CALL FOR PROJECTS: SPRING 2013

Application Deadline: April 22, 2013

Application for CPC Project Assistance

Instructions: We encourage non-profit organizations and municipal agencies to contact the CPC with ideas for projects that can benefit the community while providing meaningful service learning for RWU students. Please fill out the Application for Project Assistance, answering all applicable questions and including all supporting documents.

In order for any project to be considered for assistance, completed applications must be submitted to CPC Project Coordinator, Stephany Hessler, by 5 pm on April 22, 2013. Applications may be submitted by:

Email: shessler@rwu.edu
Fax: (401) 254-3565
Mail: RWU Community Partnerships Center
      Roger Williams University
      One Old Ferry Road
      Bristol, RI 02809-2921

Any questions regarding the application process can be directed to Stephany at (401) 254-5211.

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SECTION 1: Organization Information

Name of Organization: Community Preparatory School
Mailing Address: 126 Somerset Street
Name of Project Contact Person(s): Pam Delaney, Director of Development
Contact Information: Phone: 401-521-9697 x2
                      Fax: 401-751-1072
E-mail: pdelaney@communityprep.org

Type of Organization:
- Public (town, city, municipality, special district, government agency)
- Private (citizen, non-profit)
- Other (please explain)
Description of Organization and Mission:

History: Founded in 1984, Community Preparatory School is an independent middle school (grades 3 – 8) located in the heart of the inner city in Providence, R.I. Community Prep offers its students the benefits of an independent school -- small classes, challenging academics and a positive, nurturing environment -- along with the cultural and economic diversity of a public school.

The school began with 25 students, when an educator saw that children from his community where being lost in the public-school system. That educator is the Head of School, Dan Corley, who set out with his Brown University roommate, economist Robert W. Hahn, to establish a school that would allow children from low-income families to work at their own pace and develop a sense of responsibility for their work.

Mission: Community Preparatory School serves culturally and economically diverse students who are well qualified to benefit from a rigorous academic education in an atmosphere of mutual respect, especially students who would otherwise not have access to such an education. The school's goal is to help its students succeed in college-preparatory high school programs and to become community leaders.

Community Preparatory School challenges students to become confident, independent learners and develops a strong sense of public service in students through community service and stewardship. It engages parents, students and teachers in goal setting and planning in an effort to ensure academic and social success for each student.

The school is committed to sharing its vision, programs, and resources with the local neighborhood and the broader community.

How did you hear about the CPC?

Through Roger Williams University website, referral by faculty and staff, and general knowledge.

SECTION 2: Project Description

Title of the Project: Community Preparatory School’s Marketing Campaign to Attract Full-Tuition Students

Project Location (Address, City, State, and Zip): 126 Somerset Street, Providence, RI 02907

General Project Description (you may attach a longer narrative if necessary):

Community Prep is a remarkable gift to an inner-city child. Since its doors opened at the John Brown Settlement House in 1984 with 25 promising students, CP’s 626 graduates have been accepted by the most competitive and prestigious independent and public schools in the region.
Over 84% are attending or have graduated from 165 colleges and universities from Albertus Magnus to Xavier including Brown, Harvard and Yale. Yet the majority of students are from circumstances that make access to this kind of education beyond their financial means. To make this possible, tuition is set at or below the per-pupil cost for a public school education. For the 2012-2013 academic year, tuition is $13,600 while that of comparable independent schools exceeds $25,000, making CP an exceptional educational value.

Furthermore, while every family pays something toward school fees, 90% receive financial aid ranging from $2,000 to $13,200; only 10% pay full tuition. This model turns the business plan of traditional private schools on its head. Independent schools typically rely on tuition for 82% of their operating budgets and 18% from donations. In Community Prep’s case, tuition defrays only 16% of costs. Contributions to its annual fund are required to fill the gap between the $15,800 cost-per-student (tuition & administrative costs) and tuition revenues.

Community Prep faces two major challenges to raising $1.4 million in scholarships needed this year. Although the school is well known among educators, it remains a well-kept secret from the broad community. Co-founder and head of school, Dan Corley, has received numerous awards and accolades. Recently, Community Prep was cited by WPRI Eyewitness News as “One of the best private schools in Rhode Island,” and the Providence Business News recognized the school for “Excellence at a Non-Profit.” Despite the favorable media coverage, the school’s name recognition remains consistently low, especially among prospective full-tuition families. A second hurdle is that the poor economy and an aging donor pool have resulted in an annual fund that has remained flat for several years and failed to make goal in the past two.

