



EVERYBODY MATTERS

Framingham State University
Nonprofit Giving Course
Grant Proposal
Prepared by
South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.
“The Joan Brack Adult Learning Center”

The subject of this grant application before you is South Middlesex Opportunity Council’s (SMOC) Joan Brack Adult Learning Center (JBALC). The mission of the JBALC is to provide no cost, no barrier, quality instruction in the areas of Adult Secondary Education (ASE), High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) preparation, formerly known as the (GED) preparation, and English as a Second Language (ESL). The JBALC creates pathways to economic independence for immigrant and low-income adults, young adults, and young parents who are not prepared for, or who do not have access to traditional educational systems.

GRANT PROPOSAL PREFACE

Founded in 1700, the City of Framingham was once a quiet small farming town and stopover for travelers heading between Boston and Worcester. Now, Framingham is the center of the 10-town MetroWest region and its largest community (population 68,443). The MetroWest region has experienced explosive economic growth and is home to thousands of small and medium sized business and large national firms like Bose, Boston Scientific, Genzyme, Mathworks, Stapes and TJX. Professionals from Boston and other US Cities have relocated to the area to work in the MetroWest region that claims an average national wage higher than that of the state and the nation.¹ Many very low-income and immigrant families have settled in the area for opportunities to work in the area’s vast retail and hospitality sector that services the aforementioned population.

Historically, Framingham’s downtown hosted small businesses and homes of Italian and Irish immigrants. Now, they sustain those of Puerto Rican and Brazilian heritage. In Framingham, 26.6% of the population is foreign born; 14.3% Latino; 8.2% African American; and, 35.2% of the families speak languages other than English at home.² Framingham has the largest Brazilian community in the state.³

Immigrants and low-income individuals and families in Framingham face monumental challenges in achieving self-sufficiency and economic prosperity. These challenges include poverty, limited English language skills, low educational attainment, unemployment and often vast cultural differences. The Joan Brack Adult Learning Center at SMOC is a place that breaks down these barriers and offers hope and opportunity to those who need it most.

South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.

Brief history and mission: Founded in Framingham in 1965, SMOC is a nonprofit 501(C)(3); the federally designated Community Action Agency (CAA)⁴ for the MetroWest and Blackstone Valley

¹ Greater MetroWest Profile 2017, MetroWest Economic Research Center (MERC), Framingham State University

² US Census ACS 2012 – 2016 5-year Estimates

³ US Census 2010

⁴ CAAs are private or public nonprofit organizations that were established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fight America's “War on Poverty” in geographically designated areas.

regions; a statewide provider of low-income housing; and, a certified Community Development Corporation (CDC)⁵.

SMOC's mission is to improve the quality of life of low-income and disadvantaged individuals and families by advocating for their needs and rights; providing services; educating the community; building a community of support; participating in coalitions with other advocates and searching for new resources and community development partnerships. Central to our mission is working with individuals and families to maximize self-sufficiency and economic independence, especially for the most vulnerable in our society, including the homeless.

Major programs:

To fulfill our mission, SMOC has developed and operates over 60 wrap-around support programs including Child Care, Head Start, WIC Infant and Children nutrition program, Fuel Assistance, Weatherization Assistance, Mental Health Services, Addiction Treatment, Domestic & Sexual Violence Services and Workforce Development to assist our clients become self-sufficient. SMOC is a provider of low-income housing, owning and managing 1,964 units including shelter, sober housing, temporary housing and permanent housing for both individuals and families. Housing and shelter programs are integrated with case management services and connections to SMOC's wrap around support programs.

Organizational structure and demographics of Board of Directors, clients and staff:

SMOC is governed by a 24 member Board of Directors. One third are representatives of the low-income population or former clients in the service area. Another third are representatives from each of the communities in the area or their appointed representatives. The remaining third are representatives of selected private organizations in the service area such as the NAACP and the Clergy Associations.

SMOC's 2017 *Client Survey* reports SMOC served 46,778 low-income individuals, including 33,000 families and 13,872 children. Almost 70% of families were single parent households, 80% of these households were female-headed. Demographics: 41% Male, 59% Female. Race: 57% White, 15% Black/African American, 22% Other, 5% Multi-Race 1% Asian, 45% Hispanic and 20% Disabled.

