

1. Organization Name

Scholar's Initiative (SI)

2. Program or Project Name

Sophomore to Senior After-School Program

3. Impact You Seek

A statement of the problem the organization is trying to solve with this program or project and how the community will look different if/when the organization succeeds.

Scholar's Initiative exists to solve the problem that students from low-income families have lower high school graduation rates and lower college enrollment rates than their middle and upper-class peers. If successful with the Sophomore to Senior After-School Program in 2013-2014, Jeffco Public Schools will have an equal high school graduation rate for all students, regardless of family income level with a 75% transition and enrollment in postsecondary education in for all Seniors involved in the SI program.

4. Target Population(s) Characteristics

A descriptive list of characteristics of the population(s) the organization seeks to serve with this program or project including, but not limited to: age, geographic location, ethnicity, and economic background.

Teens, ages 14-18, enrolled at Jefferson County Public High Schools, from low-income families, predominantly Latino, receiving free and reduced lunch.

5. Key Assumptions/Rationale for the Program

A bulleted list of the assumptions upon which the program or project is based. Cite existing data in support of your Assumptions when available.

- First-generation college students need support to complete a rigorous high school curriculum and transition to college (Adelman, 2005)
- High school students relate to and respect near-age peers
- Mentoring commitment beyond one year yields better long-term results for students

6. Position in the Field

Describe other organizations' work to address the same problem/issues addressed by your organization and how your approach is similar or different.

College Get Ready and Colorado Scholars are both partners in the field who help prepare young students for college. Both of these organizations are key partners, but SI maintains an ongoing relationship year round versus the summer college prep support organizations. SI is the only program that follows the student with a one-on-one intensive mentoring relationship for a three-year period. SI is also the only after-school program serving Jeffco Public Schools that currently uses the Department of Higher Education data to verify whether students involved in the program enroll in higher education.

7. Partnerships and Collaborations

List any organizations you partner or collaborate with related to this request and describe your relationship with each.

College Get Ready provides our summer week-long intensive program. Jeffco Public Schools provides data including attendance rates and semester grades for all participants. We partner with the statewide organization, College in Colorado to help provide resources for parents to engage with their child's school and college-going process.

8. Time Frame

Provide the start and end dates for the program or project and any other important information in regards to timing.

July 2013 through July 2014. Students meet their mentor in August and will maintain their relationship for a period of three years.

9. Level of Evaluation and Measurement for this Program or Project

Please select from the list below and briefly describe practices in collecting, analyzing and using information related to this program or project.

- Self-Reported: Organization tracks Outputs and some Outcomes to the best of its ability.
- Third-Party Informal: Organization has contracted with an external evaluator for this program or project.
- Third-Party Quasi-Experimental: Organization has contracted with an external evaluator for this program or project. The evaluation includes a comparison to a randomly-selected control group.
- Third-Party Experimental: Organization has contracted with an external evaluator for this program or project. The evaluation includes a comparison to a randomly-selected control group.

Brief description:

A third-party experimental study including a randomized control group, was concluded on SI in the year 2012 by the University of Colorado Boulder. SI receives data from Jeffco Public Schools each semester. Students submit 9-week progress reports to their mentors.

10. Sustainability

Is there a plan to sustain elements of this project beyond the end of the grant period? Please describe.

The Scholar's Initiative will continue to seek individual and foundation support for this program. In addition to philanthropic dollars, in 2015 the organization will work with Jeffco Public Schools to pursue a county-wide tax increase for increasing public school funding, including revenue that would be allocated for organizations that can demonstrate increasing academic achievement and increasing college-going rates for Jeffco students.

11. Policy Implications

Does the purpose of this request have public policy implications? If so, please describe.

Yes, Scholar's Initiative is an evidence-based program that exhibits positive outcomes including increased academic achievement and enrollment in postsecondary opportunities. The research study conducted on Scholar's Initiative in 2012 demonstrated the efficacy of a three-year intensive mentoring/after-school program. As funding cuts in K-12 public education continue, policy makers will be able to demonstrate the impact and validity of academic-focused college preparation programs.

12. Program or Project Plan and Outcomes

List **three to five** key program or project Activities. For each one, provide all Output Targets, Outcomes, Success Measures and Measurement Tools. Some Activities may have multiple Output Targets, Outcomes, Success Measures and Measurement Tools. Begin a new row for each Activity. This table should not exceed three pages.

