Benefits Access for College Completion

Project GO!: Breaking Down Barriers to College Completion

Welcome
Benefits Access for College Completion

Our Institution
Benefits Access for College Completion

Cuyahoga Community College Mission

To provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services - including university transfer, technical and lifelong learning programs - that promote individual development and improve the overall quality of life in a multicultural community.
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- Opened in 1963
- Ohio’s first and largest community college
- 4th largest higher education institution in Ohio
- More than 55,000 credit & non-credit students each year
- More than 144 degrees, certificates, and university-transfer programs
- Transfer agreements with more than 35 institutions in 71 disciplines
- Three primary sources of funds: county levies, state funding, tuition/fees
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- Four Campuses
  - Metropolitan - Cleveland
  - Eastern – Warrensville/Highland Hts.
  - Western - Parma
  - Westshore – Westlake

- Two Corporate Colleges

- One Workforce Site

- One site located in Brunswick

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Serving Northeast Ohio

- Lake County
  - Eastern Campus
- Geauga County
- Summit County
- Cuyahoga County
  - Corporate College East
  - Metropolitan Campus
  - Hospitality Management Center at Public Square
  - Unified Technologies Center
- Lorain County
  - Corporate College West
  - Westshore Campus
- Medina County
  - Brunswick University Center
  - Western Campus
- Medina County
  - Medina University Center

Breaking Down Barriers to College Completion
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- Average age is 29
- 20% are 40+ years old
- 70% are in career/technical programs
- 80% place into Developmental math
- 60% place into Developmental English
- 70% receive financial aid
What is BACC?
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A national demonstration to develop and institutionalize scalable and sustainable policies and practices that help a diverse population of eligible students gain access to an array of public benefits. Accessing benefits and financial aid will better address students' financial and support needs, and thereby improve academic performance and completion.
This initiative is led by the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) with funding from the Ford Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Lumina Foundation and the Open Society Foundations. The Annie F. Casey Foundation is also a contributor.
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A “Chosen” College

Of nearly 1,200 Community Colleges in the U.S., Tri-C was one of six selected to apply for the BACC grant.

Other chosen schools are

- Gateway Community & Technical College (KY)
- Lake Michigan Community College (MI)
- LaGuardia Community College (NY)
- Northampton Community College (PA)
- Skyline College (CA)
Aimed at solving two problems

- Billions of unused public benefit dollars are returned to state and county funders each year
- Students drop out of college for financial reasons

Breaking Down Barriers to College Completion
Billions of public benefit dollars are returned to state and county funders each year.

Students drop out of college due to financial reasons.
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Who are the partners?
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Project GO! Partners

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS)
Ohio Board of Regents
Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB)
Cleveland Foodbank
United Way 211
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Project GO! College Partners

- Case Western Reserve University
- Cleveland State University
- Cuyahoga Community College (Human Services Students)
- John Carroll University
- Kent State University

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Strategy for initiating and expanding services by identifying:

• the full range of public benefits available
• points of contact where information about public benefits can be delivered
• providing training for staff and Benefit Coaches who interface with students
• establishing processes, policies and procedures that provide online and individual one-on-one assistance to students
• closely monitoring and evaluating student access to public benefits
• using data to assess the impact of BACC on student entry, persistence, and completion

Source: Tri-C BACC Letter of Interest
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Student Engagement Campaign

• Email blasts to target students
• Mail – flyers, brochures
• Cards posted at Enrollment Centers
• Channel in My Tri-C Space
• External www.Tri-C.edu/Project Go! webpage
• PowerPoint presentation on HiViz monitors
• Posters throughout each campus
• Phone calls to target students by benefit coaches
• Identifiable kiosks/workstations at each campus near Career Centers
• Faculty announcements
## Benefits Access for College Completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ohio Benefit Bank</th>
<th>Food and Nutrition Programs</th>
<th>Healthcare Assistance Programs</th>
<th>Tax and Student Aid Programs</th>
<th>Other Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)</td>
<td>Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Children, and Infants (WIC)</td>
<td>Free and Reduced Priced Lunch Program (USDA)</td>
<td>Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Healthy Start &amp; Healthy Families Programs</td>
<td>Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD) Medicaid</td>
<td>Medicare Premium Assistance</td>
<td>Child Care Assistance (Title XX)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Child and Family Health Services (CFHS)</td>
<td>Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps</td>
<td>Medicare Low-Income Subsidy (LIS)</td>
<td>Ohio Works First Cash Assistance (OWF)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ohio’s Best Rx (prescription drug discount)</td>
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<td>Golden Buckeye Program</td>
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<td>Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)</td>
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<td>Voter Registration</td>
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Project GO! Tiers of Student Engagement

**Tier One:**
Faculty, counselors, Call Center, student ambassadors and other Tri-C staff will have brochures and flyers with information to refer students to Project GO!’s personnel, locations, and web page from both my Tri-C Space and www.Tri-C.edu.

**Tier Two:**
Division office, Enrollment Center, Financial Aid personnel provide general information to our students of kiosk locations, distribute program brochures and explain how to contact a Project GO! staff member.

