

MeQ – Making College Work *Equals* Quality of Life

Executive Summary

Service Description

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This service will give college students an opportunity to gain valuable work experience, help to pay a significant part of their tuition, and prepare them to transition into the job market. The service will provide organizations with an opportunity to employ exceptional students—students imbued with the philosophy, "learn to work and work to learn." The service will also provide colleges with an opportunity to partner with MeQ to increase graduation rates for low-income students.

Mission and Personal Experience

While our service would be beneficial to most college students, we have chosen to focus initially on a group of students called DREAMers. They came to this country as children but unfortunately do not have the proper papers to seek legal residency. In 2012, President Obama, through an executive action called DACA, made provisions for some of these young people to work, go to school, and drive a car, but they receive no government aid in funding their college education. (Many of these young adults' parents are undocumented and cannot work legally but are part of the shadow economy.)

Our focus is also driven by our mission and our personal experience:

- 1) Mission/Vision
 - a) We share with the DREAMers a vision of a better quality of life in the future.
 - b) We believe that education is an important foundation stone in achieving that vision.
 - c) The DREAMers, as children of God, deserve a chance at that better life.
 - d) Helping to achieve that vision is tied closely to our life's work of making Christ visible in the world.

- 2) Personal Experience
 - a) We have interacted with DREAMers over the last two years and have found them to be very qualified and committed college students.

- b) DREAMers with DACA status can attend college at in-state tuition rates but lack access to financial assistance available to other college students who are U.S. citizens.
- c) We believe our service can provide needed financial assistance as well as valuable work experience. We have met with groups of DREAMers to discuss this service, and they are excited to participate.

Service Component

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Why Might DREAMers Be Interested?

Over four years this concept has the potential to deliver:

- Up to \$40,000 in tuition assistance.
- Multi-semester corporate work experience.
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- Possibility of graduation with no student loan debt.

And, based on the Perdue-Gallup Index, a shot at living happily ever after: a recent study by Gallup, Purdue University, and the Lumina Foundation found that young adults who receive work experience and mentoring in college go on to score higher in indicators of well-being. (See <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/galluppurdueindex-report-2014.pdf>.)

Funding Proposal for MeQ Nonprofit Corporation (Final)

Submitted to the Marie's Gift Committee of NOVA Catholic Community on Sept. 25, 2016 by the MeQ Nonprofit Corporation Board.

MeQ Board

Richard Urban

Carmela Ormando

Paula Alderete

Analia Puig

Hareth Andrade

Elise Cleva

Giancarla Rojas

Cheryl Urban

Henry Mejia

Clyde Christofferson

Dr. Gail Kettlewell

1. Amount

MeQ Nonprofit Corporation proposes that it receive \$45,000 from Ms. Marie Pinho's bequest.

2. Description

Summary

MeQ Nonprofit Corporation will use the requested \$45,000 to develop a paid internship/college enrollment program for DREAMers, beginning in northern Virginia.

Essentially, MeQ seeks to adapt the model of the Corporate Work Study Program used by Jesuit-run Cristo Rey high schools throughout the country, including in this area at Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Washington, DC. The enclosed document on the 2015 work study program at DBCR presents the program's benefits to employers, who pay \$32,200 in exchange for four high school student interns' filling an entry-level position

for 10 months. (In 2016, employers have been asked by DBCR to pay \$32,700 for four interns for 10 months.) The model for MeQ, developed by Richard Urban, is for a venture that will be self-sustaining and replicable, as the model used by the Cristo Rey high schools has been.

Population Served

DREAMers are undocumented young adults who came to the United States as children. The name for this demographic group comes from the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, which was introduced multiple times in Congress but sadly failed to pass. The DREAM Act would have provided conditional residency, and eventually permanent residency, to these young adults.

Since 2012, many DREAMers have successfully applied for DACA – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, which allows them to attend school and to work. In Virginia, thanks to a decision by state Attorney General Mark Herring, recipients of DACA are eligible for in-state tuition at public colleges and universities. Even so, the cost of attaining higher education is still an enormous challenge for DACA-mented youths. As non-citizens, they do not qualify for numerous forms of federal financial aid, and they often come from hard-working but low-income families.

