

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

REPRESENTATIVES

Rick Miera, Chair
Nora Espinoza
Mary Helen Garcia
Jimmie C. Hall
Dennis J. Roch
Mimi Stewart

State Capitol North, 325 Don Gaspar, Suite 200
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
Phone: (505) 986-4591 Fax: (505) 986-4338
<http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/lesc/lescdefault.aspx>

SENATORS

Cynthia Nava, Vice Chair
Mary Jane M. García
Gay G. Kernan
Lynda M. Lovejoy

ADVISORY

Vernon D. Asbill
Mark Boitano
Stephen H. Fischmann
Howie C. Morales
John Pinto
Sander Rue

ADVISORY

Alonzo Baldonado
Ray Begaye
Eleanor Chávez
George Dodge, Jr.
Roberto “Bobby” J. Gonzales
Tim D. Lewis
Sheryl M. Williams Stapleton
Shirley A. Tyler
Bob Wooley



Frances Ramírez-Maestas, Director
David Harrell, PhD, Deputy Director

August 24, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: Pamela Herman, J.D.

RE: “ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY” ADULT BASIC EDUCATION GRANT TO THE NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

On August 4, 2011, as part of its Accelerating Opportunity initiative, Jobs for the Future (JFF)¹ announced the award of \$200,000 design grants to 11 states, including New Mexico, to “challenge states across the country to transform adult education systems into more successful pathways leading to economic security” (see Attachment). JFF says that Accelerating Opportunity seeks to change how adult basic education (ABE) is delivered by putting students on track to earn a postsecondary certificate or degree and giving them the support they need to succeed. According to JFF, the Accelerating Opportunity initiative is funded by a collaborative effort of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations.

The Higher Education Department (HED) is the New Mexico Accelerating Opportunity grantee. A representative of HED states that the award was made in March 2011, and that since then, the department has been working with ABE programs in the state to develop curricula based on a model program from the state of Washington called Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST). The IBEST model involves team teaching, in each classroom, of both basic and career skills. That approach provides students with a context for learning basic skills and a chance to enter career pathways and start earning postsecondary much sooner than would

¹ JFF states that it is a national nonprofit organization that identifies, develops, and promotes new education and work force strategies that help communities, states, and the nation compete in a global economy.

otherwise be possible. The model is oriented toward higher-skilled ABE students. According to HED, studies of IBEST as it was implemented in Washington show that the model boasts course completion rates in the 85 to 90 percent range.

HED indicates that most of the Accelerating Opportunity grant funds are being used for stipends for instructors to plan and prepare courses. IBEST courses now in development will be piloted at three institutions in fall 2011:

- University of New Mexico-Valencia campus;
- Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell campus; and
- Central New Mexico Community College.

HED hopes that up to 10 public postsecondary institutions can offer IBEST classes in spring 2012. Institutions that have expressed an interest in participating, in addition to the pilot sites, include:

- Clovis Community College;
- Doña Ana Community College;
- Northern New Mexico College;
- San Juan Community College;
- Santa Fe Community College;
- University of New Mexico-Taos campus; and
- Western New Mexico University.

According to HED, the department hopes that implementing the IBEST model in New Mexico will allow for leveraging of teaching resources and state ABE funds by getting students into credit bearing postsecondary courses sooner. HED is currently exploring the availability of other funding streams to support and sustain the IBEST approach if it proves successful.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Jeff Landis

617.728.4446 ext. 146

jlandis@jff.org

Jobs for the Future's Accelerating Opportunity Initiative Awards Grants to Eleven States to Transform Adult Education

Strategic Funding Collaboration Supports Community College Efforts to Increase Adults' Employment Skills

Boston, MA (August 4, 2011) - [Jobs for the Future](#) (JFF) today announced the grantees of [Accelerating Opportunity: A Breaking Through Initiative](#), which will challenge states across the country to transform adult education systems into more successful pathways leading to economic security.

Accelerating Opportunity targets workers who are underprepared for today's demanding job market and builds on the legacy of JFF's innovative adult education initiative *Breaking Through*, as well as Washington State's *I-BEST* program. It is supported by a strategic partnership of five of the nation's leading philanthropies.

Accelerating Opportunity has two phases. The first 11 states selected—Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, and Wisconsin—have each been awarded \$200,000 to support efforts to redesign adult basic education and postsecondary programs to integrate basic skills with practical, occupational training. Approximately five of these states will then be selected to receive implementation grants of \$1.6 million each over three years to implement their plans. The initiative will engage nearly 40 community colleges across the country and impact over 18,000 adult learners.

“The number of adults without skills and credentials beyond high school is a national crisis threatening our economic recovery,” says JFF President and CEO Marlene B. Seltzer. “At the same time, employers are having difficulty finding qualified workers to fill skilled positions that command a higher salary. The trend will only continue—by 2018, 70 percent of all jobs will require workers with some form of postsecondary credentials.”

