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November 28, 2006

Krista Ferrell
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1031 Quarrier Street
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Dear Ms. Ferrell,

In response to the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Healthy Schools' request for quotations to evaluate the CDC-DASH Professional Development Consortium, Edvantia has prepared a proposal describing our capacity for and interest in conducting the evaluation. This proposal describes a comprehensive evaluation plan with multiple components to thoroughly assess the evaluation goals. Edvantia values collaborative evaluation and strives to be responsive to the needs of our clients. We are open to making adjustments to the proposed evaluation based on the needs of the Consortium.

We believe that our skills and experience make us uniquely qualified to conduct a high quality evaluation of the Professional Development Consortium's efforts. We look forward to discussing our proposal with you and collaborating to conduct a responsive evaluation. If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kristine L. Chadwick, Ph.D.
Senior Research & Evaluation Specialist

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(3 enclosures: Proposal, Quotation Form, Past Evaluation Report)



www.edvantia.org



Quotation to Evaluate the Professional Development Consortium

November 28, 2006

Edvantia, Inc.

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EDVANTIA™
Partners in education. Focused on results.

Bid
Submitted by Edvantia, Inc.
(formerly Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc.)
To Evaluate the Professional Development Consortium

This bid includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the West Virginia Department of Education ("WVDE") or the Professional Development Consortium ("PDC") and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed in whole or in part for any purpose other than to evaluate this bid. If, however, a contract is awarded to this offeror as a result of, or in connection with, the submission of this bid, the WVDE and PDC shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting contract. This restriction does not limit the WVDE or PDC's right to use information contained in this bid if it is obtained from another source without restriction. All data contained in this bid are subject to this restriction.

Submitted to:

The West Virginia Department of Education

Submitted by:

EDVANTIA™

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November 28, 2006

Edvantia's Response to Request for Quotation Issued by the West Virginia Department of Education To Evaluate the Professional Development Consortium

Edvantia, a nonprofit education research, evaluation, technical assistance, and professional development firm, is pleased to provide a quotation to evaluate the Professional Development Consortium, a CDC-DASH funded initiative to improve the West Virginia Department of Education and its partners' ability to promote the adoption and widespread implementation of the coordinated school health program (CSHP) model.

Edvantia Evaluation Experience and Capacity

Founded in 1966, Edvantia, Inc. (formerly Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc.) is headquartered in Charleston, West Virginia, with a branch office in Nashville, Tennessee. Since its founding 40 years ago, Edvantia has effectively managed and coordinated thorough program analyses for multi-year, multi-site, and multi-million dollar projects, including the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL), Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center, Coalfield Rural Systemic Initiative, and the Eisenhower Math and Science Consortium for the Appalachian region. For more than 15 years, Edvantia evaluators have served as the internal, and external, evaluators for regional comprehensive centers, including those serving Appalachia and the mid-Atlantic states. During four decades of education research and development work in the Appalachian region and in 17 other states, Edvantia has consistently met the delivery and performance requirements of the U.S. Department of Education, state and local education agencies, foundations, and business customers.

Edvantia has a strong record of successfully completed research and evaluation studies of educational, community development, social service, and technology processes, products, and projects. Edvantia's researchers have extensive experience in conducting high-quality research and evaluation studies that are descriptive, predictive, formative, and/or explanatory in nature and are skilled in planning and conducting experimental, quasi-experimental, and case study research studies. The staff have broad experience using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including rigorous primary and secondary data analyses, literature reviews, research syntheses, focus groups, interviews, document reviews, large-scale and small-scale surveys, and systematic classroom observations. Additionally, Edvantia research staff are highly skilled in conducting appropriate and rigorous statistical analyses (descriptive, comparative, and inferential) both of original or newly collected data and of existing data sets of varying sizes. Edvantia possesses technology to support data collection, analysis, and presentation, including qualitative data management software (e.g., NVivo, ATLAS.ti), statistical programs (e.g., SPSS, Excel), and Web-based data collection tools (e.g., ColdFusion, SurveyMonkey). Edvantia's research and evaluation work has received acclaim both nationally and internationally, and Edvantia has amassed an outstanding record of user-friendly publications for varied audiences. Edvantia's comprehensive project and product quality assurance processes guide the development and implementation of research studies and resulting products (e.g., research reports, evaluation reports, policy briefs) and ensure that they meet corporate and industry standards.

Specifically, Edvantia believes that evaluation must serve as an integral element of program planning and implementation. Evaluation of the PDC should be an ongoing process that not only assesses activities and accomplishments but also strives to determine the merit, or value, of accomplishments and then use this information for continuous improvement. Program evaluations conducted by Edvantia are based on *The Program Evaluation Standards* (1994), published by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, the *American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators* (2004), and the Utilization-Focused Evaluation principles (Patton, 2002). These standards collectively inform Edvantia's approach to program evaluation and guide the production of quality, impartial program evaluations that are reliable, valid, and useful.

In addition to Edvantia's research and evaluation division, the company directs a high quality technical assistance and professional development division. Edvantia has developed and facilitated professional development and technical assistance projects with many public agencies. These include state departments of education (or "SEAs"), intermediate education agencies, boards of education, local school districts, policymaking entities, and parent groups. For example, Edvantia has successfully worked with SEAs for more than 10 years to develop and maintain a professional development infrastructure within each state. The focus of this infrastructure is to identify state needs for professional development, develop requisite training materials, provide train-the-trainer professional development, and deliver training to schools across the region.

Edvantia PDC Evaluation Project Staff

The vast majority (90%) of Edvantia's professional staff have earned advanced degrees in education research, evaluation, education, or other social science fields. In addition, the organization is staffed by both veteran researchers and those new to the field, offering clients a range of experience, education, and perspective.

Dr. Kristine Chadwick will serve as Principal Investigator for the PDC evaluation, providing intellectual leadership to all facets of the evaluation and serving as the main contact between PDC partners and the evaluation team. She is co-manager of Edvantia's research and evaluation division, called the Institute for the Advancement of Research in Education, and experienced in health education, prevention programming, and comprehensive health promotion initiatives, in addition to her expertise in education research and evaluation (including many evaluations of professional development to teachers and administrators). For six years while she worked at research centers associated with Brown University and the University of Rhode Island, she coordinated the day-to-day evaluation activities of four coalition- and partnership-based substance abuse prevention and health promotion initiatives funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services. Chadwick also conducted a needs assessment of HIV prevention services for the Rhode Island Department of Education. Since then, she gained eight years of experience evaluating professional development and other P-16 education programs. Dr. Chadwick possesses extensive experience with case studies, qualitative studies examining organizational planning and collaboration, and the evaluation of professional development. She focuses her evaluations on producing reports that are user-friendly and provide information for program improvement (i.e., "utilization-focused" evaluation, Patton,

1997). She holds a master's and doctorate in experimental psychology from the University of Rhode Island, with emphases in evaluation research and community psychology. She has a certificate in the Advanced Study of Evaluation from Claremont Graduate University and is currently preparing for the Project Management Professional certification from the Project Management Institute.

Georgia Hughes, an Edvantia Research and Evaluation Specialist II, will serve as the Evaluation Manager, ensuring the day-to-day operation of the evaluation. Ms. Hughes has seven years of experience conducting research and evaluation studies on a variety of topics, including several educational evaluations, and managing three evaluation studies currently. Ms. Hughes earned her master's degree in applied psychology from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and is currently completing her dissertation for a doctorate in the same field. She has extensive training in a wide range of research and evaluation methodologies. In addition to rigorous methodological training, Hughes has experience designing and conducting surveys, interviews, and focus groups; developing data collection instruments and protocols; analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, including data from secondary sources; conducting comprehensive statistical analyses and interpretation; designing and managing databases; and reporting research findings for a variety of audiences, both technical and non-technical. Prior to joining Edvantia, she worked as a senior research associate with Applied Research Consultants in Carbondale, Illinois, and as a legislative aide to a West Virginia state senator.

Dr. Sandra Angius, who will serve as the lead Professional Development/Technical Assistance Expert, has more than 34 years of educational experience, primarily in the area of professional development and technical assistance. Currently, she is the director of the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) at Edvantia. The ARCC is one of 16 regional comprehensive centers, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, that provides state education agencies with intensive technical assistance to address the No Child Left Behind requirements and meet student achievement goals. Dr. Angius also serves as Edvantia's chief program officer and directs the work of two management teams—the Center for Education Services (CES) team and the Institute for the Advancement of Research and Evaluation (IARE) team. These two teams represent the work across the Edvantia corporation in professional development and technical assistance (CES) and research and evaluation (IARE). Before coming to Edvantia, Dr. Angius served as the director of research coordination and director of federal support for the West Virginia Department of Education. She has also served as director of the Upward Bound program at Marshall University, awareness counselor for the West Virginia Board of Regents, social services worker, and classroom teacher. Dr. Angius earned an Ed.D. in education administration from West Virginia University in 1990.

Dr. Rebecca Gajda will serve as the Senior Researcher. Dr. Gajda is a former public secondary school teacher and dropout prevention coordinator for a large and demographically diverse school district in the Midwest. She has also served as an administrator at Youth SAFE, a citywide shelter for homeless and abused children and adolescents funded by the State Department of Education. Rebecca has a Master's degree in Special Education and in 2001 earned a doctorate in Education and Human Resource Studies from Colorado State University. Currently, Dr. Gajda is an Assistant Professor of Educational Administration and Leadership at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst where her teaching and research is focused on the examination of organizational collaboration and the quality of school-agency partnerships.

In 2005 Dr. Gajda was awarded Marcia Guttentag Award by the American Evaluation Association (eval.org) for her outstanding contribution to the field of evaluation, whose work brings to life the guiding principles of the profession. She has published numerous articles and a book on how to conduct high quality and useful evaluations in education, health, and human service settings. Her work is drawn from real life on the ground experience with practitioners, project directors, and government-based project officers. Dr. Gajda has been the lead evaluator for two large-scale Safe School/Healthy Student initiatives funded by the Departments of Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services, a 21st Century Community Learning Centers demonstration grant, and several small-scale state and locally funded initiatives committed to high-quality programming for youth. The Departments of Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services have recommended Dr. Gajda's Strategic Alliance Formative Assessment process (Gajda, 2004) as the model to use in the evaluation of safe and healthy school programming. Most recently, the Centers for Disease Control has invited Dr. Gajda to be present on how to evaluate inter-organizational collaboration at the upcoming AEA-CDC annual conference to be held June 2007 in Atlanta, GA.

In addition to the Principal Investigator, Evaluation Manager, Professional Development/Technical Assistance Expert, and Senior Researcher, other Edvantia professional development staff, a Research & Evaluation Assistant, technology staff, and support staff will have time allocated to this project.

General Approach/Philosophy of Evaluation

The approach/philosophy on which the proposed evaluation is based is closely aligned with Michael Quinn Patton's Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) (1997, 2002). Utilization-focused evaluations are designed to maximize the usefulness of the evaluation to its intended audiences. The ways in which real people in the real world will use evaluation findings is a concern from the very beginning of the evaluation process (rather than an issue once the evaluation has been completed). Because no evaluation can be value-free, U-FE employs the values of those who have the responsibility to apply evaluation findings and make decisions concerning the implementation of evaluator recommendations.

In utilization-focused evaluations, the users' needs are preeminent. The evaluator's primary task is to develop good working relationships with intended users and help them decide which evaluation strategies will best fit their needs and budgets. The evaluation will seek to optimize the utility to stakeholders of evaluation processes, findings, and recommendations. Evaluators must be flexible and, to some degree, eclectic. The primary task is not to design an evaluation that aligns with the evaluators' belief systems but rather to design an evaluation that the intended users believe is rational, free from bias, and responsive to changing conditions and needs.

In the U-FE model, evaluation decisions are made in consultation with program staff. External evaluation is a collegial process, not an adversarial one. Evaluators will consult with PDC partners about data collection instruments and procedures as well as interim findings throughout the evaluation period on both a formal and informal basis. The goals of this communication are

- to provide guidance in the use of formative evaluation findings for program improvement
- to provide guidance in using data to inform major decisions
- to encourage an evidence-based focus that is non-threatening in nature so that the decisionmakers can focus on lessons learned from both “positive” and “negative” evaluation findings

Evaluation Design

The design will be a mixed-method goals-based evaluation. The mixed-method approach allows for data triangulation, or “multimethod research” (Brewer & Hunter, 1989), which will provide a more comprehensive picture than can be obtained by using only one particular data collection method. This approach posits that the strengths of each method will compensate for the weaknesses in others, ultimately providing a stronger, more rigorous evaluation design. Further, the mixed-design will include both *intramethod mixing* (i.e., using both open- and closed-ended items on a survey) and *intermethod mixing* (i.e., mixing two or more different methods), leading to “the most accurate and complete depiction of the phenomenon under investigation” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 298). A goals-based evaluation assesses the extent to which a program meets predetermined goals and objectives as articulated in the original program plans (McNamara, 1998). In this project, the evaluation will examine the extent to which the PDC’s activities have led to

- an increase in the capacity of funded partners to perform tasks as assigned by the Centers for Disease Control and on which the PDC has provided training
- a refinement of funded partner work-plans to be more focused and feasible in relation to PDC training topics
- an increase in funded partner staff competencies as defined in the document, *Building Competencies for Managing and Staff of Coordinated School Health Programs*.

Guided by the overarching goals, the evaluation will utilize a matrix framework to organize the major areas, or constructs, of importance. This matrix will be based on the components of the coordinated school health program model, as they intersect with the competencies needed to operate coordinated school health programs effectively. Understanding that some components will overlap due to the integrated nature of these programs and that other matrix cells may not be applicable to the study, the evaluators will use the framework to guide the development of data collection instruments and procedures and to structure the reporting of findings. The structure of the proposed framework is illustrated below

Competencies / CSHP Model Components	Health Education	Health Services	Physical Education	Nutrition Services	School Environment	School Counseling / Social Services	Teacher Well-being	Community
Management								
Programmatic Needs Assessment & Strategic Planning								
Collaboration								
Policies								
Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment								
PD & TA								
Marketing, Dissemination, Communication								
Monitoring & Evaluation								
Surveillance								

Using the framework, the evaluation team will categorize the types of professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) that have been provided to the partners, establish the PD and TA needs, and determine areas of strength and weakness in partners' workplans. For example, to determine PD needs, the evaluators may review documents and ask interview questions relating to curriculum, instruction, and assessment in physical education programs in the district or state. However, little focus may be paid to the intersection of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with school counseling, as other competencies would be more relevant.

An oft-employed model for evaluating professional development will also inform the evaluation proposed here. Thomas Guskey's five-level model, an adaptation of the earlier Kirkpatrick model for evaluating training programs in business settings, goes beyond addressing questions of what happens as a result of training and attempts also to address questions of why various student outcomes may occur (Guskey, 1999, 2000, 2002). The five levels are arranged hierarchically, from simple to more complex, and success at higher levels of the model is dependent upon success at lower levels.

Each level in Guskey's model represents a different milestone along the path toward the ultimate desired outcome (e.g., improved student academic performance and health). The first level, *participants' reactions*, addresses questions of whether or not participants liked the PD training. The second level, *participants' learning*, focuses on measuring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes participants gained as a result of the training. Whereas the first two levels of the model address questions related to participants' experiences with the training, the third level—*organization support and change*—focuses on organizational characteristics and attributes that can affect participants' success in implementing their new knowledge and skills. According to Guskey, professional development occurs in a larger context that includes organizational policies and practices; it is these factors that Level 3 addresses (Guskey, 2000). At Level 4 of the model, called *participants' use of knowledge and skills*, the focus of the evaluation is on determining the extent to which participants employ the knowledge and skills taught at the training in their daily jobs. The final level of the model, student learning outcomes, focuses on the ultimate goal of many PD programs—the impact of the training on students' learning. Thus, Level 5 of

Guskey's model assesses whether the implementation of PD training influences student outcomes (in this case, risky behavior avoidance, engagement in healthy behaviors, attendance, academic perseverance). Although evaluators seek to answer specific questions for each level of the model, Guskey continually reminds evaluators that they must be open to finding unintended consequences or outcomes (Guskey, 1999, 2000)

At each level of Guskey's model, different information gathering techniques are required. Further, data collection typically becomes more complex as evaluators address each successive level (Guskey, 1999, 2002). For instance, Level 1 questions can typically be answered with questionnaires administered immediately following the training session(s). Answering Level 2 questions, however, may require more sophisticated methods that may include knowledge assessments (including pre- and post-tests), demonstrations, portfolios, or structured reflections, although these questions are often answered through participant self-report. Likewise, Level 3 issues may need to be addressed with document and record reviews, questionnaires, or structured interviews with teachers and administrators to assess all facets of organizational support. At Level 4 of the model, evaluators may use questionnaires, interviews, structured reflections, or observations to assess training participants' use of new knowledge and skills. Level 5 requires the most intense and sophisticated methods and can include student assessments or standardized tests, grades, portfolios, grades, or analysis of other student records.

The current evaluation will focus on Levels 1 through 4, with the logic of the program predicting that positive findings at those levels will eventually lead to more effective comprehensive school health programs that impact student attitudes and behaviors.

Data Collection Strategies

It is expected that the final evaluation plan and accompanying data collection strategies will be determined through discussion with PDC after award of the evaluation contract. Presented in this section are examples of the types of data Edvantia evaluators could collect in order to complete the list of tasks specified in the Request for Quotation.

Identification of Professional Development Needs of Participants

Professional development needs questionnaire. In order to identify the professional development needs of participants, a semistructured Web-based questionnaire (the "Needs Questionnaire") will be constructed. The Needs Questionnaire, which will include both open-ended and forced-choice response formats, will solicit information regarding perceived strengths in the competencies and coordinated school health program model components, amount and quality of technical assistance and professional development received from a variety of sources, and desire for additional training. This questionnaire will be conducted in the spring of 2007 (and each spring thereafter if the contract continues beyond February 2008). A paper version of the Needs Questionnaire can be made available for participants who are not comfortable with the Web format. The questionnaire will be preceded by a letter (or e-mail) from the PDC explaining the questionnaire's purpose and the fact that the participant will soon receive a link from Edvantia to complete the questionnaire. Two weeks following the delivery of the Web questionnaire link information, a follow-up/prompt e-mail could be sent by the PDC thanking those who have participated and once again requesting participation from those who have not.

completed the questionnaire. These methods, in addition to others to be determined through discussion between the evaluation team and the PDC, will ensure that the Needs Questionnaire obtains at least a 75-80% response rate.

Document and artifact review. In order to triangulate the findings from the Needs Questionnaire, the evaluation team will review the work plans and completed staff competencies rubrics if available. Systematic reviews of these documents, of any needs assessments that have been conducted by the PDC to plan professional development events to date, and of evaluators' notes and meeting minutes from two annual PDC planning meetings, will be cross-referenced with the needs questionnaire data to ensure a comprehensive assessment of needs.

Evaluation of PDC event impact on participants' activities post-event

Professional development event evaluation form. Evaluators will coordinate with PDC staff to administer onsite an event evaluation at the end of one PDC national professional development event each year. This Event Evaluation Form will assess participants' reactions to the content and format of professional development events. In addition, clients will be asked to rate the quality, utility, and relevance of each event (Guskey's Level 1), explain what they have learned (Guskey's Level 2), and describe how they plan to use what they have learned (behavioral intention for Guskey's Level 4).

Professional development event flash interview. In order to supplement the Event Evaluation Form data with context-rich participant reactions, the evaluation team will conduct short "flash" interviews with a random selection of event participants. These Flash Interviews, which will last approximately two minutes, will be conducted immediately before, during (i.e., at breaks), and after the event. Prior to the PD event, randomly selected participants will be asked what they hope to gain from the event. During and after the event, participants will be queried about the quality of the event, and their most and least favorite topics, activities, or sessions of the event. The purpose of the Flash Interview is to capture participants' immediate, visceral reactions to the PD event, and to provide rich quotes to supplement the Event Evaluation Form data. The evaluation team expects to interview approximately 20 participants at each annual PD event.

Professional development follow-up questionnaire. Approximately three months following the national professional development event, evaluators will conduct follow-up activities. The follow-up evaluation, such as semistructured post-event telephone interviews ($n < 50$) or Web-based survey ($n > 50$) conducted by Edvantia staff, will solicit information from participants about the ways in which the professional development event increased their capacity to coordinate and implement programs relating to the CSHP model. Questions will ask both what new knowledge and skills from the professional development participants have been able to apply thus far, what they plan to apply, and on what topics they require technical assistance in order to fully implement the new knowledge and skills (Guskey's Level 4). In addition, participants will be queried about organizational factors (e.g., state or district policies, organizational communication barriers, strong partnerships) that hinder or facilitate the application of new skills and knowledge (Guskey's Level 3).

Document and artifact review. If participants complete a new competencies rubric each year, and if these documents are shared with PDC staff, the evaluation team could conduct an analysis of these data, stripped of individual identifiers to protect the anonymity of participants. In addition, funded partners' work-plans will be reviewed to examine changes in those components of the plan related to the topics covered in professional development events. The changes will be compared to the matrix of competencies by CSHP model components to determine the extent to which funded partners are better able to implement the CSHP model in their states, territories, or districts

Identification of additional technical assistance and follow-up support needs of participants

Professional development follow-up questionnaire. As described above, the technical assistance needs of those funded partners who participate in the national PD event will be administered a follow-up questionnaire (either phone interview or Web-based survey) in which they will have the opportunity to describe the types of technical assistance they require in order to apply the skills and knowledge learned at the PD event. However, not all funded partners may participate in this national event, nor will the follow-up questionnaire address the full range of technical assistance needs. Thus, the questionnaire must be complemented with other data collection strategies.

Technical assistance needs interview. Included in the Needs Questionnaire described earlier will be items relating to funded partners' interest in technical assistance or follow up on topics related to the competencies and coordinated school health program model components. Those stating they do have a need for follow-up will be interviewed using the Technical Assistance Needs Interview¹ ("TA Needs Interview"). The TA Needs Interview will be conducted by telephone each summer. The semistructured interview will include questions relating to each competency and each CSHP model component. The sampling frame will be the population of funded partners. Edvantia will work with the PDC on methods to ensure at least a 75-80% response rate.

Document and artifact review. The funded partners' work-plans will be reviewed and assessed using the matrix of competencies with CSHP model components to ascertain the extent to which the plans are feasible and of high quality. Areas of weakness will be compared with funded partners' reported TA and PD needs. Weak areas that are not mentioned as those for which funded partners need TA or PD will be added to the list of PD and TA needs by the evaluation team.

Technical assistance logs. If not currently doing so, PDC partners will be asked to track the TA and follow-up support provided to funded partners, including the date of request, length of time until a response, type of support, intensity of interaction (e.g., number of hours or days committed), number/type of interactions (e.g., in-person, e-mail, phone, etc.), and resolutions. These data will be compiled over several years to gain a sense of the types of problems funded partners encounter, the types of TA that have been delivered, and the breadth

¹ In discussions between the evaluation team and the PDC partners, we will collectively determine whether the Needs Questionnaire and the TA Needs Interview should be combined. Given that these are in two different categories of activities, as delineated in the Bid Form, they have been presented separately here

(number of funded partners) and depth (amount of TA provided to a given funded partner) of TA that has been provided. TA will continue to be tracked throughout the evaluation contract period and will be cross-referenced with reported and otherwise identified TA and follow-up needs to create a comprehensive picture of the TA that is needed for these types of programs. Disaggregations of log data by region, type of partner, CSHP model component, competency, or other variables will be conducted to examine trends and factors influencing the need for TA.

Documentation of the impact of internal and external processes and communication with multiple partners

PDC partner interviews. A semistructured interview protocol will be developed to solicit information from key PDC partners about PDC progress toward achieving its objectives, successes and challenges in implementation, and suggestions for program improvement. Partners will be asked to evaluate both the overall effectiveness of the PDC as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of its structure and functioning. Consortium communication and collaboration will be central topics of these interviews and will be structured using a modification of the Strategic Alliance Formative Assessment Rubric (Gajda, 2004). This rubric assesses the level of integration in strategic alliances, consortiums, and coalitions, and examines their purposes, strategies and tasks, leadership and decision-making, and interpersonal and interorganizational communication.

Observation. The evaluation team will be present for two PDC planning meetings annually. At these meetings, the evaluators will take notes on both the content and process of each meeting. As warranted, the evaluators will ask clarifying questions during or immediately following the meeting to ensure an accurate portrayal of the meeting. If the PDC partners intend to include the evaluators as participants, the observation element will become participant observation.

Document and artifact review. A number of PDC documents and artifacts will be collected and reviewed as evidence of the consortium's progress and effectiveness, including meeting minutes and agendas, PDC plans, and other consortium documentation (e.g., Web site content, letters or other forms of communication disseminated to funded partners or others, etc.).

Documentation of PDC alignment with CDC-DASH vision for professional development for funded partners

PDC partner interviews. Included in the PDC Partner Interviews will be questions about the CDC-DASH vision for professional development and the PDC's approach to professional development and technical assistance. The interview data will constitute one method of determining the alignment between the CDC-DASH vision and the PDC's enactment of that vision.

Expert review. Edvantia's staff include national experts on the delivery of professional development and technical assistance. These experts will have time dedicated to this project to review the alignment between the CDC-DASH's vision for professional development and the PDC's work. Using a version of the National Staff Development Council's (2001) Standards for Staff Development that are tailored to this project's context, PDC documentation, and PDC

Partner Interview data, the PD experts will create and implement an alignment process resulting in a written analysis of the alignment. Recommendations for improving the alignment between the CDC-DASH vision and the PDC's work will also be provided.

Data Collection

Edvantia evaluators will collaborate with the PDC partners to ensure that evaluation surveys are administered at the national professional development event. PDC partners will ensure that participants are aware that the event is to be evaluated; Edvantia evaluators will distribute and collect the Event Evaluation Form. Professional development follow-up evaluation will adhere to the standards for Web-based surveys proposed by Dillman (2000) or, if conducted as phone interviews, will follow Edvantia's established procedures for phone interviews, including a standardized call tracking form, a minimum of 10 contact attempts, and the use of trained interviewers.

Documents will be collected and logged by the evaluation team. Each document, if available in electronic format, will be attached to the NVivo qualitative analysis software. Documents available in hard copy will be scanned and attached to NVivo for qualitative analysis.

The TA Needs Interview will be conducted during the summer of 2007 using the full list of funded partners. Each potential interviewee will be mailed a letter collaboratively created by the evaluation team and the PDC partners. A member of the evaluation team will follow up with at least one member from each funded partner entity. At least 80% of the funded partner entities will be represented, and at least 70-75% of the individuals on the list. PDC Partner Interviews will be conducted in the fall of 2007, with the goal of reaching 90-100% of PDC partners. Edvantia will send a letter to each PDC partner two weeks prior to the start of the interviews. The Flash Interviews will be conducted at the PD event location in common areas (e.g., empty room, hallway, etc.). Evaluators will contact PDC-partner and TA Needs interviewees and schedule the interview at a time convenient to the interviewee. The TA Needs Interview and PDC Partner Interview data will be transcribed in real time (i.e., the interviewer will type responses during the interview). The transcriptions will be expanded and corrected immediately after the interview. The Flash Interviews will be digitally recorded and then transcribed. Transcripts will be formatted for entry into the NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Technical assistance log data will be collected quarterly from the PDC. Specific procedures for collecting these data will be developed after discussions with the PDC to ascertain the content and format of these records.

The expert review will occur in the spring of 2007 (and each spring thereafter as appropriate). Edvantia evaluators will gather the necessary documentation and discuss the process of the review with Edvantia professional development experts, CDC-DASH representatives and other PDC partners. After such discussions, Edvantia professional development experts will draft the documentation for conducting the review, share the documentation with the PDC for feedback, revise, then conduct the review. Findings from the review will then be shared with the evaluation team for inclusion in the annual report.

