

# APPENDIX VII – 19



## VISTA PROJECT PLAN AND APPLICATION 2016-2017 MEMBERS

Final Deadline for June, July and August Volunteers: April 8, 2016  
Please limit your application to 10 typed pages  
Please submit your application to bolsen@arizonaserve.org

### Part One

#### 1. Organization Information:

Organization Name:	Tucson Unified School District, Family & Community Outreach Department- Family Resource Centers Program
Contact Name:	Terri Howard
Address:	655 N. Magnolia, Tucson, AZ 85711
Telephone:	(520)232-7058
Email:	terri.howard@tusd1.org
Website:	tusd1.org/familycenters
EIN #:	
Proposed VISTA Project Title:	Planning to Pay for College

2. Describe below your organization's mission, structure, and plans for expansion or improvement (why you want a VISTA at this time.) Please include information on the structure of your organization (staff, board of directors, etc.); the history of your organization; and your organization's impact in the community:

Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) is the oldest and largest district in Southern Arizona. As the largest district in Southern Arizona, Tucson Unified offers more unique opportunities than any other district in the region. We strive to deliver an educational experience that best fits the needs of every child. TUSD provides a well-rounded and supportive academic environment at each of our elementary, middle, and high schools. Our academic and support services teams focus on nurturing the whole child-academically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

TUSD Family & Community Outreach Department facilitates connections to resources for TUSD students and their families. We believe stronger families and stronger students help to build a stronger community. The Family Resource Center program is part of the Family & Community Outreach Department, which is overseen by TUSD Assistant Superintendent of Student Equity.

The Family Resource Centers Program was created as part of the Unitary Status Plan for TUSD, with the first of four centers opening in April, 2015, at the former Wakefield Middle School. A second center opened at Palo Verde High School in January, 2016. Two more centers are scheduled to open in May, 2016, at Catalina High School and Southwest Education Center. The centers were strategically placed in neighborhoods with highly concentrated minority and low-income populations in order to ensure accessibility to services. These centers focus on providing resources to TUSD students and families to increase family involvement, improve overall graduation rates, and support students in college enrollment.

A primary goal of the Family Resource Center Program is to provide additional supports to minority and disengaged students and their families to increase college enrollment. VISTA would be an integral part of reaching this goal by

providing targeted outreach and support in financial planning for college to these high school seniors and their families through the Family Resource Centers.

3. Please describe your proposed VISTA project. Use clear, concise language to explain the population to be served by this project, the issue area(s) to be addressed, and the types of activities you expect a VISTA to accomplish:

VISTA Members will work through each of the four Family Resource Centers, one worker per center. They will conduct outreach and support to targeted high school seniors and their families in order to find financial resources to pay for college. The targeted population includes Mexican American and African American students who qualify for free or reduced lunch and have not created an adequate financial plan to attend college. Outreach will include contacting targeted students and families through a variety of avenues to encourage participation in the project, and building and maintaining relationships with those students and their families. Supports include creating a timeline for securing finances prior to graduation, searching for scholarships to meet the needs of the student, creating a quality scholarship application, completing the FAFSA, understanding deadlines, and creating a financial plan that ensures feasibility. These supports will be accomplished through one-to-one meetings, workshops and classes, and by connecting students and families to resources throughout the greater community.

## Part Two

### Volunteer Assignment Description

<p><b>Project Goal:</b> To increase college enrollment for graduating African-American and Mexican-American high school seniors who qualify for free or reduced lunch by providing college financial planning to targeted students who have not secured adequate funds to pay for college, and by guiding students through the process of seeking out and securing financial resources for college.</p>	<p>Period of Performance</p>
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Conduct outreach and recruitment of targeted high school seniors and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Activity 1: Contact students and families through mail, email, phone, and direct contact at school sites.</li> <li>• Member Activity 2: Conduct meetings, in groups or individually, with students and/or families to encourage participation in financial planning project.</li> </ul>	<p>Months/Quarter</p> <p>Prior to September 15, 2016</p>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Create a feasible financial goal and timeline to meet the goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Activity 1: Aid students in creating a timeline to secure finances for college.</li> <li>• Member Activity 2: Aid students in determining the cost of the program and college they plan to attend.</li> <li>• Member Activity 3: Aid students and families in understanding possible funding sources (available funds, scholarships, grants, loans, etcetera).</li> </ul>	<p>Months/Quarter</p> <p>Prior to October 1, 2016</p> <p>Prior to October 30, 2016</p> <p>Prior to October 30, 2016</p>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Identify appropriate financial aid sources and create quality scholarship applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Activity 1: Conduct sessions (group or individual) to aid students and families in seeking out scholarship opportunities that are appropriate and fitting to the needs of the student.</li> <li>• Member Activity 2: Conduct sessions (group or individual) in creating quality scholarship applications (accuracy, completeness, essays, letters of recommendation, etcetera).</li> </ul>	<p>Months/Quarter</p> <p>Prior to November 30, 2016</p> <p>Prior to December 15, 2016</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member Activity 3: Conduct sessions (group or individual) to aid families in gathering documents necessary to complete financial aid applications.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Secure financial resources to meet the needs of the student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member Activity 1: Seek out appropriate scholarships and other funding sources, and complete quality applications for financial aid.</li> <li>Member Activity 2: Conduct sessions (group or individual) for students and parents to complete and update FAFSA.</li> <li>Member Activity 3: Seek out and refer students and families to other financial supports and resources in the wider community to help meet college funding needs of targeted students.</li> </ul>	<p>Months/Quarter</p> <p>Ongoing until financial goal is met</p> <p>February- April, 2017</p> <p>Ongoing until financial goal is met</p>