SMOC's programs are staffed by 730 (348FT/413PT) diverse and dedicated human service workers. SMOC's 2016 *Staff Demographic Survey*, reports our staff is 70% Female, 30% Male, 62% White, 10% African American, 2% Asian, 2% Multi-Race, 23% Hispanic and 27% are bi-or-multi-lingual.

SMOC's Sustainability

SMOC is a long-standing fiscally sound nonprofit. A majority of our funding comes from the fulfillment of Federal and State and in some cases Town contracts. In FY17, our revenues were \$85,561,873 and liabilities \$85,031,618. Administration rate is 11%. Approximately 40% of the organization's income and expenses are from pass through programs such as Section 8 housing vouchers, Fuel Assistance and WIC Subsidies. SMOC financials are audited annually. SMOC latest Audit, 2016, shows no findings.

Joan Brack Adult Learning Center (JBALC)

JBALC was founded in 1999 to provide *no-cost* Adult Secondary Education (ASE). JBALC fills a void in the community, as the JBALC hosts the only *free daytime* and *yearlong* HiSET/GED and ESL programs in the region. The JBALC is housed in SMOC headquarters at 7 Bishop Street in Framingham.

⁵ CDCs are community based nonprofit organizations that engage local residents and businesses to work together to undertake community development programs, projects and activities that improve the community and benefit low and moderate-income people. CDCs are under the authority of the MA Dept. of Housing and Community Development.

The facility includes a double size-classroom and a computer equipped laboratory. The staff includes an ASE Coordinator/Teacher and ESL Coordinator/Teacher and two HiSET/GED Teachers. The JBALC receives over 300 applications each year. The waiting list for ESL classes in Framingham exceeds 500 students. The JBALC was founded in-partnership and with the financial support of the Joan H. Brack Family Foundation.

The JBALC provides the following programs.

- *Adult Secondary Education (ASE)* classes, covering 6th-12th grade skills and content, are offered 20 hours a week, 48 weeks a year to students without a high school degree and who are preparing for the HiSET. Individually tailored academic plans help meet students' unique learning and test-taking needs. Areas of study: math, social studies, science, reading and writing. Strategically, JBALC offers a math intensive class providing students with opportunities to focus on math studies daily, as many students struggle with the math portion of the HiSET.
- The *Young Parents Program (YPP)* in collaboration with the Dept. of Transitional Assistance, helps young parents (under 24 years of age) pass the HiSET exam and achieve long-term economic independence. Parenting classes and vocational training and placement are part of the program.
- *Essential ESL* is a multilevel, group and web-based curriculum that delivers communicative language lessons to high-beginner through high-intermediate level students 9 hours a week in four 12 week cycles: Finding Success in the U.S., Exploring American Culture, Making Community Connections and Communicating at Home. Forty-five students participate annually.
- *Basic ESL* curriculum engages low beginner and beginner-level students in dynamic, group and web-based lessons to boost basic English communication skills for 6 hours a week in four 12 week cycles. Twenty-five students participate annually.
- *Waitlist Class*: A class for students that have applied, tested, and been placed on the waitlist. Meets once a week for 2 hours, serving 60 students annually. The curriculum, *U.S.A. Learns*, is technology from the U.S. Dept. of Education offering 3 levels of practice in all language proficiency.
- *Computer Basics for ESL Learners*, a new grant funded pilot program that provides low-computer literate students with basic computer skills, including basic internet skills, for up to 24 ESL learners who have been tested and accepted into the ESL program.
- In addition to education programs the JBALC staff connects students to SMOC wrap around support programs such as employment services; government programs such Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) often referred to as food stamps; and public housing. Staff also connects students to higher education such as MassBay Community College and Framingham State University.

Joan Brack Adult Learning Center Accomplishments in FY17

- Served 112 students in ESL program, with over 200 applying for ESL.
- Graduated 11 ESL students (who completed a full year of Essential ESL). Also, 4 ESL students transitioned from Basic ESL to the Essential ESL class and 78 improved English.
- 12 ESL students report obtaining a new or better paying job.
- Initiated a citizenship class pilot. Eight students completed applications for naturalization which have all been filed.
- Received 206 HiSET applications and processed 92 applications from a variety of referral sources including SMOC programs and partner organizations.
- Administered 66 pre-tests for HiSET placements; 53 students participated in classes.
- Graduated 6 HiSET students. Also, 4 students passed 1 or more subtests and 1 HiSET student moved up to the next level of learning. All who tested, passed the math portion on the first attempt.