Steps will be taken to ensure that all data are collected systematically and thoroughly. Such steps could include data collection training to improve inter-rater reliability, sharing of instrument drafts with PDC partners for feedback, and pilot testing of instruments

In addition, appropriate consent processes will be implemented so that all evaluation respondents are fully informed of their rights and of evaluation procedures. Respondent information will be kept confidential. All Edvantia research and evaluation projects must be submitted to the organization's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review and may not proceed unless IRB approval is granted. Edvantia's IRB is registered with the federal government. The Office of Human Research Protections in the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services has issued a federal-wide assurance identification number based on Edvantia's certification that all of its activities related to human subject research, regardless of funding source, will be guided by ethical principles in the protection of human subjects

Data Entry and Management

Quantitative data will be entered, cleaned, analyzed, and stored using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software program. Qualitative data, including documents and interview data, will be entered into the qualitative analysis software package, NVivo 7.0, for storage and analysis

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, medians, variances, standard deviations, or cross-tabulations) will be examined for any quantitative data collected. Replies to qualitative survey items and interview prompts will be analyzed by theme and by question, as appropriate. Data will be segmented into passages through coding. Emerging themes will be identified, and data will be reviewed for replicating categories. These categories will be given broad codes. Once significant data are categorized, finer coding will be employed. Finer coding will be completed using patterns emerging within each coded set. Themes will then be tabulated and summarized by salient and prevalent issues. Document and artifact reviews will be treated as another kind of qualitative data and will be coded for themes and categories pertinent to the project. Thick description of documentary data will be included.

State, territory, and district policies will be analyzed in terms of their alignment with the comprehensive school health program model. If requested, policies will also be assessed in terms of the extent to which and ways in which they support or impede the objectives of the CSHP model.

Reporting

Edvantia evaluators' approach to report development seeks to optimize timeliness, utility, and rigor for stakeholders, funding agents, and other appropriate audiences. Evaluators will prepare an annual formal, comprehensive evaluation report. The evaluators also will report verbally to the PDC partners on evaluation progress at least every other month and will be available for conference calls as needed.

Evaluation information also will be shared with PDC partners. Formal reports and ongoing, informal communication of findings will keep the partners apprised of the effectiveness

of their efforts. Evaluators will also develop recommendations for program improvements based on data analyses, and these, too, will be shared with the PDC partners. Evaluators will discuss evaluation activities, findings, and recommendations via regular conference calls, planning meetings, and ongoing email and telephone communications.

All written evaluation reports associated with the PDC evaluation, and the procedures informing them, will adhere to the *American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators* (2004), *The Program Evaluation Standards* (The Joint Committee, 1994), and the Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) standards (Patton, 2002). In addition, all materials developed by PDC evaluators will be submitted to the Edvantia Quality Assurance Process, which provides thorough and rigorous editing.

References

- American Evaluation Association. (2004). *American Evaluation Association guiding principles for evaluators*. Retrieved June 20, 2005, from <http://www.eval.org/Guiding%20Principles.htm>
- Brewer, J., & Hunter, A. (1989). *Multimethod research: A synthesis of styles*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Dillman, D. A. (2000). *Mail and internet surveys: The tailored design method (2nd ed.)*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Gajda, R. (2004, spring). Utilizing collaboration theory to evaluate strategic alliances. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 25 (1), 65-77.
- Guskey, T. R. (1999, April). *New perspectives on evaluating professional development*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guskey, T. R. (2002, March). Redesigning professional development: Does it make a difference? *Educational Leadership*, 59(6), 45-51.
- Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). *The program evaluation standards: How to assess evaluations of educational programs (2nd ed.)*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McNamara, C. (1998). *Basic guide to program evaluation*. Retrieved August 1, 2006 from http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm
- National Staff Development Council. (2001). *Standards for staff development*. Retrieved November 20, 2006 from <http://www.nsd.org/standards/index.cfm>
- Patton, M. Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation: The new century text (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) checklist*. Retrieved January 27, 2006 from <http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/ufe.pdf>
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (eds.) (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). *The program evaluation standards: How to assess evaluations of educational programs* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Appendix

Resume

Kristine Leigh Chadwick

Education

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Certificate | Claremont Graduate University, Certificate in the Advanced Study of Evaluation, 2005. |
| Ph.D. | University of Rhode Island, in Experimental Psychology, with concentrations in evaluation research and community psychology, 2004.
Dissertation Title: "A narrative exploration of personal factors and organizational contexts in the development of local leadership " |
| M.A. | University of Rhode Island, in Experimental Psychology, with concentrations in evaluation research, community psychology, and organizational theory and behavior, 1995. |
| B.A. | San Diego State University, in Psychology, graduated Magna Cum Laude, 1990. |

Experience

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1/06 - present | Senior Research and Evaluation Specialist, Edvantia, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 4/99- 1/06 | Research and Evaluation Specialist II, Edvantia, Inc., Charleston, West Virginia |
| 2/98-3/999 | Research Associate III, The National Center on Public Education and Social Policy, University of Rhode Island, Providence, Rhode Island |
| 5/92-2/98 | Research Assistant, The Community Research & Services Team, Brown University Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies, Providence, Rhode Island |

Consulting Experience

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 5/95-present | Rhode Island Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Providence, Rhode Island |
| 1/04 - 6/04 | Boyd County Public Schools, Kentucky |
| 1/02 - 11/02 | Ohio University Ironton Campus, Ironton, Ohio |
| 10/00 - 8/01 | Ohio University, Athens, Ohio |
| 11/96 - 1/98 | Project S.A.V.E., Providence, Rhode Island |
| 9/96 - 2/98 | Initiatives for Human Development, Cranston, Rhode Island |
| 1/96 - 2/98 | Rhode Island Department of Health, Providence, Rhode Island |
| 9/95 - 12/95 | Burrillville School Department, Burrillville, Rhode Island. |

1/94 - 9/94

The Support Center of Rhode Island, Providence, Rhode Island

Other Relevant Professional Experience

March 2004 Kentucky Department of Education, Reviewer

January 2001 U.S. Department of Education

Selected Publications

Howley, A., Chadwick, K., & Howley, C. (2002). Networking for the nuts and bolts: The ironies of professional development for rural principals. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 17, 171-187.

Selected Presentations (married name=Nilsen)

McGraw, T., Burdette, K., & Chadwick, K. (2005, June). The effects of a consumer-oriented multimedia game on the reading disorders of children with ADHD. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Digital Games Research Association, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Chadwick, K.L. (2004, November). Guiding programs toward rigorous evaluation through the use of a generic evaluation rubric. Roundtable presentation conducted at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Atlanta, GA.

Chadwick, K.L., Moats, S., Smith, C.J., & Craig, J. (2004, April). The challenge of quantifying the effects of a technical assistance process provided by external change agents in a state's low performing schools. Paper presentation conducted at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Chadwick, K.L. (2003, November). Congruence, complementarity, and contradiction: Using mixed-methods in the evaluation of Kentucky's Extended School Services. Paper presentation conducted at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Reno, NV.

Chadwick, K., Cipoletti, B., Riffle, J., & McQuain, S. (2002, April). Statistics 101 meets high-stakes testing to inform inclusion policy and practice. Paper presentation conducted at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Chadwick, K.L., Howley, C.W., Burns, R.C., & Hauser, B. (2001, April). "The story of Hancock County: How aligning district, school, and instructional goals is saving the district." In Z. A. Barley (Chair), *Connections: Standards, Instruction, Home*. Paper presentation conducted at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.

Chadwick, K.L., & Schrago, J. (2001, April). "How Tennessee successfully motivated and supported teachers' skill development in meaningful classroom Internet use." In D. Grisham (chair), Teacher Professional Development and Technology. Paper presentation conducted at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.

Meehan, M.L., Cowley, K.S., & Chadwick, K.L. (2001, April). Academic aspirations of Appalachian seventh graders and their parents. Roundtable presentation at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.

Chadwick, K.L., & Ceperley, P.E. (2000, November). "Mirror, Mirror, On the Wall" A formative evaluation tool that builds schools' capacity to reflect on their progress toward implementing a standards-based curriculum. Demonstration conducted at the meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Chadwick, K.L., & Burns, R.C. (2000, November). Building capacity to keep the collective "eye on the ball" in schools. In R.J.D. Chesswas (Chair), The evaluation of professional development in education. Multipaper presentation conducted at the meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Riffle, J.S., Kusimo, P., Keyes, M., & Chadwick, K.L. (2000, November). Community Math Nights: Evaluating the Effectiveness of School-Community Involvement. In K. Race (Chair), Evaluating Mathematics Programs in a Number of Settings: What Adds Up? Multipaper presentation conducted at the meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Nilsen, K.L., Ceperley, P., Squires, D. (2000, April). Implementing the Aligned and Balanced Curriculum (ABC): Building Capacity for Continuous School Improvement. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Nilsen, K.L. (1999, November). Using Empowerment, Professional Community, and Effectiveness to Plan Technical Assistance Delivery. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Orlando, FL.

Stevenson, J., Florin, P., Mitchell, R., & Nilsen, K.L. (1997, November). Using a developmental framework to guide evaluation and focus feedback. Paper presented at Evaluation '97, the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, San Diego, CA.

McMillan, B.L., Nilsen, K.L., Stevenson, J.F., Mitchell, R.E., Florin, P., & Kang, S. (1996, March). The implications of acculturation, cultural pride, and biculturality in community programs with Hispanic youth. Poster presented at the meeting of the Society for Behavioral Medicine, Baltimore, MD.

Chadwick, K.L. (1994, November). "It's not just what you know, it's who you know:" Using changed relationships in communities as a measure of success in partnerships. In J. Stevenson (Chair), Successful community partnerships: How we will know one when we see one Panel at the meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Boston, MA

Chadwick, K.L. (1993, November). Providing technical assistance for community program evaluation: An initial report on the process and challenges. In J. Stevenson (Chair), Empowering stakeholders in community prevention evaluation. Panel at the meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Dallas, TX.

Chadwick, K.L. , & Sieben, I. (1992, November). Juxtaposing qualitative and quantitative results for a deeper understanding of community youth participants in a substance abuse prevention program. In J. Stevenson (Chair), Mixed method complementarity in evaluations of alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs Panel at the meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Seattle, WA.

Technical Reports

More than 30 technical reports (project evaluation reports, research reports) written to industry standards

Professional Affiliations

American Educational Research Association (Division H newsletter editor 2001-2003)

American Evaluation Association

RESUME

Georgia K Hughes

Education

Doctoral candidate	Southern Illinois University Carbondale (2002-present) Applied Psychology Program
M.A.	Southern Illinois University Carbondale (2002) Major: Applied Psychology
B.A.	West Virginia Wesleyan College (1999) Major: Psychology (Summa Cum Laude)

Experience

2005 - present	Research & Evaluation Specialist II Edvantia, Charleston, West Virginia
2004 - 2005	Research & Evaluation Specialist I Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Charleston, West Virginia
2000 - 2003	Teaching Assistant Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois
1999 - 2003	Research Assistant Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois

Consulting Experience

2003 - 2004	Consultant, Survey Design & Questionnaire Development. Pro Bono, for Alpha Gamma Delta International Fraternity - Strategic Planning Committee.
2002 - 2003	Project Leader, Ferrell Hospital LEAD Program 360-Degree Evaluation. Applied Research Consultants, for SIH/Ferrell Hospital.
2002 - 2003	Project Associate, AEA 2002 Annual Conference Evaluation. Applied Research Consultants, for the American Evaluation Association
2002	Project Leader, SIUC Counseling Program Focus Group Training Workshop. Applied Research Consultants, for SIUC Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program.
2001 - 2003	Project Associate, Project Lift-Off Evaluation: Focus Groups and Survey Summaries. Applied Research Consultants, for Joyce Killian, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, SIUC

2001 - 2002	Project Leader, Creative Quest In-Depth Interviews Applied Research Consultants, for Creative Quest, LLC, a marketing firm in St. Louis, MO
2001	Project Leader, Health Care Professions Ethics in Rural Health Care Study. Applied Research Consultants, for Linda Grace & Charla Lauter, SIUC Department of Health Care Professions.
2000 - 2001	Project Associate, Southern Illinois Dairy Industry Focus Groups Applied Research Consultants, for SIUC Department of Agriculture
2000	Project Co-Leader, Southern Illinoisan Reader Response Focus Groups. Applied Research Consultants, for The Southern Illinoisan newspaper.
2000	Project Co-Leader, Focus Group Pilot Test for Survey about Genetically Modified Organisms. Applied Research Consultants, for Wanki Moon, SIUC Department of Agribusiness Economics
2000	Project Co-Leader, Southern Illinoisan Reader Feedback Focus Groups, Applied Research Consultants, for The Southern Illinoisan newspaper.
1999 - 2000	Project Associate, Museum Explorers Year V. Applied Research Consultants, for SIUC University Museum

Honors and Awards

2003	Outstanding Service to Graduate & Professional Student Council
2002 - 2003	SIUC Doctoral Fellowship
2000 - 2001	SIUC Master's Fellowship
1999	Summa Cum Laude Graduate, West Virginia Wesleyan College
1999	West Virginia Wesleyan College Outstanding Student in Psychology
1999	Alpha Gamma Delta Foundation Scholarship Award
1995 - 1999	Dean's List, West Virginia Wesleyan College

Professional Affiliations

American Evaluation Association
American Educational Research Association
American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Association of Political Consultants

Selected Presentations/Workshops/Posters

Copley, L. D., Meehan, M. L., Howley, C. W., & Hughes, G. K. (2004). Second Field Test of the AEL Measure of School Capacity for Improvement Paper presented at the 86th annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

Meehan, M. L., Wood, C. L., & Hughes, G. (2004). Measuring Treatment Integrity: Testing a Multiple-component, Multiple-method Intervention Implementation Evaluation Model MultiPaper presentation at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Atlanta, GA

Ohse, D., & Hughes, G. (2003). Evaluating the 2002 American Evaluation Association Conference: Reflections on Methods, Findings, and Lessons Learned - Evaluating the Experiences of Newcomers. MultiPaper presentation at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Reno, NV.

Ohse, D. M., Mastrangelo, L. A., Awad, G., Hughes, G., & Swindler, S. (2003). Adventures in Evaluation: Strategies for Successful Data Management. Skill Building Workshop presented at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Reno, NV.

Service, A., Pinero, S., Horvath, A. M., & Hughes, G. (2003). A Multi-Method Approach to Evaluating Project Lift-Off. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Reno, NV.

Hughes, G. K., Awad, G., Horvath, A., & Rowald, L. (2002). Difficult Dialogues: Tactfully Communicating with Troublesome Clients. Skill Building Workshop presented at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Washington, D C

Service, A., Yamazaki, K., & Hughes, G. (2002). Project Lift Lift-off Evaluation: A Multi-method Evaluation from a Systemic Perspective. MultiPaper presentation at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Washington, D C

Hughes, G. K., Awad, G. H., Swindler, S., & Pinero, S. (2002). Fun with Focus Groups: An Interactive Workshop. Professional development workshop presented for SIUC Counseling Psychology program, Carbondale, IL.

Hughes, G. K., Senn, T., Service, A., Gandolfo, C., & Krueger, R. (2001). Everything in Moderation: Practical Tips for Moderating Focus Groups. Skill Building Workshop presented at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, St. Louis, MO.

Hughes, G. K. (2001). Assessing the Needs of the Chapter. Presentation/workshop for Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity International Leadership Team, Indianapolis, IN.

Hughes, G. K., Senn, T., & Service, A. (2001). Everything in Moderation: Conducting Effective Focus Groups. Professional Development Presentation at the Applied Psychology Conference, Carbondale, IL.

Cheng, Y., Hughes, G. K., Briggs, C. S., & Service, A. (2000). Museum Explorers Year V: Beyond Models of Excellence. Roundtable Discussion presented at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Honolulu, HI

Hughes, G. K., & Mirkovich, T. A. (1998). The Effects of Anxiety and Learned Helplessness on Retention with High Anxious versus Low Anxious Subjects. Presentation at the Central West Virginia Scholarly and Creative Activity Conference at Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, WV.

Selected Technical Reports

Copley, L. D., Meehan, M. L., Howley, C. W., & Hughes, G. K. (2004). Second Field Test of the AEL Measure of School Capacity for Improvement. Charleston, WV: AEL.

Hughes, G. K., Cowley, K. S., Copley, L. D., Finch, N. L., Meehan, M. L., Burns, R. C., et al. (2004). Effects of a Culturally Responsive Teaching Project on Teachers and Students in Selected Kanawha County, WV, Schools. Charleston, WV: AEL.

Meehan, M. L., Wood, C. L., Hughes, G. K., Cowley, K. S., & Thompson, J. (2004). Measuring Treatment Integrity: Testing a Multiple-component, Multiple-method Intervention Implementation Evaluation Model. Charleston, WV: AEL.

Chadwick, K. L., Hughes, G. K., Wood, C. L., Gilchrist, C. L. (2004). The Ohio College Access Network: Annual Evaluation Report. Charleston, WV: AEL.

Pinero, S., Service, A., Hughes, G., Horvath, A., & Sagrestano, L. (2003). Phase 4: Project Lift-off Evaluation. Report for Joyce Killian, SIUC Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

McKillip, J., & Hughes, G. K. (2003). IMGIP/ICEOP Fellow Higher Education Job Search Survey. Report for IMGIP/ICEOP Administrative Office. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Service, A., Pinero, S., Hughes, G., Horvath, A., & Sagrestano, L. (2003). Phase III: Project Lift-off Evaluation. Report for Joyce Killian, SIUC Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

Swindler, S., Hughes, G., Briggs, C., Yamazaki, K., Ohse, D., Pinero, S., & Sagrestano, L. (2003). American Evaluation Association Annual Conference Evaluation: Evaluation 2002 Final Report. Report for American Evaluation Association. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

Service, A., Yamazaki, K., Hughes, G., Horvath, A., & Sagrestano, L. (2002). Phase 2: Project Lift-off Evaluation. Report for Joyce Killian, SIUC Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

Service, A., Briggs, C., Hughes, G. K., Awad, G. H., Sagrestano, L. M., & McKillip, J. (2001). Southern Illinois Dairy Industry Focus Groups. Reports for College of Agriculture. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

Hughes, G. K., Service, A., Jacobs, E. A., Sagrestano, L., & McKillip, J. (2000). Focus Group Study of a Survey about Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Report for Wanki Moon, SIUC Department of Agribusiness Economics. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

Cheng, Y., Hughes, G. K., Service, A. W., Briggs, C. S., & McKillip, J. A. (2000). Museum Explorers Year V: Beyond Models of Excellence. Report for SIUC University Museum. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, Applied Research Consultants.

REBECCA GAJDA
University of Massachusetts
Educational Policy, Research, and Administration
259 Hills House South, 111 Infirmary Way, Amherst, MA 01003
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Education and Human Resource Studies
Specialization: Teacher Education and Staff Development
Colorado State University, August 2001

M.A. - Special Education
Specialization: Severe Affective Needs
University of Northern Colorado, May 1997

B.A. - Political Science
University of Massachusetts-Amherst, May 1991
Graduated Summa Cum Laude

Secondary Teacher Education Program
University of Massachusetts-Amherst, December 1991

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor August 2006 - Present	University of Massachusetts-Amherst, MA Educational Policy, Research and Administration
Assistant Professor August 2001 – May 2006	The University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services, Secondary Teacher Education Program
Senior Research Associate 1999-2001	Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning, Colorado State University & Poudre School District, Fort Collins, Colorado
Graduate Teaching Fellow 1998-2001	Colorado State University, Curriculum & Instruction Educator Preparation Program, Fort Collins, Colorado
Teacher 1992-1998	Secondary Social Studies, Poudre School District, Fort Collins, Colorado
Dropout Prevention Coordinator 1993-1995	Poudre School District, Fort Collins, Colorado
Education Co-Director 1992	Youth SAFE, Department of Social Services, Fort Collins, Colorado

PUBLICATION RECORD

JURIED ARTICLES

- Koliba, C. (in press). Evaluating the imperative of inter-personal collaboration: A school improvement perspective. *American Journal of Evaluation*.
- Gajda, R., & Cravedi, L. (2006, November). Experienced practitioners as pre-service teacher educators: The benefits and limitations of a PDS course delivery model. *Action in Teacher Education*.
- Gajda, R. & Dorfman, D. (2006, September). Career academies and the arts. Implications for schooling. *Art Education*.
- Gajda, R., (2006). Safe schools through strategic alliances: How assessment of collaboration enhances school violence prevention and response. *Journal of School Violence*. (5) 1..
- Gajda, R. (2004). Utilizing collaboration theory to evaluate strategic alliances. *American Journal of Evaluation*. 25, 1, 65-77.
- Gajda, R. (2004). Responding to the needs of the adopted child. *Kappa Delta Pi The Record*. (40) 4, 160-164
- Gajda, R. and Jewiss, J (2004). Thinking about how to evaluate your educational initiative? These strategies will get you started. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, (9) 8.
- Butler, E , Bierman, P., and Gajda, R., (2003, November) Investigation-stimulated discussion sections make geoscience more relevant in large lecture class. *EOS*. (84) 47, 517-522.

BOOKS/BOOK CHAPTERS

- Gajda, R. (2006). Action Research. In *Encyclopedia of education leadership and administration*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. Edited by Fenwick English.
- Gajda, R. & Rich, W. (2006) Differentiated Instruction. In *Encyclopedia of education leadership and administration*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. Edited by Fenwick English.
- Gajda, R. and Tulikangas, R. (August, 2005). *Getting the Grant: How Educators Can Write Winning Proposals and Manage Successful Projects*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, VA.

INVITED PUBLICATIONS

- Rallis, S., Rossman, G., & Gajda, R. (accepted for publication). Working title: From competent practice to ethical relationships in evaluation. *Evaluation and Program Planning*
- Gajda, R. and Tulikangas, R. (in press). Educators can get the grant. *Something Better*. Missouri Education Association.
- Gajda, R. (2006) You can get that grant!. *Virginia Journal of Education*. (100), 1, 11-14.
- Gajda, R. (2003, September). Essay review. The Abandoned Generation: Democracy Beyond the Culture of Fear by Henry Giroux. *Teachers College Record* <http://www.tcrecord.org>
- Gajda, R. (2002, September). Essay review. Free Schools, Free People: Education and Democracy After the 1960's by Ron Miller. *Teachers College Record*. <http://www.tcrecord.org>.
- Gajda, R. (2001, December). Fundamental change in teacher education. *American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Briefs*, (22), 17 4-6.
- Gajda, R. (2001, November). Teacher quality, quantity issues not solved with alternative licensing. *Burlington Free Press* (It's My Turn), 7A.
- Gajda, R. (2001). The NNER and pre-Service teacher's philosophic orientations, Unpublished doctoral dissertation. *Colorado State University*. Fort Collins, Colorado.

RESEARCH/TECHNICAL REPORTS

- Sprague, D., Gajda, R., Killeen, K. (2006, September). The effects of TASS on secondary science teachers' assessment practices. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Honors College URECA! grant final report.
- Gajda, R., Marineau, S., Patrizio, K. (November, 2005) *Teaching All Secondary Students Year One Evaluation Report*. In-depth analysis of quantitative and qualitative data related to the development of intra-school collaboration and organizational outcomes Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services
- Gajda, R. (2005, May). *Communities of Practice: Collaboration Assessment Reports*. Evaluation sponsored by the Vermont Higher Education Collaborative. Utilization-focused comprehensive evaluation process; results of interview surveys, on-site observations, document analysis Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services
- Gajda, R. (2004, June) *Peoples Academy-Career Academy of the Arts (PACAA), Program Evaluation Report*. Comprehensive examination of PACAA effect on student engagement, motivation, and achievement. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services

- Gajda, R. & Massell, L. (2004, March). *Climate Survey Final Evaluation Report and the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative*. A compilation of ten school-based reports, baseline data across four domains of safety and well-being, descriptive and inferential analysis, qualitative analysis, 300 pages. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services.
- Gajda, R. & Massell, L. (2003, October). *Assessment of Collaboration and the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative*. PASS Project, assessment of collaboration and leadership as part of formative evaluation process, literature review, organizational systems analysis. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services
- Gajda, R. & Massell, L. (2003, September). *PASS Project Implementation Findings: Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative*. Use of Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) to assess levels and type of Project implementation. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services.
- Gajda, R. (2003, Spring) *Career Academies Pilot Year One Report*. Literature review, analysis of interviews and survey data from first year of funding of four career academies in Vermont; used by the Vermont High Schools on the Move Design Team and Project Management. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services.
- Gajda, R. (2003, January). *Linking Learning to Life Final Evaluation Report*. Analysis of pre-existing program data sets and document analysis; synthesis of interviews and survey data; used for grant writing and marketing. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services.
- Gajda, R. (2002, Summer). *Enhancing Vermont's Statewide Mentoring Capacity*. (a report on the formative and summative evaluation of the PATHWISE Mentoring program; funded by an Eisenhower School Improvement Grant; results utilized by the Vermont Education Association and the Teacher Quality Network). Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services.
- Gajda, R. (2000). *Becoming a Teacher in the Wake of School Violence*. A report on the impact of the tragedy at Columbine High School on the perspectives and decision-making of teacher licensure students. Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning, Ft Collins, CO.
- Gajda, R. (2000) *An Assessment Tool for the Alignment of Colorado Educator Preparation Standards*. Literature review of standards-based instruction; creation of assessment matrix for use by the Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Commission of Higher Education, Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal. Denver, CO. Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning. Ft Collins, CO.
- Gajda, R. (1999) *Learning and Sustainable Communities*. A report on enhancing success for first year students at Colorado State University. Center for Teaching and Learning. Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning. Ft. Collins, CO.
- Gajda, R. (1999) *Standards Alignment Through Partnership*. An analysis of a K-12 linkage incentive grant; findings and recommendations utilized by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education). Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning. Ft. Collins, CO.

COURSES TAUGHT

Action Research in the Schools	Intro to School Leadership
Advanced Program Evaluation	Leadership for High School Renewal
Assessment of Student Learning	Licensure Portfolio Development
Collaboration for Student Achievement	Literacy Across the Curriculum
Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	Organization for Curriculum Development
Differentiated Instruction	Philosophy of Education
Foundations of Schooling in the United States	Supervision of Instruction

PROFESSIONAL/ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS

American Educational Research Association (AERA)
American Evaluation Association (AEA)
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
National Staff Development Council (NSDC)
Phi Beta Kappa (PBK)
Phi Delta Kappa (PDK)

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Director of Research & Facilitator. High Schools on the Move Study Group II, Sponsored by the Lamoille South Supervisory Union, VT Department of Education and the Josephine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation. \$65,000. April 2006 – present

Director of Research & Evaluation. Teaching All Secondary Students (TASS), intensive state-wide high school renewal/reform initiative developed and delivered in response to Act 117 Vermont Higher Education Collaborative. (\$75,000/3 years) September 2004-August 2006.

Co-Principal Investigator, Vermont Coalition for High School Renewal, Development Grant – Josephine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation (\$55,000/one year). Fall 2004-May 2005.

