The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) seeks a Program Specialist for the OCHE based TRIO Educational Opportunity Center grant. The Program Specialist is a key position in implementation of the grant. Prior experience working in state, federal, nonprofit, or other grant management is a required skill set needed on day one to maintain the foundation started in the 2021-2022 year for the grant.

The successful candidate in the position will divide time between assisting the TRIO Pre-College Programs Director in the implementation of the grant and meeting with adult clients. Client support includes: assisting in completing high school graduation via HiSET (or other alternative education opportunities), financial literacy, college application support, and/or assisting in the client enrolling in higher education. The position is in Helena and serves Lewis and Clark County, Broadwater County, and Jefferson County.

This position is a full-time classified staff position covered by the Montana University System (MUS) Staff Compensation Plan. MUS staff are eligible for employee benefits (health insurance, sick leave and vacation leave, state holidays and retirement program) in accordance with state law. MUS employees are eligible to use certain college tuition waivers in accordance with Board of Regents policy.

Description of Work Unit: The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), the administrative arm of the Montana Board of Regents, administers two federal U.S. Department of Education TRIO Pre-College grants, one a long-established program with OCHE and the other a new September 2021 OCHE TRIO grant, Educational Opportunity Center. Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) serves 850 eligible clients annually in eleven western Montana counties. With its unique position at the state level, EOC supports and lead ongoing initiatives to strengthen the college access strategies of state and service counties.

Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) provides counseling and information on college preparatory services to eligible adults who want to enter or continue a program of higher
Target clientele focuses on student resident access for the forty percent of high school students who do not initially enroll in higher education, students who stopped out of the education pipeline, or those who want to enhance skills for job growth. Services include financial literacy, financial aid assistance, academic advice, personal counseling, career workshops, information on the types of higher education opportunities available, assistance in completing college application process, media activities designed to involve and educate the community with higher education opportunities, tutoring, mentoring, and education opportunities specifically available for current or retired military personnel and their families. The goal of EOC is to increase the number of adults who enroll in higher education.

The Program Specialist reports to the TRIO Pre-College Programs Director.

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Assist Director in general program duties, including implementation of the grant;
- Assist Director in implementing community program goals, objectives and needs to clients and community stakeholders;
- Work with Director in application of state and federal regulations that apply to the grant to ensure grant compliance;
- Facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration between EOC personnel, alternative school programs, community organizations, and state partners to improve decision-making processes and increase effectiveness of EOC program services;
- Work with remote staff to ensure permissible services delivery;
- Work collaboratively with the other OCHE-based Pre-College TRIO program to coordinate grant services, professional development, and TRIO staff meetings.
- Provide direct services to clients in Broadwater County, Jefferson County, and Lewis and Clark County who are primarily first-generation and/or economically disadvantaged;
- Collect, organize and maintain documentation of program services and hard copies of client files;
- Develop and implement media relations for EOC program in coordination with OCHE communications personnel, including development of social media accounts for the program;
- Provide virtual program-wide services to participants, families, and project staff;
- Conduct virtual staff meetings with Outreach Advisors;
- Develop and implement workshops for clients in Broadwater County, Jefferson County, and Lewis and Clark County;
- With the Director, plan and execute in-person staff meetings three times a year.
- With the Director, create, revise, and implement communication strategic program plan, including but not limited to, the program website and social media accounts;
- Work with Director to create program curriculum designed to support adult learners, veterans, and traditionally underrepresented populations;
- Travel to grant counties for site visits and as needed for program delivery;
- Assist Director with identifying staff and program training needs related to delivery of program services;
- Assist in the identification, development and writing of grant applications;
- Take lead on special projects assigned by the Director and complete in established time
• Work with IT staff to manage and track program assets in the field and Helena office;
• Provide training to new program staff;
• Track grant budget under direct supervision of Director;
• With Director monitor, input, and/or update data for the program in the database tracking system;
• Use data collected by the grant to create reports on program progress and efficiency;
• Participate in state, regional, and/or national trainings as necessary;
• Coordinate program services with other college access programs in OCHE and across the state;
• Other duties as assigned;
• This position requires weekly travel to three counties, and occasional travel to other grant service counties, and professional development both in-state and out-of-state.

Required Qualifications:
• Bachelor’s degree;
• At least two years working in grant management with federal, state, nonprofit, or similar programs with progressive responsibilities and duties;
• Demonstrate relationship building in a work environment;
• Proficient in Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Access);
• Effective communication skills, both verbal and written;
• Experience planning and executing program events and/or activities;
• Previous experience providing program services to participants, clients, and/or adult learners;
• And, previous experience working with either records management or office management.

Preferred Qualifications:
• Master’s degree;
• Previous experience working with TRIO programs;
• Individual who has overcome similar circumstances as the clientele the program serves;
• Previous experience working with adult populations, veterans, or traditionally underrepresented populations;
• And, knowledge of higher education, financial literacy, and/or the college application process.

Application Requirements and Deadlines:
Application requirements consist of items one through three below:
(1.) a letter of interest relating the applicant’s experience and qualifications to the required and preferred position qualifications described above;
(2.) a list of three professional references with contact information, including position titles; and
(3.) a completed State of Montana employment application.

Online submission is preferred at: https://statecareers.mt.gov/. Applicants may also submit
materials to OCHE (Attention: Human Resources), PO Box 203201, Helena, MT 59620-3201.

The position is open until filled. Candidates should submit required application materials by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 15, 2022, to be considered in an initial screening of applications. This position is eligible for veterans’ preference in accordance with state statute. Approval will be obtained before contacting the candidates’ current employer.

**Reasonable Accommodations:** Under state and federal law, qualified applicants with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Modifications or adjustments may be provided to assist applicants to compete in the recruitment and selection process. An applicant must request an accommodation when needed. If you need any such accommodation, contact the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education at 406-449-9155. TDD users may use the relay service by dialing 711.

**AN EEO EMPLOYER**