Activities Programmatic actions or methods the organization will undertake in an effort to achieve Impact.	Output Targets Quantifiable units of service the organization expects to deliver through its Activities.	Outcomes Results or changes the organization expects its Activities will achieve. Outcomes may be short-term (shortly following the activity) or long-term (measured after time has passed). Please describe all short-term Outcomes expected during the grant period and any long term Outcomes that provide relevant context.	Success Measures Observable measures that define success and indicate that the organization is making progress toward achieving its desired Impact. Measures should include the number or percentage of participants who will achieve each desired Outcome.	Measurement Tools Methods and instruments the organization uses to collect information about Outputs and Outcomes.
<p>Weekly academic tutoring sessions:</p> <p>Students receive twice weekly, one-hour sessions to help with school-work</p> <p>Mentors share ownership of academic outcomes in core classes with their students</p> <p>Teachers have college-mentor available to help student be successful</p>	<p>100 students will participate in twice weekly academic tutoring sessions</p> <p>100 students will participate as mentors</p>	<p>Students' GPAs will improve</p> <p>Students will enroll in advanced courses</p> <p>Students will graduate from high school</p>	<p>85% of the 100 students in each cohort will maintain GPA of 3.0 or higher</p> <p>Students who fall below a 3.0 GPA will increase their GPA by .5 in the next semester after they have fallen below a 3.0</p> <p>80% of the students will take one or more advanced or AP class each semester</p> <p>90% of the students will graduate from high school</p>	<p>Grades and report cards shared by the district each semester</p> <p>Student course-enrollment provided by the district</p> <p>Student progress reports provided by the student and shared with the mentor each 9 weeks</p> <p>Graduation data provided by the school district</p>

<p>Monthly college preparation sessions:</p> <p>Students learn about the college-going process</p> <p>Students receive help building a portfolio</p> <p>Students work on critical components of college application process include ACT prep and college-essays</p>	<p>100 students will participate in monthly sessions</p>	<p>Students will understand the process of applying to and enrolling in college</p> <p>Students will have all of the resources they need in place to apply to college</p> <p>Students will enroll in college</p>	<p>80% of the students attend at least 8 sessions</p> <p>80% of the students complete their college portfolios with 2 college essays, three college applications, 1 resume and completed FAFSA application</p> <p>80% of the students will enroll in postsecondary education</p>	<p>Program coordinator tracks student attendance at monthly sessions</p> <p>College-prep director and mentors track portfolio materials completed by students</p> <p>Students self-report their college enrollment: self-reporting is verified in fall by data from the Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Colorado Community College System office</p>
<p>Concurrent enrollment courses:</p> <p>Students participate from sophomore to senior year in concurrent enrollment classes</p>	<p>100 students participate in one concurrent enrollment class each semester</p>	<p>Students gain familiarity with college-level coursework</p> <p>Students earn college credit</p> <p>Students maintain a passing grade in order to participate in the program</p>	<p>75% of students receive a grade of C or higher in their concurrent enrollment courses</p>	<p>Program coordinator receives course-work grades from Red Rocks Community College and the Community College of Denver</p>
<p>Social events with peer cohorts:</p> <p>Students socialize with high school peers and college students</p>	<p>4 social events offered over the course of the year</p>	<p>Students build a community of peers who value academics</p> <p>Students have fun in the program</p>	<p>90% of students participate in at least one social event per semester</p> <p>80% of students report positive experiences at social events and an increased feeling of community among their SI peers</p>	<p>College coordinator tracks attendance at events by attendance sheets and records this information in an Excel spreadsheet</p> <p>Student self-assessments</p>

<p>Quarterly parent sessions:</p> <p>Parents attend sessions about the SI program</p>	<p>4 quarterly parent sessions offered over the course of the year</p>	<p>Parents understand the components of the program</p> <p>Parents are better equipped with information to support the academic achievement of their students</p> <p>Parents are better equipped to support their students in the college-application process</p>	<p>80% of students have a parent, family member or other adult attend at least 3 quarterly meetings a year</p> <p>Students report feeling more supported in their academic achievement and college-application process by their parents</p> <p>Parents report feeling better equipped to support their students</p>	<p>Program coordinator tracks attendance with attendance records</p> <p>Student self-assessments</p> <p>Parent self-assessments</p>
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