Principal Investigator/Director of Evaluation – Burlington School District Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative (US Departments of Education, Justice and Health and Human Services \$120,000/year) Formative and summative data collection, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, reporting and strategic planning District-wide climate survey assessment. Supervision/mentoring of evaluation team members. Fall 2002 – May 2004

Consultant, The Vermont Network for High School Reform. Survey design, data analysis and reporting. Technical training for network researchers in mixed-methods research design. February – July 2004

Project Evaluator, Lamoille South Supervisory Union. An evaluation of People's Academy: Career Academy of the Arts. Qualitative and quantitative methods. Substantial in-depth interviews with multiple stakeholder groups. June – July 2004

Lead Evaluator, Eisenhower Professional Development Grant: Enhancing Vermont's Statewide Mentoring Capacity. Member of project management team; liaison to Pathwise and ETS evaluation personnel. Comprehensive formative and summative data collection, analysis, reporting and consultation. Winter 2001-Spring 2003

Project Evaluator, Linking Learning to Life School to Work Opportunities (US Departments of Education and Labor) Burlington School District. Spring/Summer 2002.

Project Evaluator, Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative in Fort Collins, Colorado. (US Departments of Education, Justice and Health and Human Services.) Member of management team; liaison to the Research Triangle Institute's (RTI) federal evaluation team. Comprehensive formative and summative data collection, analysis, reporting and strategic planning. Extensive integration and utilization of technology. Summer 2000 – Fall 2001

Project Evaluator, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education) Systematic assessment of a school district initiative, extensive quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. 1999 – 2001

Evaluation Consultant, Front Range Community College Action Research Mini-Grants. Consultation with instructors at Front Range Community College who received mini-grants to conduct action research projects. Fort Collins, CO Summer 1999

Evaluation Consultant, Standards Alignment Through Partnership, a K-12 linkage incentive grant funded by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and a collaborative endeavor of Colorado State University, Poudre School District and Thompson Valley School District Spring/Summer 1999

Policy Analyst - Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Commission of Higher Education, Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal. Designed a system for the alignment of Colorado educator licensure programs with newly mandated state standards. Spring 2000

Policy Analyst -Developed a process for the Colorado Department of Special Education in order for them to successfully address the federal Office of Special Education Programs self-assessment mandate Spring/Summer 2000

GRANT/TECHNICAL WRITER

Grant Writer, with Sharon Rallis. National Science Foundation. Proposal due January 2007.

Grant Writer, January 2006-March 2006, Robert Noyce Scholarship Program. National Science Foundation request for proposals.

Evaluation plan for Howard Community Center for Children and Families, submitted to the Department of Education – OSEP (350,000/18 months) May 2005.

Evaluation plan for South Burlington High School, Implementation Grant application – submitted to Office of Juvenile Justice and Dropout Prevention, (\$100,000) March 2004

Evaluation plan for the Eisenhower Professional Development Grant, Vermont Department of Education, (\$90,000/1 year) Winter 2002

Evaluation plan for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Demonstration Grant Competition, US Department of Education/Poudre School District, (2.6 million/3 years) Spring 2001

Evaluation plan for the Elementary School Counselor Demonstration Grant competition, US Department of Education/Poudre School District, (\$250,000/3 years) Spring 2000

PEER REVIEWER

Parent Information Resources Centers Grant competition. US Department of Education, Washington, D.C. June, 2006.

Dropout Prevention Demonstration Grant Proposal competition, US Department of Education, Washington, D.C. August 2001

Smaller Learning Communities Grant competition, US Department of Education, Portland, Summer 2000

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

JURIED PRESENTATIONS

Gajda, R. (April 2007). *Evaluating Educational Collaboration*. Pre-conference workshop accepted for presentation at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. Chicago, IL.

Gajda, R. (November 2006). *Organizational Collaboration*. Full day pre-conference workshop delivered at the American Evaluation Association annual conference. Portland, OR.

Gajda, R. *Utilizing Collaboration Theory to Evaluate Professional Learning Communities: Implications for School Improvement*. Paper presented at the American Evaluation Association annual conference. Portland, OR, November, 2006.

Gajda, R. & Sprague, D. *Evaluating the Effects of TASS on Science Teacher Assessment Practices*. Paper presented at the American Evaluation Association annual conference. Portland, OR, November, 2006.

Patrizio, K. & Gajda, R. (March 2006). *Evaluating Collaboration in the Professional Development School*. Paper presented at the National Professional Development School Conference. Orlando, FL.

- Gajda, R. *Experienced Teachers Assuming Leadership in Teacher Preparation: How Teaching Subject-Matter Methods Retains and Sustains Quality Professionals*, Paper presentation. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Washington, D C. February, 2005.
- Massell, L. & Gajda, R. *Facilitating the Interpretation of School Safety and Climate Survey Data: Building Capacity for Evaluation Use*. Paper presentation. American Evaluation Association. Atlanta, GA. November, 2005.
- Bellum, J. & Gajda, R. *The Need for States, Schools and IHEs to Face the Assessment and Accreditation Challenge Together*. Paper presentation. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Washington, D.C. February, 2005.
- Gajda, R. *Evaluating the Effect of Teacher Preparation Programming on the Formation of Pre-Service Teacher Beliefs*. Paper presentation. American Evaluation Association. Atlanta, GA. November, 2004.
- Gajda, R. & Jewiss, J. *Before You Say Yes: Responding to Potential Clients Who Pop the "Evaluation" Question*. Paper presentation. American Evaluation Association. Atlanta, GA. November, 2004.
- Gajda, R. & Massell, L. *Assessing School Climate and Safety in The Era of No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, Paper presentation. American Evaluation Association. Atlanta, GA. November, 2004.
- Evaluating Collaborative Efforts*. Paper Presentation at the American Evaluation Association Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV. November 2003.
- Using Technology and Empowerment Evaluation to Meet the Challenges of Teacher Education Accreditation*. Paper Presentation. Accepted for presentation at the American Association of Higher Education Annual Conference. June 2003, Seattle, WA.
- Democracy, the NNER, and Pre-Service Teachers' Philosophic Orientations*. Paper presentation. New England Educational Research Organization. Northampton, MA. April 2002.
- A School Shooting Case Study: Lessons in Prevention, Response, and Long-Term Resolution*. Paper presentation. American Educational Research Association. New Orleans, LA. April, 2002.
- The Impact of School Violence on Pre-Service Teachers*. Paper presentation at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting; Seattle, April 2001.
- Trends and Best Practices in Reading Instruction*. Phi Delta Kappa; Sustaining Success: Beyond the Quick Fix Conference, Denver, CO. October 2000.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- Professional Learning Communities for School Improvement*. Group dialogue presentation. VT Department of Education – Office of the Commissioner. June 5, 2006.
- Evaluating Collaboration in Organizations*. Lecture presentation. The University of Vermont 2006 doctoral cohort. College of Education and Social Services. April 13, 2006.
- High School Renewal and Reform. The Vermont Context*. Lecture presentation. South Burlington School District: South Burlington High School. September 21, 2005.

Program Evaluation. Inquiry in Action. Guest lecture, Education and Foundational Studies summer program. The University of Vermont. July 19, 2005.

Inclusive Pedagogy. Doctoral Advisory Committee. College of Education and Social Services. April, 29, 2005. (with Dr. Cynthia Reyes)

Burlington School District School Board Meeting. Presentation of the School Climate Survey SS/HSI Evaluation Report. February 17, 2004

Burlington School District All Administrators Meeting. Context setting and presentation of initial climate survey findings. January 2004

High Schools on the Move. Facilitator at 1st Annual Statewide Conference. December, 2003. Burlington, VT

Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. Local Evaluator forum - invited presenter. SS/HS National Conference. Washington, DC. April 2003

Assessment in Context and in Practice. Fair Haven Union High School. District In-Service Workshop. Fair Haven, VT. January 2002

The Philosophic Orientation of Pre-Service Teachers. Department of Education Colloquium Series. The University of Vermont. November 13, 2001.

Effective Lesson Planning and Delivery. Lamoille Union High School. District In-Service Workshop. Hyde Park, VT. November 2001.

Professional Goal Setting. Lamoille Union High School. District In-Service Presentation. Hyde Park, VT. October 2001.

Cultivating Linkages for Safe Schools and Healthy Children. Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative, Ft. Collins, CO. January 2001

Evaluation Strategies for Community Educators. Colorado Association of Community Educators; Annual Conference, Denver, CO. October 2000

School Violence and the Teacher Licensure Candidate. Mary E. Scott Lecture series, C.S.U, College of Applied Human Sciences, March 2000

Becoming a Teacher in the Wake of School Violence. CSU; School of Education Spring 2000 Conference

Constructivist and Innovative Social Studies Teaching Methods. Colorado State University; Educator Licensure Program, Spring and Fall 2000

Effective Leadership Skills. Guest Lecturer. University of Northern Colorado; Department of Recreation Management, Fall 1999

Scenarios Based Planning. Poudre School District; Eyestone Elementary School, Fort Collins, Colorado, September 1999

How to Make a Difference with Students Considered At-Risk. Poudre School District - Boltz Junior High School, Fort Collins, Colorado January 1994

AWARDS/DISTINCTIONS

American Evaluation Association – Centers for Disease Control, invited by the Executive Director of the AEA to facilitate workshops on organizational collaboration for the national gathering of the CDC. June 2007, Atlanta, GA.

2006 American Evaluation Association Annual Conference invited expert lecturer & pre-conference workshop presenter Portland, OR, November, 2006

2005 *Marcia Guttentag Award* - awarded by the *American Evaluation Association* to an outstanding young evaluator (less than 5 years since earning a doctorate) in the nation whose work brings to life the *AEA Guiding Principles for Evaluators* Presented at the Crossing Borders-Crossing Boundaries joint meeting of the American Evaluation and Canadian Evaluation Society, October 2005, Toronto, Ontario.

2004 & 2005 nominee, *Kroeppsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award*, presented to an Assistant Professor who exhibits excellence in classroom instruction (blind nomination by students)

1998-2001 *Graduate Teaching Fellowship*, Ph.D. program in Educational Leadership, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado

1991 *Phi Beta Kappa*, elected member

1991 Summa Cum Laude

RESUME

Sandra Angius

Education

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Ed. D. | West Virginia University (1990)
Major: Higher Education Administration/Minor: Student Personnel |
| M.A. | Marshall University (1975)
Guidance and Counseling |
| B.A. | West Virginia Institute of Technology (1971)
Social Studies Education |

Experience

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 2004 - present | Chief Program Officer and Director, Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center at Edvantia, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 2003 - 2004 | Vice President for Education Services, Director, Region IV Comprehensive Center and Director, Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science at AEL, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 2002 - 2003 | Director, Region IV Comprehensive Center and Director, Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science at AEL, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 2001 - 2002 | Director, Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 1996 - 2001 | Associate Director, Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL, offices in Charleston, West Virginia and Arlington, Virginia |
| 1992 - 1996 | Director, Research Coordination, West Virginia Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 1989 - 1992 | Director of Federal Support, West Virginia Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 1984 - 1989 | Coordinator of Monitoring, Chapter 2 and Title II, West Virginia Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia |
| 1980 - 1984 | Director of Upward Bound, Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia |
| 1978 - 1980 | Assistant Director/Counselor of Upward Bound, Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia |
| 1975 - 1978 | Talent Search Counselor, Educational Awareness Talent Search, West Virginia Board of Regents, Charleston, West Virginia |

- 1973 - 1975 Social Studies Teacher, Crum High School, Crum, West Virginia
- 1972 - 1973 Social Service Worker II, West Virginia Department of Welfare, Wayne,
West Virginia

Background and Qualifications

Dr. Angius received an Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration from West Virginia University in 1990 (Major: Higher Education Administration; Minor: Student Personnel). She joined the Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL, Inc. as a Senior Manager in 1996, became Associate Director in 1997, and became Director in 2001. She added in 2002 the role of Director of the Math and Science Consortium at AEL, and the role of Vice President of Education Services in 2003, and the role of Chief Program Officer in 2004. Previously (1984-96), she was with the West Virginia Department of Education where she began in Federal programs and concluded as Director of Research Coordination. Other experiences include: Assistant Director and then Director of the Marshall University Upward Bound Program; Talent Search Counselor with the West Virginia Board of Regents; Classroom Teacher at Crum High School; and Social Worker with the West Virginia Department of Welfare. Dr. Angius's 34-year career in education spans from public schools to higher education and federal programs. Her training, federal program experiences, and public school and secondary education experiences serve her well as AEL's Chief Program Officer and Director of the Region IV Comprehensive Center.

Selected Publications (authored or co-authored)

- K-12 Grant Opportunities, West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Research Coordination, 1996
- The Guide for Planning and Conducting a Program Evaluation, West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Research Coordination, 1994
- Gender Equity in Mathematics, Science, and Technology, West Virginia Department of Education, Elimination of Sex Discrimination Program, 1989
- Women in West Virginia History, West Virginia Department of Education, Elimination of Sex Discrimination Program, 1989

Selected Presentations

- Instruction and Learning Audit: A School's Self-Portrait, 2005 Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Annual Conference, Orlando, Florida
- Conducting WalkAbouts, 2004 National Staff Development Council (NSDC) National Conference, Vancouver, Canada
- The Effect of Parent Involvement on Student Achievement, 2002 National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID) National Conference, San Antonio, Texas
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment, 1998 Middle Tennessee Title I Conference, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

Team Building, 1994 High Schools That Work Conference, West Virginia Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia



State of West Virginia
Department of Administration
Purchasing Division
2019 Washington Street East
Post Office Box 50130
Charleston, WV 25305-0130

Request for Quotation

RFQ NUMBER

EDD263990

PAGE

1

ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO ATTENTION OF

KRISTA FERRELL
304-558-2596

RFQ COPY

Edvantia
PO Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUILDING 6
1900 KANAWHA BOULEVARD, EAST
CHARLESTON, WV
25305-0330

DATE PRINTED	TERMS OF SALE	SHIP VIA	F.O.B.	FREIGHT TERMS
11/01/2006				

BID OPENING DATE:

11/29/2006

BID OPENING TIME

01:30PM

LINE	QUANTITY	UOP	CAT NO	ITEM NUMBER	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
0001	1	EA		924-10		
CONSULTING, EDUCATIONAL						
REQUEST FOR QUOTATION						
THE WEST VIRGINIA PURCHASING DIVISION FOR THE AGENCY, THE WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, IS SOLICITING BIDS TO PROVIDE THE AGENCY WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXECUTION OF AN EVALUATION PLAN IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM (PDC) PER THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS.						
TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO KRISTA FERRELL IN THE WEST VIRGINIA PURCHASING DIVISION VIA EMAIL AT KFERRELL@WVADMIN.GOV OR VIA FAX AT 304-558-4115. DEADLINE FOR TECHNICAL QUESTIONS IS NOVEMBER 15, 2006 AT 5PM. TECHNICAL QUESTIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY) WILL BE ANSWERED BY ADDENDUM. QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ACTUAL SUBMISSION PROCESS MAY BE SUBMITTED AT ANY TIME PRIOR TO BID OPENING AND MAY BE SUBMITTED IN ANY FORMAT.						
EXHIBIT 3						
LIFE OF CONTRACT: THIS CONTRACT BECOMES EFFECTIVE ON UPON AWARD AND EXTENDS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR OR UNTIL SUCH "REASONABLE TIME" THEREAFTER AS IS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN A NEW CONTRACT OR RENEW THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT. THE "REASONABLE TIME" PERIOD SHALL NOT EXCEED TWELVE (12) MONTHS. DURING THIS "REASONABL						

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS

SIGNATURE	TELEPHONE	DATE
<i>Christina J. Lewis</i>	304.347.0431	November 27, 2006
TITLE Director, Business Operations	FEIN 55-0484812	ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE

WHEN RESPONDING TO RFQ, INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS IN SPACE ABOVE LABELED 'VENDOR'

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<p>ORDERED FOR DELIVERY DURING THE TERM OF THE CONTRACT, WHETHER MORE OR LESS THAN THE QUANTITIES SHOWN.</p> <p>BANKRUPTCY: IN THE EVENT THE VENDOR/CONTRACTOR FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY PROTECTION, THIS CONTRACT IS AUTOMATICALLY NULL AND VOID, AND IS TERMINATED WITHOUT FURTHER ORDER.</p> <p>THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN THIS CONTRACT SHALL SUPERSEDE ANY AND ALL SUBSEQUENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS WHICH MAY APPEAR ON ANY ATTACHED PRINTED DOCUMENTS SUCH AS PRICE LISTS, ORDER FORMS, SALES AGREEMENTS OR MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS, INCLUDING ANY ELECTRONIC MEDIUM SUCH AS CD-ROM.</p> <p>REV. 04/11/2001</p> <p>VENDOR PREFERENCE CERTIFICATE</p> <p>CERTIFICATION AND APPLICATION* IS HEREBY MADE FOR PREFERENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH WEST VIRGINIA CODE, 5A-3-37 (DOES NOT APPLY TO CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS).</p>						
<p>A. APPLICATION IS MADE FOR 2.5% PREFERENCE FOR THE REASON CHECKED:</p> <p>() BIDDER IS AN INDIVIDUAL RESIDENT VENDOR AND HAS RESIDED CONTINUOUSLY IN WEST VIRGINIA FOR FOUR (4) YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE DATE OF THIS CERTIFICATION; OR</p> <p>(X) BIDDER IS A PARTNERSHIP, ASSOCIATION OR CORPORATION RESIDENT VENDOR AND HAS MAINTAINED ITS HEAD-QUARTERS OR PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS CONTINUOUSLY IN WEST VIRGINIA FOR FOUR (4) YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING</p>						
SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS						
SIGNATURE <i>Christina J. Lewis</i>			TELEPHONE 304.347.0431		DATE November 27, 2006	
TITLE Director, Business Operations		FEIN 55-0484812		ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE		

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11/01/2006						
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LINE	QUANTITY	UOP	CAT NO.	ITEM NUMBER	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
<p>THE DATE OF THIS CERTIFICATION; OR 80% OF THE OWNERSHIP INTEREST OF BIDDER IS HELD BY ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL, PARTNERSHIP, ASSOCIATION OR CORPORATION RESIDENT VENDOR WHO HAS MAINTAINED ITS HEADQUARTERS OR PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS CONTINUOUSLY IN WEST VIRGINIA FOR FOUR (4) YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE DATE OF THIS CERTIFICATION; OR</p> <p>() BIDDER IS A CORPORATION NONRESIDENT VENDOR WHICH HAS AN AFFILIATE OR SUBSIDIARY WHICH EMPLOYS A MINIMUM OF ONE HUNDRED STATE RESIDENTS AND WHICH HAS MAINTAINED ITS HEADQUARTERS OR PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS WITHIN WEST VIRGINIA CONTINUOUSLY FOR THE FOUR (4) YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE DATE OF THIS CERTIFICATION.</p> <p>B. APPLICATION IS MADE FOR 2.5% PREFERENCE FOR THE REASON CHECKED:</p> <p>(X) BIDDER IS A RESIDENT VENDOR WHO CERTIFIES THAT, DURING THE LIFE OF THE CONTRACT, ON AVERAGE AT LEAST 75% OF THE EMPLOYEES WORKING ON THE PROJECT BEING BID ARE RESIDENTS OF WEST VIRGINIA WHO HAVE RESIDED IN THE STATE CONTINUOUSLY FOR THE TWO YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING SUBMISSION OF THIS BID;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>() BIDDER IS A NONRESIDENT VENDOR EMPLOYING A MINIMUM OF ONE HUNDRED STATE RESIDENTS OR IS A NONRESIDENT VENDOR WITH AN AFFILIATE OR SUBSIDIARY WHICH MAINTAINS ITS HEADQUARTERS OR PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS WITHIN WEST VIRGINIA EMPLOYING A MINIMUM OF ONE HUNDRED STATE RESIDENTS WHO CERTIFIES THAT, DURING THE LIFE OF THE CONTRACT, ON AVERAGE AT LEAST 75% OF THE EMPLOYEES OR BIDDERS' AFFILIATE'S OR SUBSIDIARY'S EMPLOYEES ARE RESIDENTS OF WEST VIRGINIA WHO HAVE RESIDED IN THE STATE CONTINUOUSLY FOR THE TWO</p>						
SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS						
SIGNATURE <i>Krista Ferrell</i>		TELEPHONE 304.347.0431		DATE November 27, 2006		
TITLE Director, Business Operations		FERN 55-0484812		ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE		

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11/01/2006				
BID OPENING DATE: 11/29/2006		BID OPENING TIME 01:30PM		

LINE	QUANTITY	UOP	CAT NO	ITEM NUMBER	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
<p>SIGNED: <i>Christina J. Lewis</i></p> <p>TITLE: Director, Business Operations</p> <p>* CHECK ANY COMBINATION OF PREFERENCE CONSIDERATION(S) IN EITHER "A" OR "B", OR BOTH "A" AND "B" WHICH YOU ARE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE. YOU MAY REQUEST UP TO THE MAXIMUM 5% PREFERENCE FOR BOTH "A" AND "B". (REV. 12/00)</p> <p>NOTICE</p> <p>A SIGNED BID MUST BE SUBMITTED TO:</p> <p>DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION PURCHASING DIVISION BUILDING 15 2019 WASHINGTON STREET, EAST CHARLESTON, WV 25305-0130</p> <p>THE BID SHOULD CONTAIN THIS INFORMATION ON THE FACE OF THE ENVELOPE OR THE BID MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED:</p> <p>SEALED BID</p> <p>BUYER: KF-21</p> <p>RFQ. NO.: EDD263990</p>						

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS		
SIGNATURE <i>Christina J. Lewis</i>	TELEPHONE 304.347.0431	DATE November 27, 2006
TITLE Director, Business Operations	FEIN 55-0484812	ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE

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State of West Virginia
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BID OPENING DATE: 11/29/2006						
BID OPENING TIME: 1:30 PM						
PLEASE PROVIDE A FAX NUMBER IN CASE IT IS NECESSARY TO CONTACT YOU REGARDING YOUR BID:					304.347.0487	
CONTACT PERSON (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY):					Financial Matters: Christina Lewis Technical Matters: Kristine Chadwick	304.347.0429
***** THIS IS THE END OF RFQ EDD263990 ***** TOTAL:						\$154,250

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS		
SIGNATURE <i>Christina Lewis</i>	TELEPHONE 304.347.0431	DATE November 27, 2006
TITLE Director, Business Operations	FEIN 55-0484812	ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE

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West Virginia Department of Education
Office of Healthy Schools
Bldg. 6, Room B-309

008

Request for Quotation

The WV Purchasing Division for the agency, the WV Department of Education, is soliciting bids to provide the agency with an evaluator for the Professional Development Consortium.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. The vendor will evaluate planning for PDC activities, including but not limited to:

- 1) Identification of professional development needs of participants;
- 2) Identification of PDC event impact on participant's activities post-event;
- 3) Identification of additional technical assistance needs of participants;
- 4) Identification of document impact of internal and external processes and communication with multiple partners; and
- 5) Documentation of alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Health Promotion- Division of Adolescent and Student Health's (CDC-DASH) vision for professional development for funded partners

B. The vendor will evaluate the impact of PDC activities in the following categories:

- 1) increase in capacity of funded partners to perform tasks as assigned by CDC and which the PDC has provided training;
- 2) Refinement of funded partner work-plans to be more focused and doable in relation to PDC training topics; and
- 3) Increase in funded partner staff competencies in reference to "Competencies" document-see <http://wvde.state.wv.us/osshp/section7/index.html>

C. The vendor will evaluate implementation of PDC events, including:

-
- 1) achievement of learning objectives
 - 2) meet priorities of DASH
 - 3) perceived value of activities
 - 4) follow-up and support

D. The vendor must:

- 1) Attend two PDC planning meetings. Dates and venues **to be announced**.
- 2) Attend on PDC national professional development event per year.
- 3) Provide periodic verbal process reports on the implementation of the evaluations and results to be provided on a bi-monthly basis to the PDC
- 4) Participate in conference calls

- 5) Develop a detailed written plan (goals/objectives) with task identification, timeline, tools, etc for evaluation

009

VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS

The vendor must:

- Demonstrate background and/or experience in the coordinated school health model
- Document five years evaluation experience
- Document evidence of experience in professional development
- Provide project staff vitae
- Provide one (1) example of a past evaluation report.

NOTE: It is preferred that this information be submitted with the bid. The agency reserves the right to request this information. Vendors must supply requested information within 48 hours of request. Vendors failing to supply this information in this timeframe may be disqualified.

Term and Renewal of Contract:

This contract is to commence upon award by the Purchasing Division and will extend until February 28, 2008. Renewal of this contract shall only occur only if WV is awarded cooperative agreement for the Professional Development Consortium.

Incurring Costs:

The state and any of its employees or officers shall not be held liable for any expenses incurred by any bidder responding to this RFQ for expenses to prepare, deliver the bid, or to attend any meetings, oral presentations or protest hearings

Travel Expenses:

Travel expenses **will not** be reimbursed to bidders, thus any anticipated travel expenses **must** be accounted for in the determination of the rates bid – see bid submission format included in the bid package

Bid Submission:

As there are multiple rates listed on the bid sheet, to facilitate evaluation of bids, the lowest total contract price shall be awarded the contract. However, it is the intent of the RFQ that this contract be awarded as an open-ended contract. The actual hours needed is anticipated to fluctuate and unknown at this time

The vendor's rate will be established as a result of this award, but the quantity of hours will be considered open-ended, to be authorized in advance by the WVDOE.

Price Quotations:

010

The price(s) quoted in the bidder's proposal will not be subject to any increase and will be considered firm for the life of the contract.

Any anticipated overhead, support staff, travel expenses, indirect costing of expenses or any other reimbursable expenses must be incorporated into the vendor's fee. No separate payments for these types of expenses will be made, and they shall be considered the sole responsibility of the vendor

BID SHEET

011

Vendor Name: Edvantia, Inc.

Vendor Address: P. O. Box 1348, 1031 Quarrier Street
Charleston, WV 25325-1348

Vendor Phone: 304.347.0431

1. Identify professional development needs of PDC client base.

	Estimated		rate =	
	hours per year			
250	x	\$74/hr		\$18,500

2. Evaluate PDC event impact on participant's activities post-event.

	Estimated		rate =	
	hours per year			
500	x	\$73/hr		\$36,500

3. Identify additional technical assistance and follow-up support needs of participants.

	Estimated		rate =	
	hours per year			
750	x	\$67/hr		\$50,250

4. Document impact of internal and external processes and communication with multiple partners.

	Estimated		rate =	
	hours per year			
250	x	\$98 /hr		\$24,500

5. Document alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Health Promotion- Division of Adolescent and School Health's (CDC-DASH) vision for professional development for funded partners.

	Estimated		rate =	
	hours per year			
250	x	\$98/hr		\$24,500

TOTAL RFQ PRICE: \$154,250

NOTE: Any anticipated travel expenses will need to be accounted for and included in the determination of the above costs.

A F F I D A V I T

012

West Virginia Code §5A-3-10a states:

No contract or renewal of any contract may be awarded by the state or any of its political subdivisions to any vendor or prospective vendor when the vendor or prospective vendor or a related party to the vendor or prospective vendor is a debtor and the debt owned is an amount greater than one thousand dollars in the aggregate.

DEFINITIONS:

"Debt" means any assessment, premium, penalty, fine, tax or other amount of money owed to the state or any of its political subdivisions because of a judgment, fine, permit violation, license assessment, defaulted workers' compensation premium, penalty or other assessment presently delinquent or due and required to be paid to the state or any of its political subdivisions, including any interest or additional penalties accrued thereon.

"Debtor" means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, limited liability company or any other form or business association owing a debt to the state or any of its political subdivisions.

"Political subdivision" means any county commission; municipality; county board of education; any instrumentality established by a county or municipality; any separate corporation or instrumentality established by one or more counties or municipalities, as permitted by law; or any public body charged by law with the performance of a government function or whose jurisdiction is coextensive with one or more counties or municipalities.

