

Abstract

The purposes of the Future Foundation Leadership Initiative (FFLI) is the emphasis on collaboration between local communities in South Carolina (via foundations) and Clemson University. This program provides an innovative platform for creating a mentoring relationship between students/community members to learn from and contribute to local foundations in the upstate of South Carolina. This is obtained primarily by partnering students who are interested in a career with non-profits or foundations and current foundation personnel. Both partners are provided firsthand insight into meeting the challenges of public service activities. The partnership created between foundations and students will lead to collaborative project development through the training received at the FFLI. Through the service provided in our program, participants will be better equipped to serve the communities in which they decide to work and live.

Statement of Community Need

A grant according to Grants.gov is “an award of financial assistance the principal purpose of which is to transfer a thing of value from a federal agency to a recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation” (2005) Grants fund a wide variety of public endeavors, from science innovation in elementary education to neuroscience at the doctorate level. Grant writing can have an enormous impact at the community level. Many local organizations may be in need of funding but, “they shy away from grant writing because they believe that the process is complicated, time consuming and may not yield results.”(Van Zant, 2003) Although these concerns seem valid they should not discourage people from learning the art of grant writing. The belief that grant is not worth the effort is something that can be changed simply by providing information and support.

National organizations like The Grantsmanship Center and Grant Writing USA offer extensive grant writing workshops to its participants. The national programs however do not offer workshops in the state of South Carolina and are costly. In addition to not being available in the state, many of these workshops are geared toward professionals in education or science fields. It is our belief that grant writing can greatly impact the social climate of any industry, and that professionals are not the only ones that need this training. Students, community leaders and professional alike can benefit. By hosting Grant writing workshops community leaders and future community leaders can learn successful methods to implement within their organizations.

Goals and Objectives

The unique aspect of the goals of the Future Foundation Leadership Initiative (FFLI) is the emphasis on collaboration between local communities in South Carolina (via foundations) and Clemson University. This program will provide the platform for creating a mentoring aspect for those students/community members to learn from and contribute to local foundations. This is obtained primarily by preparedness of students who are interested in a career with non-profits or foundations and partnering current foundation personnel with those students. The partnership created between foundations and students will lead to collaborative project development due to the training received at the FFLI. Through the service provided in our program, participants will be better equipped to serve the communities in which they decide to work and live.

How do students benefit from the program? Individuals experience numerous changes in their career. These changes may be attributed, in part, to individual lack of preparedness or under-preparedness. In particular, a career in a foundation or other non-profit organization may pose

unique challenges not otherwise seen in more careers like education, engineering, or business. The participants from foundations offer specific insight and expertise to the partner students also participating in the program and thereby benefit from the mentoring component.

How do foundations and communities benefit from the program? As noted previously, many local organizations may be in need of funding but, “they shy away from proposal writing because they believe that the process is complicated, time consuming and may not yield results.”(Van Zant, 2003). The participants from foundations also offer specific insight and expertise as to the immediate needs of their organization. Through the partnership of FFLI, participants will gain access to training and partnership development that will yield positive results within their organizations.

In keeping with the unique nature of meeting the partners needs, the objectives of FFLI include:

- The promotion of collaborative partnerships between students and community members through direct civic engagement.
- Engagement of graduate and undergraduate students who show an interest in public service and service learning.
- Engagement of community members and policy makers by training future foundation leaders who will serve as ambassadors of their cause in the communities they represent.

Methods and Timeline

The objectives of FFLI will be obtained through:

1. An invitation (via email) to foundation representatives located in the Upstate of South Carolina. The first 10 respondents will be invited to participate in Initiative One at no cost to the organization where they will receive one days training in proposal development. A similar invitation and explanation of the Initiative will be hosted on the Strom Thurmond Institute website and give students the opportunity to reserve a seat at the Initiative (10). The timeline for this initial step is the week of March 6, 2006.
2. Initiative One will consist of a four hour workshop (at the Strom Thurmond Institute-STI) designed to train the participants in the proposal development process (March 6, 2006). The workshop will be delivered by Dr. Dixie Goswami and Dr. Harold Long and will consist of the formal steps in proposal development as published by Burke and Prater, 2000 and capitalizing on the extensive experience of Dr. Goswami and her work with foundations throughout the United States. The workshop will provide refreshments and lunch to all participants on that day.
3. Materials to be provided during the workshop include: introductory letter and explanation of services, agenda, proposal template, sample proposals, other support material, and workshop evaluation surveys.
4. Upon completion of Initiative One, participants will be granted access to the FFLI web to be created upon funding and initial registration set to occur on March 6, 2006. The FFLI web will serve as a storehouse of information concerning proposal development, funding sources, sample grants, proposal development assistance, and contact information. This web tool will provide a cost efficient means by which to disseminate information and continue collaboration over longer distances. Future upgrades will offer video conferencing capabilities giving partners the opportunity to communicate “face-to-face”

where vehicle travel is cost prohibitive and timely. The timeline for completion of FFLI web is the first week of April 2006.

5. Initiative Two is the follow-up workshop to Initiative One. This is designed to give those initial participants a refresher and further develop their skills. In May of 2006, a follow-up email to all the initial participants will be sent inviting those respondents to return for phase two. The second phase is designed to train the participants in strategies designed to sustain funding for their organizations (a critical component to longevity of any organization). These services will target the specific nature of the organization as opposed to the initial more general workshop. The 3 hour workshop will be delivered by Dr's Goswami and Long at the Strom Thurmond Institute.