### Part Three

- Describe how your project will work to reduce poverty and its effects in your community. Include relevant data to illustrate the need within the community and/or the population you serve.

The project will reduce poverty and its effects in the community by providing financial planning strategies and securing college funding for at-risk high school seniors who are not financially prepared for college. TUSD high schools average from 70% to 80% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, and approximately 2,000 African-American and Mexican-American seniors will be enrolled in the 2016-2017 school year. According to the Pew Research Center, the percentage of African-American and Mexican-American 18-24 year olds attending college is increasing but still lags behind their Anglo counterparts. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, low income students continue to enroll in college at much lower rates than their middle to high income counterparts. Additionally, the Pew Research Center reports a widening gap between the earnings of high school and college graduates. In 2013, 25 to 32-year-olds with high school diplomas earned \$17,500 less annually than their counterparts with college degrees. This project will help provide needed supports and access to education for students who are less likely to enroll in college, thus providing them with greater earning potential.

**Share of 18- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in College, 1967-2010, by Race and Ethnicity**

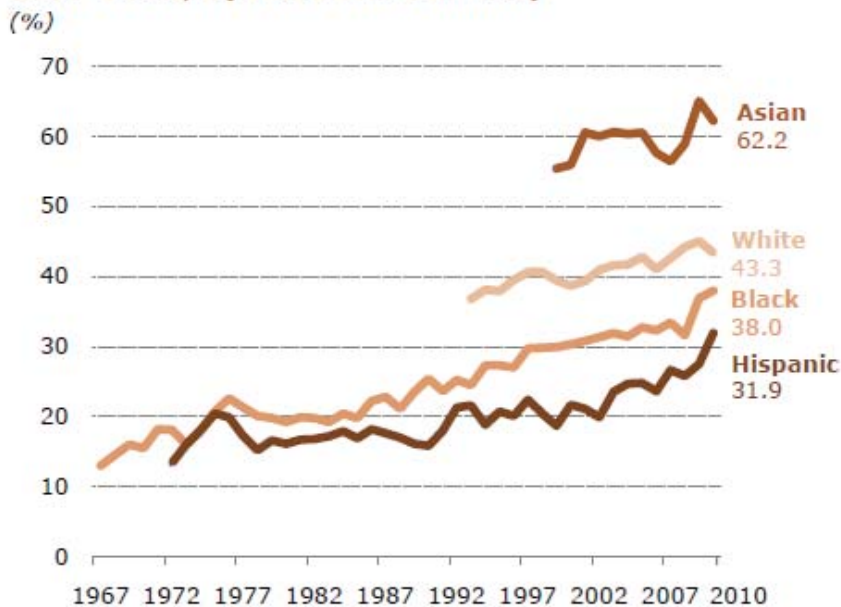
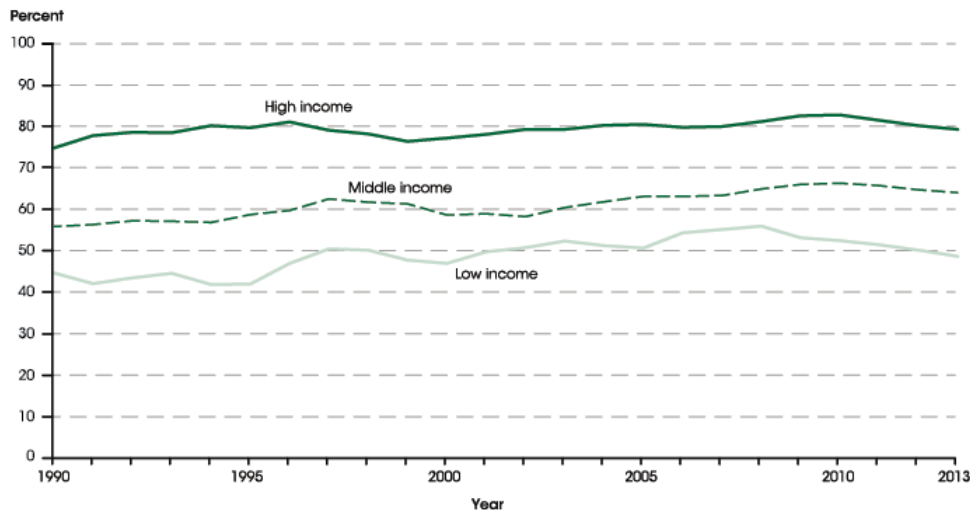
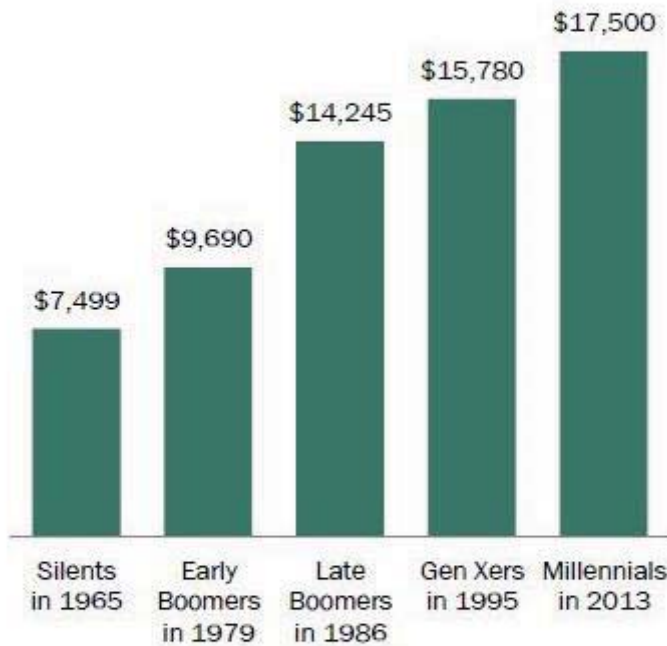