While there are currently organizations such as TheDream.US and the Dream Project that provide scholarship funds to DREAMers in Virginia, MeQ will stand out by tying tuition funding to an opportunity to gain professional development and work experience. One inspiration for having this relationship be part of MeQ is a study conducted by Purdue University and the Gallup Organization with 30,000 college graduates. The study found that students who found a mentor and had a multi-semester work experience during their college years had a better quality of life as measured by their responses to a questionnaire.

Present Circumstances

Currently, MeQ is incorporated as a nonprofit in the state of Virginia, with an Employment Identification Number. MeQ is in the process of acquiring 501(c)(3) status.

MeQ has developed a cadre of three institutes of higher education willing to collaborate: Northern Virginia Community College, Marymount University, and George Mason University. MeQ has also attracted a number of interested DREAMers, some currently in college and some who have graduated but seek to make the college experience better for other DREAMers. Finally, MeQ has assembled a board (members listed above) and has received offers of volunteer service from several parents of DREAMers.

Proposed Use of Funds from Pinho Bequest

The MeQ board will administer and be accountable for any funds received from the Marie Pinho bequest. These funds will provide seed capital to support MeQ's transition from a concept to an operational program, which will eventually necessitate hiring several fulltime staff. To reach the point of making those hires, MeQ must engage in fundraising, networking, and material development. The Pinho funds will support those activities, with expenditures addressing the following needs:

- Funding one year of part-time professional staff support (20 hours/week) on a contract basis. Such support will ensure continuity of operations, better coordination and utilization of volunteers, and consistent and ongoing efforts for employer, student, and university outreach.
- Graphic and web design services to include branding, print product design, and possible website redesign. Developing and presenting a consistent, professionally designed visual identity (logo, typeface, etc.) carried out in collateral products (such as letterhead, stationary, envelopes, business cards, email signature blocks, etc.) and in print and online publications will be critical to MeQ's ability to present itself effectively to corporate/employer audiences.
- Printing services for the production of an initial stock of MeQ informational products targeting donors and potential partners in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.
- Professional fee for services of a tax attorney or other tax professional to determine whether payments by employers for MeQ student placement qualify as tax deductions for the employer and advise MeQ on appropriate language for communicating this information to prospective partners. MeQ's ability to attract employer partners would be enhanced if the organization could point to a tax benefit resulting from the relationship. If assessment indicates that payments for MeQ student placement do not qualify as charitable deductions, the consultant will be asked to advise MeQ with respect to changes that could be made to its process, procedures, or programs to achieve this goal.
- Professional fee for services of a qualified attorney to develop an appropriate contract for student placements. Such a contract will be needed to clearly communicate both employer and student responsibilities within the employer/employee relationship being brokered by MeQ.

It is important to note that once MeQ engages employer partners (companies, nonprofits, etc.), it will be self-sustaining. Thus, the funding that MeQ requests in this application will be an investment that will not need to be replenished annually.

Success

The measure of success is MeQ's ability to engage employer partners and go through a first year of operations. In that first year, MeQ plans to serve 34 DREAMer students, with the hope that in the second and third years, the numbers served will increase to 76 and 108, respectively.

Connection

We the board, who are submitting this proposal, are the administrators of the project.

3. Enclosures and links

- MeQ One Pager (File name: MeQ 1 pager revised 8.22.16.doc)
- MeQ Executive Summary, which includes financial model (File name: MeQ – Executive Summary 7 16.docx)
- CIP Research References, a brief compilation of articles and studies that support the idea of linking college enrollment, college affordability, and work experience (File name: CIP Research.docx)
- Explanation of the Corporate Work Study Program at Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Washington, DC (DBCR_Workstudy_Benefits_2015.pdf)
- For a list of DBCR's employer partners in Washington, DC, and metro Maryland, please see <http://www.dbcr.org/corporate-work-study/our-corporate-partners/>

Enclosure 1: MeQ One Pager

MeQ Corporation – Making College Work equals Quality of Life

MeQCorporation.org

The Challenge: Many DREAMers – undocumented young adults who came to the U.S. as children – are on fire to attend college but lack resources and a support network.

Enter MeQ, which runs a paid internship/college enrollment program for DREAMers, beginning in northern Virginia.