Evaluation

The success of FFLI will consist of a formative and summative evaluation of the outcome objectives as stated previously in the proposal. This will consist of the use of on-line surveys (see <http://stromsurvey.cu.clemson.edu/login.asp>) following both phases of FFLI as well as a post program survey six months following completion of phase two. The post program survey will be designed to determine the extent to which:

- The promotion of collaborative partnerships between students and community members through direct civic engagement was obtained.
- Graduate and undergraduate students seem engaged with foundation and community members following participation in FFLI.
- Engagement of community members and policy makers was likely obtained through participation in FFLI.
- The amount of external funds in foundations was increased as a result of participation in FFLI.

Dissemination/Communication

The work of FFLI will delivered to colleagues and the general public by:

- The creation and continued hosting of information on FFLI web.
- The creation and distribution of a newsletter detailing the outcomes and services provided during the Initiative. This newsletter will be distributed to local and state media services by the information distribution procedures already in place at the Strom Thurmond Institute.
- Through the partnerships developed at the Initiative, all information will be disseminated via email to the participating foundations with emphasis on publication on their web sites.

Sustainability

Perhaps one of the most novel aspects of the FFLI is the answer to the question, where do we go from here? Once the two sessions of the Initiative is complete, participants will be given the opportunity to join a subscription based suite of services already in place at the Strom Thurmond Institute and Leadership one. This will be a subscription service which will provide the client with grants alert services informing the client of specific funding opportunities which are pre-screened to match their unique needs. Additionally, the subscription service will provide grant writing assistance and review services as well as program evaluation services which are crucial to measuring the success of their work.

Until the subscription base has developed into a sustainable revenue model, additional grant proposals are under development to continue FFLI past May of 2006. Grant proposals are under consideration to the Bellsouth Foundation and the Self Family Foundation to make the FFLI a partner in the development of local foundations and individuals who show interest in working with foundations.

Personnel

Harold L. Long, Principal Investigator

Earned Degrees

Ed. D. (2002) Educational Administration, with an emphasis on Research, South Carolina State University, Dissertation Title: The Correlation Between Low Birth Weight and Academic Achievement.

M. Ed. (1995) Elementary Education
Converse College.

B. S. (1989) Psychology, with a concentration in Philosophy
Lander University.

Major Professional Employment

2005 – Present Research Coordinator, Clemson University, The Jim Self Center on the Future at The Strom Thurmond Institute of Government & Public Affairs

2003-2005 Technology Coordinator, Spartanburg District Five Schools

1995-2003 Educator, Greenville County Schools

1992-1994 District Manager, Multimedia Incorporated

1989-1992 Executive Director, Barbizon International

Dixie Goswami, Presenter

Earned Degrees

M. Ed. (1966) English
Clemson University.

B. S. (1939) English
Clemson University.

Major Professional Employment

1984-Present Clemson University

Professional Accomplishments

- Networks for English teachers, linked with Clemson's English department,
- REACH -- Rural Education Alliance for Collaboration in the Humanities -
- South Carolina Cross-Age Tutoring
- The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network has a site at Clemson's Strom Thurmond Institute
- Richard Riley Award from the S.C. Council of Teachers of English

Project Budget

Staffing, Senior Personnel plus benefits	4676.00
Salary for Principal Investigator	1,875.00
Salary for Presenter	1,000.00
Salary for Web Master	750.00
Staffing, Other Personnel plus benefits	1010.00
Salary for Graduate Assistant	1000.00
Fringe Benefits at 29%	1051.00
Fringe Benefits at 1%	10.00

Materials and Supplies	825.00
Workshop packets	400.00
Refreshments and Lunch for 20 participants and program personnel	425.00
Communication	600.00
Documentation/Dissemination	225.00
Total Budget	7336.00

Budget Justification

A. Senior personnel:Harold Long, Strom Thurmond Institute	3% salary
B. Dixie Goswami, Presenter, Senior Scholar, STI	Paid hourly
C. Graduate Students Graduate Assistant, Richelle Jones	Paid hourly
D. Materials and Supplies,	
Workshop packets (invitations, agenda, templates, sample proposals, sample grant evaluation checklists, surveys)	300.00
Refreshments and Lunch for 20 participants and program personnel	325.00
E. Communication Long Distance Telephone, 50.00 per month for 12 months	600.00
F. Documentation/Dissemination, postage and shipping related to workshop invitations, workshop packets, surveys, newsletter, summary and results to participants	125.00
G. Fringe benefits at 29%	797.00
H. Fringe benefits at 1%	5.00

Personnel Responsibilities

Principal Investigator (Dr. Long)- Administer overall project objectives, principal presenter at the two workshops, coordinate design/dissemination of project literature, design and administer surveys and other evaluation duties, coordinate design of FFLI web, and other duties as project necessitates.

Presenter (Dr. Goswami)- Present during second workshop and serve as proposal facilitator to the participants as they develop their specific proposal.

Webmaster (Michael Chase)- Design and host the FFLI website for the duration of the program as well as subsequent upgrades for the sustainable period.

Graduate Assistant (Richelle Jones)- Serve as project host- assisting with invitations, agendas, workshop packets, and survey distribution. Additional responsibilities include the coordination of on-going communication between the two phases of the workshop as well as website assistance, answering email, and other assistive duties as project necessitates.

References and Summary

Van Zant, Susan. (2003). Successful Grant Writing Strategies. *Leadership*, 32, 16-19

November 29, 2005. <http://www.grants.gov>

Burke, Jim & Carol Ann Prater. *I'll Grant You That: A Step-By-Step Guide to Finding Funds, Designing Winning Projects, and Writing Powerful Proposals*. Heinemann, 2000.