

The Research Foundation for SUNY Brockport - Patricia Williams

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Organization Profile

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Mission/Vision Mission

The RF provides talent, services, and technology that empower SUNY to research, innovate, and transfer discoveries that transform the world's knowledge economy.

Vision

The RF partners with SUNY to make it the best place for faculty, students and staff to research, innovate, and solve the world's most pressing problems.

Receive County Funds? no

Div. of Corp. N/A? yes

Proposal Information

Project Name Rochester Educational Opportunity Center (REOC) Mobile Welding Lab

Summary While correctional facilities are doing their best to rehabilitate inmates and prepare them for successful reentry into society, it is clear that more intervention is needed. Rehabilitation can come in many forms, including access to education and vocational training. In recent years, welding programs within prisons have begun sprouting all over the U.S. According to Crimesolutions.gov, one of the most commonly reported trade credentials attained in prison is welding. Hence, Rochester Educational Opportunity Center (REOC) plans to create a Mobile Welding Lab program to serve eligible at-risk youth (ages 18-24), current inmates, and ex-offenders that have significant barriers to employment. The purpose of the REOC Mobile Welding program is to help guide at-risk offenders who are on probation to a better life by offering them skills training in a high-growth/high-demand and economically vital industry relevant to Monroe County's economy and critical life skills that many lack prior to their participation. While REOC currently has numerous programs addressing eligible at-risk youth, current inmates, and ex-offenders, we seek to augment and strengthen our efforts by establishing the REOC Mobile Welding Lab program. The REOC Mobile Welding Lab can be moved between prisons, community centers and educational facilities.

Workforce/Economic?	Health/Safety?	Infrastructure/Sustainability?
yes	no	no

Description The REOC Mobile Welding Lab will be used as a live welding training lab to provide students real world training. The lab will be housed in a large trailer with live-welding units to train all welding processes (stick, MIG, and TIG) with 8 welding work stations. The lab will continuously travel throughout Monroe County, as needed, and can be stand-alone with a diesel generator or with shore power connectivity for extended durations. The lab will allow us to bring the training to underserved communities throughout Monroe County, especially the prison system. This will remove some of the transportation barriers. The lab will allow us to partner with Monroe County, City of Rochester, the prison system, community centers, and local school districts to provide the training to their constituents. Students completing the program will be eligible for the AWS Weld Test Certification in Shielded Metal Arc and Flux-Cored Metal Arc Welding (see details below). NCCER curriculum will be utilized, Welding Level I for SMAW portion of the training, Level II for GMAW/FCAW.

According to the American Welding Association, there continues to be a high demand for certified welders nationwide. An estimated 500,000 job openings are currently available nationwide for certified welders. According to the Occupational Job Outlook, the demand for welders is high in Monroe County as well. Additionally, many companies that hire welders are willing to accept applications from ex-offenders. This program is designed to provide valuable welding skills that will allow students to gain meaningful employment upon successful completion. Employers will be brought in routinely to speak to participants regarding job expectations and opportunities within their organizations and possible interviews.

While a skilled workforce is essential to business and industry success in Monroe County, creating programs that will help reduce recidivism is also essential. This proposal supports workforce development and public safety. The program can provide a new pipeline of highly skilled professionals for the welding industry for a very long time by tapping into a population that is underserved. Those who are participating in the program will also have the opportunity to explore further career options through higher education by participating in workshops on college options, financial aid and college survival skills.

This project will be sustainable after 2026 because the major cost for this project is building the mobile welding lab. REOC will be able to sustain this project from the state budget that REOC receives yearly from SUNY. Welding education is not just improving the lives of at-risk youth, current inmates, and ex-offenders, it's also helping Monroe County as a whole. This program can help reduce the severity of the ever-growing skills gap that threatens to leave hundreds of jobs unfilled.

We understand that at-risk populations often need dedicated support to help address barriers to education access: poverty, crime, lack of suitable housing, and unemployment. Therefore, REOC's counselors will support this initiative by providing its participants with case management and individual and group counseling, academic advisement and career counseling and guidance, as well as mental health counseling and support.

