The Resource Development Department (RDD) is launching its Web page on the MCC Web site in a few weeks. You will be able to access the page by going to the drop-down menu and selecting "Administration." The purpose of the RDD page is:

- To inform the MCC community about current grant awards
- To share initiatives from other institutions as a catalyst for new ideas at MCC
- To guide faculty and staff in their research on grant topics and potential funding sources
- To announce upcoming grant-development training offered through the Faculty Professional Development schedule
- To provide access to funding databases as well as proposal development and grant management manuals
- To archive Grant$ News$ newsletters and other resource articles
- To celebrate the successes of grant-funded projects and the positive impact that they have on MCC’s students and community constituents.

The RDD will send out an announcement when the page has been launched, currently planned to occur before June 15, 2008.

In April 2008, Natural Sciences Assistant Professor Dr. Andrew Swanson attended the National Science Foundation’s Regional Grants Conference with Director of Resource Development Brad Davis. The two-day conference’s informative sessions covered the gamut of NSF programs: from scholarship grants for students majoring in science, technology, engineering or mathematics to international research grants.

Traditionally, community colleges apply for NSF funding in just a few areas: scholarships, advanced technology education, informal science programs and course curriculum and laboratory improvement. It became clear, however, that community colleges are eligible to apply for grants that support other types of projects, including a broader range of research designed for undergraduate students. Of course, as with most major grants, NSF is looking for strong partnerships (with research universities as well as other community colleges.)

Currently MCC is developing a proposal for NSF funding through the Advanced Technology Education initiative for program improvement. A group of MCC faculty and staff has also met with the director of St. Petersburg College’s NSF scholarship program to consult about program design for a future application.

If you have a grant idea involving science, technology, engineering or mathematics, please discuss it with your department chair and contact the RDD at ext. 6-5388. For more information on NSF, visit their Web site at www.nsf.gov. Remember the mantra that NSF program officers repeat: Success requires that we “Ask Early, Ask Often!”
Wow! There’s grant money to be had! What are we waiting for? Can grants support the operation of our program or fund stipends for faculty? Can they help replace equipment in our laboratory?

The answer is maybe. It is rare to find a grant that pays operating expenses, merely replaces equipment or helps to pay for buildings (brick and mortar grants). Grants often serve as seed money to establish new programs or as a catalyst for improvement or expansion of existing programs. A “fundable” grant idea clearly describes a problem and proposes a solution that results in outcomes matching the funding agency’s mission.

These criteria make it very important to find the right funding agency for the problem you want to address. There are grant programs in the areas of health care, humanities, science, education and workforce development, to name just a few. Grant programs may support research, professional development, student success strategies, cultural activities, adult education, speaker series, guest artists or curriculum development.

So, if a grant project is designed to serve the funding agency’s mission as well as MCC’s strategic priorities, the resulting proposal might call for salaries for grant-funded personnel, release time for faculty, equipment, professional development, curriculum development and travel. If you stay focused on the desired outcomes, the rest will follow!

Grant Proposals in the Pipeline . . .

At MCC there are always grant projects in development. During the coming months the resource development department will be working with faculty and administrators on the following proposals:

- Carl D. Perkins funds for AS and AAS programs, with a five-year plan under Perkins IV
- Carl D. Perkins - Career Pathways Consortium -- Tech Prep
- National Science Foundation (NSF) Scholarships for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- NSF Advanced Technology Education – Process Technicians
- Student Support Services grant
- Adult Education Geographical Grant
- Potential funding to support emergency management issues
- College Reach-Out Program (CROP)
- SBDC grant

THANKS SO MUCH!

MCC has received a grant award under the Florida Governor’s Summer Program in the amount of $26,799 for its project entitled: Revealing the Truth: Multidisciplinary Explorations into Crime Scene Investigations. This is the fourth year that MCC has been awarded funding for a summer program designed for gifted and high achieving high school students in Manatee and Sarasota counties.

The program provides a scenario requiring students to apply skills taught during the four-week adventure, dealing with natural and social sciences as well as mathematical analysis and information technology forensics.

We would like to recognize the team that worked so diligently on the project proposal: David Friedenbach, Andrew Swanson, Michael Mears and Cindy Hunter.

Congratulations and thank you!
Brad Davis, Director, Resource Development
Grants to Support Key Strategic Initiatives

The Resource Development Department (RDD) has been on the lookout for grants to support the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), developed during the SACS reaffirmation process. The QEP essentially challenges us to implement enhanced standards, policies and services for learning at a distance to increase student retention, success and satisfaction rates. Great strides have been made on all fronts, most notably dealing with: (1) instructor training & certification and (2) online course material development. A major thrust for the coming months will be the student engagement, retention and academic success. The Internet, electronic devices and online instruction are not just for DL courses any more.

While conducting research for grant funding, the RDD staff discovered that the agencies that invested heavily in online learning in the 1990s are no longer, or rarely, funding projects that solely benefit a college’s “distance learning” (DL) program. What did become clear is that comprehensive grant projects welcome the use of distance learning and other “flexible setting” strategies to enhance curricula, student engagement and academic success.

The Integration of eLearning Tools

The Distance Learning Task Force is charged with implementing the QEP. The committee, led by Nancy Edwards, includes a cross-section of faculty, student and staff representatives including Brad Davis of the RDD. The group has proposed a change in how MCC views distance learning (DL), emphasizing a continuum of technology use in a growing number of courses. This paradigm shift begins with a change in terminology: from DL to eLearning.

At MCC and across the country, the lines between the categories are blurred (face-to-face, Web-enhanced, blended or Web-based). eLearning involves the use of a computer or electronic device (e.g. a mobile phone) in some way to provide training, educational or learning material. eLearning can involve a greater variety of equipment than online training or education, for as the name implies, ‘online’ involves using just the Internet or an Intranet.” (Derek Stockley 2003)

Hence, eLearning includes all electronic devices, from the Internet to the television, from MP3 players to PDAs.

The integration of eLearning tools can augment the College’s instructional options: presenting faculty with the opportunity to enhance the content of their courses; allowing more flexibility for students to schedule their studies and enabling MCC to offer a degree completely online.

The new nomenclature opens the door to the innovative use of technology to increase student engagement and improve academic success in all teaching settings. What can a name change do? It can shift us into a new way of thinking about teaching and learning, student engagement and academic success at MCC. And, gaining insight into the role of eLearning informs not only programmatic direction, but also potential grant initiatives.
This March, MCC held its fifth annual grants recognition luncheon. Created to focus on the accomplishments and hard work of our growing “community of grant-developers,” the event reflects on the activities of the past year and outlines some of the opportunities and challenges for the future.

Over the past six years there has been a steady increase in faculty participation in grant projects and more are joining the effort all the time. Sponsored by Dr. Sarah Pappas, this year’s luncheon was attended by approximately 50 MCC faculty, staff and administrators.

Celebrating Grant Development

MCC Resource Development Committee

Peg Beck  Bonnie Hesselberg  Idelia Phillips
Donald Bowman  Cindy Hunter  Carol Probstfeld
George Cubberly  Karen Kester  John Rosen
Bradley Davis  Michael Mears  Daisy Vulovich
Karen Goldstein  Helen Meyer  Darlene Wedler-Johnson

Grants Recognition Luncheon
“The Path to Excellence”
March 21, 2008

Photo credit: Judy Wishart

Stay tuned for our new Web page - Coming soon!