Achieving the Dream ™

Community Colleges Count

2016 Leah Meyer Austin Award

Application Summary and Rubric

Achieving the Dream

Leah Meyer Austin Award

Contents

Award Overview

The Leah Meyer Austin Award (LMA Award) annually recognizes an Achieving the Dream Institution that has demonstrated outstanding progress in achieving organizational and cultural change in pursuit of a student success vision that integrates all its individual efforts into a cohesive strategy. Successful institutions design whole-college solutions to support and promote the success of all students, resulting in significant and sustainable institutional improvement. Institutions take bold actions to design policies, processes, and programs that reinforce desire to achieve the institution's student success and equity goals. Winners exhibit dynamic and committed leadership, demonstrating the following: cultivate a culture of evidence, support and promote broad and meaningful engagement from stakeholders across the college community, and pay particularly close attention to the needs of underrepresented and underserved students.

Eligible Applicants

Active Achieving the Dream Institutions that joined the Network in 2013 or prior and have not received the LMA Award in the last previous two years (2014 or 2015) are eligible to apply. For a complete list of active institutions, please visit our website. Achieving the Dream will announce the winner of the LMA award at DREAM 2016. The winner will be notified by November 20, 2015, and will agree to keep the results confidential until the formal announcement.

How to Apply

Applicants should submit the two following components to austinaward@achievingthedream.org by **11:59 p.m. EST, October 16, 2015**.
- Narrative questions (Word/PDF)
- Evidence upload (Excel/Word/PDF)

We strongly encourage applicants to review the full application and review the rubric prior to beginning their application.

Contact

Contact Achieving the Dream staff at austinaward@achievingthedream.org.

Application Questions

To apply for the 2016 Leah Meyer Austin Award, please complete the following application.

1. **Institutional Contacts**: Full contact information for three key contacts (application contact, President/CEO, and key communications contact)

2. **Overview Statement and Narrative Questions**

   Overview Statement: (maximum 500-word summary) Provide an overview describing why your institution should be considered for the Leah Meyer Austin Award. Briefly describe what has led to increased student success at the institution, with particular attention to the success of underrepresented and underserved students, and indicate how your institution has tried to close achievement gaps.

   Narrative Questions: Please answer all of the questions below. Strong applications will clearly reference evidence throughout narrative responses, with references to specific chart/table numbers in the Evidence Upload section where appropriate.

   i. Outline your institution's student success vision and priorities/goals. In your response, you must include: how the institution selected these priorities, how these priorities are communicated across the college community, and how they are embedded in the college's decision-making and resource allocation processes. (Maximum 300 words)

   ii. Describe your institution's accomplishments in reaching the student success priorities/goals to date. Please reference relevant evidence provided in the Evidence Upload section and explain any fluctuations in the referenced data. Strong applications will also discuss how these improvements were achieved. For example, you may wish to include information on faculty and staff engagement, community partnerships, strength of leadership, or innovations in teaching and learning. (Maximum 600 words)

   iii. Explain any challenges your institution has faced and how you have addressed them. While we are looking for institutions that have worked innovatively to overcome obstacles in accomplishing their student success goals, we recognize that this process is difficult. Strong institutions are able to identify their weaknesses and challenges and are bold enough to address them. For example, you may wish to include information on state policy challenges, leadership transitions, financial or resource challenges as well as your plans for overcoming these challenges. (Maximum 300 words)

iv. Describe your institution's approach to achieving equitable outcomes for all students as it relates to your student success agenda. Identify at least two your institution's greatest strengths for meeting these priorities and its principal challenge in this area, outlining the steps taken to overcome this challenge. The review committee values candid responses that focus on the action steps the institution is taking to address challenges.
(Maximum 300 words)

v. Describe how your institution has achieved a student-centered culture that reflects systemic institutional changes. Achieving the Dream Institutions are expected to strive for organizational and cultural improvement focused on the success of all students. Describe how your student success efforts have improved or are improving; the institution's organization, processes, and culture; and outline your plans for ensuring the continuation of this work.
(Maximum 300 words)

3. **Evidence Upload**

In a single PDF file, provide evidence of institutional transformation that is improving the way the institution functions as well as increasing student outcomes. This document should not exceed 11 pages, including the cover page. Institutions should use this section to complement and augment their narrative question responses.

a. Cover Page: Include the institution's name and a table of contents that lists titles/charts/table numbers with corresponding page numbers.
(Maximum one page.)

b. Evidence of Impact and Scale: Provide clearly labeled documents as evidence of institutional transformation that is improving student outcomes. Evidence must support the claims made in the narrative and be presented in a clear manner, with references to specific chart/table numbers in the narrative where appropriate. Evidence should focus on the impact of interventions or policy/procedure changes on student outcomes, as well as the scale and reach of said interventions/policies/procedures. In documenting percentage growth and/or any outcomes data, applicants must include both percentages and actual numbers.
(Maximum ten pages.)

