



Montana University System

Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

560 N. Park Avenue – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Posted October 31, 2024

Job Title: **METS Program Specialist**
Montana Educational Talent Search Program
Position #: 51200042
Location: Helena, Montana
Wage: \$28.00 per hour
Status: Full-time. Position is contingent upon continued grant funding.

Description:



Mission: The mission of METS is to advise low-income, first-generation participants to complete high school credentials, while preparing them for post-secondary education and a successful career.

Description of Work Unit

Growing Montana resident student access is a top priority for the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE). Therefore, OCHE seeks a dynamic Program Specialist to support the Montana Educational Talent Search (METS) program and support a thriving college access team. The program Specialist works closely with the program Director to ensure grant compliance and effective delivery as well as to provide support for each of the METS Pre College Advisors in target areas across the state. The Program Specialist also works closely with the remote Pre-College Advisors.

The Montana Educational Talent Search Program (METS) is federally funded under the TRIO programs from the U.S. Department of Education and administered through the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The program serves 1,287 low income and/or first-generation college students in grades 6-12, a significant percentage of whom are Native American. The program serves four service areas throughout Montana with a central office located in Helena. The successful position will work with both local program personnel and remote personnel to achieve the Talent Search TRIO objectives.

More information on the program may be found at www.ets.mus.edu.

The position is a full-time classified staff position covered by the Montana University System 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. Eligible for MUS staff tuition waiver and dependent partial-tuition waiver at MUS educational units in accordance with Board of Regents policies.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The Program Specialist for METS works closely with the Director to deliver the METS objectives and program operations.

In this role, the Specialist will take the lead in providing administrative and program leadership support to the TRIO Pre College Programs Director.

Additional job duties and responsibilities of this position include:

- Take the lead in providing support to the METS team members in accurate and timely submission of travel justifications, pro card logs and travel logistics, purchasing, and program operations.
- Provide annual training to METS team members on OCHE/MUS procurement and travel procedures.
- Under the general guidance of the Program Director, maintain program services to ensure compliance with federal regulations and align with METS program goals and objectives.
- Work with remote staff to ensure required program services delivery and coordinate permissible services delivery.
- Manage logistics for METS staff travel and ensure all travel aligns with compliance standards.
- Assist Director in implementing community program goals, objectives and needs to target schools, tribal programs and community service.
- Support the College Access Manager in the development and implementation of the METS Student Leadership Program ensuring that it aligns with broader program goals.
- Work collaboratively with the College Access Team and other OCHE team members to successfully deliver the MUS Arc of Events (College Application Week, FAFSA Completion, Decision Day and CAP (Complete the Application Process)).
- Oversee management and maintenance of web-based grant database system, including supporting the Director in completing the program Annual Performance Review.
- Coordinate, interact, and maintain positive working relationships with school staff including principals, teachers and counselors on behalf of METS students.

- Support the Director in building and maintaining positive working relationships with post-secondary schools in Montana including MUS, tribal, community and private colleges/universities.
- Communicate effectively to a wide range of audiences both verbally and in writing.
- Participate in state and national professional development.
- Assist the Director in identifying professional development needs for the staff, takes the lead on arranging professional development, with the input of the Director, supports each field-based Pre College-Advisor (PCA) in meeting program objectives.
- Assist in developing staff meeting agendas and facilitate meetings, work directly with PCAs to plan target area specific services and program-wide activities both in person and virtually, and support the Director on developing connections between the central Helena office and target communities/schools served by the program.
- In partnership with the Director, communicate the budget, FTE and compliance efforts of METS to the MUS Director of Accounting.
- With the Director, plan and execute in-person or virtual all staff retreat.
- Work with the Lead PCA to support and identify areas to strengthen/improve PCA connections to their participants, schools, and other colleagues.
- Facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration between METS personnel, target schools, community organizations, and state partners to improve decision-making processes and increase of effectiveness of METS program services.
- Support the Director and the METS team members in all Department of Education training and in completion of the APR including collecting and reporting on data.
- Take the lead on METS projects as directed by the Director.
- Required travel to target areas as well as the ability to participate in occasional overnight and weekend travel.
- All other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree
- Excellent attention to detail and organizational skills
- Superior oral and written communication skills
- Knowledge of educational systems and procedures

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience working with culturally diverse populations in an academic setting
- Someone of similar background to that of target participants
- Experience working with Native American populations
- Progressive duty assignments in working with a federal grant
- Previous experience working for a TRIO program
- Prior experience working in Montana 6-12, or higher education setting

Application Requirements and Deadlines:

Application requirements consist of items one through four below:

- (1.) a letter of interest relating the applicant's experience and qualifications to the position;
- (2.) a resume;
- (3.) a list of three professional references with contact information; and
- (4.) 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 Thursday, November 21, 2024**, 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.

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