"Related party" means a party, whether an individual, corporation, partnership, association, limited liability company or any other form or business association or other entity whatsoever, related to any vendor by blood, marriage, ownership or contract through which the party has a relationship of ownership or other interest with the vendor so that the party will actually or by effect receive or control a portion of the benefit, profit or other consideration from performance of a vendor contract with the party receiving an amount that meets or exceeds five percent of the total contract amount.

EXCEPTION:

The prohibition of this section does not apply where a vendor has contested any tax administered pursuant to chapter eleven of this code, workers' compensation premium, permit fee or environmental fee or assessment and the matter has not become final or where the vendor has entered into a payment plan or agreement and the vendor is not in default of any of the provisions of such plan or agreement.

LICENSING:

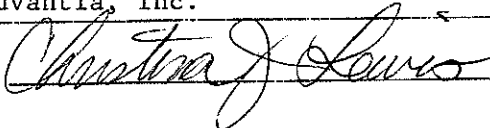
The vendor must be licensed in accordance with any and all state requirements to do business with the state of West Virginia.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

The vendor agrees that he or she will not disclose to anyone, directly or indirectly, any such personally identifiable information or other confidential information gained from the agency, unless the individual who is the subject of the information consents to the disclosure in writing or the disclosure is made pursuant to the agency's policies, procedures and rules. Vendors should visit www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/privacy for the Notice of Agency Confidentiality Policies.

Under penalty of law for false swearing (West Virginia Code, §61-5-3), it is hereby certified that the vendor acknowledges the information in this said affidavit and are in compliance with the requirements as stated.

Vendor's Name: Edvantia, Inc.

Authorized Signature:  Date: November 27, 2006



The Ohio College Access Network 2006 Annual Evaluation Report

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October 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) was founded in 1999 as a public-private partnership among KnowledgeWorks Foundation (KWF), Ohio Board of Regents (OBR), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), and preexisting college access programs across the state. Following a \$2 million pledge from the Governor's Access Initiative, OCAN planned to establish 21 new access programs in targeted Ohio communities by October 2004. By the end of 2003, OCAN membership had grown to 33 programs, 23 of which have been established since OCAN's founding in 1999. By August 2006, 35 college access programs were operating within OCAN. Several member programs formerly identified as "predevelopment" either transitioned to member programs or discontinued operation with the network.

Unlike previous years, OCAN's organizational structure did not suffer major changes over the past year. OCAN offices remained in Cincinnati and Cleveland, with the same four individuals working for the organization as in 2005.

Evaluation Overview

OCAN's strategic plan for fiscal years 2005 through 2007, developed through a collaborative process with member programs and OCAN board members, served as the basis for this 3-year evaluation. The vision of OCAN is to help Ohioans pursue lifelong education, with specific focus on assisting historically underserved populations of all ages, and, in so doing, to help Ohio exceed the national college educational attainment average by increasing college enrollment by 30% over the next decade. OCAN's mission is to increase awareness of and successful participation in quality postsecondary programs, including apprenticeship, certificate, associate's, and bachelor's degree programs. The three strategic goals are (1) program development, (2) advocacy, and (3) sustainability.

OCAN operates as an intermediary support organization that works at the state level to enable local member programs to succeed in their communities. With its focus on nurturing the development of college access programs, brokering knowledge from other organizations (e.g., National College Access Network and Pathways to College) to inform member programs about best practices, and securing funding from various sources, OCAN works to create and sustain a capable enabling system for college access in the state of Ohio.

Evaluation Design

This is the final report of the 3-year evaluation that was conducted from 2003 to 2006; the report summarizes both the evaluation activities conducted during the final year of this 3-year external evaluation of OCAN and the findings across the 3-year evaluation. The evaluation has utilized a mixed-method, single-case study design with embedded units of analysis (Yin, 2003) designed to achieve depth and breadth. The focus of the evaluation was on determining the extent to which OCAN's activities have aligned with and successfully met the organization's strategic goals of program development, advocacy, and sustainability. In addition, the evaluation sought to determine OCAN's effectiveness in its role as an intermediary support organization.

Several elements of the evaluation were designed to gather feedback from relevant OCAN stakeholders across the state (see Table A). Specifically, staff members from member programs were surveyed (Member Program Survey), key informants (Key Informant Interview) and OCAN staff members (OCAN Staff Member Interview) were interviewed, OCAN

workshops and other major events were observed and notes recorded, and documents from the OCAN program were reviewed and used to contextualize the evaluation.

Table A
Data Collection Instruments in the OCAN Evaluation

Instrument	Item Types	Constructs	Sampling Frame	N	Response Rate
Key Informant Interview (Annual)	5 open-ended	Perceived OCAN effectiveness in program development, advocacy and sustainability	Leaders in education and business and policymakers in Ohio	14	54%
Member Program Survey (Annual)	61 selected-response and open-ended	Service capacity, staff and volunteers, services, data management and evaluation capacity, perceived program effectiveness, interactions with OCAN, satisfaction with OCAN interactions, perceived effectiveness of OCAN, and future needs	Two leaders from each of OCAN's 35 member programs	38 26	Respondent level = 54% Program level = 74%
OCAN Staff Survey (Annual)	12 open-ended	Perceived progress in meeting goals of program development, advocacy and sustainability; successes and challenges encountered; concerns for upcoming year	All paid staff members of OCAN	4	100%
Member Program Staff Interview	55 open-ended	Personal role in program, program history, program context, service capacity, data management, program outcomes, satisfaction with OCAN services, suggestions for OCAN	All professional staff associated with case study programs	5 11	CEO: 83% LEAF: 92%
Member Program Board Member Interview	35 open-ended	Personal role in program; program history; program context; service capacity; data management; program outcomes; extent of networking with KWF, OCAN, and others; understanding of, and interactions with, OCAN; value of potential board training; suggestions for OCAN	70% of board members who had served at least 1 year on case study program boards of directors	4 9	CEO: 100% LEAF: 50%
Survey of Education Personnel	12 selected response	Knowledge of, and satisfaction with, case study program and OCAN; suggestions for improving case study program and OCAN	Superintendents, guidance counselors, principals, and teachers in schools served by case study programs	12 54	CEO: 80% LEAF: 67.5%

Note: Response Rate = # Response / # Sample; CEO = Clermont Educational Opportunities Program; LEAF = Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation.

To achieve a deeper understanding of OCAN's interactions with member programs, smaller unit (embedded) case studies were also conducted on a purposive sample of programs. Case study sites (programs) were sampled to obtain a selection of sites that included urban, suburban, and rural locations, and mature as well as new programs. Five programs were chosen for the evaluation case studies. Table B displays the programs selected for the case studies. Two of the five programs (Clermont Educational Opportunities and the Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation) were visited in 2003-2004 and again in 2005-2006, and were designated the longitudinal program case study sites. The other three case study programs (Lima/Allen County College Access Program, Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" Program, and the

Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center) were visited once in 2004-2005 and were designated the single-visit case study programs. The findings from the 2004-2005 visits and 2005-2006 visits have been incorporated into this report. Data collected for the program case studies included interviews with program staff (Member Program Staff Interview) and board members (Member Program Board Member Interview), observations of staff activities, surveys of school system personnel (Survey of Education Personnel), and program document reviews.

Table B
Member Program Case Study Sites

Member Program	2003 - 2004	2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006
Clermont Educational Opportunities*	✓		✓
Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center		✓	
Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" Program		✓	
Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation*	✓		✓
Lima/Allen County College Access Program		✓	

*Denotes longitudinal case study sites

Findings

OCAN workshop observations. In addition to statewide workshops, in December 2005 OCAN introduced regional workshops to the professional development opportunities. Two regional locations across Ohio were offered for each workshop; a total of six regional workshops took place between December 2005 and June 2006. Regional workshops offered information on volunteer program expansion, networking for impact, and nonprofit management. Two statewide workshops were held in February and May 2006; they focused on expanding college access services and board member training. An additional statewide workshop (advisor training) was held in August 2006; however, because data collection ended 60 days prior to the end of the evaluation (July 31), the evaluator did not observe this training. Workshop evaluation data were generally positive, with most participants reporting that the workshops either met or exceeded their expectations.

In addition to the workshops, two meetings of the Member Advisory Council (MAC) were observed; one meeting held in January 2006 was not observed. Both MAC meetings that were observed solicited MAC members' input on three main topics: (1) OCAN membership level, (2) OCAN principles of good practice and seal of excellence, and (3) data collection. During these meetings, MAC members shared their feedback, concerns, questions, and interests with OCAN staff members. Twenty member programs were represented at the first MAC meeting observed, and 21 member programs were represented at the second MAC meeting observed.

Similar to workshops in prior years, 2006 workshops offered informal presentations, opportunities for networking, and resources that complemented each professional development session. The two statewide workshops averaged more (27) participants than the three statewide workshops (22) held in 2004-2005. Regional workshops averaged approximately half of the attendance (13) of statewide workshops; participants reported that they appreciated the smaller group size offered by the regional workshops.

Key informant interviews. Half (7) of key informants reported being very familiar with OCAN, while five reported being somewhat familiar with the organization. In comparison to 2004 and 2005, 2006 respondents seemed more optimistic that an increasing number of Ohioans are familiar with OCAN. Similar to 2005, approximately half of respondents who provided comments on OCAN's effectiveness in leveraging resources reported that OCAN has been very successful over the past year; in 2004, approximately three fourths of respondents believed that OCAN had been very successful in leveraging funding resources. The majority ($n = 13$) of key informants agreed that OCAN would survive as an organization due to the essential services it provides. The majority of key informants believed OCAN had been successful in influencing public opinion and attributed the increase in public awareness to local member programs. Respondents who offered their thoughts on the effectiveness of OCAN's advocacy efforts all stated that OCAN was reasonably effective to very effective.

Over the past 3 years, key informants have offered several suggestions for enhancing OCAN's viability and influence on public opinion. Similar to 2004 and 2005 respondents, respondents in 2006 expressed concerns that OCAN needs to diversify its efforts to pursue additional funding sources. Key informants discussed the importance of OCAN locating and securing additional funding to remain a viable organization. In addition, for the past 3 years, key informants have mentioned the need for OCAN to expand and intensify its efforts to influence policy decisions related to college access.

Member program surveys. The services that member programs most commonly reported providing included financial aid counseling, college visits and fairs, and high school early awareness activities for students in Grades 9 through 11.

Of the 26 member programs that responded to the survey, most (92.3%) reported having a formal system in place to monitor and track activity outcomes; this percentage was 4.2% more than in 2004 and 23.4% more than in 2005. Half of these member programs reported tracking, or intending to track, students after high school graduation. About one third (31%) of these programs reported using OCAN's WEST system; 47% of the remaining respondents planned to use the system during the next academic school year.

When asked how effective they thought their programs had been at increasing access to postsecondary education for students and others in their community, respondents overall rated their programs as effective, or 3.9 on the 5-point scale ($SD = 0.85$). Several respondents attributed program effectiveness to (a) an increase in the number of students and/or schools served or (b) an increase in the number of scholarships and last dollar grant applications.

Similar to respondents in 2004 and 2005, respondents in 2006 believed that it was important for Ohioans to have an organization that supports and advocates for college access at a statewide level.

In terms of program development, respondents reported that OCAN was most effective at creating a resource exchange network for college access programs, disseminating "best practice" ideas, and serving as a credible clearinghouse of information about college access. In terms of advocacy, respondents reported that OCAN was most effective at serving as a credible advocate for college access to policymakers in Ohio and advocating for college access funding in Ohio. Generally, respondents rated OCAN more effective at conducting sustainability functions in 2006 than in 2005.

OCAN staff interviews. Staff members reported the development of two new programs within the past several months. Similar to 2005, staff members of OCAN reported focusing their efforts on providing quality support to both new and old programs rather than focusing on the number of new programs developed. One staff member described the efforts of the past year as resulting in the development and execution of "a set of principles of good practice for college access that serves as a guideline for new college access programs" and went on to say this was "something that was really missing from our [OCAN's] work." In addition, OCAN has engaged in a variety of activities that focus heavily on assisting and supporting new member programs while also benefiting established programs.

In 2005, OCAN began to focus its efforts with newer member programs on issues of sustainability by providing technical assistance, professional development, and resources related to sustainability. Staff members generally agreed that OCAN has been more effective at assisting established college access programs this past year than in any previous year. Whereas staff in previous years reported a heavier emphasis on growing new programs, OCAN staff members consistently reported that services offered this year were more successfully directed at both existing and new member programs than they had been in any other previous year. Several staff members commented that while newer programs may get more direct attention than older programs, there was also a major effort to meet the individual needs of more established programs.

Compared to 2005, staff members in 2006 were less positive about OCAN's success in leveraging private resources, as opposed to public resources. Responses for 2006, however, differed from 2005 in that most staff members were optimistic about attaining private funds if more focus were given to this area. As in previous years, staff members in 2006 were confident that OCAN would remain a viable organization throughout the next decade. The need for OCAN's current and projected services resurfaced as the primary impetus for sustaining OCAN as an organization.

As in 2005, OCAN has focused its marketing efforts on assisting local access programs with efforts in their communities rather than promoting OCAN. In addition, responses in 2006 indicated a movement toward increasing efforts to promote statewide awareness. As in 2005, in 2006 staff members reported that OCAN has been able to effectively influence policy decisions. While staff agreed that there is always room for improvement, OCAN staff members' involvement in increasing awareness of their program and services by interacting with policymakers and legislators, in addition to having their "voice heard" on several important state education topics, has been a notable success for enhancing college access awareness through policy decisions. Unlike in previous years, some staff members in 2006 expressed concerns about the role OCAN should and will play in influencing policy decisions in the upcoming years.

Staff members in 2006 reported several organizational successes for OCAN, such as increasing full-time staff, implementing new programs, and continuing to modify OCAN's current and future goals. In 2006, staff members' concerns focused mainly on (a) the need to diversify funding resources and increase public awareness, (b) organizational concerns related to the board's level of involvement, and (c) the improvement of data tracking procedures. The organizational concerns reported in previous years, related to leadership and separation from the National College Access Network (NCAN), were no longer present. Instead, staff members expressed concerns more aligned to specific elements of OCAN's current level of functioning.

In the past three years, staff members had many similar concerns related to OCAN's future. These concerns included issues related to funding, the successful implementation of a data tracking system (WEST), and competing agendas with other organizations. In addition, in 2006, staff reported new concerns related to the outcome of the gubernatorial election, transitioning of OCAN's staff, and whether the staff would be too small to address OCAN responsibilities.

Program case studies. Two member programs (CEO and LEAF) that had been visited in 2004 were revisited in late 2005/early 2006. Three other programs (Lima, Ironton, and CYC) were visited once during the 2004-2005 school year.

According to information collected during member program site visits, OCAN has been successful in its goal of **program development**, which focuses on providing valued services to member organizations to ensure college access and success. OCAN member programs provide a variety of services related to college access. All five programs reported offering similar services in their local communities, with financial aid counseling being the service provided most often. Other similar services included parental advising and early awareness activities.

OCAN seems to have effectively communicated the need for programs to engage in data collection and outcome measurement. In terms of recording participant information, all five case study programs maintained paper or electronic records of their interactions with service users. Although no programs collected outcome measures at the time of each site visit, all acknowledged the need for collecting such outcome data and reported their intent to track participants following high school graduation. Two of the five programs (CEO and Lima) expected to implement OCAN's Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database the following year. The remaining program (LEAF) was currently developing its own system to measure program outcomes.

Program staff members reported receiving useful information from the professional development workshops and conferences offered by OCAN. At least one staff member from each of the five member programs had attended a professional development workshop and annual conference sponsored by OCAN.

Information from the five case studies suggests that OCAN is achieving its **advocacy** goal of becoming the recognized leader of college access in Ohio by aligning resources to promote the work and success of OCAN and its members. In terms of advocating college access in local communities, the five member programs have been effective in communicating their purpose to education personnel in their surrounding service area. The majority of education professionals were familiar with the services provided by their local access programs and their awareness of these services slightly increased across the 3-year evaluation for the longitudinal case study sites (CEO and LEAF).

Across all five programs, staff and board or council members were mixed in their knowledge of OCAN's mission or purpose. Individuals from two of the five programs (LEAF and Ironton) expressed little understanding of OCAN's role in college access. The majority of staff and board members from two programs (CEO and Lima) reported a general understanding of OCAN's mission.

According to data collected across the five case study programs, OCAN has progressed toward its goal of **sustainability** for its member programs. Through OCAN's many funding

opportunities, the five member programs have received some amount of funding for various program activities over the past three years. Some of these monies have helped the case study programs to replicate best practices, distribute last dollar grants, and conduct professional development seminars.

The majority of staff and board members from the five case study programs agreed that their programs were not capable of serving more participants at its current funding levels. Almost all of these individuals believed that additional funding was essential to expand their program services. However, according to board or council members from the five case study programs, almost all who were interviewed were optimistic that their programs would be sustainable over the next three years.

Conclusions

Edvantia's evaluation of OCAN supports the following conclusions about program development, advocacy, and sustainability.

Program development. OCAN has engaged in several program development efforts to help member programs strengthen their services. Member programs received various types of technical assistance and support from OCAN staff. Although not a significant difference, programs that had worked with OCAN longer reported less frequent requests for OCAN assistance than did programs that had worked with OCAN for a shorter period of time.

After a few years of development, OCAN officially implemented its Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database in the fall of 2005. Results from the Member Program Survey indicated that 8 (31%) of the 26 responding member programs already utilize the WEST system; almost half (44%) of those not currently using the system plan to use it, and 22% are unsure if they will use the system.

The introduction of regional workshops in 2005 brought positive feedback from member programs. Workshop participants appreciated the more intimate setting, saying it promoted more opportunities for discussion and networking.

Member programs reported greater levels of satisfaction with all services provided by OCAN from 2005 to 2006. Although financial resources continued to be needed by member programs, representatives from local access programs rated OCAN as more effective at securing public and private funding for local access programs in 2006 than in prior years.

Advocacy. OCAN's efforts to advocate for college access have received recognition from top state government officials. The Ohio General Assembly complied with Governor Taft's request and appropriated all the funds he recommended for the College Readiness and Access line item in the FY06-07 budget. That elected leaders recognized the importance of the program and its mission indicates that OCAN and its allies have been successful in communicating with legislators, the governor, and other key leaders about the importance of supporting college access initiatives in Ohio. In addition, OCAN seems to have performed effectively at helping local access programs advocate for themselves. Education professionals reported being aware of the services provided by their local college access program. In addition, multiple education personnel reported interacting fairly often with the college access advisors in their schools. The awareness of college access by education professionals is a positive reflection of local access programs' work in their surrounding communities.

Sustainability. OCAN's uncertain future in terms of state funding resources has been a top concern for staff members over the past year. In the past three cycles of Ohio's biennial budgets, funding levels for college access and readiness initiatives have increased only slightly. However, the specific reference to OCAN in the budget and the legislature's willingness to appropriate all funds requested by the governor suggest that Ohio's current government recognizes the importance of college access initiatives and is willing to provide support for their missions. In addition, OCAN's transition in focus from starting new college access programs to helping existing programs achieve sustainability seems to be working. It is interesting to note that member programs rated OCAN more effective in 2006, compared to 2005 and 2004, at helping local access programs to sustain their programming; this function received the highest improvement among the sustainability functions across the 3 years (the average rating in 2004 was "not very effective" and in 2006 the average was "effective"). Member program staff also perceived OCAN to be more effective at training them to engage in effective fund-raising efforts in 2006, compared to 2005. Such high perceptions of OCAN reflect well on its goal to nurture established member programs.

INTRODUCTION

The first statewide college access network in the nation, the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN), was founded in 1999 as a public-private partnership among KnowledgeWorks Foundation¹ (KWF), Ohio Board of Regents (OBR), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), and preexisting college access programs across the state.² Within the overall goal of increasing the number of Ohioans who matriculate to and graduate from college, the original objectives for OCAN included the following:

- to stimulate the creation of new college access programs where none currently exist
- to provide resources for existing college access programs to gain experiential knowledge of specific college access initiatives throughout the state
- to serve as a resource in the field of college access and retention and other higher education-related subjects

As originally conceptualized, OCAN was to focus on service functions, such as identifying and addressing needs of the 11 existing local access programs, working in concert with OBR on access initiatives, deploying research and development findings from KWF, providing direction to communities interested in beginning new college access programs, and coordinating with other access initiatives in the state (e.g., GEAR UP). KWF's focus was to be on grant-making and research and development—areas such as funding and managing grant-making directed at OCAN activities (including providing the initial seed money for OCAN operations), conducting research and development projects to be recommended for implementation by OCAN, and developing replication plans for successful programs. KWF was also to hold positions on the OCAN board of directors and to provide strategic direction for OCAN.

Between 2000 and 2002, OCAN worked to establish new college access programs around the state and to support college access initiatives through interactions with policymakers. In his February 2002 State of the State Address, Governor Taft announced the Governor's Access Initiative, pledging \$2 million to help double the number of college access programs within 18 months and citing OCAN as the organization that would make that happen. In March 2002, OCAN staff delivered a proposal to Governor Taft, describing how OCAN would establish 21 new access programs in targeted Ohio communities by October 2004. By the end of 2003, OCAN membership had grown to 33 programs. By August 2006, 35 college access programs were operating or in development within OCAN. See Figure 1 for a geographical depiction of the programs.

¹ At the time OCAN was conceived, KnowledgeWorks Foundation was named the Thomas L. Conlan Educational Foundation. For readability the foundation will be referred to simply as KnowledgeWorks Foundation or KWF.

² OCAN became incorporated with 501(c)(3) status in September 1999 with Chad P. Wick as president and chair and Christina R. Milano as vice president.

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According to the most recent state report card on higher education, Ohio has received higher than average ratings on college preparation, participation, completion, and benefits (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2006). However, for the past 3 years, Ohio has received failing marks in the category of college affordability, which measures the extent to which families can afford to pay for higher education based on income levels, financial aid, and the cost of colleges and universities in the state. Since 1992, Ohio's state investment in need-based financial aid (as compared to the federal investment) has increased by only 4%, from 25% to 29%; this percentage is 60% less than top-performing states. Additionally, the average middle-income family can expect to contribute 44% of its annual income to pay college costs. Families with low to lower-middle incomes can expect to contribute 173% and 71%, respectively, of their annual incomes to pay college costs.

To examine the extent to which public support for college access programs has changed since the inception of OCAN, evaluators examined relevant line-items in Ohio's most recent biennial budgets (FY02-03, FY04-05, FY06-07) for the Ohio Board of Regents. Evaluators examined the funding levels recommended by the Governor, funds appropriated by the General Assembly, and, using the most recent data possible, actual expenditures during the budget year. Although several line items such as the Access Challenge—which provides funds to certain campuses to restrain tuition costs—may impact college access at a macro level, three other line items more directly affect college access programs and OCAN itself. The budgets for FY02-03 and FY04-05 included line items for College Readiness Initiatives (line GRF 235-404) and Access Improvement Projects (line GRF 235-477). According to the budget legislation (House Bills 94 and 95 of the 124th and 125th General Assemblies, respectively), funds allocated to College Readiness Initiatives were to be used for programs designed to help students enroll and be successful in postsecondary education; funds allocated to Access Improvement Projects were to be used for statewide strategies and pilot projects to increase college access and retention for specific populations of students. In the FY06-07 budget, however, those two items were combined into one single line item: College Readiness and Access (GRF 235-434). Budget legislation states that funds allocated to the College Readiness and Access line item should be used to support programs like OCAN and others that increase the number of students pursuing postsecondary education and improve students' academic preparation for higher education. The specific mention of OCAN in the legislation (House Bill 66 of the 126th General Assembly) marked the first time the program has been mentioned by name in budget legislation.

Funding for college access and readiness initiatives has remained fairly stable during the three most recent budget cycles in Ohio. Although funding appears to increase greatly in the current budget cycle, most of that increase can be attributed to earmarked allocations for Ohio's Early College High School initiative, which received \$1.5 million in FY06 and \$2.7 million in FY07. Likewise, specific allocations to the Ohio Appalachia Center for Higher Education (OACHE) and the Student Achievement in Research and Scholarship (STARS) Program at Miami University account for \$968,237 of FY06 and \$997,285 of FY07 appropriations. After accounting for these earmarked allocations, then, roughly \$3.8 million of funding is available for College Readiness and Access in FY06 and \$3.9 million in FY07. These figures represent parity with or only a slight increase over appropriations in previous years which, after accounting for executive adjustments and earmarked funds, totaled roughly \$2.5 million in FY02, \$3.9 million in FY03, \$3.1 million in FY04, and \$3.3 million in FY05. Table 1 presents the appropriation figures for the relevant line items for budget years FY02-03 through FY06-07.

Table 1

Funding for College Access and Readiness Initiatives in Ohio's Recent Budgets

	FY02-03		FY04-05		FY06-07	
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Executive Recommendations						
College Readiness Initiatives	\$3,127,000	\$3,190,000	\$4,237,000	\$4,492,000	--	--
Access Improvement Projects	\$1,111,000	\$1,111,000	\$1,049,000	\$1,080,000	--	--
College Readiness and Access	--	--	--	--	\$6,375,975	\$7,655,425
Legislative Appropriations^a						
College Readiness Initiatives	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$3,152,603	\$3,401,759	--	--
Access Improvement Projects	\$1,110,879	\$1,110,879	\$1,048,664	\$1,080,124	--	--
College Readiness and Access	--	--	--	--	\$6,375,975	\$7,655,425
Final Appropriations After Executive Adjustments^b						
College Readiness Initiatives	\$2,350,000	\$3,997,500	\$2,982,369	\$3,188,902	--	--
Access Improvement Projects	\$1,044,226	\$1,018,121	\$1,016,717	\$1,012,538	--	--
College Readiness and Access	--	--	--	--	\$6,375,975	\$7,655,425
Actual Expenditures						
College Readiness Initiatives	\$2,277,642	\$3,982,894	\$2,963,237	\$3,188,902	--	--
Access Improvement Projects	\$1,059,153	\$ 986,791	\$1,021,923	\$1,012,538	--	--
College Readiness and Access	--	--	--	--	NA	NA

a Certain funds appropriated by the General Assembly for Access Improvement Projects were earmarked for specific initiatives (e.g., OACHE, STARS, Access Appalachia). The totals for those earmarks as allocated by the legislature for each fiscal year were as follows: \$950,000 in FY02; \$765,000 in FY03; \$968,237 in FY04; \$997,285 in FY05. Earmarked allocations accounted for \$2,542,772 and \$3,751,270 of funds appropriated for College Readiness and Access in FY06 and FY07, respectively.

b Adjustments by the governor to legislative appropriations most often resulted in decreased funding: -6.00% in FY02, -4.81% in FY04, and -6.26% in FY05. In FY03, executive adjustments resulted in a 38.90% increase in funding. Evaluators applied these adjustments to earmarked allocations to determine approximate levels of non-earmarked college access and readiness funding.

In 2001, Christina Milano, former vice president of OCAN, was appointed president of OCAN, and Shane Hollett replaced Joy Kaser as executive director. In 2004, OCAN experienced further leadership transition with the departure of Shane Hollett and the appointment of Kim Kiely as interim executive director during a search for a new director. In February 2005, Christina Milano resigned as president and chief operating officer in order to focus exclusively on the National College Access Network. Jennifer Blatz, the college access program officer at KnowledgeWorks Foundation who had worked with OCAN, replaced Ms. Milano as an interim "executive on loan" until a permanent executive director was found. In July 2005, the OCAN board of directors announced that Ms. Blatz would become the OCAN executive director. Since that time, OCAN has experienced greater stability in its staffing.

OCAN's strategic plan, adopted in 2004, includes three overarching goals, as summarized in Figure 2. This strategic plan for fiscal years 2005 through 2007 serves as the basis for this evaluation and, thus, deserves detailed description. The conclusions drawn from this third year of the evaluation will be organized by strategic goal.