Over 26 million adults lack a high school diploma. While just over 2.5 million of these individuals are enrolled in adult basic education programs, many of them leave after only a semester or two, not earning any form of postsecondary credential. **Accelerating Opportunity** seeks to change the way adult basic education is delivered by putting students on track to earn a postsecondary credential and providing them with the support needed to succeed. Educational pathways to higher skills,

credentials, and employment will be rigorously tested and independently evaluated. This evidence will be provided to philanthropy, labor, employers, adult education planners and other stakeholders to ensure that adult education programs lead to postsecondary credentials and good jobs.

Accelerating Opportunity is funded by a strategic collaboration of diverse philanthropies including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations. For program and implementation expertise, JFF has engaged the National Council on Workforce Education, National College Transition Network, and the Washington State Board of Community & Technical Colleges as partners.

“This is a serious economic issue, as well as an education issue. There is a mismatch between the high-demand, high-skilled jobs currently available and the skills workers currently have,” says Hilary Pennington, director of Postsecondary Success, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “***Accelerating Opportunity*** links directly with our work in postsecondary education, and most importantly, it will address the needs of a traditionally underserved population on community college campuses.”

Accelerating Opportunity is informed by the [Breaking Through](#) initiative, which has promoted the support of 41 community colleges in 22 states to improve career pathways and postsecondary education for low-skilled adults.

“Building from our previous work with *Breaking Through*, states will get the opportunity to identify the barriers to success for their residents and design a plan that will address the unique needs of their workforces and communities,” says Maria Flynn, JFF vice president, Building Economic Opportunity. “We are thrilled to expand this work and engage every important stakeholder, from community college presidents and trustees to local politicians and policymakers, allowing for redesigned programs that are genuinely sustainable.”

About Jobs for the Future

Jobs for the Future identifies, develops, and promotes new education and workforce strategies that help communities, states, and the nation compete in a global economy. In over 200 communities across 43 states, JFF improves the pathways leading from high school to college to family-sustaining careers.

www.jff.org

www.twitter.com/jfftweets

About the National Council on Workforce Education

The National Council for Workforce Education is committed to promoting excellence and growth in workforce education. As an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), NCWE provides a national forum for administrators and faculty in workforce education and basic skills, as well as representatives of business, labor, military, and government, to affect and direct the future role of two-year and other post-secondary institutions in workforce education and economic development. NCWE provides the link between policy and workforce education and economic development by providing support, research, and critical information to members on

current and future trends and policies.

<http://www.ncwe.org>

About the National College Transition Network

The National College Transition Network (NCTN) at World Education, Inc. supports adult education staff, programs, and states, and regional and municipal agencies in establishing and strengthening college transition services. NCTN accomplishes this through technical assistance, professional development, collegial sharing, advocacy, and publications that focus on the needs of the field. NCTN connects policy and research and practice to help build the capacity and expertise in adult education.

<http://www.collegetransition.org>

About the Washington State Board of Community & Technical Colleges

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) is responsible for administering the Community and Technical College Act and providing leadership and coordination for Washington's public system of 34 community and technical colleges. The SBCTC is governed by a nine-member board appointed by the Governor. The SBCTC is headquartered in Olympia.

<http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu>

About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org>

About the Joyce Foundation

The Joyce Foundation supports efforts to protect the natural environment of the Great Lakes, to reduce poverty and violence in the region, and to ensure that its people have access to good schools, decent jobs, and a diverse and thriving culture. We are especially interested in improving public policies, because public systems such as education and welfare directly affect the lives of so many people, and because public policies help shape private sector decisions about jobs, the environment, and the health of our communities. To ensure that public policies truly reflect public rather than private interests, we support efforts to reform the system of financing election campaigns.

<http://www.joycefdn.org>

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Established in 1930, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports children, families and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society. Grants are concentrated in the United States, southern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

<http://www.wkkgf.org>

About the Kresge Foundation

The Kresge Foundation is a \$3.1 billion private, national foundation that seeks to influence the quality of life for future generations through its support of nonprofit organizations in six fields of interest: arts and culture, community development, education, the environment, health, and human services. Fostering greater access to and success in postsecondary education for low-income, minority and first-generation college students is the focus of Kresge's Education grantmaking. In 2010, Kresge awarded more than \$23 million in grants to support higher education in the United States and South Africa, with more than one-third benefiting U.S. community colleges. <http://www.kresge.org>.

About the Open Society Foundations

The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve this mission, the Foundations seek to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, the Open Society Foundations implement a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. At the same time, we build alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. The Foundations place a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of people in marginalized communities.

<http://www.soros.org>.