



The Council of State Governments
Sharing capitol ideas.

2011 Innovations Awards Application

DEADLINE: MARCH 28, 2011

ID # (assigned by CSG): 2011- _____

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: Georgia

Assign Program Category (applicant): Health and Human Services – Education

1. Program Name
Georgia College and Career Academy Network
2. Administering Agency
Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle, Department of Education
3. Contact Person (Name and Title)
Irene Munn, Director of Policy, Office of Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle
4. Address
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8. Web site Address
<http://www.georgiacareeracademies.org/>
9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

Together, the Office of the Lt. Governor, the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), and the Department of Education coordinate the Georgia College and Career Academy Network (GCCAN). GCCAN works tirelessly around the state to inform communities about the college and career academy movement, award grants to new and existing college and career academies, and provide professional development and networking opportunities for its partners.

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 28, 2011 to be considered.

The program has been operational since January of 2007; awarding its first grants for college and career in that same year.

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

GCCAN is multifaceted and therefore has many different activities occurring at the same time. In terms of awarding grants, each year, communities must go through a rigorous process in order to receive funding. The following is a look at the grant process along with a look at the different programs that GCCAN is conducting for this particular year:

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

- TCSG CA Committee meets to review annual candidate proposal summaries & readers' score-spread to consider for recommendations (applicants from previous year)
- TCSG Board approves new round of grant awardees (Up to \$3 Million in bonds for construction + cash for start up funds) (applicants from previous year)
- **GCCAN WORKSHOP:** Two Annual Career Academy 101 sessions are held - for any community that may have an interest in pursuing an Academy – that details the “how to” obtain and sustain from the CEO perspective
- **NEW 2010 –**
 - Formal approval letters are sent to both those awarded and those not awarded. In the past, only non-awardees were sent a letter and the winners were called!?
NOTE: Each application identifies a primary contact, which can be the Superintendent, College President or even a business partner...*need to determine to whom letters are addressed and copied to.*
 - Database reporting to be launched to capture quantitative & qualitative information

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

- Legislative session begins... *new appropriations and potential of new bills being passed that could impact grant requirements*
- Awardee workshop (via Elluminate) are conducted to review “next steps/processes”
Note: Next steps review includes:
 - MOUs being developed
 - Budget/reimbursement process overview
 - Quarterly summary reporting requirements...*currently that includes addressing the progress of the grant application criteria*

MARCH-APRIL

- Approved funds for Career Academies announced
- **GCCAN WORKSHOP:** Annual Innovation in Education Conference (March 17, 2011 – Board “Governance” Training for existing Academies with Ford PAS & Soft Skills breakout sessions...tentatively)

MAY-JUNE

- Cash portion of most recent awardees must be off TCSG books...local arrangements are made to transition funds from college to secondary

JULY-AUGUST

- Get volunteer readers and conduct training (face-to-face, if feasible or calls)
- Updates to annual grant application to include:
 - New cover
 - Change of dates, and any other reconsiderations
 - Check with Charter School Office for any changes
 - Charter petition process begins

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Grants due (FY10 due date, September 13th)
- Grants distributed to readers
 - **NOTE:** A single criteria is assigned per reader and with only 10 hard copy grants submitted, per grant requirement, those 10 must be distributed and re-distributed to 16 readers
- Record ratings on scoring spreadsheet as they come in
- Contact Charter School Office to get ratings for each applicant (on criteria related to charter status)
- Once all scores are in, determine the finalist...those that have mathematical possibility of being in the top rated group
- Schedule formal presentation date for qualifying candidates
- Select panelist
 - **DAY OF PRESENTATIONS:** Panelist are given a different color index card – one per finalist for notes and scores – the average score of them all is added to the readers' scores on spreadsheet.

12. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

GCCAN was created in 2007 as a mechanism to encourage and spur the growth of an educational model that seeks to bring more relevancy and rigor into Georgia schools. GCCAN receives state funding and donations from key contributors like AT&T, Georgia Power The Georgia Apartment Industry Education Foundation. These financial commitments allow GCCAN to give out grants to help college and career academies do the following: construct or expand new facilities, enhance instructional offerings, and provide professional development to staff.