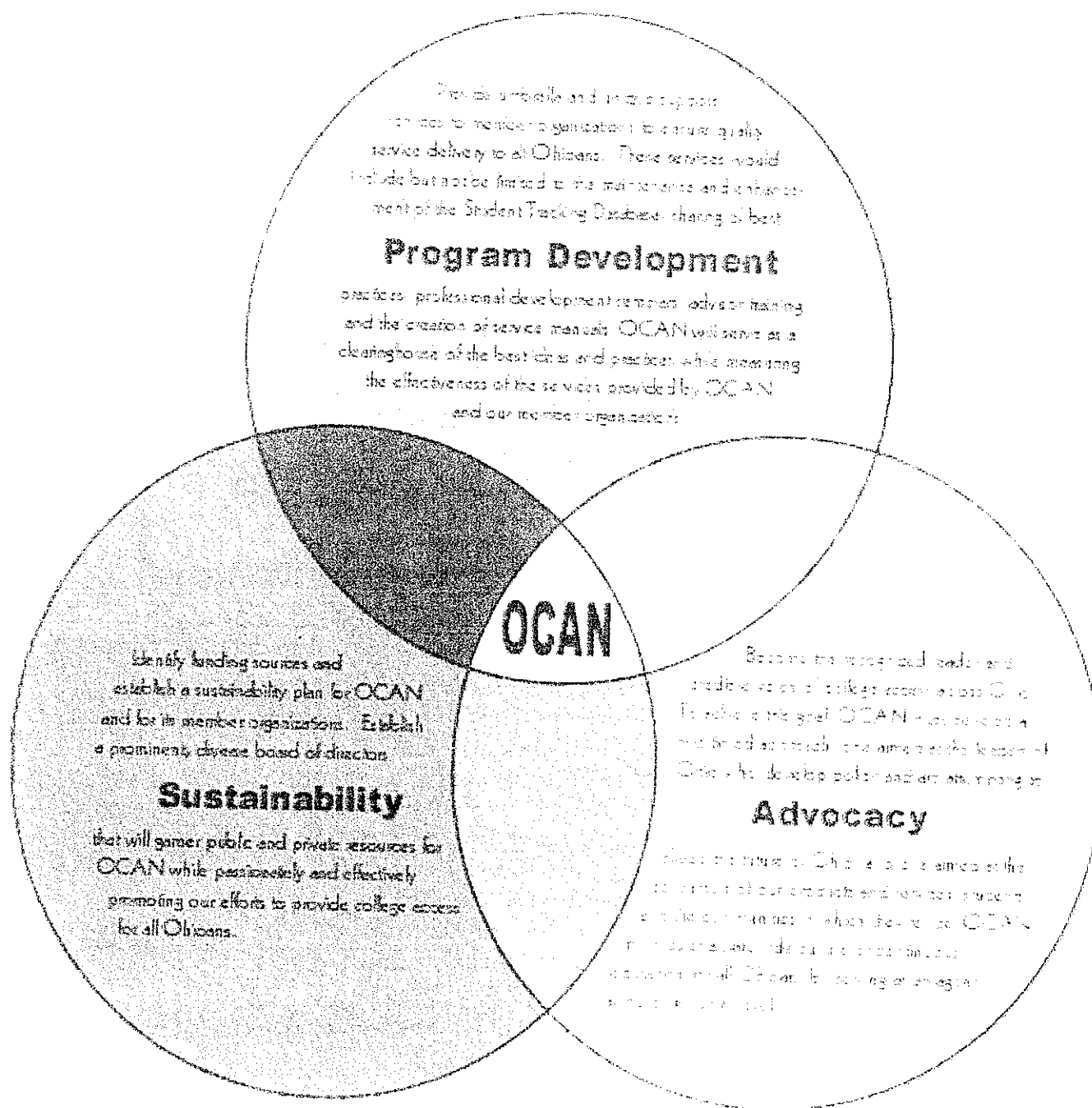


Figure 2 Graphical depiction of OCAN's strategic goals as of June 2004

The vision and mission statements for OCAN, as listed in the Strategic Plan FY 2005-2007 Final Draft, follow

Vision The Ohio College Access Network will help Ohioans pursue life-long education, with specific focus on assisting historically underserved populations of all ages, and in so doing, will help Ohio exceed the national college educational attainment average by increasing college enrollment by 30% over the next decade.

Mission The Ohio College Access Network increases awareness of and successful participation in quality postsecondary programs, including apprenticeship, certificate, associate, and bachelor degree programs

The program development goal focuses on providing valued services to member organizations to ensure college access and success. OCAN has two main strategies for achieving this goal. The first strategy is to raise Ohio's college-going rate by 30% over the next decade through such tactics as creating a benchmarking system to measure the effectiveness of OCAN and its member organizations, developing the Regional Centers of Excellence model, and creating an affiliation agreement between OCAN and each of its members to define the roles and responsibilities of each party. The second strategy is to set guidelines for member organization service delivery and ensure that OCAN is providing the proper level of support. OCAN proposes to accomplish this by developing a comprehensive manual of services for member organizations, setting guidelines for service delivery, and sharing best practices. In addition, each year OCAN staff will evaluate member organizations' community-based college access services, evaluate current OCAN membership, and consider offering membership to additional college access organizations.

OCAN has three strategies for achieving its advocacy goal of becoming the recognized leader of college access in Ohio by aligning resources to promote the work and success of OCAN and its members. The first strategy is to develop a comprehensive advocacy agenda by

- forming an OCAN government relations/public communications team and developing advocacy and public policy papers
- identifying legislative champions to serve as advocates
- developing partnerships with organizations in the field of higher education, such as the American College Testing (ACT) Program, the Ohio Association for Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA), the Ohio Association for College Admission Counseling (OACAC), and the National College Access Network, (NCAN) to gain additional resources for member organizations
- partnering to develop P-16 councils

The second strategy involves marketing OCAN and the services its members provide by creating a comprehensive marketing program. The third strategy is to identify what OCAN represents by establishing a policy agenda that develops public-private partnerships to enhance the operations and public view of the overall network.

OCAN's third strategic goal involves establishing a sustainability plan for OCAN and its member organizations. The strategic plan proposes three strategies to accomplish this goal. First, OCAN will establish a prominent and diverse board of directors and establish standing committees to garner resources for OCAN and its member programs. OCAN staff also will work to institutionalize OCAN's place in Ohio's biennial budget and will build regional fund-raising collaboratives. Second, OCAN staff will work with OCAN member programs to establish prominent and effective board leadership by providing professional development to help member programs build effective boards and by utilizing OCAN evaluation data to determine program needs. Third, OCAN staff will determine ongoing funding needs for OCAN and its member programs through fiscal year 2007. Staff will develop a 5-year business plan focused on program and staff development to

- identify broad-based sources of funding, build and strengthen relationships with new and potential funders, and establish statewide, member-oriented, fund-raising collaboratives
- develop fund-raising strategies for member programs
- reevaluate the allocation of grants to member programs and identify potential grant allocations if institutionalized in Ohio's biennial budget

This report summarizes the evaluation activities conducted during the final year of this 3-year external evaluation of OCAN and the findings across the 3-year evaluation. Its primary audiences include the college access program staff at KnowledgeWorks Foundation, the OCAN board of directors, and OCAN staff. Secondary audiences include the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Department of Education, the National College Access Network, and other parties involved in improving college access for underserved populations.

METHODS

The 3-year evaluation of OCAN commissioned by KnowledgeWorks Foundation includes both quantitative and qualitative methods within an embedded case study design as described below

Design

This evaluation utilized a mixed-method single-case study design with embedded units of analysis (Yin, 2003) designed to achieve depth and breadth. The focus of the evaluation was on determining the extent to which OCAN's activities have aligned with and progressed toward the organization's strategic goals of program development, advocacy, and sustainability. In addition, the evaluation sought to determine OCAN's effectiveness in its role as an intermediary support organization. The following questions guided the evaluation:

Program Development

1. How effective is OCAN in assisting member programs with development?
 - a. What assistance and support do member programs receive from OCAN (e.g., the frequency and types of interactions)?
 - b. What perceptions do member programs have of the quality and value of OCAN services, how they might be improved, and what additional services are needed?
 - c. What role has OCAN played to enhance the capacity of new and existing college programs to serve participants?
 - d. What has been/is OCAN's experience and success in starting new college access programs and in helping to sustain and support existing programs? What differences and challenges exist in serving these two kinds of programs?

Advocacy

2. In what kinds of advocacy could OCAN engage to benefit the current work and sustainability of member programs and support college access in Ohio?
3. In what kinds of advocacy is OCAN engaging, or has OCAN engaged in the past, that supports college access in Ohio?
 - a. What difference is OCAN making in promoting college access initiatives?
 - b. How have partners built a public constituency to support the goals and objectives of OCAN?
 - c. How have knowledge and lessons learned from this initiative been used to influence public opinion and/or inform policy decisions around college access?
 - d. How has public policy around college access in Ohio changed?

Sustainability

4. What factors affect the sustainability of OCAN?
 - a. How have partners aligned and leveraged public and private resources in support of OCAN and college access programs?
5. How effective is OCAN in assisting member programs with sustainability?
 - a. What difference is OCAN making in obtaining funds for college access initiatives?

OCAN as an Intermediary Support Organization

- 6 Overall, how well does OCAN function as an intermediary support organization in the field of college access in Ohio?
 - a How well do OCAN's role and support of programs, as well as its successes to date, align with its mission and goals?
 - b What is the "value added" that OCAN brings to college access in Ohio?

Future of OCAN

- 7 What do the findings from this evaluation suggest for OCAN's future direction?

Several elements of the evaluation were designed to gather feedback from relevant OCAN stakeholders across the state. Specifically, staff members from member programs were surveyed, key informants and OCAN staff members were interviewed, OCAN workshops and other major events were observed and notes recorded, and documents from the OCAN program were reviewed and used to contextualize the evaluation.

To achieve a deeper understanding of OCAN's interactions with member programs, smaller unit (embedded) case studies also were conducted of a purposive sample of programs. Case study sites (programs) were sampled to obtain a selection that included urban, suburban, and rural locations, and mature as well as new programs. Sites were eliminated if (a) they had not had much contact with OCAN, because this was an evaluation of OCAN and not of member programs, or (b) they were in the predevelopment phase. Five programs were chosen for the evaluation case studies; Edvantia collaborated with OCAN to select programs that represented the sample of member programs in terms of geography, community context, demographics, program structure, and program age. Two of these programs were visited twice, once in 2003-2004 and again in 2005-2006, and were designated as the longitudinal program case study sites. The findings from the 2004 visits were included in the first year's evaluation report (see Chadwick, Hughes, Wood, & Gilchrist, 2004). The other three case study programs, referred to as the single-visit case study programs, were visited once in 2004-2005. Data collected for the program case studies included interviews with program staff and board members, observations of staff activities, surveys of school system personnel, and program document reviews. Summaries of all five program case studies are included in this report.

Instruments

All instruments used in the OCAN evaluation were drafted by Edvantia staff and reviewed and approved for use by KnowledgeWorks Foundation and OCAN staff members; consent forms and procedures associated with each instrument were reviewed and approved by Edvantia's Institutional Review Board. First, the instruments used in the overall case study evaluation of OCAN are described. Second, the instruments used in the embedded case studies of OCAN member programs are described.

OCAN Case Study Instruments

Key Informant Interview. The Key Informant Interview (Appendix A) was designed with five questions corresponding to OCAN's strategic goals of program development, sustainability, and advocacy. The first question asked respondents to use a scale to rate their

familiarity with OCAN. The four remaining questions were open-ended and designed to elicit impressions of OCAN from persons in key, influential positions in Ohio (i.e., education, business, policy).

Member Program Survey. This 61-item survey (Appendix B) queried member program staff about their planned program service capacity, staff and volunteers, planned services, data management and evaluation capacity, interactions with OCAN, satisfaction with OCAN interactions, perceived effectiveness of OCAN, and future needs. Items gauging respondent satisfaction with seven forms of OCAN support (i.e., e-mail and phone, in-person, annual OCAN conference, workshops and trainings, newsletters and other information mailings, resource materials, Member Advisory Committee) were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*), with a not applicable option added. Twenty-five items about OCAN effectiveness were rated on a 5-point scale where 1 was *not at all effective* and 5 was *very effective* (a *don't know* response option was available). One open-ended item addressed future needs. The next items asked how helpful eight topics would be as workshops for board members, and respondents answered on a 5-point scale where 1 was *not helpful* and 5 was *very helpful* (again, *don't know* was provided as an alternative response).

OCAN Staff Interview. The Staff Interview protocol, included as Appendix C, consisted of 12 open-ended questions aimed at assessing OCAN's progress toward achieving its strategic goals, perceived successes over the past year, and challenges OCAN faces as an organization.

Member Program Case Study Instruments

The case studies were guided by a protocol, included as Appendix D. The protocol listed the case study research questions and the overall evaluation questions. The protocol then described the data collection instruments and outlined the case study report.

Member Program Staff Interview. The Member Program Staff Interview (Appendix E) included 55 open-ended items grouped within the following topics:

- personal history with program
- program history
- program context
- service capacity
- data management
- program outcomes
- extent of networking with KWF, OCAN, and others
- satisfaction with OCAN trainings and workshops
- satisfaction with OCAN annual conferences
- satisfaction with OCAN phone/e-mail support
- satisfaction with OCAN staff on-site visits
- satisfaction with other types of support from OCAN
- comments and suggestions for improving OCAN

This interview protocol was used with financial aid advisors, the executive director, and any other professional staff employed by the program; the interviews lasted approximately 45

minutes to 1 hour. Staff members in support roles (e.g., administrative assistants) were not interviewed.

Member Program Board Member Interview. The Member Program Board Member Interview protocol (Appendix F) was used with the members of the board of directors or advisory councils of each case study program. It included 35 open-ended items in the following topic areas:

- personal history with program
- program history
- program context
- service capacity
- data management
- program outcomes
- extent of networking with KWF, OCAN, and others
- understanding of, and interactions with, OCAN
- value of potential trainings OCAN could offer to board members
- comments and suggestions for improving OCAN

Survey of Education Personnel. The Survey of Education Personnel (Appendix G) included 12 selected-response items aimed at soliciting education personnel feedback relating to knowledge of, and satisfaction with, the program and OCAN. Survey respondents could also provide suggestions for improving OCAN or the program. This survey was produced in machine-scannable format on two sides of one page and tailored to each program. Based on a sample letter developed by Edvantia, the program staff printed on program letterhead the explanatory cover letter that accompanied the survey. The financial aid advisors were provided with sufficient quantities of the survey and postage-paid return envelopes to distribute to the principals and guidance counselors at the schools in which they worked. The survey was also mailed to the superintendents of all the districts served by the program.

Data Collection

Key Informant Interview

Key informant interviews were designed to assess the extent to which OCAN is achieving its primary goals (i.e., program development, advocacy, sustainability). In 2004, Edvantia staff determined that the OCAN board of directors consisted of members from three primary categories of constituents (business people, education professionals at all levels of the system, people with direct influence on Ohio policy). Edvantia and OCAN staff collaborated to select key informants representing each constituency group. Some of these key informants were on the OCAN board; others represented the constituency groups but were not on the board. Key informants in 2005 and 2006 were selected using the organizations and positions selected for the 2004 evaluation (see Chadwick, Hughes, Wood, & Gilchrist, 2004). The names of key contacts filling various positions were updated as necessary. Twenty-six Ohioans in the fields of education, business, and policy were selected to participate in the 2006 key informant interviews. To the extent possible, alternates were identified for each interviewee in case he or she declined to participate or could not be reached by Edvantia staff after 10 attempts. See Table 2 for the

distribution of interviewees by category. Notably, the response rate in 2006 was lower than in 2004 (80%) or 2005 (81%)

Table 2

Distribution of Key Informants by Category

Category	Potential Interviewees	Active Refusals*	Passive Refusals**	Actual Interviewees	Response Rate
Business	2	2	0	0	0%
Education	15	0	6	9	60%
Policymakers	9	4	0	5	56%
Total	26	6	6	14	54%

* Key informants who chose not to participate in the interview

** Key informants who were unable to be reached after 10 contacts

Policymakers from both the legislative and executive branches of Ohio government were interviewed. Additionally, several subcategories in the area of education were considered. Thus, interviews included Ohioans involved in higher education, K-12 education, and college access programs and initiatives. Individuals from the business sector declined to participate or could not be contacted; responses may have been obtained from the business sector if the number of potential interviewees had been larger.

The key informant interviews were conducted by telephone from April to early July 2006. In April, Edvantia staff sent each key informant a letter notifying him or her of the upcoming interviews and requesting participation. Key informants were then contacted by phone or e-mail, and interviews were scheduled at times that were convenient for the interviewees. Edvantia staff followed up with interviewees to conduct the interviews and continued attempts to schedule interviews into early July. If telephone interviews could not be scheduled, interviewees were given the option of responding by e-mail. Edvantia staff completed 14 interviews (13 by phone, 1 by e-mail) for a response rate of 54%³. Eleven of the key informants interviewed in 2006 were also interviewed as key informants in 2005; while some interviewees had changed in 2005, key informants represented the same organizations for both years. Interviews ranged in duration from 10 minutes to approximately 35 minutes. At the conclusion of the interviews, key informants were thanked for their time and participation. Responses were recorded in real time; that is, Edvantia staff typed responses as interviewees spoke. Responses were then entered into a database, separated by question, and analyzed.

Member Program Survey

Survey packets were mailed March 27, 2006, to the contact persons for 35 member programs. Each packet contained a personalized cover letter from KnowledgeWorks Foundation describing the purpose of the survey, a postage-paid return envelope, instructions for the survey, and two copies of the survey itself.

The cover letter instructed the survey recipients to complete one copy of the survey themselves and to give the "pass-along copy" of the survey to the program board or advisory committee chairperson. If the program did not have a board of directors, or advisory/board

³ Evaluators theorize that the 2006 election year in Ohio may have had an impact on the low response rate for key informant interview participants in the policymakers category.

committee, survey recipients were instructed to give the second copy to the program director or to some other person who was very knowledgeable about the program. On April 24, 2006, a reminder e-mail was sent to the contact persons asking them to complete the surveys as soon as possible, if they had not already done so.

A total of 38 individuals from the member programs returned surveys. Given a total possible return of 70 surveys (35 programs x 2 surveys per program), this is an individual-level response rate of 54%, compared to 67% in 2004 and 58% in 2005; the decrease in the number of programs in OCAN's network over the past three years (2004, 42 programs; 2005, 36 programs; 2006, 35 programs) may have contributed to low response rates. Of the 35 programs, 26 returned at least 1 survey, for a program-level response rate of 74%.

OCAN Staff Interview

All 4 staff members employed by OCAN were interviewed individually, including the executive director, associate director, assistant director of program development, and the executive assistant/office manager. The interviews took place in the OCAN offices in Cincinnati on June 28, 2006. The interviews lasted between 40 and 60 minutes. Staff members were assured of the confidentiality of the data and were told that most interview data would be reported without identifying information; staff members may be identified when responding to questions regarding staff member roles and responsibilities.

Member Program Case Studies

The general data collection plan for the member program case studies included interviewing all professional staff members and at least 70% of those board members who had served for at least 1 year. The 70% figure was chosen to balance the cost and time considerations of trying to reach and interview board members against the value of the contributions each board member would bring to the case study. Edvantia evaluators, with agreement from OCAN and KWF staff, decided that 70% was reasonable. In addition, program documents, such as strategic plans or reports to OCAN, were copied for review. Edvantia evaluators worked with each program's administrative assistant to distribute the Survey of Education Personnel. To the extent possible, given confidentiality considerations, Edvantia evaluators observed the work of program staff, such as advisors. Data collection activities conducted at the two longitudinal sites are described below; activities conducted at the three single-visit case study programs (Lima/Allen County College Access program, Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" program, and the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center) were described in the 2005 evaluation report (Chadwick, Wood, Hughes, & Huang, 2005).

The Clermont Educational Opportunities (CEO) College Access Program case study site visit took place on December 15 and 16, 2006. One evaluator from Edvantia traveled to Clermont County, Ohio, for the 2-day visit. The first day of the visit was spent conducting individual interviews with 4 staff members and 2 members of CEO's advisory council. The evaluator worked with the executive director to get the cover letters and Survey of Education Personnel copies mailed to the superintendents, school principals, and guidance counselors. A total of 15 surveys were distributed, and 12 returned, for a response rate of 80%. The executive director also provided a white paper that the program distributes to potential donors and funding sources. On the second day of the site visit, interviews with an additional staff member and 2

other council members were conducted by phone. Because CEO was in a transition phase, the executive director selected individuals on the advisory council whom she deemed as most knowledgeable of CEO's activities for interviewing purposes. A total of 5 staff members and 4 council members were interviewed over the 2-day visit.

The visit to the Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation program occurred on April 3 and 4, 2006. One evaluator from Edvantia traveled to Lake County, Ohio, for the 2-day visit. The first day of the visit was spent conducting interviews with 9 staff members and 4 members of LEAF's board of directors. In addition, the evaluator received a tour of the program's new facility and observed a meeting for advisors. On the second day of the visit, the evaluator worked with the executive director to get the cover letters and Survey of Education Personnel copies mailed to the superintendents, school principals, and guidance counselors. A total of 80 surveys were distributed, and 54 returned, for a response rate of 67.5%. Interviews also were conducted with 2 staff members and 5 board members. Board members who were unable to be interviewed in person were contacted via telephone.

Observations

In addition to the surveys and interview protocols developed for the evaluation, several other forms of data collection took place. One evaluator attended two of the three statewide professional development workshops OCAN offered to member programs, starting in February 2006; the evaluator also attended one of every two regional workshops held. Two out of three OCAN Member Advisory Council (MAC) meetings were also observed. The evaluator recorded observations from the workshops and meetings in text.

Data Analysis

Interviews

The staff and board interviews conducted during the case study site visits and OCAN staff interviews were tape-recorded with permission and later transcribed by Edvantia staff. Key informant interviews were recorded in real-time, creating an immediate transcript. All transcripts were compiled for content analysis. Responses were reported in narrative format.

Surveys

The Member Program Survey and Survey of Education Personnel were hand-entered into SPSS (a statistical software program) for analysis. Quantitative analyses included frequencies for nominal and ordinal data, and frequencies and descriptive statistics for interval data. For the Member Program Survey, items relating to factual information about the program were aggregated to the program level so that the number of responses equaled the number of programs for which there were data (program-level analysis). Items calling for opinions and perceptions were analyzed at the individual respondent level (respondent-level analysis).

Qualitative analyses included coding of themes from all open-ended items. Where appropriate, these codes were quantified for frequency. Where such quantification was not appropriate, the themes were described in narrative text.

Observations

Observation notes from evaluator observations of OCAN workshops and Member Advisory Council meetings were written up and analyzed thematically. Additional information about the workshops was collected from OCAN staff, including information from the OCAN workshop evaluation form, and the list of participants and the access programs with which they were affiliated.

Program Case Studies

Data from the case studies were analyzed as described above, according to the type of instrument. However, instead of reporting separately the staff and board interviews, education personnel surveys (or interviews), Census data, and program document analysis, case studies were written up as a coherent whole, with the data collection elements interwoven in a narrative format. The case study method is a comprehensive research strategy that allows evaluators to examine the contextual conditions of each case study site (Yin, 2003). Thus, each case study summary is a section of this larger report. The full case studies are included in Appendix H.

FINDINGS

Observations

As one type of support for member programs (evaluation question 1a), the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) holds professional development workshops for its member programs throughout the year. The workshops provide sessions on a variety of college access topics and allow program staff to network with other college access programs across Ohio. Workshops are typically held every other month at various locations across the state, at no cost to participants. In December 2005, regional workshops were introduced as a new element to the professional development opportunities. Rather than traveling to one statewide workshop, member programs had the option of attending one of two workshops held at regional locations. The regional workshops were held on consecutive days (excluding one workshop that had to be rescheduled due to inclement weather) and presented identical information. Two statewide workshops and six regional workshops (three workshops x two locations) were held between December 2005 and June 2006, compared to three statewide workshops between the months of October 2004 and September 2005; both statewide workshops and three regional workshops were observed by an Edvantia evaluator. One workshop held in August 2006 was not observed, and thus is not included in the following observation summary; evaluators obtained the evaluation forms and participant list from this workshop, and these are included at the end of this summary.

Statewide Professional Development Workshops

OCAN held three statewide professional development workshops between February and August 2006 in Columbus, Ohio; an evaluator observed two of the workshops. While workshops held in 2003-2005 typically offered professional development on a variety of topics, workshops held in 2005-2006 focused on individual themes. The first statewide workshop (February 2006) presented sessions on expanding college access services. The second workshop (May 2006) focused on board member training, and the third statewide workshop (August 2006) was a training specifically for college access advisors; an Edvantia evaluator observed the first two statewide workshops. Because each workshop concentrated on two different themes, each one will be discussed individually.

Expanding college access services workshop. The first two presentations focused on scholarship programs from two of OCAN's member programs. Both member programs had sought input on their scholarship programs from another, successful OCAN member program. One presenter identified various methods of fund-raising for scholarship dollars, including "Leave a Legacy," a program of the National Committee on Planned Giving, and the Harlem Ambassadors, an organization that promotes the values of staying in school, staying off drugs, and fostering racial harmony. The second presenter distributed materials from her program: last dollar grant application, guidelines, and calculation worksheet; a college budget information sheet; and the program's annual report. She noted that donors are recognized by personalized plaques that are displayed at the local high school, and student recipients send hand-written thank-you notes to donors.

Another college access staff member presented on the components and operations of college access resource centers. This presenter stressed the importance of considering the reasoning, costs, and funding involved in establishing a resource center. After determining these

issues, programs need to consider the benefits of partnerships, which help programs by providing space or equipment, leverage for funding, and other types of support. The next step, defining the program, involves determining the center's targeted population, the services to be provided, and the location of the center. Once the program is defined, components and equipment need to be determined, such as how and when the center will provide services, and the impact of staffing and technical resources on service delivery. The presenter concluded the session with an overview of her program's resource center.

A brief demonstration of OCAN's member intranet was presented by an OCAN staff member. In addition, a representative from Student Loan Funding presented a demonstration of the "Online Advisor" Web site, recently developed with help from OCAN. The presenter explained that the resources on the Web site are mainly for student use and that individual member programs can customize their particular site to fit their program.

The six components (or six A's) of advisory services: aspiration, awareness, achievement, affordability, actualization, and attainment.

A session on advisory services was presented by a fourth college access program staff member. The presenter stated that advisory services can be packaged in six components, called the six "A's," which are aspiration, awareness, achievement, affordability, actualization, and attainment. Much discussion during this session focused on the importance of partnering with P-16 groups in local communities to expand efforts and strengthen the pipeline.

A sixth presentation by a college access staff member from one of OCAN's member programs provided information on financial aid advising. This presenter focused mainly on financial aid updates for 2006. A handout, "Highlights of Student Aid Provisions," was provided by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and distributed to workshop participants. Because of recent cuts to education earmarks, the presenter announced that students' financial aid packages probably would not be finalized until summer of 2006, which would delay some programs from distributing last dollar grants at their normally scheduled time.

The final workshop session was presented by an OCAN staff member and focused on funding opportunities available to member programs through OCAN. The funding opportunities included the Invest in Success grant, 10 grants of up to \$20,000 each, and the Regional College Access Center of Excellence grants. These two types of grants were offered to help programs build capacity and leverage resources.

