LSC Rises During Pandemic

The dedicated grant teams at LSC have gone above and beyond to find ways to assist students who have had their lives turned upside down by the COVID-19 crisis. Utilizing the abundant technology LSC has made available, some grant teams are tutoring and advising students virtually. Others have worked hard to switch classes to an online format so students can complete their course work now but present their grant projects at a later date. Thanks to these hardworking teams, students have online access to programs like Study Island and are attending 4-year college tours virtually rather than in person. Advisors are working diligently to ensure students remain on track and are thriving. Other grant team members are working with funders and RDA to obtain contract extensions for their grants because students and colleges will need those grants more than ever in the coming months. RDA would like to extend its gratitude to all grant team personnel who have risen to the challenge of ensuring that students come first, despite the personal challenges they face. One LSC!

RDA Staff Members Receive LSC Awards

RDA staff shined at the 2020 LSC Awards Ceremony. Grant Developer Charis Prejean (pictured, right) received the Staff Excellence award for System Office University Park. Charis was nominated for her leadership in a U.S. Department of Education, Title III/V Eligibility Waiver system-wide project. The project involves working with LSC AIR to update the PowerBI report; revising a system-wide college survey (adapted to each unique college) and coordinating the effort to collect and report all required information from each college.

Executive Director Elizabeth Thompson (pictured, left) earned the inaugural LSC Focus Award for System Office University Park. The award recognizes an employee who exemplifies our Cultural Beliefs through leadership that drives LSC toward meeting its Top 5 Strategic Goals. Elizabeth was nominated for her work to build partnerships with the LSC Foundation and LSC departments, resulting in student scholarships and other support for students and campuses.
All 6 campuses Title III/Title V Eligible

RDA is pleased to report that all six eligible colleges received a Title III/V Eligibility Waiver for the FY2020-2021 year. The waiver applications are a concrete example of what happens when we work as One LSC. AIR provided support and expertise in building a PowerBI report specific to the Waiver requirements. Grant Developer Charis Prejean devised an online survey to collect and report data which allowed each campus to contribute campus-specific data. Other vital contributors include the Office of General Counsel, the RDA Development Staff and key people at each college. These waivers make LSC eligible to apply for funding from the CARES Act for HSI institutions.

Advantages of receiving a waiver include exempting all LSC campuses from paying a 50% cost share for student workers, establishing eligibility for other non-Federal cost share waivers for Federal Student Financial Aid and establishing eligibility to apply for certain grants and exemption from cost share requirements in grants such as TRIO and THECB College Readiness and Success Models.

CARES Act Grant Opportunities

The CARES Act brings support to colleges and universities to assist in supporting students and covering costs involved with COVID-19. Grants could result from several different government offices and agencies. Governors received funds to distribute to K-12 or Higher Education. The CARES Act provides funds for competitive grants for Title III and Title V. Because all six waiver applications for LSC-eligible schools were approved, we are eligible for this money. Thank you for your support! Funds for competitive grants will also go to the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and the National Endowment for the Humanities.
LSC, Baker Hughes, TWC Announce New Partnership

A collaborative effort to launch a pilot program between LSC, Baker Hughes and the Texas Workforce Commission will fund LSC students in full for the first cohort to begin a successful career as a Field Service Technician in the energy industry. The first-of-its-kind program will address the industry’s urgent need for qualified candidates while providing proficient students with key skills and a direct path to potential employment after graduation.

The seven-week program will feature hands-on training in technical labs and time on the Baker Hughes training rig located in Tomball. Field Service Technicians provide service and customer support during field operations. They also help manage all on-site installation, repair, maintenance and test tasks. Field Service Technicians also diagnose errors or technical problems and determine solutions.

Pictured (left to right) are Muzzamil Khider, VP of HR for Oilfield Services, Baker Hughes; Chancellor Stephen C. Head; Robert D. Andrade, Texas Industry Partnership Programs, Texas Workforce Commission; and Michael Gutierrez, Workforce Solutions.

Students Get Results in Active Learning Environment

Lone Star College-CyFair students and faculty recently completed their first semester of math courses in the new Active Learning Classroom provided by the Steelcase Foundation’s $67,000 grant. The active learning environment includes flexible seating arrangements for small group, large group and individual seating. In January 2020, the Steelcase Foundation analyzed pre and post survey data from both students and faculty.

The surveys included questions related to behavior, engagement, and the perceived effectiveness of the classroom. Student results showed improvement of 20% or more in several areas including peer supported learning, critical examination and discussion of ideas, and inspiration after seeing their work. The results for faculty were slightly less positive, but there was a 20% increase in key areas. For example, faculty say students are now using a variety of new tools and the active learning environment is conducive to their desired teaching method.

Grant Summit to Return Next Year

See you in 2021!
Tips for Working From Home

The unexpected need to work from home is causing all of us to learn a new skill set. We gathered tips from the NGMA Network, BBC.com, and the New York Times to make the transition a little easier.

1. Use collaboration tools (Microsoft Teams, Google Drive, Google Hangout, Zoom).
2. Stay connected with as much face-to-face interaction as possible (Jabber, Face Time, WebEx).
3. Conduct Weekly Team Meetings, however brief.
4. Maintain a regular routine (as much as possible around home schooling and multiple people working from home).
5. Avoid isolating yourself. You can be alone and still interact with others.
6. Take breaks. Take a walk. Fresh air is refreshing.
7. Establish a designated work space and set boundaries for when and where work will occur.

LSC supports WebEx Meetings, WebEx Events, WebEx Teams, Jabber, and Microsoft OneDrive. That means they are available to you at no cost. Learn more at [http://www.lonestar.edu/ots.htm](http://www.lonestar.edu/ots.htm).

New Awards

Please congratulate the recipients of these and all recent awards. Note that TWC rescinded four grants totaling $65,728 because of COVID-19. Those grants are noted with an asterisk in the list below. All of the grants were to offer summer programming for school age students. The Governor’s Summer Merit program would have provided STEM skills-related summer camp programs while Camp Code for Girls would have provided computer coding/programming summer camps. TWC will not fund these grants this year but intends to hold another competition for the summer of 2021.

LSC-DEER, Skills Development Fund-U.S. Steel, $487,454
LSC-DEER, Perkins Basic Grant Program Additional Allocation, $109,535
LSC-DEER, Metallica Scholars, $50,000
LSC-Houston North, Out2Learn, $0 (Community Partnership)
*LSC-Houston North, Governor’s Summer Merit Program, $12,861
*LSC-North Harris, Governor’s Summer Merit Program, $13,703
*LSC-University Park, Camp Code for Girls, $12,314
*LSC-Tomball College, Camp Code for Girls, $26,850