Examples of evidence may include any or all of the following:
- Data illustrating the achievements outlined in the narrative, focusing on ATD's five core indicators of student success (completion of developmental instruction, completion of "gateway" courses particularly the first college-level or degree-credit courses in math and English, successful completion of courses attempted, persistence from term-to-term and year-to-year, and

completion of credentials). When providing these data, please follow these guidelines:

- o Disaggregate the data by race/ethnicity, Pell status, gender, etc.
- o Provide at least 4 years of data.
- o Data should show a significant upward trend.
- o Define the cohort clearly.

- Data demonstrating faculty or staff development. For example, you might include data showing the broad engagement of faculty and staff in particularly successful professional development opportunities. Strong applications will also provide the level of engagement of adjuncts and part-time staff.

- Evidence of changes in institutional policies and practices to improve student success. For example, making successful programs--such as orientation or student success courses--mandatory, streamlining the graduation process, eliminating late registration, etc. To save space in the narrative, you may wish to provide a chart summarizing these changes, providing information on what the policy was before as well as what changes occurred to better promote student success.

- Student, faculty, or staff feedback that indicates improvement of programs, processes, or services. For example, you may wish to provide results from focus groups, surveys, or interviews where students, faculty, and staff assess instruction, services, or the institution.

- Evidence of external stakeholder engagement. For example, partnerships with local K-12 institutions, four-year institutions, local nonprofit organizations, or businesses.

- Evidence of scaling successful interventions, modifying interventions, or eliminating unsuccessful ones using the More to Most framework. ["Some" indicates the intervention is serving less than 25% of its target population. "More" indicates a scale level of 25 - 60% of target population. "Most" indicates a service level of over 60% of target population.]

- Up to two letters of support from a governing board and/or a community stakeholder. They must be submitted as part of the 10 pages of evidence. PLEASE NOTE: Testimonials from Achieving the Dream Leadership or Data Coaches will not be accepted as evidence.

4. **President/CEO Signature Confirmation Page**

President/ CEO Signature Confirmation Page

X _____

Review Rubric

Reviewers are required to use this rubric to evaluate applications for the LMA Award. We encourage applicants to review this rubric prior to beginning their application.

Overview Statement

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Applicant provides a compelling case for why the institution should be considered for the 2016 Leah Meyer Austin Award				
Applicant provides a clear concise overview of the institution's journey toward increasing student success				

Student Success Priorities

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Applicant provides a clear description of the institution's student success vision and priorities/goals				
Student success priorities are ambitious and likely to positively impact a large proportion of students				
Applicant describes how the institution communicates its progress towards its priorities to the college community				

Accomplishments

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Applicant offers evidence of progress toward meeting the institution's student success goals				
Applicant provides a clear explanation of how this progress was achieved				

Challenges

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Applicant acknowledges and describes the institution's major challenges in meeting student success goals				
Applicant outlines effective steps that the institution has taken/is taking to address these challenges				

Achieving Equity Outcomes

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Applicant has a carefully considered and planned approach to achieving equitable outcomes				
Applicant is candid about its weaknesses in this area and presents a plan to overcome these challenges				

Systemic Institutional Improvement

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Applicant describes how attention to student success priorities is transforming institutions in terms of structures, policies, procedures, faculty and staff engagement, and resource allocation				
Applicant outlines the institution's plans to continue its student success efforts				

Evidence of Impact and Scale

Statement	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Promising 2	Needs Improvement 1
Evidence is relevant to the narrative responses, showing the impact of specific policies or practices adopted to improve student success				
Evidence is presented in a clear way. All graphs, charts, and tables are clearly labeled and n's are provided in addition to percentages where applicable				
Evidence shows clear progress (upward trend) of the institution improving student outcomes				
The majority of the evidence submitted regarding student outcomes includes disaggregated data in relation to race/ethnicity/Pell status				
Evidence shows the scale or reach of specific policies or practices				