Board member training workshop Due to recommendations from OCAN's 2005 annual evaluation report, prepared by Edvantia (Chadwick, Wood, Hughes, & Huang, 2005), OCAN developed a board member training workshop to assist member programs with board development. The day's workshop sessions were presented by a representative from Partners in Change. The presentation was formal, with a discussion and question period following each agenda topic. In the first session, the presenter discussed identifying people with passion. Information was geared toward the following topics: expectations, intentional recruitment, orientation/training, roles/responsibilities, and evaluations.

The second agenda item focused on defining a vision for the future. Information was presented on strategic planning, mission moments, core values, and board/staff partnerships. The

afternoon session presented information on resources. The presenter discussed ways to better utilize time and money and talked about developing a brand for an organization. At the end of the workshop, the presenter helped participants define their organization's "greatness"

Regional Professional Development Workshops

Six regional professional development workshops were held at various locations across Ohio.

In addition to holding statewide professional development workshops in Columbus, OCAN began conducting regional workshops in an effort to decrease travel time and expenses for its member programs. Each of three regional workshops was offered at two locations. Thus, six regional professional development workshops were held at various locations across Ohio, including Hillsboro, Lima, Springfield, Fairlawn, Zanesville, and Medina. These regional workshops were hosted by OCAN member programs. Each workshop had a central theme. For the workshops held in Hillsboro and Lima, professional development focused on volunteer program expansion. The Springfield and Fairlawn workshops presented information on networking for impact. And the workshops held in Zanesville and Medina focused on nonprofit management.

Volunteer program expansion workshop. An Edvantia evaluator observed the workshop held in Hillsboro, Ohio. Agenda items included reasons to utilize volunteers, volunteer retention, using federal initiatives to support volunteer programs, and follow-up questions and discussion. Presenters included three representatives from OCAN member programs.

The first presentation focused on the following topics: benefits of volunteers, recruiting volunteers, determining the need for volunteers, and different types of volunteers. Information was presented on necessary details for operating a volunteer program, including applications with references, background checks, insurance, and a confidentiality statement. The presenter also discussed various materials for volunteer packets and ways to express appreciation for volunteers.

The second presentation focused on connecting volunteers with member program activities, communicating with volunteers, and appraising volunteers (monitoring, evaluating). In addition, workshop participants participated in interactive scenarios. Participants were divided into groups of three or four and presented with a hypothetical scenario in which they had to determine appropriate reactions. For instance, members of one group had to determine how they would deal with a volunteer who had been arrested for a crime.

The afternoon workshop session focused on two main types of volunteer sources: AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA. The presenter discussed the services provided by each group, the advantages and disadvantages of using USA FreedomCorps volunteers, and regional center recruitment.

Networking for impact workshop. This regional workshop presented information on three aspects of networking: audiences, actions, and advocacy. Workshop sessions were presented by a representative from Performa, a Wisconsin-based company that specializes in creating

Information was presented on three aspects of networking: audiences, actions, and advocacy.

high-performance environments. The first session began with participants' definitions of advocacy. Participant responses included terms such as defend, champion, trailblazers, and change agents. The presenter defined advocacy as a set of targeted actions directed at decision makers in support of a specific issue. An advocacy network is a group of organizations and individuals working together to achieve changes in policy, law, or programs for a particular issue.

Networks may be personal or professional, formal or informal, and temporary or ongoing. The "right" people to have in a network are individuals of affluence, influence, or "your people." The presenter also discussed the principle of power. The following types of power were defined: personal power, positional power, and yielded power. For access programs, persons of yielded power (or individuals who have the ability to brand an organization) can move a program from an operational level to a strategic level.

The afternoon session helped participants develop their own network tree. Five steps for building a network tree include (1) identifying each key constituency, (2) identifying constituents' expectations of an organization, (3) assessing how well the organization is meeting identified expectations, (4) identifying how to keep stakeholders engaged and informed, and (5) building the network tree. The presenter used OCAN as a model to construct a network tree. Participants positively reacted toward the network tree and found the exercise helpful to streamlining the networking process. Other information topics included the stages of an advocacy network and effective communication.

Nonprofit management workshop. The third regional workshop focused on nonprofit management. Agenda items included human resources issues and financial literacy for not-for-profits. The first session, human resources issues, was presented by a local attorney who specializes in labor and employment law and litigation. The presenter held an informal discussion session and encouraged participants to ask questions throughout her presentation. One topic of discussion focused on employment law. Important documents for nonprofit organizations to have on file are an employee manual and a statute of limitations on employee applications. Organizations should shorten the statute of limitations to 6 months to help avoid costly legal defense. Employers should provide as much documentation as possible during the hiring process. In the event that a rejected applicant would file suit to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, documentation will be needed to support the employer's decision to not hire the applicant.

Other topics of discussion during the morning session included interviewing techniques, at-will employment, and non-harassment policy. The presenter also discussed policies for independent contractors. Defining "control" is important when hiring an independent contractor; if a certain amount of control is exercised, contractors can file suit against the organization and claim they were treated as employees. Other discussion focused on defining the difference between "exempt" and "nonexempt" employees as being critical to organizations.

A local accountant presented an afternoon session on financial literacy for not-for-profits. Information covered the following topics: financial statements, basic budgeting, cash accounting versus accrual-based accounting, insurance options, internal controls and fraud, Sarbanes-Oxley, and House Bill 66. An example of a cash-flow statement was distributed to participants. The observer noted that while the information presented was important, participants may have

benefited more from real-life examples of financial statements from nonprofit organizations, which were not included in the presentation.

Workshop Participant Attendance

Attendees at the professional development workshops varied. The first statewide professional development workshop attracted 34 participants from 25 OCAN member programs, and 20 participants representing 14 member programs attended the second statewide workshop. There was an average of 27 participants from member programs at each statewide workshop. The two statewide workshops averaged more (27) participants than the three statewide workshops (22) held in 2004-2005. The final statewide workshop (advisor training), which was not observed by an evaluator, attracted 131 participants from 26 OCAN member programs; attendance for this workshop was not included in the overall average because it was geared toward a different audience (i.e., toward advisors rather than program leaders).

**An average of 27 participants attended each statewide workshop;
an average of 13 participants attended each regional workshop.**

A total of 22 participants representing 14 member programs attended the regional workshops held in Hillsboro and Lima. The workshops in Springfield and Fairlawn attracted 34 participants representing 13 member programs. Twenty-two participants representing 14 member programs attended the Zanesville and Medina workshops. An average of 13 participants from member programs participated at each regional workshop. Regional workshops averaged approximately half of the attendance of statewide workshops; participants reported that they appreciated the smaller groups offered by the regional workshops.

Workshop Session Evaluation Results

Following the final session of every OCAN workshop, participants were asked to complete a written evaluation of the day's sessions. The evaluations measured participants' expectations, the overall usefulness and value of the sessions, and the content and quality of presentation in each session. Overall, feedback was positive, with almost all participants responding that the workshops either met or exceeded their expectations. Overall, 75% or more of the participants responding to each evaluation rated the workshops as very or extremely useful. Individual sessions averaged a rating of 4.4 based on a 5-point scale with 1 representing low and 5 representing high levels of usefulness. Respondents suggested that OCAN offer more time for team activities, present specific examples of information relevant to access programs, and provide more opportunities for questions. Several participants were satisfied with the workshops and offered no suggestions for improvement. Some of the topics participants would like to see covered at future workshops include building collaborations, alumni relations, tracking students after postsecondary education, and grant writing.

For the statewide advisor training workshop, 27% of participants reported that the workshop exceeded their expectations, 70% reported that the workshop met their expectations, and the remaining 3% believed the workshop did not meet their expectations. Individual workshop sessions for this training averaged 3.9 on a 5-point scale, and ranged from 3.6 (college access financial aid assessment, and roles of the advisor) to 4.3 (financial aid 101).

Workshop Format

Similar to workshops held between October 2004 and September 2005, workshops held between December 2005 and August 2006 offered both informal and formal presentations, opportunities for networking, and resources complementing each professional development session. A variety of presenters conducted the sessions, including member program staff, business representatives, and OCAN staff members. Individual workshop evaluations maintained equally positive results across the two years.

Member Advisory Council Observations

In addition to the workshops, two meetings of the Member Advisory Council (MAC) were observed; a total of three meetings were held between November 2005 and August 2006, however, one meeting was not observed. The MAC is designed to provide feedback, pose questions, offer comments, and give advice to the OCAN board of directors. The MAC also is designed to help focus future OCAN efforts and set priorities. MAC meetings were held in the OhioLINK conference room in Columbus, Ohio, and lasted approximately 4 hours. Lunch and refreshments were provided at both meetings. Individual summaries of the two observed meetings are provided below.

March 2006 MAC meeting Agenda items for the March 2006 meeting included (1) an introduction to Student Lending Works, (2) OCAN membership levels, (3) principles of good practice and seal of excellence overview, (4) report from seal of excellence pilot sites, and (5) OCAN's fund-raising plan overview. Including presenters, the Edvantia evaluator, and OCAN staff members, 31 people attended the meeting. Of the 30 attendees, 20 represented 20 OCAN member programs. In addition, 5 individuals from Minnesota who are actively pursuing the development of a college access network (Minnesota College Access Network) were present to observe and network with OCAN and its members. Prior to attending the meeting, participants accessed the OCAN Member Intranet for a meeting agenda and materials for discussion.

For the first presentation, an OCAN staff member provided an overview of the four OCAN membership levels developed thus far. Organizations at the Traditional level would be nonprofit, community-focused college access organizations, as defined by the provision of basic types of services. A Traditional Membership is defined through the work of the College Readiness Initiative in the state of Ohio, a vote of inclusion by the OCAN board of directors, and correspondence with one of the following categories: community-based college access program, college access resource center, or a higher education access partnership. The Associate Membership was extended to organizations or programs that receive federal and/or local funding and offer college access services. Examples of organizations receiving an Associate Membership would include those with GEAR UP, TRIO, or Upward Bound programs. The Affiliate Membership was designed for educational institutions and/or associations that share a common vision with OCAN. The fourth level, Supporting Organization, would include those partners (e.g., Student Loan Funding) with whom OCAN finds an important and necessary alignment to advance the work of statewide college access. Dues and benefits of each membership level were explained in a handout distributed at the start of the meeting. Only Traditional and Associate members would be eligible to apply for the Seal of Excellence.

Following the overview of membership levels, participants had the opportunity to ask questions and submit feedback

The second presentation was conducted by a representative from Student Lending Works, a nonprofit student lender that has been designated by the state of Ohio. Student Lending Works can provide free brochures, posters, and other information to programs. Student Lending Works also conducts counseling with parents and families on debt consolidation. One participant encouraged programs to use the services offered by Student Lending Works because he or she believed them to be very beneficial. This participant also felt that the representative had much expertise with student lending. Before concluding, the presenter gave each participant a packet of materials about the nonprofit organization.

The last presentation of the morning was an update on some of the changes made to OCAN's Principles of Good Practice and Seal of Excellence, provided by an OCAN staff member. Formerly known as the Seal of Approval, OCAN decided that the Seal of Excellence was a better name as it would recognize programs' excellence in policy and practice. The Seal of Excellence is aligned with the Traditional and Associated Membership Levels; therefore, only members at those levels are eligible for the Seal. The seven areas outlined in the Principles of Good Practice align with the seven categories of the Seal's application process. To test the Seal's application process, OCAN distributed the application to representatives from four member programs, who were asked to complete the application and provide feedback to OCAN

OCAN's pilot test of the Seal of Excellence helped programs to identify areas of weakness.

and MAC members. A representative from the first program to provide feedback on the application reported that the application was a good exercise and helped her program "look at its own weaknesses." The process took this representative approximately 2 hours to complete. The second individual to provide feedback regarding the application stated that his or her access program received 128 of the 136 points necessary for the Seal. This individual described the application as a "growth process." The third program to report also achieved 128 out of the possible 136 points. The representative of the program commented that the application helped his or her program identify areas of weakness that needed focused attention. The fourth program to participate in the Seal's pilot application process reported that the application was a good exercise that helped identify areas that could be improved immediately, with little effort.

For the first afternoon session, attendees were split into groups of 3 or 4 individuals to discuss the OCAN membership levels and the Seal of Excellence. OCAN staff members distributed discussion questions regarding the topics to each group. Discussion on these topics lasted approximately 20 minutes, followed by a report-out session.

Before concluding the meeting, an OCAN staff member presented OCAN's fund-raising plan for fiscal years 2005 through 2007. The first component of OCAN's strategic plan for fund-raising focused on advocacy and outreach. The staff member stated that OCAN has done a good job with securing public funds but needed to focus more on private funding. The second component was identified as sustainability, including building regional fund-raising collaborations and developing fund-raising strategies for member programs. OCAN's evaluation findings suggested that OCAN not compete with local programs for funds and should work to engage the business community. December 2005 MAC meeting participants discussed community, statewide, and regional fund-raising initiatives, as well as OCAN's need to

distinguish itself from member programs. OCAN plans to keep MAC members abreast of state advocacy work that OCAN conducts and to evaluate the process of fund distribution.

August 2006 MAC meeting. Agenda items for the August 2006 meeting included (1) an overview of OCAN's Principles of Good Practice, Seal of Good Practice, and Seal of Excellence; (2) the application process for the Seal of Good Practice; (3) the application process for the Seal of Excellence; (4) a question-and-answer period about the seals; (5) the importance of data collection for college access organizations; (6) an overview of OCAN's data management resources; and (7) a demonstration of the Ohio Board of Regent's OCAN/Higher Education Information (HEI) data exchange process. Following the overview of the agenda, participants introduced themselves, stating their roles and affiliations. There were 23 member program staff from 21 programs at the meeting. In addition, 5 OCAN staff members and 3 presenters also attended.

To start the day's presentations, an OCAN staff member distributed a handout detailing the Principles of Good Practice and OCAN Seals. She added that an external evaluator reviewed the documents to identify needed improvements. Professional development will be provided to assist programs that do not meet all standards. The Seals' value for new member programs is as a helpful guide for implementing policies and procedures; established member programs can utilize the standards to improve their own policies and procedures. In addition, programs can post their Seals on marketing materials or include the accreditation in grant proposals. Because programs cannot apply for the Seal of Excellence before achieving the Seal of Good Practice, every program will first apply for the Seal of Good Practice. The Seal applications will be reviewed by an external review team composed of OCAN board members and staff and Ohio Board of Regents members. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions about the Seals and Principles of Good Practice. One participant expressed appreciation for OCAN staff members' consideration of the MAC members' comments and suggestions when developing the standards for the Seals.

The next discussion topic focused on OCAN's membership levels. An OCAN staff member announced that OCAN's board of directors requested that Traditional Membership programs pay annual dues of \$50. The staff member stated that the board of directors felt that this fee would represent investment in OCAN's membership and help to formalize the relationship between OCAN and the Traditional members. When asked to offer feedback about the proposed fee, participants stated that they agreed with the fee and felt that the amount was reasonable. All other members at levels other than Traditional will pay nominal fees for professional development opportunities and other activities. OCAN will announce the expansion of membership at its annual conference in October 2006.

For the final morning presentation, an OCAN staff member made several announcements regarding the OCAN survey and highlights of the annual conference. The staff member also introduced a magazine called *College 101* that OCAN has partnered with a Cleveland publishing company to publish. The magazine targets junior and senior students and guides them through the college application process. A draft copy of the magazine was passed around to participants. The first issue will be distributed in the fall, with a second in the spring. Order forms were distributed to participants so their member programs could receive copies for all students in schools in their service area. Highlights of the magazine include school profiles, college student profiles, popular careers, and a comprehensive listing of all higher education institutions in Ohio.

Magazine articles are primarily written by Fran Stewart, a Cleveland writer who has much experience in writing about college access.

Afternoon meeting sessions focused on data collection and program outcomes. The first session was a demonstration of the data exchange process used by OCAN and the National Student Clearinghouse, which collects postsecondary enrollment information for a number of institutions. Pilot demonstrations were conducted with a few OCAN member programs. Participant information files were retrieved from the member programs; while participants' social security numbers help track students more efficiently, programs can also use participants' dates of birth and names to track them throughout postsecondary education. After submitting participant information, member programs received information on (1) the number of students enrolled during the first year of postsecondary education, (2) the number enrolled the second year, (3) the names of the institutions in which students were enrolled, (4) the terms of enrollments, and (5) data disaggregated to the high school level. Utilizing the data exchange process helps college access programs monitor college enrollment and retention rates. Programs can expect results within 2 weeks of submitting a request. While programs that wish to use the Clearinghouse will incur a cost of \$375, OCAN hopes to one day offer the services free of charge to member programs.

The second afternoon session consisted of a demonstration of the newly developed OCAN/HEI system data exchange process, conducted by an OBR representative. This data exchange process provides member programs with the following information on participants: name of institution, campus, term, grade point average, major, number of credit hours enrolled, and graduate information. Although member programs must receive signed waivers from participants to access their information, aggregate data files may be retrieved without signed waivers. However, social security numbers are required to track students throughout postsecondary education. MAC participants responded positively to the demonstration of the data exchange process. In addition, a few participants expressed their appreciation for OCAN's efforts in data collection and outcomes.

Member Advisory
Council participants
expressed their
appreciation for
OCAN's efforts in data
collection.

Key Informant Interviews

Fourteen key informants in education and policy answered questions relating to OCAN's strategic goals. Often the heads of their organizations, these individuals hold positions of power in Ohio, and their perceptions of OCAN are important because of their influential positions. They and their constituents both affect, and are affected by, OCAN's success or failure in the field of college access. Below are their perceptions of OCAN.

Familiarity With OCAN

When asked how familiar they were with OCAN (evaluation question 3a), half of the respondents reported they were very familiar, while 5 reported being somewhat familiar with the organization. Of the remaining 2 respondents, 1 reported being not at all familiar with OCAN and 1 reported being minimally familiar.

Relatively few respondents believed that most Ohioans who are interested in pursuing postsecondary education know about OCAN. Two respondents, similar to 2005 and 3 fewer than in 2004, did not know and would not guess how familiar Ohioans were with OCAN. Three respondents reported that Ohioans were not very familiar with OCAN. One respondent who did not expect Ohioans to be familiar with OCAN noted, "I deal with colleges all the time, and I'm not familiar with it."

Six respondents reported that Ohioans' familiarity with OCAN varies by geography or some other factor. Three of these respondents indicated that the public's level of familiarity increases in those communities where a local member program exists. Said one policymaker, "If you go to a community with an OCAN program, they would know what it is. But outside those network sites, recognition is not so high." A second respondent stated, "In some areas they are [aware], but in other areas of the state, they don't even know this is available to them." This same respondent also questioned how one could reach the more rural areas of the state that are not exposed to major media. He or she stated, "[There are] probably a lot of school districts and teachers who aren't even aware that these programs are out there. We have to figure out a way to inform them of programs that will help kids be successful in the future." In addition, 2 other leaders in education commented that Ohioans' familiarity with OCAN varies by interest in pursuing postsecondary education. One respondent reported, "You are talking about a select group of people who are interested in pursuing postsecondary education. The program should be expanded to those who are not considering postsecondary."

"In some areas they are [aware], but in other areas of the state, they don't even know this is available to them."

Two respondents reported higher degrees of familiarity with OCAN among the higher education community compared to the general public. One leader in education reported there was a lack of awareness regarding OCAN at the broader level. Another respondent commented, "I would imagine at least some of the Ohioans are familiar with the program."

In comparison to 2004 and 2005, 2006 respondents seemed more optimistic that an increasing number of Ohioans are familiar with OCAN. Nine of 14 respondents (64%) reported that people in education or the general public were at least minimally familiar with OCAN,

compared to 43% in 2005 and 25% in 2004. In addition, compared to one third of the respondents in 2005 and one fourth in 2004, only one fifth of respondents in 2006 agreed that more people were aware of OCAN if a local member program existed in their community. As in 2004 and 2005, however, respondents in 2006 continued to indicate that the majority of Ohioans remain unfamiliar with OCAN.

OCAN's Effectiveness in Leveraging Resources

As part of measuring the factors that affect the sustainability of OCAN (evaluation question 4a), respondents were asked to rate OCAN's effectiveness in garnering public and private resources in support of college access programs in Ohio. Two (14%) respondents, compared to 19% in 2005 and 30% in 2004, stated that they had no knowledge on which to base an answer. In addition, no respondents reported that OCAN had not been effective in leveraging public and private resources, compared to 1 in 2005. Two respondents said OCAN had been somewhat successful in leveraging resources (compared to 5 in 2005), and 3 respondents reported OCAN's level of effectiveness to be contingent on factors such as community location and resources. Six respondents (43%), compared to 11 (52%) in 2005 and 10 (50%) in 2004, reported that OCAN had been very successful in leveraging resources. Finally, 1 respondent in 2006 differentiated his or her answer to report OCAN as being successful when leveraging public resources but ineffective in leveraging private funds.

The respondent who said that OCAN has not been effective in leveraging private resources commented on OCAN's newly directed efforts in pursuing private funds while highlighting potential obstacles. This person said,

They [OCAN] are beginning to work more seriously with private monies. OCAN, however, is an umbrella organization, so they really don't want to have to compete with themselves for funding. It's a little dicey because of the nature of the organization.

This same respondent reported OCAN to be highly effective in leveraging public monies.

"OCAN's leveraging of public and private resources has been more effective in the past."

The 2 respondents who reported that OCAN had been somewhat effective in leveraging funding resources commented on OCAN's past success stating, "OCAN's leveraging of public and private resources has been more effective in the past." One of these respondents attributed OCAN's decrease in effectiveness to a general decrease in state budget funds that are allocated to higher education. The second respondent spoke more directly about a need for OCAN to increase its awareness at the state level by keeping the legislature informed about how funding is being spent.

Most (5) of the 6 respondents who reported that OCAN has been very effective in leveraging resources discussed the level of funding OCAN has secured from state and private sources. One policymaker commented on OCAN's attainment of a \$600,000 increase in state funding for the 2006 fiscal year. This person stated,

The Committee on Higher Education and the Economy set a goal of increasing Ohio's undergraduate attendance by 30% in the next 10 years. The governor sees OCAN as a critical tool to achieve that goal. In House Bill 66, the most recent biennial budget, appropriations for OCAN were \$1.1 million for fiscal year 2006 and \$1.2 million for fiscal year 2007. OCAN was one of very few higher education programs to see an increase in funding.

One leader in education noted that OCAN has been successful in leverage funding from communities to support students. A second education leader remarked on OCAN's "balance" in effectively securing public and private funds. A third respondent in the education sector commented on OCAN's effectiveness at accessing funding through the governor's office and the GEAR UP program.

Two of the 3 respondents who reported OCAN's level of effectiveness to be contingent on factors such as community location and resources discussed OCAN's success as being limited to more urban areas. Both respondents, one in the education sector and the other in policy, talked about OCAN's need to provide resources to more rural areas by forming partnerships and collaborations with organizations that can help provide funding to support resources in these areas. The education leader stated,

In some of the rural areas, and counties and borders, the options to leverage those kinds of funds aren't there as much. They [OCAN] need to do more outreach and partnerships to form bigger regions with other areas. The Northwest Ohio area has very few programs. . . . Northeast, Central, Southwest, and Appalachia seems to be doing a good job. The Northwest is agricultural, with manufacturing and automotive. [In that region, there is] not the effort or understanding of the need to develop programs like this, despite there being first-generation students.

There are both similarities and differences in respondents' perceptions regarding OCAN's success in raising and leveraging funding reported in 2005 and 2006. Unlike responses in 2005, no respondent in 2006 reported OCAN to be ineffective in leveraging public and private resources; no respondent in 2004 reported OCAN to be ineffective in leveraging resources. Similar to prior years, approximately half of respondents who provided comments on OCAN's effectiveness reported that OCAN has been very successful over the past year. In addition, similar to 2004 and 2005, respondents expressed concerns regarding OCAN's need to diversify its efforts to pursue other additional funding sources.

OCAN's Viability

One individual (compared to 3 [14%] in 2005 and 5 [25%] in 2004) did not know enough about OCAN to have an opinion on its viability as an organization. Overall, out of the 13 respondents who commented on OCAN's viability, 100% agreed that OCAN should survive as an organization due to the essential services it provides. In addition, 12 of the respondents believed that OCAN's viability was definite or very likely.

86% of the key informants interviewed believed that OCAN's viability was definite or very likely.

Five respondents, all in the education sector, commented on OCAN's viability over the next decade as being definite. One leader in education said,

[Viability is very likely] because Ohioans recognize the need to increase the number of kids who are going and succeeding in college. The state can't do it all; local communities have to pick up that responsibility and OCAN supports those local communities. I think OCAN is going to be around for quite a long time.

Another leader in education stated, "I think it [OCAN] has a very strong base with which to work, and a very strong need and will be very viable." A third leader partially attributed OCAN's viability to its effectiveness in leveraging funds.

An additional 8 respondents indicated they believed OCAN's viability to be very likely. Several of these respondents, including leaders in education and policy, attributed the likely viability of OCAN to be largely dependent on an increasing need for its services. One respondent stated, "It [college awareness] is [an] absolutely an essential part of schooling and college networking." Another respondent commented on OCAN's "deep roots" as a contributor to its viability. One leader in education discussed OCAN's likely viability in relation to the current atmosphere in legislation. This respondent stated,

I think it has the potential to be very viable because of legislation being introduced regarding the Ohio corps program. The tone of the legislation helps as well. They are promoting STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] initiatives and degree options. They want to promote more college access programs around STEM. Also Ohio is lagging behind other states in college access and college rates.

Another leader in education suggested that while OCAN as an organization may remain viable, smaller local member programs may not.

"OCAN needs to strengthen its financial base and [start] looking at other sources available."

One policymaker was more skeptical regarding OCAN's viability over the next decade. While he or she believed OCAN's work is "dramatic," issues related to funding were discussed as a potential obstacle to its viability. One policymaker supported this concern, stating, "OCAN needs to strengthen its financial base and [start] looking at other sources available."

Compared to 2004 and 2005, key informants in 2006 were even more optimistic about OCAN's stability and viability over the next decade. It is unknown, however, whether responses are truly more positive or if those with less positive views declined to be interviewed this year. Unlike responses in prior years, respondents did not report any concerns related to OCAN's relationships with other organizations or a need for OCAN to develop more internally as an organization. In the past three years, key informants reported that OCAN's viability is largely attributed to the need for the kinds of services it provides. In addition, similar to responses in the past 2 years, several respondents in 2006 discussed the importance of OCAN locating and securing additional funding to remain viable.

OCAN's Effectiveness in Influencing Public Opinion

Respondents were asked what OCAN does to increase public awareness or influence public opinion about college access, and how effective its efforts have been (evaluation question 3c). Two (14%) of the respondents—including 1 leader each from the fields of education and policy—did not know, compared to 6 (29%) in 2005 and 9 (45%) in 2004.

No key informants responded that they did not think OCAN had been successful in its efforts to increase public awareness or influence public opinion, compared to 2 (10%) in 2005 and 5 (25%) in 2004. Three respondents, 2 from the policy field and 1 from education, reported they felt OCAN needed to improve its efforts to influence public opinion. A policymaker commented on the need to increase publicity, stating,

I believe as part of the grant that OCAN makes or gives to an organization or an area, they should require that organization, or area to have some kind of public notice or press release, maybe involving interviews. Part of the request for money is getting the name [OCAN] out there.

The remaining 9 respondents all commented on OCAN's effectiveness in influencing public opinion at some level. Seven respondents, including leaders in policy, postsecondary education, and education, agreed that OCAN has been successful in increasing awareness with targeted audiences or at the local level. Two leaders in education thought OCAN's effectiveness at increasing public awareness can be attributed to the development of local programs. Both of these respondents acknowledged that awareness of OCAN and its services is limited to local areas with program members. In addition, 2 other leaders in education spoke in more detail about OCAN's success at increasing awareness in specific geographic regions. Both respondents discussed the lack of effectiveness OCAN has had in other regions of the state and emphasized a need to pursue efforts focused on increasing statewide awareness. Two respondents remarked on the need for additional funding to address these concerns. One leader in education suggested, "OCAN will have to partner with other organizations to develop the funding to do a statewide marketing campaign to influence what people are thinking and why college is important."