**Tier Three:**
Financial Aid Advisors, Student Support Specialist, Career Center personnel, BACC interns, Peer Financial Coaches, the BACC Program Director, and the Benefit Coach Coordinator work with students one on one during an appointment or as a walk-in to assist with navigating the site, and understanding and completing the Ohio Benefit Bank application process.
Project GO! Benefit Coach Duties

BENEFIT COACH DUTIES:

• point person providing one on one assistance to students

• take incoming phone calls and initiate outgoing calls to answer program questions; collect appointment results utilizing E-SARS

• schedule appointments and walk-ins for eligibility screening on the Ohio Benefits Bank (OBB) website

• provide students with follow-up documentation requirements for benefit application processing
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Project GO! Benefit Coach

Project Go! Benefit Coaches include Cuyahoga Community College staff, interns and Peer Financial Coaches. All Benefit Coaches receive:

- Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services Training
- United Way 211 Training
- Ohio Benefit Bank Training
- MDC, Inc. Training (Success Coach Training)
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**Project GO! Student Data**

- 849 students responded to the Project GO! intake survey
- 182 students have received benefits
- 234 benefits have been accessed by students
- 49 students are receiving multiple benefits
- 132 students have completed the “common” application

*Information gathered from CJFS as of December, 2013.*
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Who does Project GO! target?
Who are our financial aid students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14,846 - 27.1%</td>
<td>Below poverty level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17,355 - 31.7%</td>
<td>135% of the poverty line</td>
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## Financial Aid Statistics

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAFSAs Received</td>
<td>45,677</td>
<td>48,351</td>
<td>47,584</td>
<td>42,567</td>
<td>33,289</td>
<td>26,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSAs Processed</td>
<td>31,102</td>
<td>35,945</td>
<td>32,708</td>
<td>27,179</td>
<td>21,538</td>
<td>18,360</td>
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## Benefits Access for College Completion

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pell Grant Recipients</strong></td>
<td>18,212</td>
<td>18,968</td>
<td>19,353</td>
<td>15,342</td>
<td>11,773</td>
<td>10,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pell Grants Disbursed</strong></td>
<td>$55,438,386</td>
<td>$58,393,395</td>
<td>$66,831,258</td>
<td>$47,778,431</td>
<td>$30,982,845</td>
<td>$25,553,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Loan Recipients</strong></td>
<td>11,159</td>
<td>10,079</td>
<td>8,703</td>
<td>7,095</td>
<td>5,189</td>
<td>4,308</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Federal Student Loans Disbursed</strong></td>
<td>$46,882,339</td>
<td>$39,774,751</td>
<td>$30,615,846</td>
<td>$26,850,421</td>
<td>$18,011,670</td>
<td>$14,816,943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Target Student Population

- **2012-2013**
  - New students with EFC of 0 (zero)
  - Independent with children
  - Students with 60 credits or more (Spring 2013)

- **2013-2014**
  - All enrolled financial aid students
  - EFC of 0-3,000 with new FAFSA

- **2014-2015**
  - All students with EFC of 0 (zero)
    - New applicants for students with no benefits on FAFSA
    - Developing recertification process for students who are receiving benefits as indicated on FAFSA

*Expected Family Contribution (EFC)*
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How did we implemented?
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Getting Started

- **Initial Structure**
  - Point-persons in strategic areas
  -Partnered with 4-year schools to solicit interns
  -Core group and strategic implementation team
  -Housed in various student service locations
  -Referrals to the Project Go! office from college departments

- **Current Structure**
  - Point of contact shifted to integrate within financial aid
  -Hired financial aid managers and peer financial coaches
  -Services in Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships
  -Referrals to public benefit services from college departments
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- Benefits access services integrated into financial aid application processes
- Target group students are “flagged” to complete an interest form to be contacted regarding public benefits
- Viewed as part of financial aid packaging and in support of financial education initiatives
Focus for integration is to support student’s financial needs through an inherent process in the Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships.

Expanded the integration within financial aid processes in December 2013.

Resulted in increase of pre-screened applicants by:

- 61.8% over last year *
- 180% in past six months**

*Fall 2012 to Fall 2013 comparison
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Larger outcome to the integrated benefits access model within the Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships:

• Reducing student loan debt by leveraging public benefits options for which students may be eligible

• Ensuring student financial success and education upon graduation
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How would you implement?
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Getting started
Question #1:

Do you have a hypothesis of where a public benefits access program will fit at your institution?

A. Yes
B. No
Question #2:

Do you have a financial literacy education goal on your campus?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Unsure
Question #3:

Is there a need for a similar program on your campus?

A. Yes  
B. No  
C. Unsure
Question #4: What area of the college would be best?
A. Student Financial Aid
B. Counseling
C. Enrollment-Admission
D. Career Centers
E. Academic Affairs
Question #5:

What are possible barriers to implementing such a program?

A. Funding
B. Buy-in
C. Personnel Resources
D. Partner Relationships
E. All of the above
Talking sustainability...
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Student Communications

- Mail & Email
- Calls from Benefit Coaches
- New Student Orientation
- Financial Aid Advising
- Faculty & Counselors
- Hi Vis Ads college wide
- My Tri-C Space Link
- Call Center Info
- Mail & Email blasts
- Resource Kiosks
- Campus Resource Days

Breaking Down Barriers to College Completion
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Peer financial coaches, funded by federal work-study funds, will sustain peer-to-peer workforce

Maintain relationship with county and state partners to ensure continuous training and program changes

Determine opportunities to expand outside of the Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships with additional trained benefit coaches
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Continue to refine our process and student flow to determine opportunities to engage students

Redefine financial aid awarding to continue to brand Project Go! as a financial aid service and opportunity
Project Go! Testimonial

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HOg4YUDYjY
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Questions?
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