MeQ

- screens, mentors, and provides training for the work environment to DREAMer college students (MeQ Associates).
- ensures that partner organizations recognize the value of these prepared, passionate young adults.
- facilitates yearlong internships for the Associates with partner organizations.
- liaises with employers during internships and provides any course corrections needed to improve Associates' success and productivity.
- absorbs the expense of employee benefits; complies with all worker's comp requirements; and withholds taxes.



2 students fill **1** fulltime position in an organization by working a collective total of 40 hours/week, taking into account their need to balance work and school.

Employers

- invest in potential future employees.
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Enclosure 2: MeQ Executive Summary, which includes financial model (File name: MeQ – Executive Summary)

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Enclosure 3: CIP Research References, a brief compilation of articles and studies that support the idea of linking college enrollment, college affordability, and work experience

CIP Research References:

100 students start college. Who graduates?

A college degree is a near-requirement for students to build a life in the middle class, but whether or not students graduate often depends on their family income when they start school. Here's what happened to 100 students from four different income groups who began college in 2002.

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The Economics of wellbeing.

Well-being is the combination of all the things that are important to each individual — it is how people think about and experience their lives. Understanding how people think about and experience their lives is one of the first steps in determining the appropriate interventions that organizations, communities, and higher education need to take to solve their biggest challenges. This research has the ability to provide colleges and universities with insight on how to improve the lives of current undergraduates in these key areas, which are within their control. While there is no one way to achieve high well-being, except through work and accountability, institutions can help provide their students with goals that are ultimately more fulfilling than income alone.

Rath, T. & Harter, J. (2011). The Economics of wellbeing. Available online at <http://www.gallup.com/strategicconsulting/126908/Economics-Wellbeing.aspx>

Gallup and Healthways have developed the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being 5 View

Education to Employment: Designing a system that works - McKinsey Center for Government

There are two related global crises: high levels of youth unemployment and a shortage of people with critical job skills. Leaders everywhere are aware of the possible consequences, in the form of social and economic distress, when too many young people believe that their future is compromised. Still, governments have struggled to develop effective responses—or even to define what they need to know.

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The Corporate Work Study Program: A Proven Approach Engaging Businesses & Communities

*Be part of shaping the next generation of young professionals
while meeting your current business needs!*

How It Works...

- **Employee leasing** - Companies contract with the Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP) to fill their full-time, entry-level, clerical jobs, such as file clerk, mail processor, receptionist, etc.
- **Job Sharing** - Four students share one job. The business is covered Monday through Friday. Students rotate their schedules, each working five full days a month throughout the extended (10 month) school year. Academic schedules are structured so that students never miss a class.
- Students work **standard business hours**, usually 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., from Labor Day through mid- June, except for some school holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas Break, and Spring Break. Other non-working holidays will be discussed with Clients. Clients may retain the same students the following academic year, as well as hire them during the summer and holidays.
- **Students are employees of the Corporate Work Study Program, not the Client.** Companies pay a flat fee of \$32,200 directly to CWSP for one full-time Corporate Work Study Team; CWSP handles all payroll, W-4, I-9, Worker's Compensation, FICA and FUTA paperwork, as well as all routine employer issues. Each student of the four-person team earns \$8,050/year toward his or her tuition.
- Students receive 3 weeks of professional **Workforce Training** from the CWSP staff and volunteer corporate sponsors in preparation for the work assignment.
- **Daily Supervision/Oversight from the CWSP** – We transport students to/from work each day. We are in regular contact with sponsors and students to ensure positive working relationships.

For a short video on the school that works!

<http://www.dbcr.org/corporate-work-study/>

Work Schedule

Four students share one job. Each student works a total of five days every month.

Sample monthly schedule:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Veronica	Veronica	James	Jackie	Anthony
Week 2	James	Veronica	James	Jackie	Anthony
Week 3	Jackie	Veronica	James	Jackie	Anthony
Week 4	Anthony	Veronica	James	Jackie	Anthony

Overall **Benefits** to Corporate Sponsors:

- A cost-savings
- Significant reduction of turnover at the entry-level positions
- Increase in overall employee morale
- Enhancement of diversity and company profile as a community leader
- A chance to play a direct role in educating and shaping their future workforce and potential customers

Let us go to work for you! Contact us at 301-891-4750 x140

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