One policymaker discussed OCAN's success at increasing awareness at both the local and state levels. With regard to the state level, this respondent spoke about OCAN's involvement with SASCCO (Student Access and Success Coordination Council of Ohio) on working with various organizations to develop a statewide marketing campaign. Regarding the local level, this policymaker stated,

OCAN [is] in the trenches at high schools and career centers and is increasing awareness at that level through counseling, scholarships, [and] other assistance students might need. Just the nature of their business helps increase awareness.

Two key informants commented on OCAN's various resources and professional development when discussing OCAN's effectiveness in influencing public opinion. One leader in education stated, "I receive newsletters from them. I'm on a Listserv where I do receive news releases. Their [OCAN's] conference is well attended and helps bring together allied organizations." A second leader in education said, "OCAN holds annual conferences, well!

covered by press. Good speakers, agenda by OCAN.” This same respondent went on to discuss the need for OCAN to build awareness statewide via marketing.

In 2006, no key informants reported they felt OCAN was ineffective in its efforts to increase public awareness or influence public opinion, compared to 2 (10%) in 2005 and 2 (10%) in 2004. In addition, all respondents who provided comments agreed that OCAN was effective at some level. Similar to the past 2 years, several 2006 respondents attributed OCAN’s increase in public awareness to local member programs. Respondents from both years agreed that member programs play a great role in generating public opinion concerning college access issues. The most common theme in 2006 responses suggests a broader statewide lack of awareness of OCAN and its services.

OCAN’s Effectiveness in Influencing Policy

Finally, respondents were asked to describe how OCAN uses its experience and expertise to influence policy decisions regarding college access (evaluation question 3d). Two respondents (14%) did not know or were not familiar enough with OCAN to respond to this item (which is less than the 24% of respondents who gave this response in 2005 and 25% who gave the response in 2004).

“Any organization that is making that connection between policymakers and those working with grass roots, is doing something right.”

Eight of the 12 respondents who offered their thoughts on the effectiveness of OCAN’s advocacy efforts stated that OCAN was “reasonably” to “very” effective. One policymaker stated, “They certainly have a presence in Columbus. I look at reports on their materials, reports from the Board of Regents. I think I attended a breakfast that was sponsored by OCAN. I consider them relatively active.” A leader in education commented, “Any organization that is making that connection between policymakers and those working with grass roots, is doing something right. Yes, OCAN is effective.” Another education leader discussed OCAN’s participation in a “number of governor’s commissions related to higher education” and its “key role” in providing staff to commissions. One policymaker remarked that OCAN was very successful in advocating for college access.

Several respondents, including 2 education leaders and 1 policymaker, commented on OCAN’s need to develop better relationships with legislators and state agencies. One leader in education discussed the possibility of OCAN working with member programs to engage their constituents to meet with state representatives and senators to talk about the difficulties they face when considering attending college. Another education leader remarked on a need for OCAN to increase both public and legislative awareness of its work. One policymaker stated, “It is critical that OCAN conveys to members of the legislature (not just finance and higher education subcommittees) OCAN’s track record and services.”

“It is critical that OCAN conveys to members of the legislature OCAN’s track record and services.”

One leader in education spoke directly about OCAN’s effectiveness in changing policy by discussing its connection with a financial aid program designed to assist students in paying

for college. This respondent discussed OCAN's strong connections with the governor's policy advisors and the developing relationship with the Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Board of Regents.

Finally, 3 respondents commented on OCAN's need to expand or intensify efforts to influence policy decisions regarding college access. One policymaker highlighted the importance of access programs strongly advocating for funding to help legislators understand their important role in helping "young people to know and believe in themselves" when thinking about attending postsecondary education. This respondent stated, "The access programs aren't telling their stories well enough to get more business and legislature influence. The funding for research like this for the program should not go away. It is incredibly important." A leader in education remarked on OCAN's past reliance on KnowledgeWorks to engage in issues related to policy decisions. This respondent noted that he or she felt OCAN's effectiveness has been "average" in creating its own identity around public policy and advocacy. Another leader in education suggested increasing the State Board members' awareness of OCAN by diversifying methods of contact with board members. This respondent stated, "How do we reach all the board members? Maybe a variety of ways, calling, coming to our meetings. I went to a breakfast meeting with some of the programs. That gave us a real opportunity to hear about it."

Similar to 2005, in 2006 no respondents described OCAN's efforts to influence policy decisions as ineffective. In addition, several key informants in both 2005 and 2006 discussed the need for OCAN to expand and intensify its efforts to influence policy decisions regarding college access. In 2006, however, only 14% of respondents, compared to 24% in 2005 and 2004, reported they were not familiar enough with OCAN to discuss its effectiveness in influencing policy decisions.

Comments from Key Informants

Five leaders in education provided additional comments about OCAN. One leader suggested that OCAN could improve its methods of sharing knowledge about effective program models. A second education leader discussed a need for OCAN to build partnerships with programs that may help serve geographical areas in which OCAN is not currently as effective. Finally, a third educational leader commented on OCAN's need for more frequent communication with schools, stating, "Other than these [interviews], they sent me a postcard the other day, but that's the only contact I've had with them."

"By tightening up the criteria OCAN uses, it has been able to increase credibility with those people and organizations they are involved with in the area."

Two of the 5 leaders in education who provided additional comments discussed the positive effects OCAN's "seal of approval" development has had on the organization. One respondent commented, "By tightening up the criteria OCAN uses, it has been able to increase credibility with those people and organizations they are involved with in the area." In addition, a respondent remarked on the new leadership within OCAN, stating, "They have really gotten OCAN on track. I commend the staff and leadership for taking very strong steps."

Member Program Surveys

The Member Program Survey queried program staff about their planned program service capacity, staff and volunteers, services, and data management and evaluation capacity. The survey also asked staff about their interactions with OCAN, satisfaction with OCAN interactions, perceived effectiveness of OCAN, and future needs. Two copies of the Member Program Survey were distributed to OCAN's 35 member programs. A total of 38 individuals from the member programs returned surveys, for an individual-level response rate of 54%. Of the 35 programs, 26 returned at least 1 survey, for a program-level response rate of 74%.

Respondent Descriptive Information

Of the 38 respondents, 47% held the executive director/director position at their programs. Approximately 24% were board or advisory committee chairs, and 16% were program or project directors. The remaining 13% held other roles, including four respondents who described themselves as one of the following: codirector, contractor or office manager, grant writer, and support staff member.

Program Descriptive Information

The member programs had worked with OCAN for an average of 4.1 years ($SD = 1.9$). Member programs served an average of 17.7 schools ($SD = 27.1$), with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 141 schools served. Slightly less than half (40.7%) of the programs served more than 10 schools. They served an average of 5.0 elementary schools ($SD = 16.3$); 2.1 middle schools ($SD = 4.2$); 9.5 high schools ($SD = 11.5$); and 1.0 other school ($SD = 3.6$). Member programs served an average of 7.7 school districts ($SD = 8.8$), with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 37 districts served. Slightly less than half (48.1%) of the programs served 5 or more districts.

The member programs employed an average of 6.0 paid staff members ($SD = 10.6$), with half of member programs reporting 1.5 or fewer paid staff members. Although 8 member programs did not use volunteers, the average member program used 12.9 volunteers ($SD = 22.2$) on a regular basis.

Member programs used an average of 6.9 funding sources for operational costs and services ($SD = 8.0$), with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 36 funding sources used. The member programs used an average of 14.4 funding sources ($SD = 33.2$) for scholarships, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 123 funding sources used.

Table 3 shows the services that member programs most commonly reported providing. They included financial aid counseling, college visits and fairs, and high school early awareness activities for students in Grades 9 through 11. The services least commonly offered by the member programs were academic preparation, adult returning-student activities or advising, elementary school early awareness activities for students in Grades 5 or 6 and lower, and other services not delineated in the table. Across the 3 years of the evaluation, there was a trend for member programs to report offering slightly more services related to financial aid counseling, and fewer parent advising services. The provision of services related to college admissions and selection counseling and last dollar grants increased between 2004 and 2005, and decreased between 2005 and 2006.

Table 3

Percentage of Responding Programs Offering Each Service

Service	% Program 2006	% Programs 2005	% Programs 2004
Financial aid counseling	96.3%	96.3%	92.3%
Participation in college visits and fairs	85.2%	77.8%	84.6%
High school early awareness activities (for students in Grades 9 through 11)	81.5%	81.5%	84.6%
College access resource center	70.4%	70.4%	76.9%
College admission and selection counseling	70.4%	81.5%	76.9%
Last dollar grants/other scholarships	70.4%	77.8%	69.3%
Career exploration	70.4%	63.0%	--
Parental advising	66.7%	81.5%	88.5%
Middle school early awareness activities (for students in Grades 6 through 8)	63.0%	66.7%	65.3%
College entrance exam preparation/information	55.6%	66.7%	--
Fee waivers for tests and/or college applications	40.7%	40.7%	46.1%
Academic preparation (e.g., tutoring)	37.0%	37.0%	--
Adult returning-student activities or advising	37.0%	48.1%	38.5%
Elementary school early awareness activities (for students in Grades 5 or 6 and lower)	37.0%	48.1%	61.6%
Other services	16.0%	18.5%	38.5%

For the member programs receiving planning and/or start-up funding from OCAN, 85% reported that they were somewhat or very likely to continue to offer college access services after OCAN funding ends.

Managing Program Information

One of the goals of OCAN involves building member program capacity to measure program outcomes. Respondents answered a series of questions about how their programs manage data, and their responses were aggregated to the program level. Table 4 presents information about the responding programs that have formal implementation and outcome tracking systems and procedures (e.g., surveys or interviews with students and school staff). Most (92.3%) responding member programs reported having a formal system in place to monitor and track activity outcomes. Fewer member programs, though still more than half, reported (1) conducting surveys or interviews with school staff to assess satisfaction with the program's services, (2) having systems in place to track staff interactions with students, and (3) conducting surveys or interviews with students regarding satisfaction with program services and/or intentions to pursue postsecondary education. Half of the member programs reported tracking, or intending to track, students after high school graduation. No evaluation activities consistently increased across the 3-year evaluation; however, the percentage of programs that reported having systems in place for four of the five activities increased between 2005 and 2006. The greatest difference (+23.4%) occurred in the category, "Have (or will have) a formal system to monitor and track the outcomes of services and activities."

advocates for college access at a statewide level. Respondents in 2006 gave slightly less weight to the importance of such an organization ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.1$) than did respondents in 2005 ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.8$) and in 2004 ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.9$); however the high mean scores indicate that respondents in all years reported such an organization was important.

Respondents were asked how often they had contact with OCAN staff (evaluation question 1a). There was variation among member program respondents. Ten respondents reported having at least weekly contact with OCAN staff; 11 respondents reported having contact with OCAN staff more than once a month. Five respondents reported contact once a month. One respondent reported quarterly contact with OCAN staff. One in 5 respondents (21.1%) reported contact frequency of a couple times per year, and 3 respondents reported no contact with OCAN staff in the past year. Traditionally, programs that had worked with OCAN longer reported less frequent requests for OCAN assistance than programs that had not worked with OCAN as long; this relationship was significant for the first 2 years of evaluation, but not in 2006. See Table 6 for more detail.

Table 6
Frequency of Respondents Asking for OCAN Assistance

Frequency	2006		2005		2004	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never	9	23.7	14	33.3	11	23.4
Once a year	4	10.5	3	7.1	6	12.8
A couple of times during the year	6	15.8	13	31.0	14	29.8
Quarterly	10	26.3	6	14.3	4	8.5
Once a month	3	7.9	3	7.1	9	19.1
More than once a month	6	15.8	2	4.8	2	4.3
Weekly	0	0	1	2.4	--	--

To measure member programs' perceptions of the value of OCAN's services (evaluation question 1b), the survey included a series of items asking respondents to rate their level of satisfaction with various services (see Table 7). When these seven items were combined from all 38 respondents to form a satisfaction scale, the range of values could be from 7 to 35. The mean for the scale was 30.4 ($SD = 3.7$), with an internal reliability coefficient of .90. The majority of respondents were satisfied (i.e., rating the services at or above a 4 on the scale) with most services. As in 2005, the highest levels of satisfaction in 2006 were reported for the e-mail, phone, and in-person support services; the annual conference and in-person support received the highest average ratings in 2004. Although still positive, the lowest satisfaction ratings were given to the Member Advisory Council and the newsletter and other informational mailings; in 2005, resource materials and the newsletter and other information mailing were rated lowest, with workshops and trainings and the newsletter and other informational mailings rated lowest in 2004. It is important to note that approximately half (47.4%) of respondents had not attended a Member Advisory Council meeting and thus did not provide a rating on this item.

Table 7

Respondent Satisfaction with OCAN Services to Programs

Service	2006			2005			2004		
	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Satisfied	Mean	SD	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD
E-mail and phone support	31	4.65	0.55	79.0%	4.22	0.95	37	3.81	0.85
In-person support	29	4.62	0.56	73.7%	4.33	0.69	34	3.91	0.79
Annual OCAN conference	28	4.21	1.00	55.3%	4.16	0.80	28	3.96	0.84
Workshops and trainings	28	4.32	0.86	68.4%	3.67	1.06	34	3.68	0.81
Newsletters and informational mailings	32	3.94	0.98	55.2%	3.41	0.88	40	3.30	0.72
Resource materials	33	3.97	1.21	65.7%	3.07	1.89	--	--	--
Member Advisory Council	13	3.85	1.28	23.7%	--	--	--	--	--

Note: The "not applicable" response option was excluded from the numbers of responses depicted here. All items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Satisfaction percentages were based on responses of 4 or higher.

The survey provided areas in which respondents could share/write their comments or suggestions on how OCAN could improve each of its services. Below are examples of the comments and suggestions that were provided

When asked how OCAN could improve its e-mail and phone support, few comments were made. One respondent wrote, "[OCAN staff member] has been very supportive and has gone out of his way to help us get started." Another simply wrote, "[OCAN] staff are always prompt." However, one respondent commented that "OCAN staff are frequently on the road" and suggested that staff should "return e-mails promptly." Another respondent stated that he or she "had not had the opportunity to use this type of support."

With regard to in-person support, comments were positive. One respondent commented, "I have always been impressed with the support for the program directors and the board members." Another commented, "Staff are making more of an effort to visit sites; [it] is important to see what is occurring at the different sites." Another wrote, "[OCAN staff] have positive and proactive attitudes." One respondent suggested that "[OCAN] should keep the Cincinnati and Cleveland offices."

"I have always been impressed with the support for the program directors and the board members."

Respondents commented that the annual conference provided helpful information. Wrote one, "[The conference provides] the assistance needed to help OCAN programs understand and access resources." Another respondent referred to the break-out sessions of the conference as "excellent." One respondent suggested that high school "teachers, principals, and counselors should be offered the opportunity to attend." Another suggested the conference should "offer multiple sessions on general topics." Two respondents voiced concern regarding OCAN's partnerships with other organizations to host the annual conference. One respondent stated that the multiple partnerships has "caused a lack of focus on OCAN programs and issues." Another stated, "[The conference] has too many agendas and audiences."

"The topics and speakers during the past year have been excellent."

Overall, respondents were satisfied with workshops and trainings. Respondents commented that they appreciated the regional workshops. One respondent added, "The topics and speakers during the past year have been excellent," while another remarked that the regional workshops helped decrease travel time. One respondent commented that his or her access program "has not yet participated in the workshops or trainings."

Four respondents commented on the newsletters and other informational mailings. One respondent reported that the newsletters and mailings were adequate, while another commented that the newsletters are "a good marketing tool." A third respondent stated that he or she "had not received [a newsletter] until the last board meeting" and suggested that the newsletters be mailed to board members' home addresses. Another respondent reported having received no mailings.

Seven respondents made comments or suggestions pertaining to improving resource materials that are being provided to member programs. Overall, respondents commented that OCAN's resource materials had room for improvement. One respondent stated, "[The] Advisory manual was okay but the member book this year was great." One respondent stated that "advisors know how to customize advising for each student without a manual," describing the

materials as "too general to be useful." Another respondent commented, "The marketing materials were useless" and that "printed material like this doesn't work" because it is "immediately outdated." This respondent also commented that OCAN's member directory was "great." One respondent suggested a re-ordering system for materials to be implemented, saying, "We have tried to re-order materials several times and were unsure how to go about it." Another mentioned that current resource materials are "not really relevant to our model," while another stated that "we primarily utilize our own resource materials."

When asked for comments or suggestions regarding improvement of the Member Advisory Council (MAC), five respondents commented. Two respondents commented that the MAC is "useful" and "needed." However, one of those respondents implied that the MAC had little influence, stating, "It appears that the OCAN board calls the shots without considering MAC input." Another respondent suggested that OCAN show a "closer link between the work (ideas, deliberations) of the MAC and the board." Another respondent commented, "OCAN is too far ahead of its small member programs" and that "a certain level of resources/knowledge is required to be effective."

OCAN Effectiveness

Respondents rated a series of items relating to the functions of OCAN as an intermediary support organization (evaluation questions 1b and 6a). These functions are theoretically related to OCAN's three strategic goals of program development, advocacy, and sustainability. Each function was rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*). When the seven items relating to program development were combined to form a program development effectiveness scale, the range of values could be from 7 to 35. The mean for this scale was 27.6 ($SD = 6.9$), with an internal reliability coefficient of .96. The five advocacy items had a range of 5 to 25, a mean of 20.1 ($SD = 4.5$), and an internal reliability coefficient of .93. The nine sustainability items had a range of 9 to 45, a mean of 33.7 ($SD = 8.6$), and an internal reliability coefficient of .92. Table 8 presents respondents' average ratings, the standard deviation for each item, and the percentage of respondents rating OCAN as effective (defined as a rating of 4 or 5). When 2006 scale scores were compared to 2005 scale scores, a significant difference ($t[6] = -4.6$, $p < .05$) was found in respondent perceptions of OCAN's effectiveness in program development; overall, respondents provided higher ratings in 2006 ($M = 27.6$), compared to 2005 ($M = 22.7$). No significant difference was found for the program development scale from 2004 to 2005. Although no significant differences were found for the two remaining scales (advocacy and sustainability), respondents' average ratings for the sustainability scale score increased consistently over the 3-year evaluation; respondents' average ratings for the advocacy scale score slightly decreased from 2004 to 2005, but increased over the past two years. In addition, no significant differences were found on the scales over the three time points.

In terms of program development, respondents rated OCAN as most effective at creating a resource exchange network for college access programs, disseminating "best practice" ideas, and serving as a credible clearinghouse of information about college access. On average, respondents rated OCAN as moderately effective at (a) promoting collaboration among college access programs and community organizations, (b) training access program staff to effectively manage access programs, (c) meeting the program development needs of local college access programs, and (d) developing the Member Advisory Council (MAC) to improve itself.

Respondents provided significantly higher ratings in 2006 for OCAN's effectiveness as a credible clearinghouse of information/resources about college access, compared to 2005 ratings ($t[5] = -2.7, p < .05$). Although not significant, respondent ratings of all other aforementioned program development functions (excluding the Member Advisory Council item) increased from 2005 to 2006. In addition, respondent ratings of the following three functions consistently increased across the 3-year evaluation: (a) disseminates "best practice" ideas (2004, $M = 3.48$; 2005, $M = 3.71$; 2006, $M = 4.24$), (b) promotes collaboration among college access programs and community organizations (2004, $M = 3.46$; 2005, $M = 3.56$; 2006, $M = 3.89$), and (c) trains access program staff to effectively manage access programs (2004, $M = 3.18$; 2005, $M = 3.56$; 2006, $M = 3.85$). However, no significant differences were found for the program development functions over the three time points.

In terms of advocacy, respondents rated OCAN as most effective as a credible advocate for college access to policymakers in Ohio and advocating for college access funding in Ohio. On average, respondents reported that OCAN was moderately effective at (a) serving as a credible advocate for college access in Ohio communities, (b) training access program staff to effectively advocate for college access programs, and (c) promoting a culture of continuous learning for all Ohioans. Respondents in 2006 rated OCAN as more effective at training access program staff to effectively advocate for college access programs than respondents in 2005 ($t[6] = -2.5, p < .05$). Although not significant, respondent ratings of the following two functions consistently increased across the 3-year evaluation: (a) serves as a credible advocate for college access to policymakers in Ohio (2004, $M = 4.12$; 2005, $M = 4.4$; 2006, $M = 4.41$), and (b) promotes a culture of continuous learning for all Ohioans (2004, $M = 3.38$; 2005, $M = 3.50$; 2006, $M = 3.83$). No significant differences were found for the advocacy functions over the three time points.

Excluding OCAN's ability to secure public funding for itself, respondents rated OCAN more effective at conducting sustainability functions in 2006 than in 2005 (evaluation question 5a). Respondents rated OCAN as more effective at securing both private and public funds for itself than securing funds for local college access programs. However, a significant difference was found between 2005 and 2006 for OCAN's effectiveness in securing public funding for local college access programs ($t[3] = -5.0, p < .05$). Respondents rated OCAN as slightly more effective in securing public funding for itself than in securing private funding. While still an improvement from 2005, respondents in 2006 rated OCAN least effective among the nine sustainability functions at securing public funding for local college access programs. In addition, no significant differences were found for the sustainability functions over the three time points.

Table 8

Respondent Opinions of OCAN's Effectiveness in Performing 20 Functions

Function	2006				2005				2004			
	n	Mean	SD	% Effective	n	Mean	SD	% Effective	n	Mean	SD	% Effective
Program Development												
Creates a resource exchange network for college access programs	35	4.34	0.80	84.2%	35	3.89	1.11	57.2%	43	4.02	0.83	66.0%
Serves as a credible clearinghouse of information about college access	35	4.20	0.99	73.6%	37	3.97	0.87	64.3%	44	4.00	0.78	74.5%
Disseminates "best practice" ideas	34	4.24	1.02	65.8%	38	3.71	1.04	54.7%	42	3.48	0.94	44.6%
Promotes collaboration among college access programs and community organizations	35	3.89	1.16	63.1%	34	3.56	1.05	42.9%	41	3.46	1.12	44.7%
Meets the program development needs of local college access programs	34	3.85	1.11	60.5%	33	3.33	1.27	40.5%	38	3.34	0.88	36.2%
Trains access program staff to effectively manage access programs	34	3.85	1.21	63.2%	32	3.56	1.16	45.3%	38	3.18	0.87	34.0%
Develops Member Advisory Council (MAC) to improve itself	12	3.83	1.34	21.1%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Advocacy												
Serves as a credible advocate for college access to policymakers in Ohio	32	4.41	0.84	71.1%	35	4.14	0.97	61.9%	34	4.12	0.88	59.5%
Advocates for college access funding in Ohio	33	4.30	0.92	73.6%	35	3.91	1.07	59.6%	35	3.94	0.97	53.2%
Serves as a credible advocate for college access in Ohio communities	30	3.93	1.05	52.6%	35	3.43	1.29	38.1%	38	3.47	1.22	40.4%
Promotes a culture of continuous learning for all Ohioans	29	3.83	1.07	50.0%	28	3.50	1.00	28.6%	34	3.38	1.10	31.9%
Trains access program staff to effectively advocate for college	33	3.85	1.20	55.3%	30	3.30	1.18	33.3%	37	3.30	1.00	38.3%

Table 8 Cont.

Function	2006			% Effective	2005			2004				
	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>		<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	% Effective	
access programs												
Sustainability												
Secures private foundation funding for itself	28	4.14	0.89	63.1%	21	3.90	1.00	38.1%	19	4.32	0.67	36.1%
Secures public (state) funding for itself	26	4.00	1.23	50.0%	26	4.00	1.02	45.2%	20	4.30	0.87	31.9%
Portrays itself as a growing, viable organization	35	4.00	0.94	76.3%	37	3.62	1.16	52.4%	41	3.80	0.98	59.6%
Disseminates funds to local college access programs in a fair manner	28	3.96	1.32	52.6%	23	3.52	1.56	35.7%	23	3.57	1.16	31.9%
Disseminates funds to local college access programs in an efficient manner	30	3.97	1.25	55.2%	28	3.46	1.60	45.2%	31	3.10	1.35	29.8%
Helps local college access programs to sustain their programming	32	3.78	1.16	52.6%	35	2.83	1.27	23.8%	37	2.78	0.95	21.3%
Secures private foundation funding for local college access programs	23	3.39	1.47	34.2%	31	2.52	1.63	21.5%	34	2.74	1.42	19.2%
Trains access program staff to engage in effective fund-raising efforts	31	3.48	1.29	42.1%	29	2.69	1.39	21.4%	33	2.67	0.74	6.4%
Secures public (state) funding for local college access programs	29	3.24	1.41	36.8%	27	2.63	1.67	23.8%	29	2.66	1.52	19.1%

Note: The "don't know" response option was excluded from the numbers of responses depicted here. All items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all effective) to 5 (very effective). Effectiveness percentages were based on responses of 4 or higher.

In addition to asking respondents to rate OCAN's effectiveness in performing various specific functions, the survey queried respondents on OCAN's overall effectiveness at achieving program development and advocacy (the third goal, sustainability, was not included in this analysis). Each goal has two components, so respondents were asked to rate OCAN on its overall performance in four roles. The overall internal reliability coefficient for these four items was .87, with a mean of 15.6 (range from 4 to 20) and a standard deviation of 3.3. As can be seen in Table 9, OCAN was viewed to be most and equally effective at developing new local member programs and supporting existing member programs. Respondents rated OCAN as moderately effective at influencing state policy around college access and at influencing public attitudes and awareness of college access issues. No significant differences were found for the four major roles over the three time points of the evaluation.

Future Needs

Respondents rated how helpful various training topics would be for local member program boards of directors or advisory councils. Treated as a scale, the eight board development items had a mean of 28.8 (range from 8 to 40), a standard deviation of 9.3, and an internal consistency coefficient of .94. Table 10 presents the respondent-level data. Respondents reported that fund-raising and strategic planning would be helpful topics for board member training.

Of the 38 respondents completing the survey, 23 provided comments about OCAN or suggestions on how OCAN could better meet the needs of member programs. Two respondents offered positive feedback to OCAN; one reported, "The professional development opportunities have been excellent and as always the opportunity to network and share with other member programs is valuable." Another respondent commented, "As of the present, OCAN is providing for the needs of our program." The following responses summarize future needs highlighted across the survey responses.

Fund-raising. Nine respondents reported the need for additional funds to support and sustain various program activities. One respondent wrote, "Money is needed for student scholarships, not administrative development costs." This respondent suggested that public funds be utilized solely for student scholarships. Another respondent spoke about the distribution of funds to local member programs: "Provide funding to local programs by a formula rather than through grant competition. Some programs can write grants well, while others do not have that capacity. Writing grants takes time away from providing services." Still other respondents requested help with generating ideas for fund-raising and guidance to funding opportunities.