Below, please find additional information pertaining to a mobile welding lab.

<https://youtu.be/7k7e3AOh9h0>

We understand that this initiative needs measurable metrics to ensure that this proposal is successful in meeting program goals and objectives. Data gathered to evaluate this initiative at the start and end of each year will include:

- Eligibility/educational status
- Number of students served each year
- Needs assessment data will be recorded and a student chart will be created for each student, which will allow the REOC counselors to identify academic performance stages, identify specific services needed, and create a plan for providing tutoring and advising or counseling
- Number of students placed in welding jobs
- Number of students who retained their jobs after a year
- The economic impact on Monroe County

We recognize that there will be additional non-measurable metrics that we will achieve through the REOC Mobile Welding Lab program that will positively transform our community, such as the following:

- How active students are in the community
- Participants will become aware of life skills programs outside of the REOC such as programs to increase skills in literacy and parenting
- Government funding that was saved due to the reduction of recurring inmates and the reduction of police on the streets

Data will be collected on a daily basis, compiled on a weekly basis, and entered into the database. Reports will be generated monthly, quarterly, and annually. The results of the reports will be evaluated to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to make necessary modifications. As a result, the effective and ineffective components and procedures of the initiative will be identified in a timely manner and modified accordingly to enhance the achievement of the initiative.

Finally, we recognize that evaluation is a continuous process. Using feedback provided by evaluation results, coupled with evaluating the goals that have been attained, will dictate the extent to which the program achieves its annual measures of success.

Company Strengths For more than 50 years, REOC has been part of a statewide network of EOCs funded by NYS and supervised by the State University of New York University Center for Academic and Workforce Development (UCAWD) with a mission to improve educational opportunities for educationally and economically disadvantaged adults. As an urban adult education center, REOC provides innovative academic, remedial, and vocational programs and services for academically and economically underserved individuals. The students that we serve are from a diverse population. Students who complete these programs transfer to post-secondary education and/or are placed in employment. To date, REOC has served more than 70,000 community residents in search of career and higher educational development. Training is provided in an array of academic and career educational courses of study leading to state approved certificates. REOC annually enrolls approximately 1,300 individuals. Over its more than half a century of operation, REOC not only improved its facilities to create an atmosphere more conducive to learning, but also offered programs and services that have resulted in countless success stories. Thousands of people from the City of Rochester and Monroe County area have benefited from the Center's programs. Some successful REOC graduates have gone on to become local leaders, college professors, entrepreneurs, doctors, nurse practitioners, lawyers, directors, and advocates within the community. REOC's vocational programs have all been identified by the Department of Labor's in-demand jobs.

The Research Foundation for SUNY works with the academic and business leadership of SUNY campuses to facilitate research and discovery by administering sponsored projects and delivering intellectual property and technology transfer services that fuel innovation and move ideas and inventions to the marketplace. The RF is a private non-profit education corporation that is tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c) (3).

Community Resources The Research Foundation (RF) will provide administrative oversight including, but not limited to: fiscal management (invoicing, personnel, and purchasing), ongoing assessment, technical assistance, budget reviews, and report submission. Minority/Women Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) will be used in accordance with Monroe County good faith efforts. REOC has been partnering with Realizing Other's Outstanding Talents (ROOTS) for over five years. ROOTS is a dynamic professional training consulting company that will focus on the emotional and social needs of our students to help them overcome personal and/or community challenges while building character, emotional intelligence, social/cultural competence, and a sense of passion and innovation. Their customized curriculum engages and empowers students, and sets the stage for life-long growth.

The in-kind services provided for this program are important in providing supportive and tangible pieces for the success of not only the students, but the program as a whole. In-kind services will be provided both directly and indirectly through both REOC and outside supporting agencies such as the Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), Legal Assistance of Western New York (LAWNY), Literacy Volunteers of Rochester (LVR), and Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Rochester (CCCR) to name a few. These agencies, along with local businesses, non-profit community programs and religious organizations will foster our community outreach and help take our services to those in need as well as facilitating job placements for our graduates.