The Board of Trustees and school administration are justifiably concerned about the ability of the school to fulfill its mission and to sustain its model in the long-term. One step towards assuring the continuing viability of the school is to fill 15% of the available seats each year with full-tuition children. CP has no difficulty attracting applicants for its scholarship program, but full-tuition students remain elusive. A difficulty in successfully marketing to this demographic is that CP’s message is confusing. On one hand, the school seeks students from the poorest backgrounds. On the other, it wishes to create a highly diverse learning environment that embraces cultural and financial differences which very much depends on including children of financial means. It offers both groups an outstanding education and succeeds at placing the vast majority of children in competitive schools. How do we effectively market to both groups?

Working with Roger Williams University’s students and departments, Community Preparatory School seeks to design and create an effective, implementable marketing strategy to increase the enrollment of full-tuition families.
Potential Scope of Work/Tasks for RWU CPC\(^1\) (you may attach a longer narrative if necessary):

Community Preparatory School wishes to increase the enrollment of full-tuition students. To achieve this goal, CP has to effectively market itself to higher income families, and seeks to partner with Roger Williams’ students through the University’s CPC program to design and create an implementable marketing strategy to full-tuition families.

It is hoped that RWU will bring skills and knowledge to the project that Community Prep does not possess within its faculty, staff and volunteers. However, some of the tasks that are envisioned from a lay point of view include:

1. Assessing CP’s current positioning among RI’s independent schools;
2. Determining its strengths and weakness;
3. Recommending a message that integrates CP’s two distinct markets;
4. Crafting a coherent and compelling plan to enhance its brand among its target audiences;
5. Other tasks as may be suggested.

Proposed Project Schedule (when the tasks/project needs to be completed):

The project is envisioned to be 3 to 6 months from inception.

Please provide the names and contact information for any staff members or volunteers who will be playing a primary role in the proposed CPC project.

Dan Corley, Head of School, dorley@communityprep.org  Phone: 401-521-9696 x301
Pam Delaney, Director of Development, pdelaney@communityprep.org  Phone: 401-521-9697 x2
Azikiwe Husband, Dir. of Admissions, ahusaband@communityprep.org  Phone: 401-521-9696 x333

What resources/previous work would the CPC be building upon that you already have completed? (Please select all items that are applicable)

- [ ] Strategic Plan
- [ ] Marketing & Communication Plans
- [ ] Additional organizational documents
- [ ] Preliminary photos of the site/project
- [ ] Maps
- [ ] Previous research
- [ ] Survey results
- [ ] Architectural or building plans

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What active support would your organization be able to contribute should your project be selected?

- Funding
- Volunteers
- Staff time
- Consultants
- Other (please list)

SECTION 3: Project Outcomes

Please describe how this project will benefit your organization and the advancement of your mission:

Community Prep is committed to sharing its vision, programs and resources with the community at large and to offering an economically and culturally diverse environment. Attracting more full-tuition families contributes to this vision and to the school’s financial stability. A secondary result is that clear messaging and a robust marketing strategy will “get the word” out to previously untapped audiences helping to raise CP’s profile among prospective donors and new audiences statewide.

Please describe how this project might benefit the overall community, including specific groups that could benefit from this project (i.e. target populations, neighborhoods, specific town/city/region).

Community Prep has graduated 626 students since its doors opened in 1984; the vast majority are inner-city kids from the state’s poorest neighborhoods. The children of Providence and specifically South Providence have been the largest beneficiaries. These graduates have gone to the region’s best secondary schools, colleges and universities. A well-positioned and clear marketing campaign will bolster the school’s visibility – hopefully among all segments of the population – but especially among the economically advantaged whose support is needed for the school’s long-term success.

Please explain why you have chosen to seek assistance from the RWU CPC with your project request, instead of undertaking the project using fee-for-services from a paid professional:

All funds raised by Community Prep are committed to underwriting the scholarship for 90% of the student body. There are no discretionary funds available to support paid professional services.
SECTION 4: Financial Information

What is your organization's annual operating budget? Please include a copy of your most recent budget with the application.

$2,411,500

What are your major sources of funding?

Most independent schools receive 82% of their operating budget from tuition and must raise the remaining 18%. For Community Prep, it is the reverse. 90% of the students receive substantial financial aid. And, since we are not a charter school and have very limited access to government funds, we especially need the community’s help. This year, the school must raise $1.4 million to help families pay the tuition. Our funding comes from: Individuals 47%, Corporations 23%, Foundations 22%, other 8%.

How much funding from your annual operating budget is set aside for this project (if any)?

None

SECTION 5: Private Sector Involvement

Have you or your organization discussed the project with practicing professionals (e.g. architect, engineer, planner, consultants, etc.)?

(please circle one): Yes / No

If no, please explain why:

n/a

SECTION 6: Supporting Documents

Please include the following items when submitting your application:

- Budget for the current fiscal year
- List of current Board members
- Copies of supporting resources identified