SC**

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: South Carolina

Assign Program Category (applicant): Human Resources/Education – Education (Use list at end of application)

1. Program Name : Correctional Education Association (CEA) Post Secondary Research Project

2. Administering Agency : Palmetto Unified School District in SCDC

3. Contact Person (Name and Title): Weyland Burns – Director of Vocational Programs, PUSD

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9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program. PUSD is participating in a 3 year study in collaboration with Correctional Education Association and Northstar Correctional Education Services and 4 other states. The purpose of the study is to measure the impact of postsecondary education on offenders by comparing live teachers with DVD via satellite instruction.

10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 1, 2010 to be considered. The program was implemented in January of 2009.

11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address? The program set up 8 academic programs delivered through SC technical colleges and through a long distance learning system through Milwaukee Area Technical College. The study set up a comparison between “live teachers” of technical colleges to DVD instruction of academic classes through the satellite system. Results will demonstrate ramifications of each delivery system and will provide quantitative data derived from released inmates who participated in the postsecondary programs.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

PUSD was selected for the study because of our strong academic and vocational programming.

CEA has been given a rare opportunity to study correctional education through funding from the U.S. Department of Education in which CEA competed with several colleges and universities for the award. CEA is not only compelled to carry out this study for the benefit of correctional education, but we all have a responsibility to show correctional educators have the ability to produce data. Additionally, CEA is hoping to apply for funding for a three-year follow-up grant to track post-release outcomes.

To support correctional education, administrators and policy makers rely on research about impact—they need to know that programs have effects. There is little rigorous research in correctional education and this first-of-its-kind study will provide information that is needed to guide policy.

Results from this study have the potential to increase funding for correctional education and increase student access to programming, particularly at the postsecondary level. This information can also help educational administrators and policy makers overcome the political unpopularity that is often associated with correctional education programs. In the short term, the study will provide resources and access to postsecondary academic and other types of educational programming in several prisons where it was not available.

The purpose of this study is to measure the impact of postsecondary education on offenders. College of the Air (COA) delivered by satellite over the Transforming Lives Network (TLN) is the intervention (experimental condition). TLN delivery will be compared to ALL OTHER forms of postsecondary academic delivery. Keep in mind that some sites assigned to deliver College of the Air on the Transforming Lives Network (COA/TLN) already have strong postsecondary programs. In these sites, both programs will be provided, but COA students WILL NOT be allowed to participate in both programs to avoid contamination of treatment.

Random assignment is being used because this is the type of study that policy-makers and researchers consider to provide the best evidence of impact. This sort of study is challenging, but there is no easier way to get this type of evidence.

In our school district, eight institutions with educational programs were randomly selected. Within that group of eight, four were randomly selected as control sites (where academic post secondary classes will be offered through technical colleges) and four were chosen as intervention sites, (where academic post secondary classes will be administered through the College of the Air Program).

The following sites are control sites:

- Wateree Correctional Institution
- Trenton Correctional Institution
- Stevenson Correctional Institution
- Tyger River Correctional Institution

The following sites are intervention sites:

- Kershaw Correctional Institution
- Manning Correctional Institution
- Ridgeland Correctional Institution
- Leath Correctional Institution

We are studying students whose tuition is paid through any source that is not considered “self-pay” as self-pay introduces an additional motivational variable. Most states are allowing Incarcerated Youth Offender (IYO) students to participate in the study, although some states have some students funded through private foundations, tribal funds, or scholarships. The parameters for students are the same as IYO requirements: under age 26, within five years of release, possess GED or high school diploma. The anticipated age change to 35 next year will also apply to study participants. [Note – changed to: 35 and years old and under; within 7 years of release]

Small site incentives are provided by the grant. Satellite equipment, installation costs, and annual TLN site fees are paid by the grant for TLN sites for the duration of the grant. Control sites receive a small incentive as well.

We will be getting in touch with the educational leadership in each location to establish procedures and protocol. We are fortunate to be participating in a study that will help to solidify our profession as correctional educators who deliver a service that is the proven best alternative to building more prisons.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method? This research project allowed PUSD to utilize more postsecondary academic classes so that inmates could acquire college credits toward trade associate degrees that required general education courses.

14. What were the program’s start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.) This program was funded with existing funds from the federal Individual Incarcerated Programs funding from the US Department of Education. Costs were about \$200,000 to include tuition costs and materials and supplies. Organization and implementation steps were administered by PUSD existing staff.

15. What are the program’s annual operational costs? Annual operations costs are about \$200,000.

16. How is the program funded? Federal funds only provide postsecondary education in SC. PUSD receives funding annually from the US Department of Education through the Individual Incarcerated Program Grant.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number. This funding is acquired each year by each state correctional department in the US.

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program? PUSD utilizes existing SCDC software and database management system. PUSD personnel did create templates and databases to store specific data required to demonstrate educational results of the postsecondary programs.

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator’s name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address. No

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ? Four other states (Nevada, Massachusetts, Tennessee, and New York) have implemented this program. The one in SC differs in the extent of the implementation and the speed by which it was implemented as SC came into the study one semester late due to another state dropping out of the study. PUSD was able to bring 8 institutions on-line to be involved in this project, which is the most of the 5 states.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? Yes.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

Con – Major effort is required to train existing staff within institutions to administer a post secondary program that is a brand new program. Sustained and diligent effort is required by the central office to administer a college level program that requires college level details in enrollment, application, grading, and communication procedures. We conducted several state-wide training sessions in conjunction with national representatives from Northstar. Continual communication and logistical support is required which before the study had never been achieved at the level required.

Pro – PUSD experienced a record number of post secondary enrollment and completions – 833 enrollees and 616 completers of post secondary classes last school year. PUSD has also implemented a one year certificate program through which inmates are earning postsecondary certificates for multiple courses completed. Inmates are learning they can do postsecondary work and some are entering postsecondary schools upon release.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception? Continual adjustment is required to adjust to the 10 institutions and their unique characteristics. PUSD has developed a reporting mechanism to reflect results and required adjustments.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

Limited financial support to hire needed personnel to administer program and ensure highest rate of completions possible. Continual efforts must be made to smooth the path with the security and operations personnel to collaborate the educational logistics. Procurement and budget requirements limit the needed flexibility to secure programming from technical colleges.

CSG reserves the right to use or publish in other CSG products the information provided in this application. If your agency objects to this policy, please advise us in a separate attachment.



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2010 Innovations Awards Application Program Categories and Subcategories

Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate Program Category for your state's submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

Infrastructure and Economic Development

- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

Government Operations and Technology

- Administration
- Elections
- Information Systems
- Public Information
- Revenue
- Telecommunications

Health & Human Services

- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

Human Resources/Education

- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

Natural Resources

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

Public Safety/Corrections

- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

Save in .doc or rtf. Return completed application electronically to innovations@csg.org or mail to:

CSG Innovations Awards 2010
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This application is also available at www.csg.org.