Figure 3. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges by the October immediately following high school completion, by family income: 1990–2013



### The Widening Earnings Gap of Young Adults by Educational Attainment

*The difference in median annual earnings of college and high school graduates when members of each generation were ages 25 to 32*



Notes: Median annual earnings are based on earnings and work status during the calendar year prior to interview and limited to 25- to 32-year-olds who worked full time during the previous calendar year and reported positive earnings. "Full time" refers to those who usually worked at least 35 hours a week last year. "College graduates" are those with a bachelor's degree or more.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of 2013, 1995, 1986, 1979 and 1965 March Current Population Survey (CPS) Integrated Public Use Micro Samples

<http://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/140211-pewgraph-editorial.pdf>

2. Describe how your project will impact one or more CNCS Focus areas ([Learn more about CNCS Focus Areas](#)):

- Economic Opportunity  
This project will impact economic opportunity by helping each targeted student to learn financial planning skills by creating a financial plan to secure funding for his or her college education.
- Education  
This project will impact education by providing each targeted student with a mentor to help him or her secure the financial resources necessary to attend college.

3. How many people do you expect will be served by the program supported by the AmeriCorps VISTA member?

This project will directly serve between 28 and 32 targeted TUSD high school seniors (seven or eight students working with each of the four volunteers). Additionally, siblings and other family members of targeted students will benefit in their own college financial planning by applying the skills and strategies learned by students and parents through this project. Finally, TUSD students and families not directly involved in this project will benefit by having access to some workshops and other services provided to targeted students through this project.

4. CNCS requires grantees to align programming with approved performance measures. [You can review their performance measures here](#). What are the desired outputs and outcomes of the services being provided and how will you measure these outcomes? Since VISTA members focus on building capacity building rather than direct services, the performance measures can be aligned with programs they support even if they are not providing the services themselves.

The desired outcomes for this project are to improve the knowledge of targeted students and their families in the area of financial planning for college and to ensure those students secure financial resources necessary to attend college. The performance measures and how they will be measured are indicated below.

**Performance Measure O9:** Number of economically disadvantaged individuals with improved financial knowledge. Goal 1: Economic Opportunity: Financial Literacy

Performance Measure 9 will be measured by a pre/post test administered to project participants.