All the college and career academies that have evolved and received support from GCCAN have committed their institutions to using educational best practices that will launch their students into a 21st century workforce. Instruction at all of the college and career academies associated with GCCAN is very much driven by the needs of the local business community. For instance, at the Central Education Center (CEC), a college and career academy in Coweta County, a partnership with the local Kia operations was formed. Both sides come together regularly to develop and revise courses being offered to students. Many of the courses developed by this partnership not only integrate many strands of the Mathematics and Science portions of the Georgia Performance Standards into the syllabi, but they also train the students how to use the same technology used to produce automobiles at the local plant. In fact, Kia has donated pieces of the state-of-the-art technology mentioned in these courses to the CEC so that students can learn how to use this technical machinery in a hands-on way. This type of training allows students to see the relevancy in their studies while also preparing them to enter the local workforce certified and ready to get right to work after graduation and/or post-secondary schooling. In addition, all college and career academies in GCCAN deepen their relationships with their communities by having local business and civic leaders sit on their governance boards.

Dual enrollment/credit options are other common threads that college and career academies found in GCCAN offer students. Dual enrollment/credit not only allows students to receive post-secondary credits while still in high school, but they also persuade students to stay in high school and upon graduation, pursue some sort of post-secondary diploma. In addition to dual enrollment/credit being a cornerstone of college and career academies in Georgia, GCCAN encourages schools to offer courses that integrate academics into their career, technical, and agriculture education (CTAE). This helps students see the relevancy of learning certain academic skills and in return gives them the motivation and ability to understand concepts that, when taught in isolation and not in context, may seem irrelevant and confusing.

In fact, Coweta County Schools has done a study that begins to outline the impact a relevant application of curriculum can have on students. In that study, Coweta County took a portion of students that receive free and reduced lunch who attend the CEC and a portion of students that receive free and reduced lunch but do not attend the CEC and compared the end-of-course-test data in Science. They found that students that were enrolled at the CEC scored an average of twenty points higher on their exam than their peers who did not take courses at the CEC. The explanation for this phenomenon is most likely a result of the fact that students at the CEC take certain CTAE courses that allow them to truly apply the academic knowledge in a relevant manner.

GCCAN helps institute and spread best practices by offering various professional development opportunities during the year. There are numerous conferences throughout the state where governance board members and proponents of college and career academies come together to discuss ways to strengthen the academies in their regions. For instance, every March, the Lt. Governor's Office in association with GCCAN, sponsor the Innovation in Education Conference. At this and similar conferences hosted by GCCAN, participants partake in various sessions on topics ranging from enriching the relationships between college and career academies and local business, to integrating academic standards into CTAE education in an effort to make the courses more relevant and rigorous for students. In addition, GCCAN also holds various informational sessions all over the state to inform local communities about the college and career academy movement and the benefits that it can provide to a school system.

Finally, GCCAN is instrumental in helping to fund and forge relationships with public and private entities that directly benefit college and career academies in Georgia. One such partnership, the Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies (Ford PAS), helps create lasting alliances with the education, business and community leaders that are committed to creating partnerships that help stimulate the local economy. The program's rigorous curriculum gives students the chance to engage in relevant learning experiences that ask them to have dialog about and find solutions for our nation's most pressing issues. Thanks to the work of the GCCAN, Georgia is one of only 6 states to be designated as a Ford PAS Hub.

13. 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.)

TCSG provided office space and an operating budget of \$250,000 of state dollars to payroll Dr. Lucy Phillip (former Director of Partnerships) and to allow her funds to begin the program. That position has remained the only TCSG paid job developed specifically for the program.

14. What are the program's annual operational costs?

Although the state funds made available to the awardees has fluctuated from year to year, the portion of the TCSG operating budget which supports college and career academies has stayed solid at \$250,000.

15. How is the program funded?

Bond and limited start-up operational funds are secured each year during the legislative session for the construction/renovation portion of the annual grant awards allocated to college and career academies.

16. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

No, starting GCCAN did not require legislation, executive order, or regulation. However, the Lt. Governor's Office is currently working on legislation that will formalize the work of GCCAN by setting up an Office of College and Career Transitions. This office will assist with the grant distribution process and help communities coordinate with the relevant parties when attempting to establish or renew a charter. The office will also work with communities across Georgia in effort to increase dual enrollment opportunities to all students, advance more relevant and rigorous curriculum and support classroom teachers with professional development needs.