Joan Brack Adult Learning Center Year-End Celebration

To recognize student accomplishments, the JBALC holds a yearly Celebration of Learning ceremony. Our celebration includes a traditional graduation ceremony awarding certificates to those who have completed a full year in the ESL program or have passed the HiSET exam. We also acknowledge learning milestones of those continuing toward their educational and language proficiency goals. We also recognize and thank our supporters.

EVALUATION PROCESS

SMOC is an outcome based performance management agency and implements tools to evaluate agency, program and individual client performance. Client and program data is regularly collected through SMOC's centralized database, Octopia™. Data tracked include client demographics, class participation, progress and scoring outcomes. Staff meets weekly to review student progress and program operation. Reports are filed monthly with SMOC administration. JBALC will provide the Framingham State University, Nonprofit Giving Course with a report on the JBALC, at the conclusion of the grant period.

HiSET testing is an online standardized test in 5 parts including math, social studies, science, reading and writing, administered by the MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. Progress in ESL is measured through the completion of the Basic ESL class from level 0 to level 1 and moving up to the Essential ESL class. Essential ESL students are placed into a level 2, level 3 or level 4 grammar group.

Student feedback is solicited at the end of each class session. Students are given satisfaction surveys to fill out. These evaluations measure student satisfaction in the areas of program effectiveness, instructor evaluation. Students also can meet with the Program Director to voice concerns.

JBALC proposed outcomes for FY18:

- Serve 89 ESL students over the course of the year
- Assist 65 ESL students in making measurable gains in English fluency
- 25 ESL students will graduate from the yearlong program
- 10-15 ESL students will report obtaining a new or better paying job
- 1-3 ESL students will move on to HiSET, professional training, or college level classes
- Serve 40 HiSET/GED students over the course of the year
- Graduate 8 -10 HiSET students
- Assist 3-5 students to progress up one level of learning toward achieving their HiSET

GRANT REQUEST

The JBALC is not supported through a government contract, however receives some state funding for per-person cost reimbursement for clients who participate in JBALC classes under the YPP or the SNAP-Education & Training fund. JBALC relies heavily on grants for the majority of its support. For 19 years, the Brack Foundation has been its biggest funder. Over the last few years, these entities have provided consistent annual grant funding: Eastern Bank Foundation, Middlesex Savings Foundation, Staples Foundation and MutualOne Foundation. In FY18 First Literacy Lab funded the new computer skills class. In JBALC FY2019, the JBALC has a gap in funding. SMOC respectfully requests \$10,000 from the Framingham State University Nonprofit Giving Course for support of the JBALC programming. A grant of \$10,000 will be used to fill a gap in funding for the JBALC FY2019 year. The grant will be dedicated to supplementing a portion of the full-time ESL and HiSET instructor's salary, much needed supplies/materials and printing JBALC promotional flyers. Please see FY2019 JBALC, on the following page for budget details.

In Closing

We thank the students of the Framingham State University Nonprofit Giving Course for the review of this grant proposal. It is SMOC’s hope that through this project the Nonprofit Giving Course class will fulfill its mission “to support local organizations fighting to equalize access to opportunity.” In considering this proposal, we would like to extend an invitation to tour the Joan Brack Adult Learning Center and meet the staff, as well as tour SMOC Headquarters. To arrange this please contact Heidi Eagles, Director of Resource Development at heagles@smoc.org or 508-620-2466. She will be happy to assist you.

Joan Brack Adult Learning Center			
Fiscal Year 2019 Projected Operating Budget			
(July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019)			
JBALC Budget	FSU: Nonprofit Giving Course Grant	Other Funding Sources	Total Budget
Income			
Government Funding ¹		11,100	11,100
Foundation and Corporate Grants ²	10,000	56,000	66,000
Brack Charitable Foundation		80,000	80,000
In-Kind Support		20,000	20,000
Total Income	10,000	167,100	177,100
Expenses			
Salaries and Wages	6000	91,765	97,765
Employee Benefits and Taxes		31,285	31,285
Total Personnel Costs	6000	123,050	129,050
Rent and Occupancy		22,352	22,352
Professional Development/Travel		750	750
Liability Insurance		1,466	1,466
Supplies/Materials/Books/Fees	2,000	1,570	3,570
Telephone Expense		840	840
Printing/Marketing	1,000	1,565	2,565
Admin. Services 11%	1,000	15,507	16,507
Total Non Personnel Costs	4000	44,050	48,050
Total Expenses	10000	167,100	177,100
Deficiency of Revenue		0	-