**Performance Measure ED1:** Number of economically disadvantaged students or students with special/exceptional needs who start in a CNCS-supported education program.

Goal 1: Education: K-12 Success

**Performance Measure ED2:** Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs.

Goal 1: Education: K-12 Success

**Performance Measure ED3:** Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches or children with special or exceptional needs/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period.

Goal 1: Education: K-12 Success

Performance Measures ED1, ED2, and ED3 will be measured by maintaining records of dates, times, and topics covered in meetings with mentors or classes and workshops facilitated by mentors.

**Performance Measure ED10:** Number of students entering post-secondary institutions.

Goal 1: Education: K-12 Success

Performance Measure ED10 will be measured by conducting a Student Follow-up Survey to ascertain college enrollment status.

5. What evidence do you have to demonstrate that this project will lead to the desired outcome(s) described above?

According to the American Youth Policy Forum Report, "Success At Every Step: How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond" (Sarah Hooker and Betsey Brand, 2009), programs that lead to an increase in college matriculation for low-income and other at-risk youth incorporate elements of both adult mentorship programs and college planning. The Fullfillment Fund reports a 96% college matriculation rate for its low income student participants as compared to approximately 50% of non-participant peers. Their program integrates elements of mentoring and financial aid counseling which include identifying potential colleges and universities, creating a financial plan, and supporting the processes involved in negotiating financial aid. This project will incorporate these elements which have lead to successful outcomes.

6. Will your organization evaluate the program(s) supported by the VISTA member? Please describe the evaluation plan if there is one.

The evaluation plan will include a financial planning pre/post test to measure gains in financial planning knowledge, records of meetings and attendance to measure participation and completion of the program, and a follow-up survey to measure college matriculation.

7. How are you able to support a VISTA member with disabilities?

TUSD promotes and supports inclusion, and practices ADA compliance.

8. What specific skills and qualities are you looking for in this VISTA member? For example, would you prefer or require applicants who speak Spanish?

Family & Community Outreach is seeking VISTA members who are effective communicators, compassionate, patient, and able to facilitate students in creating a financial plan and locating and securing funds for college through a variety of sources. Spanish is preferred but not required.

9. Will this VISTA member be required to have access to vehicular transportation? VISTA members will need to travel to and from Family Resource Centers, school sites, and other locations to meet with students and families. Vehicular transportation is not required, but is recommended.

10. Can you support the Project Site requirements? Please note if you cannot support any of the following requirements:

- Provide acceptable work plans for AmeriCorps VISTA members.
- Provide day-to-day supervision of the activities of the AmeriCorps VISTA members.
- Provide transportation and/or transportation reimbursement at a rate of at least .50/mile for project related travel expenses for AmeriCorps VISTA members. **No**
- Provide materials and supplies related to the performance of assignments and adequate working space to permit AmeriCorps VISTA members to perform their assigned duties. Specifically, office equipment, computer, internet access, email, and telephone.
- Assist in reviewing performance of AmeriCorps VISTA members.
- Provide AmeriCorps VISTA with On-site Orientation and Training (OSOT)
- Provide monthly project updates to VISTA Leader/Supervisor
- Provide for any unique budget/financial requirements of the project.
- Provide for any project specific training requirements outside of the AmeriCorps sponsored training.
- Provide staff and time for one (1) on-site review of project.
- Notify the Sponsor immediately regarding unscheduled termination of AMERICORPS VISTA members and unscheduled changes of status and conditions of AMERICORPS VISTA members, such as arrests, hospitalization, and absence without leave.
- Maintain such records and accounts and make such reports and investigations concerning matters involving AmeriCorps VISTA members and the project as the Corporation may require. The Project Site agrees to retain such records as the Corporation may require for a period of three years after completion or termination of the project or longer if required for administrative proceedings and/or litigation purposes, and to provide access to such records to the Corporation for the purposes of audit, litigation or examination.
- Allow AmeriCorps VISTA members to participate in local emergency disaster relief efforts if needed.
- Allow AmeriCorps VISTA members to participate in Days of Service, i.e., 9/11 Day, Martin Luther King Day, Cesar Chavez Day, Mayor's Day and AmeriCorps Week.
- Allow AmeriCorps VISTA members to participate in monthly Team meetings, training, and occasional AmeriCorps Statewide events and conferences.

Please attach the site supervisors resume and position description when submitting the application.

Attached: Application TUSD Family & Community Outreach, Family Resource Center Program-Resume  
Application TUSD Family & Community Outreach, Family Resource Center Program-Job Description