



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Chesterfield  
Program Title: Educational and Vocational Connections Coordinator  
Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Deborah Dugger  
Title: Director  
Department: Adolescent Resource Pathways  
Telephone: 804-748-1857 Website: <https://www.chesterfield.gov/183/Adolescent-Resource-Pathways-CARP>  
Email: carp@chesterfield.gov

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.  
Title: County Administrator  
Signature: Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.

Digitally signed by Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.  
DN: cn=Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D., o=Chesterfield County, ou=County Administration,  
email=caseyjoe@chesterfield.gov, c=US  
Date: 2023.06.27 11:21:31 -04'00'

## STEP ONE: PREPARING THE NOMINATION SUMMARY

Please prepare your nomination summary according to the outline of sections below.

### **ABSTRACT OF THE PROGRAM:**

In approximately 200 words or less, summarize the program include the program description, the purpose and outcomes.

Abstracts of award winning programs will be published. Please be sure to provide clear and concise information as this section will be used publicly in whatever format it is submitted.

The Education and Vocational Connection Coordinator (EVCC) works with court-involved youth to identify educational and vocational needs and connect youth to the services or programs to meet those needs. For youth transitioning to any school program, the EVCC works with the family to identify and address any and all tasks associated with getting the child back in school.

The EVCC is knowledgeable about the Public School System and has established relationships/contacts to leverage in getting the child back in school or enrolled in a different school/educational program. The EVCC administers vocational assessments for court-involved youth, meets with youth and their families to discuss vocational and educational interests, and connects youth to programs, internships, job shadowing or other services where they can explore and learn.

### **THE PROBLEM OR NEED FOR THE PROGRAM**

Discuss the problem or need that prompted the development of the program and the county's legal obligation, if any, to take action. Approximately ¼ pages.

Youth involved in the Juvenile Justice system are frequently removed from the community and from their school for a variety of reasons. Primarily middle- and high-school aged youth, they may be excluded from public school because of the nature of their charges. Alternatively, they may be suspended from school for negative behaviors or they may frequently miss school because they are detained. Whatever the reason for the initial absence from the school community, they may have difficulty returning. That difficulty can stem from feelings of being ostracized, being behind their same-aged peers, social anxiety or a history of school failures.

The problem is that, if left to drop out, we know that these students are less likely to contribute to society and even more likely to become financially draining to the community. Once disconnected, it is hard for students to engage or re-engage. Many court-involved youth have not found traditional school settings to be places where they experience success. Specifically for this small population of youth transitioning from long-term suspension and detainment back into the public school system, a facilitator can find the best path. Often youth have no frame of reference for choosing their future endeavors and little incentive to prioritize career planning. Assisting a child with assessing his/her skills, aptitudes, and desires, and then matching those with potential career paths will give youth opportunities for success.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM**

Provide a description of the nominated program including its objectives, time frame for development and implementation, clientele, the county's role in implementing the program and the contributions of any other partners where applicable (e.g. states and the federal government, consultants and private partnerships). Approximately 2 ½ pages.

The EVCC provides participants with academic and career readiness services to foster positive development and support educational, postsecondary and workforce success. In the juvenile justice services departments in Chesterfield County, it was noted that, after youth were released from Detention, they may feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they have missed, even though they attend school in Detention. They may also feel unwelcomed, particularly if they were suspended for negative behavior in the school. They may simply not return to school. According to the The role of the EVCC is to find an alternative educational or vocational path that is appealing to the student. This may be through vocational training at a community college, completing a high school equivalency, attending a vocational alternative program or changing from in-person to virtual.

The biggest factor for the success of the program is that students know that the EVCC is there to support them as much or as little as they need. Therefore, the length of the program can be two years to as little as 2 months, based on what course of action the youth takes and how much support they need. Some students attend the program daily to get on demand support. Others meet with the EVCC on a weekly basis to check in and gauge their progress. Overarching is a sense of acceptance and positive reinforcement for the students.

Funding for the program is primarily from the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice through a funding stream called the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA). This funding is only made available to the locality through expenditure of a maintenance of effort by the locality. The concept of the program was very clear to our partners in the juvenile probation and education department, that being to assist as many youth as possible to become successful as adults. A very small percentage of students are at high risk to offend or re-offend. The cost for this small number of youth grows exponentially when they are not prepared to make a living wage. So, while the salary of one person is an expense, the savings to the locality and the community as a whole is enormous. According the one study, 75% of all crimes in the United States are committed by high school dropouts (Smiley, 2014)

## **RESPONDING TO ECONOMIC DOWNTURN (OPTIONAL)**

If applicable, describe how the program responded to county budget constraints or addressed the county's new economic reality. Approximately ¾ pages.

## **ADVANCING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (OPTIONAL)**

To ensure all residents have what they need to achieve their fullest potential, county leaders are taking actions to integrate diversity, equity and inclusion into county operations.

If applicable, describe how the program advances diversity, equity and inclusion priorities within the county or addresses existing racial and socioeconomic disparities. Approximately ¾ page.

## **THE COST OF THE PROGRAM**

Describe both the operating and capital costs incurred in developing and implementing the program. List all costs that would be incurred by a county attempting to replicate the program. Approximately ¾ to 1 page.

The cost of the program is the salary of a Master's degree level educator with experience in adult education. Additional expenses include normal office supplies including a computer, phone, etc. If an office were not already available, there would be additional expenditures for that. In our case, the program is housed in the building with all non-secure juvenile justice services operated by the locality.

## **THE RESULTS/SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM**

Provide a description of the results and the success of the program in meeting its objectives. Include specific examples and outcome measures. Approximately ¾ to 1 page.

100% of youth who began the program completed it successfully. 100% of youth who were seniors in high school graduated. 100% of youth who tested for the High School Equivalency completed all subject areas on the test.

## **WORTHINESS OF AWARD**

Give justification for why this program meets the outlined criteria and should be awarded a 2022 Achievement Award(s). Approximately ¼ to ½ page.

This program meets a very specific niche designed to improve the graduation rate of the small percentage of youth that are disengaged with the school system. Youth who are long-term suspended, overage for their grade or detained often find it difficult to fit back into their public school system. The cost of these students to the community can be huge when increased rates of adult incarceration and unemployment costs are factored in. Any locality implementing such a program will see immediate and long lasting results for years into the future.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS (OPTIONAL)**

Supplemental materials such as pictures and charts may be uploaded in separate PDF documents on the application form. Supplemental materials are not required but are highly encouraged.

## **Citations**

**Smiley, Travis "Fact Sheet: Is the Dropout Problem Real?" Travis Smiley**