REOC will provide enrollment support, advertising and marketing promotion, staff and program support, data collection and reporting, programmatic evaluation, counseling services, retention, completion and placement services. REOC staff who will be involved in providing additional supportive services for this initiative are the Dean/Executive Director, Director of Academic Affairs, REOC Program Counselor, Coordinator of Community Relations, and an Administrative Assistant.

LVR has been partnering with REOC for over eight years and will additionally assist in improving the reading, math, English language, and digital literacy skills of the program participants.

CCCS of Rochester has been REOC's partner for over eight years and will provide free on-site/off-site in-kind financial literacy skill development for REOC program participants. Program participants are assisted with credit reports, first-time home buyer programs, debt consolidation, spending and savings plans, student loan repayment assistance needs, etc. These services have been an asset to low-income adult learners to proactively address being able to financially provide for their families.

LAWNY has been REOC's partner for 10 years, and will provide free in-kind legal assistance to the program participants. Program participants will be assisted with their re-entry, housing, public benefits, and healthcare needs. REOC deems that this service will be vital to the program participants, but especially to those who have a criminal history, therefore, allowing them to focus on learning, program completion, and obtaining/maintaining employment.

MCSO will assign a person responsible for this initiative who will identify the inmates that are interested in welding and ready for the opportunity to become productive citizens. MCSO will also assist with marketing the program to the inmates and ex-offenders that need to be trained.

Audience REOC will identify and recruit underprepared and at-risk youth (ages 18-24), current inmates, and ex-offenders living in the City of Rochester and Monroe County for the REOC Mobile Welding Lab program. We will ensure that each student receives individualized academic enrichment, wrap-around social support, and continuous advisement.

REOC engages our students through a great team of dedicated individuals committed to helping them reach their goals. REOC was founded to assist the underrepresented population and has over 50 years' experience in training and placing underserved, minority and vulnerable individuals throughout the City of Rochester and Monroe County. REOC has expert faculty and staff who work with students to acquire the academic and vocational skills needed to start a new career path, and to also grow personally and professionally.

Counselors will help students overcome barriers to success and develop skills for personal empowerment. Employment staff will facilitate the process needed to transition students from program completion to a successful career. Employment staff also provide post-employment supportive services for employment retention.

Based upon previous successes, REOC looks forward to continuing to serve this underrepresented population under this initiative.

REOC does not charge tuition and, therefore, there are no costs to the participants for the training, supportive services, or placement services.

<i>Cost 1st Year</i>	<i>Cost All Years</i>	<i>Residents 1st Year</i>	<i>Residents All Years</i>	<i>FT Employees</i>	<i>PT Employees</i>
\$800,000.00	\$1,317,950.00	0	96	1	1

Volunteers

1

Staffing Dr. Roosevelt Mareus, REOC Dean/Executive Director (In-Kind) has oversight of REOC.

Dr. Gloria Morgan, REOC Director of Academic Affairs (In-Kind) is in charge of facilitation of hiring faculty, curriculum oversight and achieving programmatic benchmarks.

Mr. Steven Fugle, DSWc/ LCSW, REOC Program Counselor (In-Kind) provides counseling for students during program timeframe.

Ms. Patricia, Beaudrie, MEd, REOC Coordinator of Community Relations (In-Kind) provides advertising and marketing development and facilitation of recruitment activities.

Ms. Angelee Ortiz-Palermo (CSEA), REOC Administrative Assistant (In-Kind) supports data collection, communication and compilation of program metrics.

(TBD) Welding Lab Instructor is responsible for training and development of enrolled students and meeting programmatic benchmarks for completion and retention.

(TBD) Truck Driver is responsible for safe transportation of the REOC Mobile Welding Lab to endure timelines and safety of the unit and students at all times.

Mr. Chris Cuby, President, ROOTS will focus on the emotional and social needs of our students to help them overcome personal and/or community challenges while building character, emotional intelligence, social/cultural competence, and a sense of passion and innovation.

Ms. Laura Merkl, Contract and Grant Administrator, RF will provide administrative oversight including, but not limited to: fiscal management (invoicing, personnel, and purchasing), ongoing assessment, technical assistance, budget reviews, and report submissions.