Finally, the legislation will also help develop a college and career academy certification process. This process would formalize the high standards and streamline the charter renewal process for college and career academies in GCCAN. This would help ensure that all college and career academies that go through the certification process are using best practices that truly bring student achievement to the next level.

17. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

To operate and administer the GCCAN, only standard computers and technology are needed.

18. 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.

Yes, GCCAN originated in Georgia. In fact, many proponents of CTAE have come and visited multiple college and career academies in the state to obtain best practices to bring back to their communities. The CEC, in Coweta County, actually wrote a manual that guides communities on how to establish successful college and career academies that fit the needs of the community. There have been multiple replications of the CEC model in communities throughout Georgia and the country. No one person was the innovator of this program. It was a team of people that help develop GCCAN. If you questions about specific aspects of the program, please use the contact information above.

19. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

From our research, there are other college and career academies in the country. However, there is no network quite like the GCCAN. GCCAN is pushing CTAE instruction to the next level by ensuring that college and career academies in Georgia truly create lasting partnerships with the post-secondary and business communities.

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

Yes, GCCAN is fully implemented. However, because of the effectiveness of the network, GCCAN is expanding throughout the state. GCCAN's goal is for every student in Georgia to have access to a college and career academy by 2020.

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

GCCAN has made considerable progress in bringing relevancy to classrooms across Georgia. Over four years ago, there were only four college and career academies across the state. Today, with the help of GCCAN, there are over twenty-three college and career academies either operational or being constructed. College and career academies have done a tremendous job bringing relevancy into the classroom. Students that attend college and career academies have various opportunities to apply skills they learn in traditional academic settings in a relevant and meaningful way. This not only drives student achievement, but also increases the investment a student has for his/her schooling. With increased investment, students want to stay in school and graduation rates increase. In fact, a study recently conducted by state officials found that dually enrolled students have a graduation rate of 94%. The reason this study is relevant is because all of GCCAN members offer dual enrollment classes and encourage students to earn at least one post-secondary certificate before they even graduate high school.

GCCAN has also done a great job helping communities forge relationships with the local technical college and businesses. GCCAN helps train governing boards of college and career academies on how to make the college and career academy a true community effort where academics are driven by the needs of the local workforce. That is why the CEC utilizes a lot of Kia technology in their courses, why the Floyd County College and Career Academy emphasizes various aspect of the healthcare industry, and why the Lanier Charter and Career Academy focuses on hospitality and marketing. Because the needs of the community drive the academics, communities are engaged in the instructional offerings being implemented in their local academies.

However, there are many challenges that GCCAN has to confront. For instance, while college and career academies across the state are reaching several thousand students, this is a small number compared to the overall number of students who would benefit from a college and career academy in their local area. College and career academies in GCCAN continue display the effectiveness of this sort of academic model, but financial limitations prevent the movement from spreading at a more rapid pace.

Another challenge that GCCAN confronts is not being able to guarantee the success of a college and career academy. GCCAN does provide instrumental funding, and professional development and networking opportunities, but because the college and career academy model lives and dies with local community support,

there is little that can be done in a top down structure to ultimately ensure the success of an academy. With that being said, this is not something GCCAN would ever wish to change. GCCAN is present to support college and career academies, but each individual community must decide what programs they are going to offer based on the needs of the local workforce.

22. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The program has grown tremendously since its inception. In 2007, when the GCCAN was first created, there were only four college and career academies in Georgia. Today, there are over twenty-three college and career academies; all members of GCCAN.

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

Although GCCAN is anchored by both the Lt. Governor's Office and TCSG, it is successful because both partners are committed to expanding the relevant and rigorous educational opportunities that college and career academies offer students. Therefore, if programs similar to GCCAN are implemented in other states, it is essential that all stakeholders work cooperatively together with the same goals in mind. If educational leaders in a state do not have the same vision for a similar network, then that state will encounter challenges.

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2011 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

- 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

Human Resources/Education

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

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This application is also available at www.csg.org.