1. Annual per-person cost reimbursement for Young Parent Program and SNAP-ET.
2. Brack Foundation, 80,000; Eastern Bank, 2,500; Middlesex Foundation, 20,000; Staples Foundation, 3,500; MutualOne Foundation, 10,000; Dollar General (applied) \$15,000 and, First Literacy Lab, 5,000.
3. Administration Rate; SMOC rate is 11%: These costs include those non-program specific reimbursable resources necessary for policy and decision making, management, oversight and administration of SMOC as a whole. In this category are general agency administrative expenses such as Human Resources, Finance, Information Technology, Executive Management, Audit and general infrastructure.

**South Middlesex Opportunity Council
Board Approved FY18 Budget**

	Total
Revenue	
Grants and Contracts	73,300,451
Housing Rental Income	11,125,861
Resource Development	1,432,620
Behaviorial Health Fees	4,942,787
Inkind Revenue	2,179,158
Other	4,830,168 ¹
Total Revenue	<u>97,811,046</u>
Expenses	
Personnel	
Salaries	25,087,637
Payroll Taxes	<u>7,532,755</u>
Total Personnel	<u>32,620,392</u>
Non - Personnel	
Rent	5,456,736
Facility/Property Expense	5,530,046
Contract Services	1,861,370 ²
Subcontract Expense	399,778
Staff Training	404,615
Staff Mileage/Travel	204,677
Food/Nutrition	661,440
Client Transportation	569,731
Client Direct Expenses	39,243,596 ³
Program Supplies and Materials	637,111
Program Support	2,138,133
Administrative Service	3,897,090 ⁴
Indirect Other	4,425,100 ⁵
Total Non-Personnel Expenses	<u>65,429,424</u>
Total Expenses	<u>98,049,816</u>
Projected Change in Net Assets before Depreciation	<u>(238,770)</u>
Depreciation	<u>2,200,597</u>
Projected Change in Net Assets	<u>(2,439,367)</u>

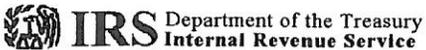
¹ Other Revenue consists mostly of Intercompany Administration Fee Revenue (which is offset by Intercompany Administration Fee Expense below) and Projected Gain from Sale of Property.

² Contract Services consists mostly of contract day care providers, consulting fees and audit fees

³ Client Direct Expenses include Rental Assistance, Fuel Assistance, WIC Subsidies, Workforce Training Stipends, Family Self-Sufficiency Accounts and Home Modification Loan Funds

⁴ Administrative Service consists of the 11% Administration Fees charged to each Division (offset above).

⁵ Indirect Other consists mostly of In-kind Expense and Mortgage Interest



OGDEN UT 84201-0029

In reply refer to: 4077567774
Mar. 09, 2016 LTR 4168C 0
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BODC: TE

SOUTH MIDDLESEX OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL
INC
7 BISHOP ST
FRAMINGHAM MA 01702-8323



001947

Employer ID Number: 04-2389659
Form 990 required: Yes

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your request dated Feb. 18, 2016, regarding your tax-exempt status.

We issued you a determination letter in August 1966, recognizing you as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3).

Our records also indicate you're not a private foundation as defined under IRC Section 509(a) because you're described in IRC Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors can deduct contributions they make to you as provided in IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts under IRC Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

In the heading of this letter, we indicated whether you must file an annual information return. If a return is required, you must file Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N, or 990-PF by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. IRC Section 6033(j) provides that, if you don't file a required annual information return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked on the filing due date of the third required return or notice.

For tax forms, instructions, and publications, visit www.irs.gov or call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

If you have questions, call 1-877-829-5500 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., local time, Monday through Friday (Alaska and Hawaii follow Pacific Time).

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SOUTH MIDDLESEX OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL
INC
7 BISHOP ST
FRAMINGHAM MA 01702-8323

Sincerely yours,



Jeffrey I. Cooper
Director, EO Rulings & Agreement