Montana University System
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

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

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
Posted December 13, 2023

Job Title: TRIO Pre-College Programs Director
Location: Helena, Montana
Salary Range: $80,000 to $88,400 dependent upon qualifications and experience

To grow Montana resident student access, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education of the Montana University System seeks an experienced and knowledgeable TRIO Pre-College Programs Director to help lead the Montana Educational Talent Search and Educational Opportunities Center programs and statewide college access efforts in coordination with the Academic, Research and Student Affairs division of OCHE.

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), the administrative arm of the Montana Board of Regents (BOR) administers two federal U.S. Department of Education TRIO Pre-College grants. Montana Educational Talent Search (METS) serves 1,287 eligible participants annually in four target areas. Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) serves 850 eligible clients annually in eleven western Montana counties. With their unique position at the state level, METS and EOC support and lead ongoing initiatives to strengthen the college access strategies of the state and target area schools and counties.

Montana Educational Talent Search (METS) provides college preparatory services to students and their families who are least likely to consider higher education as a realistic, viable, or relevant option. The goal of METS is to increase the number of low-income, first-generation, and/or Native American high school students who enter higher education.

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 education. The goal of EOC is to increase the number of adults who enroll in higher education.

The director supervises a combined thirteen FTE in the METS and EOC programs. These staff members are located in the Helena office and in program service areas located across Montana.

This position is a full-time, term-contract position renewable annually in accordance with Board of Regents personnel policies. The position is contingent upon continued grant funding. The position is eligible for employee benefits (health insurance, sick leave and vacation leave, state holidays, retirement program, staff & dependent tuition waivers in accordance with state law and Board of Regents policy).
Description of Position

The TRIO Pre-College Programs Director reports directly to the American Indian and Minority Achievement and K-12 Partnerships Director.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Hire, train, and supervise project staff for each separate grant; develop and maintain effective working relationships with all stakeholders; and control the budgets for two separate TRIO programs.
- Monitor programmatic and fiscal operations of both TRIO programs to ensure the different grant objectives are met for METS and EOC.
- Ensure compliance with all OCHE regulations, State, and federal regulations from United States Department of Education (USDOE).
- Implement a coordinated approach among existing and/or necessary college access programming in assessing programmatic and participant/client needs, delivering services, and monitoring participants’/clients’ progress.
- Hire, supervise, and provide professional opportunities for Helena staff and remote staff in target communities and counties for both programs.
- Develop cooperative relationships with stakeholders specific to each program to ensure identification, selection, and service to participants/clients.
- Through the College Access Team, communicate and collaborate with other college access programs, Dual Enrollment, and other state TRIO programs, as well as other college access programs to effectively deliver educational, financial, and career information to target populations.
- Manage the activities of both programs to ensure essential policy and practices are in place to identify, recruit, and provide services for economically and educationally disadvantaged middle school and high school students, and adult learners who desire to pursue a higher education.
- Represent the OCHE TRIO programs at local, regional, state, and national meetings and participates in professional development activities and conferences.
- Work with OCHE and METS and EOC stakeholders to create Memorandums of Understandings (MOU) to secure space for remote staff, access to participants/clients, and ensure ability to carry out services to participants/clients of each grant.
- Direct the maintenance of accurate records of each program’s activities, participants/client contacts, demographic and eligibility documentation, follow-up studies, and the separate evaluation of the programs.
- Prepare and submit separate reports for METS and EOC including the individual annual progress reports due at separate times, separate budgets, fiscal reports, and separate follow-up reports as required by OCHE, BOR, and/or the USDOE.
- Understand OCHE and BOR priorities and how to help work in support of office and system wide goals.
- Promote, facilitate, and negotiate participation in and implementation of Montana METS and EOC with METS and EOC schools and partners.
- Manage community partnerships between METS and EOC and two and four-year college campuses within the MUS, tribal college partners, K-12 school partners, and the Office of Public Instruction.
- Manage small- and large-scale procurement including sole sourcing, limited solicitations and RFP’s (Request for Proposals) necessary to run the METS and EOC Program.
- Implement and manage accountability of program standards and measures.
- Coordinate, manage, and implement yearly calendar of activities and events.
- Comply with all State and Montana University System policies.
- Perform other duties as assigned.
Required Qualifications

• Master’s degree is required, preferred in counseling, administration or education.
• Minimum of three years’ experience managing and implementing projects engaging Native American, low income, first generation, or other underserved student populations.
• Supervisory experience that includes at least one year working with remote staff.
• Experience in grant development and post-award management.
• Knowledge of database software, college admission process, and financial aid.
• Must have excellent verbal and written communication skills, organization, and collaboration skills.
• Excellent organizational and public relations skills, budget management ability, and the ability to communicate with and mobilize diverse stakeholders.

Preferred Qualifications

• Knowledge of Montana education landscape and the importance of K-12 to post-secondary pathways.
• Significant administrative experience in education, government, business, social service or a related area.
• Knowledge of statistical methodologies and research practices.
• Ability to engage in grant writing.
• Knowledge of data assessment, interpretation, evaluation, and reporting.
• Career, job, and labor market need knowledge.
• Experience in K-12 educational program development and management.
• Knowledge and skills in remote learning and delivery of distance education.
• An individual who has overcome similar circumstances.
• Trainings and education related to the EOC objectives.

Application Requirements and Deadlines

Please submit (1.) a letter of interest specifically relating the applicant’s experience and qualifications to the position, (2.) a comprehensive resume, and (3.) a list of three professional references including contact information. Applications may be mailed to OCHE (Attention: Human Resources), PO Box 203201, Helena, MT 59620-3201, or emailed to OCHEhr@montana.edu, or submitted on the State of Montana Careers website (https://statecareers.mt.gov/). Electronic submission of application materials is encouraged.

The position is open until filled. Candidates should submit required application materials by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 12, 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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