*"Money is needed for student scholarships,
not administrative development costs."*

Practices/services. Four respondents commented on the need for OCAN to develop and disseminate best practices. One respondent suggested, "Continue the networking of existing college access programs to disseminate best practices. The OCAN program can 'connect' the projects across the state." Another respondent requested resources on early awareness activities, resource center models, and career guidance. One individual suggested that OCAN "identify

Table 9

Respondent Opinions of OCAN's Strength in Performing Four Major Roles

Roles	2006				2005				2004			
	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Strong	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Strong	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Strong
Developing new local member programs	30	4.03	1.00	52.6%	33	3.82	0.81	50.0%	34	3.97	0.83	51.1%
Supporting existing member programs	34	4.03	1.14	63.2%	35	3.71	1.18	50.0%	42	3.10	1.01	36.1%
Influencing state policy around college access	28	3.89	0.88	47.4%	30	3.40	1.16	33.3%	34	3.41	1.02	27.7%
Influencing public attitudes and awareness of college access issues	33	3.55	0.87	47.3%	29	3.10	1.08	19.0%	34	3.12	1.01	25.6%

Note: The "don't know" response option was excluded from the numbers of responses depicted here. All items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very weak) to 5 (very strong). Strength percentages were based on responses of 4 or higher.

Table 10

Perceived Helpfulness of Potential Training Topics OCAN Could Provide to Local Member Program Boards and Advisory Committees

Potential Training	2006				2005				2004			
	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Helpful	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Helpful	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	% Helpful
Fund-raising	33	4.30	1.16	65.8%	38	4.05	1.31	61.9%	43	3.88	1.24	63.8%
Strategic planning	32	3.72	1.35	50.0%	38	3.34	1.32	50.0%	41	3.41	1.22	51.1%
Nonprofit legal issues (e.g., incorporation)	34	3.53	1.33	47.4%	38	3.13	1.42	35.7%	42	2.81	1.38	31.9%
New board member orientation materials	33	3.55	1.52	50.0%	38	3.00	1.69	35.8%	40	3.10	1.17	31.9%
Operations	34	3.41	1.42	50.0%	37	3.41	1.44	45.3%	42	3.26	1.25	40.3%
Board development	35	3.23	1.68	50.0%	37	2.92	1.53	30.9%	40	2.95	1.24	27.6%
Personnel issues	34	3.15	1.46	47.4%	37	3.03	1.52	30.9%	42	2.95	1.15	23.4%
Resource management (e.g., budgeting)	34	2.88	1.41	34.3%	37	3.08	1.28	35.7%	41	3.17	1.22	38.3%

Note: The "don't know" response option was excluded from the numbers of responses depicted here. All items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not helpful) to 5 (very helpful). Helpful percentages were based on responses of 4 or higher.

sustaining activities in order of importance or in order of timing ” An additional respondent recommended that OCAN “make better use of the expertise within local college access programs ” The respondent added, “OCAN does not have to meet the needs of every program, but it can determine if one of the members would be able to meet those needs and contract with them to provide the services rather than hire staff at the state level ”

Professional development. Three respondents offered suggestions for future professional development workshops that OCAN could provide to member programs. Two respondents (from the same program) recommended that OCAN provide training on financial aid and advising. Another respondent cited professional development needs on the following topics: fund-raising, managing scholarships, soliciting volunteers, and college fairs.

“Continue the networking of existing college access programs to disseminate best practices.”

Newly established member programs. Two respondents (from the same program) requested specialized help from OCAN for new, start-up programs and programs with a small number of staff members. These respondents suggested that OCAN provide frequent, personal contact, “possibly once a month,” to new programs or those “struggling programs with new personnel ” In addition, OCAN could assist member programs by providing guidelines for local boards of directors regarding their responsibilities.

Other needs. Aside from the aforementioned needs, there was much variability among the needs reported by member programs. The following bulleted items present direct comments from respondents:

- Recognize and embrace the diversity of programs, rather than trying to have every program look the same. The “Seal of Excellence” is an example of pushing all programs to provide the same set of services. If that is important, then provide the funds to do so.
- In response to [board and advisory committee trainings], OCAN should contract with local organizations to bring these topics to member [programs]. Survey members to find out the five topics they want addressed each year.
- Merging of college access activities with college admissions offices would be very useful.
- Pre-produced radio spots that could be personalized and aired on local radio.
- Develop and maintain a scholarship database.
- Education and awareness campaigns to school principals and district superintendents.

OCAN Staff Interviews

The executive director, associate director, assistant director of program development, and executive assistant/office manager were interviewed in June 2006. They answered a series of 12 open-ended questions about OCAN. Their responses follow, organized by theme.

Staff Time and Duties at OCAN

The length of employment for OCAN staff members ranges from 5 months to more than 3 years. One of the staff members has been with OCAN for 3 years and 2 months. Two staff members have been with OCAN approximately 18 months, and the remaining staff member joined OCAN in January 2006.

The executive assistant/office manager performs tasks related to general office management, including accounting, communications, and Web site development and maintenance. The executive assistant helps the assistant director of program development coordinate professional development workshops. In addition, the executive assistant has assisted with the development of the governance manual for OCAN's board of directors, and is currently assisting on a member services manual.

The assistant director of program development reported a primary responsibility to "assure that the technical assistance plan is designed and executed to better meet the needs of programs." Duties associated with this responsibility include evaluating the needs of individual programs and using this information to design professional development workshops. In addition, the assistant director of program development reported attending various meetings and conferences to network with other organizations.

The associate director has myriad duties, but responses are limited to three main functions. Much of the associate director's focus was on coordinating the OCAN annual conference, which includes bringing together OCAN partners in addition to planning speakers and educational sessions. The associate director also reported being involved in various aspects of marketing. This responsibility included working with materials created to help members promote college access in OCAN programs, such as the magazine *College 101* for seniors. The third duty of the associate director included working one-on-one with members of OCAN.

The executive director reported mainly serving in a managerial role, dedicating a large percentage of time to administrative tasks. The executive director described responsibilities such as managing OCAN staff, guiding strategic goals and objectives, budget tracking, and overseeing consultants. In addition, the executive director reported providing hands-on technical assistance to sites when needed.

Nurturing New College Access Programs

Staff members reported the development of two new programs within the last several months (evaluation question 1d). Similar to 2005, OCAN staff members reported focusing their efforts on providing quality support to both new and old programs rather than developing new programs. One staff member described the efforts over the past year to develop and execute "a set of principles of good practice for college access that serve as a guideline for new college access programs," which was defined as "something that was really missing from our [OCAN's]

work ” In addition, OCAN has engaged in a variety of activities that heavily focus on assisting and supporting new member programs but also benefit established programs

OCAN's in-person visits involve meeting with the member program's leadership and board members to identify and discuss program needs, in addition to providing technical assistance.

One way OCAN provided assistance to new member programs was through in-person staff support. These in-person visits involved meeting with the member program's leadership and board members to identify and discuss program needs, in addition to providing technical assistance. All staff members acknowledged the effectiveness of providing site visits to newer programs. Comments from staff members emphasized the importance of visiting sites to understand their individual needs and ensure that newer programs have adequate training with OCAN's resources.

Professional development workshops are another way OCAN provides assistance to new member programs. One staff member reported OCAN to have offered “intensive professional development [and] technical assistance this year at the state level and regional level.” As in 2005, several staff members commented that the professional development sessions held during the preceding year primarily benefited new programs because their staffs, unlike staff members from older programs, consistently attended the workshops.

In addition, OCAN provides various tools to member programs. One such resource that was newly implemented in 2005 was the Member Advisory Council (MAC). One staff member commented on the effectiveness of engaging new programs through the MAC, stating this resource has “given members, especially newer members, an opportunity to network with more established members.” In addition, two other resources offered by OCAN this year were an advisory service guidebook, available in late August, and the Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) system implemented in November 2005.

When asked how effective OCAN has been in nurturing the growth of new college access programs, responses from staff were consistent. Staff members agreed that the needs of newer programs were recognized and addressed via the access to and distribution of resources, site visits, and professional development workshops. Staff members described OCAN's goal as placing a great emphasis on providing individualized support to new programs based on their needs. One staff member commented, “We've been responsive and very good because we have just a few [newer programs], so we have the opportunity to place more time with those people.” All staff members reported the importance and success of providing frequent contact with newer programs to ensure their needs are continuously addressed.

OCAN continues to maintain its focus on sustainability by developing principles of good practice that serve as a guideline for new college access programs.

In 2004, OCAN provided assistance to programs in the planning stage (predevelopment programs) while also assisting newer and more established member programs. In 2005, OCAN began to focus its efforts with newer member programs on issues of sustainability by providing technical assistance, professional development, and resources related to sustainability. This year OCAN maintained this focus by continuing these activities, in addition to developing principles of good practice that serve as a guideline for new college access programs. These principles will

help ensure that all new programs receive high-quality support during and following their development. Consistent with 2005, OCAN staff members were confident that services provided to newly established access programs in 2006 have been generally effective.

Assisting Existing College Access Programs

Compared to 2004, OCAN has expanded services to existing member programs over the past two years (evaluation question 1d). As in 2005, many of the services provided to existing college access programs during 2006 were the same as those provided to new college access programs. Such services included professional development sessions, marketing and promotional materials, online resources (e.g., Building Blocks), and other resources (e.g., advisory services handbook). In addition, this past year Invest in Success grants were available to support existing programs along with Best Practice grants that were made available to all programs, whether newly created or well established. One staff member commented on the benefits of making Best Practice grants available to all program levels, stating, "Through that program-replication process, even established programs were replicating, using [Best Practice] grant monies to replicate successful programs that new programs had designed."

Over the past year OCAN has also been successful in forming a Member Advisory Council to assist both established and new college access programs. All staff members were in agreement that the new council provided an effective way for directors to voice program needs to OCAN staff. One staff member commented on feedback from past evaluations, stating, "The biggest thing that our members found is that they weren't necessarily getting to have enough of a voice in the work of OCAN as a network," thus emphasizing the important role of the council. In addition, member program feedback also played a central role in the modification of the October 2006 OCAN conference. One staff member reported that OCAN is currently in the process of forming three tracks (practitioner, leadership, and community engagement), based on feedback received from last year's conference.

Staff members also reported that implementation of several other programs in the past year had increased the effectiveness of OCAN in supporting established programs. One such example was the implementation of "check-in calls" to address established programs' individual needs. In addition, a new focus on site visits to established programs has contributed to more successfully meeting these needs. Two staff members also commented on the positive effects the principles of good practice have had, providing newer programs with a "guide" to understanding what they should hope to achieve based on established programs' successes. Another staff member expanded on the importance of standards, commenting on the use of WEST (Web-Enabled Student Tracking) to help new and established programs keep student data that have been requested by funding organizations. Another staff member reported that OCAN has engaged established programs more frequently by requesting their assistance with professional development workshops related to their areas of strength.

Staff members generally agreed that OCAN has been more effective in assisting established college access programs this past year than in any previous year. Several staff members commented on the small staff of professionals, with one staff member noting,

I think that if OCAN can grow with professional staff here as an organization a little bit, [then] I think we could do an even better job of [being effective], but I think we've done better than in the

past and I think that we could still strive to be more efficient and engaging

Another staff member commented on OCAN's effectiveness at assisting established college access programs, "New programs are always going to get more from us because some of these established programs predated OCAN and it is really hard to meet all of their needs where they're really sophisticated, but at the same time I think we've tried to balance it out, so I would say we've been effective this year "

Staff members were in agreement that OCAN has been more effective in assisting established college access programs this past year than in any other previous year.

One staff member noted that the needs of college access programs differ by program age. This staff member commented on the frequency of contact with OCAN: "I think the newer programs are those who we hear from the most about what their needs are in terms of professional development and technical assistance, and as a result we have designed workshops and put together resources to help them."

Over the past three years, OCAN has transitioned from providing similar services to all member programs to offering tailored services. In contrast to responses in 2005, OCAN staff members consistently reported that services offered this year were directed more successfully at both existing and new member programs than in any previous year. Several staff members commented that while newer programs may get more direct attention than older programs, there has also been a large effort to meet the needs of more established programs. Staff members reported that this effort has relied on collecting feedback from program members through the Member Advisory Council, check-in calls with programs, and site visits. In addition, several staff members commented on the effectiveness of services despite the small number of OCAN personnel.

Staff Perceptions of OCAN's Effectiveness at Leveraging Resources

When asked about OCAN's effectiveness at leveraging public and private resources in support of college access programs in Ohio, staff members agreed that OCAN has been more successful in raising public funds than private funds (evaluation question 4a). Several staff members praised OCAN's ability to leverage public funds. One staff member said,

During a really tight budget period we were able to receive state funding; we were instrumental in the state of Ohio receiving a major federal grant, the GEAR UP grant, and OCAN, as an organization, is completely self-sustaining as a result of governmental public funding.

In contrast, staff members held less positive opinions about OCAN's effectiveness with leveraging private funds. Three staff members agreed that the majority of funds sought by OCAN were from the state of Ohio. In addition, these staff members commented on the potential to receive more private funds if more time is allocated to pursuing these relationships. One staff member commented that the lack of focus in attaining private funds is partially attributable to a need to address concerns from program members that OCAN would be competing for their funds. This staff member stated,

We really want to sit down as a result of the Member Advisory Council with the members and talk with [program members] about OCAN's potential for going after private dollars and how that can benefit them, and I think through showing them through the amount of grant dollars that are going through OCAN to them, they've been more receptive to that idea.

Several staff members commented on OCAN's push to focus more on attaining private funds. One staffer noted that OCAN plans to hire a new employee with fund-raising experience as a strategic move to fill any "possible holes" in this domain. Another staff member commented on OCAN's recent success at securing private funds, stating,

We've had a couple pretty good private supporters, more specifically KnowledgeWorks and Student Loan Funding and now Sallie Mae who owns Student Loan Funding is sponsoring a conference and sponsoring retention dollars so we can produce grants and planning dollars and things like that.

In 2004, staff members commented that OCAN had been successful at leveraging both public and private resources. As in 2005, however, staff members in 2006 were less positive about OCAN's success in leveraging private resources. Responses for 2006, however, differed from 2005 in that most staff members were optimistic regarding obtaining private funds if more focus is given to this area.

Staff Perceptions of OCAN's Viability

All four staff members agreed that OCAN would remain a viable organization throughout the next decade. Two of the staff members focused on OCAN's viability being linked to evolving to meet different and new needs over time. One staff member stated,

I think the organization OCAN will continue to be effective and will continue to evolve because we're still a young organization and I think that as far as our viability now, compared to a decade from now, I think the influence will be the same. I think maybe the focus will be a little different. It [focus] might be either leveraging awareness to access or being an advocate for those people who are yet to be served.

A second staff member commented that OCAN staff members will be looking at the specifics of similar programs for direction on how to best create a viable organization over the next year. Another staff member described one reason for OCAN's viability this way:

I don't think that the state of Ohio's priorities around higher education are going to change anytime soon and I think the legislature feels very strongly that OCAN's playing a role in trying to decrease the educational deficit in the state of Ohio, so I do see OCAN playing an ongoing role.

A fourth staff member reported believing that OCAN's viability will depend on the continual improvement of its services.

As in 2004 and 2005 staff members in 2006 were optimistic that OCAN would remain a viable organization throughout the next decade. The need for OCAN's current and projected services resurfaced as the primary impetus for sustaining OCAN as an organization.

Staff Perceptions of OCAN's Effectiveness at Influencing Public Opinion

When asked how OCAN increases public awareness or influences public opinion about college access (evaluation questions 3b and 3c), 3 of the 4 staff members talked about the marketing materials offered to member programs. These staff members referred to the development and distribution of these materials as "phase one" and noted that the materials are intended to raise public awareness of local member program services, rather than to promote OCAN as an organization. Said one staff member, "OCAN has given the local communities the tools to increase their local public awareness and public opinion. . . I think that's our most important role and we've done those tools through marketing materials that we put together a year ago." A second staff member commented, "In the last 18 months we've developed marketing materials allowing individual programs within their communities to market themselves, which is the way Ohio works, that's the way you do it."

Several staff members also spoke about phase two of OCAN's plan to increase public awareness and influence public opinion about college access. Phase two was described as a more "in your face" method that includes a statewide advertising campaign. Two staff members discussed OCAN's collaboration with the Ohio Board of Regents to form statewide campaigns to promote college access. Both staffers emphasized the importance of working with this organization during the development phase of a statewide campaign and did not offer any thoughts as to when the campaign may be implemented. In addition, another staff member spoke about extending phase two to include the eight Lighthouse sites. The staff member stated,

[In] the eight counties where we're [OCAN] doing GEAR UP the goal is that the Lighthouse will reach out to communities where GEAR UP funds aren't being spent but the principals and the community members around will say, "Gosh, there are exciting things going on" . . . so there's been some effort through GEAR UP grants and Board of Regents

Several staff members also spoke about OCAN's collaboration with Great Lakes Publishing Company on the *College 101* magazine as a tool to promote the importance of college and the resources available to students. *College 101* is a guide to Ohio's colleges and universities and will be distributed biyearly, in September and in January, to college access advisors and counselors in the high schools. In addition, the magazine will be available at college-preparation-related events, such as College Bowl Sunday and can be ordered by schools. The magazine will also be available on newsstands for \$3.50. One staff member described the magazine as

a resource for students and families. Kind of a one-stop publication that will have a Web site that they can go to as well that will be a good resource to not only increase public awareness [and] tie education to economic development in a very user-friendly way for this particular audience but also gives students resources. The good thing about having OCAN as kind of a

distribution method is to give college access advisors kind of a tool to work with students and families. . . It's a magazine that I think is a really good piece of our marketing work that we're doing

Other methods by which OCAN has worked to increase public awareness about college access include making presentations at state and national conferences, partnering with federal college access programs, and speaking to reporters from newspapers and other publications.

When staff members were asked how effective OCAN has been at influencing public opinion or increasing public awareness about college access, they responded that they felt OCAN to be somewhat effective. One staff member felt OCAN's effectiveness scored a 5 on a scale of 1 to 10. Another staff member agreed that OCAN has definitely increased public awareness, but said there is room for improvement.

In 2004, OCAN focused on influencing public opinion about college access and increasing public awareness about OCAN. However, as in 2005, OCAN has focused marketing efforts on assisting local access programs in their communities versus promoting OCAN. Staff members believe that the marketing materials provided to local member programs will aid OCAN's mission to spread awareness of college access initiatives. In addition, responses in 2006 indicate a movement toward a second phase of marketing, which will focus more on increasing statewide awareness.

OCAN's Marketing Plan:	
Phase 1—	raise awareness of local member program services
Phase 2—	increase statewide awareness of college access

Staff Perceptions of OCAN's Effectiveness at Influencing Policy

While one staff member could not comment on how OCAN has used its experience and expertise to engage in activities aimed at influencing policy decisions over the past year (evaluation question 3d), three staff members focused their responses on OCAN's attempts to increase awareness of its program and services at the state level. Two staff members reported on the success of a policy breakfast at the statehouse during last year's OCAN conference. One staffer stated,

Inviting the chairs of the education committees from both the senate and the house to talk with our members and explain where they were on some issues and then [having] our members respond and ask questions and talk about what they're seeing in the field, those are the types of things we have done

In addition, two staff members spoke about OCAN's relationships with the mayor and a gubernatorial candidate. One staffer spoke about the inclusion of OCAN in a gubernatorial candidate's education plan, thus supporting the "evident" presence of OCAN at the state level. Moreover, three staff members commented on OCAN's successes at talking directly with legislators to increase awareness of the services OCAN and member programs provide. One staff member also remarked on OCAN's success this past year at working with member programs to facilitate communication with policymakers in their respective regions. OCAN also plans to hold another policy meeting with a panel of legislators. One staff member suggested that holding this meeting was difficult during an election year but stated "We've been around for

a few years now so we're coming out [as] great allies with the governor's office so that helps open doors for us "

Another way in which OCAN has influenced policy decisions is having its "voice" heard at the state level. One staff member explained that there has been a big effort to develop a "rigorous core curriculum" for the state of Ohio and stated, "OCAN has sent a letter to the governor's office stating why our members think this is important to do "

"The chair of the Senate education committee talks about OCAN all the time."

When staff members were asked about the effectiveness of these efforts over the past year, three staff members agreed that OCAN has been effective at some level. One staff member said, "Actually I think they have been obviously effective because the chair of the senate education committee talks about OCAN all the time," an indication of substantial success. A second staffer echoed this opinion and offered as evidence the frequent discussion of OCAN's work by policymakers and legislators at national meetings and events.

Notably, two staff members commented on their uncertainty as to whether OCAN's role should include influencing policy and public opinion. One staff member suggested that OCAN should be more of a "clearinghouse of information" to individuals and programs. A second staff member reported feeling that OCAN has had very little involvement in policy decisions over the past year. This same staff member emphasized a need for OCAN and its Member Advisory Council to discuss OCAN's role in policy and for what programs OCAN should be advocating. Because the majority of member programs are now considered to be "very strong," this staff member envisions OCAN dedicating more focus to policy issues in the upcoming years.

As in 2004 and 2005, staff members in 2006 reported that OCAN has been able to effectively influence policy decisions. While staff agreed that there is always room for improvement, OCAN's involvement in increasing awareness of its program and services by interacting with policymakers and legislators, in addition to having its voice heard on several important state education topics, has been a notable success for enhancing college access awareness. Unlike in 2005, half of the staff members in 2006 expressed concerns regarding the role OCAN should and will play in influencing policy decisions in the upcoming years.

Staff Perceptions of OCAN's Successes

Staff reported that OCAN has achieved many successes over the past year. The following list summarizes staff comments related to each success, as well as what they perceive to be respective contributing factors to that success:

- **OCAN conference.** One staff member said, "I think our biggest success is we had the most successful conference ever in the fall. The most people, great evaluations. I think it was actually a national-caliber conference in terms of the content and information that we had there and I think that many people [who] attended would agree." This same staff member attributed this and other OCAN successes to "really focused staff" in addition to the use of OCAN's strategic plan to guide work.
- **Professional development.** One staff member commented on the redesign of OCAN's technical assistance plan of professional development, stating it has "been a

huge win” for OCAN. A second staff member attributed this success to the assistant director of program development, who did a “great job with professional development.”

- **Separation from NCAN, KnowledgeWorks, and the Board of Regents.** “We’ve always been aligned since [OCAN’s] inception with KnowledgeWorks, the Board of Regents, and NCAN and I think for the first time we’re very separate from each of those,” one staffer said. (No specific contributing factors were provided for this success.)
- **Retention.** “We’re [OCAN] looking at retention, leveraging dollars for a retention grant, I think that’s been a big win for us and I think it’s drawn more attention to OCAN,” said one staff person. Another staff person agreed with the importance of this success and remarked on OCAN’s ability to secure funding from Sallie Mae to support retention grants for college access programs to work with higher education institutions. One staff member attributed this success to staff members’ focus on retention-related issues.
- **Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST).** Two staff members thought that the implementation of WEST has been a significant success for OCAN over the last year. One staff member stated, “We now have a way programs can justify their work which can go back to legislators and show relevance, show the importance of the work.” A second staff member agreed, stating, “There are probably close to 15 programs using WEST daily at this point, which is a huge success for us.” One staff member attributed the success of implementing WEST to “more emphasis on data.”
- **Full-time staff.** One staff member stated, “I think having staff that are full-time OCAN has been a huge win for OCAN.” Another staff member commented on OCAN’s 100% increase in staff since last November. One staffer attributed the increase in full-time staff to the OCAN/NCAN split, stating that the highly paid NCAN staff were a strain on OCAN’s smaller budget. This same staffer went on to emphasize the importance of having full-time employees so staff could dedicate their time and focus to one organization instead of splitting their attention between two.
- **Strategic plan.** Several staff members commented on OCAN’s success in following the strategic plan, which included putting standards in place. One staffer reflected on the implementation of standards, stating, “It was good to come down and really help guide the work of OCAN members and what they need to be doing as part of their nonprofit operations as well as the appropriate programmatic aspects of their programs.”

Two staffers added that the dedication and hard work of staff contributed to OCAN’s successes over the past year. One staff member explained that success was related to “the staff taking into account what needs to be done and then getting feedback from our membership.”

As in 2005, staff members identified the separation of OCAN from other organizations, such as NCAN, as a continuing success in 2006. In addition, in 2006 staff members reported OCAN’s accomplishments to include several organizational successes, such as increasing full-time staff, implementation of new programs, and continual modification of OCAN’s current and

future goals. The engagement of OCAN's board of directors was a success noted in 2004, but did not surface in the following two years.

Staff Perceptions of OCAN's Challenges

Three of the four staff members described multiple challenges OCAN has faced while trying to achieve its goals over the years. The final staff member restricted his or her answer to only one domain.

Three staff members discussed issues related to the development and implementation of WEST when discussing challenges OCAN continues to face. One staff member stated, "One of the programmatic challenges that will always be a challenge despite being [more or] less up and running is tracking students from secondary to postsecondary and making that available." A second staff member said, "I will now say that data collection is our biggest shortcoming and some of that just has to do with the amount of time it takes and the amount of dollars it takes."

A second challenge reported by staff members was the lack of engagement by OCAN's board of directors. One staffer commented, "I think our board is hands-off." This same staff member went on to discuss the need for an OCAN leader with "different skills and interests" that address policy and fund-raising issues. A second staff member said, "I think they [OCAN board] need to be advocates for our work in their day-to-day lives more than some of them may be."

Another challenge identified by staff members was related to securing additional private funds to support OCAN. One staff member commented that a current concern is the heavy reliance on state funds, which have the potential to be cut by the next governor. In addition, another staff member remarked on the improvement in OCAN's attainment of private funds, but concluded by highlighting the need for more work to be done in this area.

A final challenge discussed by two staff members was related to a need for marketing to increase public awareness and the general awareness of OCAN's work at various levels. One staff member talked in detail about the challenges OCAN has faced in developing marketing strategies that are consistent with those of state agencies, such as the Ohio Board of Regents. Another staff member commented on the need to spend more time and focus on building awareness about "OCAN and its importance to the state."

When asked which factors contributed to the identified challenges, staff members discussed several topics. Two staff members mentioned the impact of having limited staffing to address all of OCAN's needs. Another discussed the challenges OCAN staff members have faced from other programs when attempting to implement data tracking procedures. Other staff members remarked on the failure to focus on private funding and increasing public awareness of OCAN's work due to staff members focusing largely on other programmatic areas. In addition, one staff member discussed the difficulties of clarifying the relationship between KnowledgeWorks and OCAN. This staff member commented that, even though KWF still has a large influence on OCAN's priorities, OCAN could benefit from continuing to be weaned off the foundation.

In relation to the above challenges, staff members suggested various methods of managing the challenges. One staff member reported that OCAN is addressing the need to increase private funding by modifying the responsibilities of a vacant job position to include "advocacy, fund-raising, and outreach." In relation to concerns regarding marketing, one staff

member reported the Student Access and Success Coordination Council of Ohio, a group of access professionals from across the state, continues to play a large role in promoting marketing. Finally, one staff member remarked on the need for OCAN to begin taking a more independent role in increasing public awareness, rather than relying on KnowledgeWorks consultants.

In contrast to challenges in 2005, staff members reported current challenges that spanned multiple domains. In 2006, staff members' concerns focused mainly on the need to diversify funding resources, organizational concerns related to the board's level of involvement, increasing public awareness, and the improvement of data tracking procedures. The organizational concerns reported in 2004 and 2005, related to leadership and separation from NCAN, were no longer present in 2006. Instead, perceived challenges pertained more to specific elements of OCAN's current level of functioning and future direction.

Staff Concerns About OCAN's Upcoming Year

Staff members shared several diverse concerns about OCAN for the upcoming year. The following list summarizes staff comments related to each expressed concern:

- **Competing agendas and strategic planning.** One staff member said, "We [OCAN] have so many managers, we have the board of directors, we have the programs we're responsible to, we have the Ohio Board of Regents that we're responsible to... it's just trying to stay focused and carve out a clear direction of OCAN and so I think strategic planning will be a critical need for the next year." A second staff member commented, "Another thing is really seeing where we want to go as an organization as we start our next strategic planning process, so it'll be a challenging time."
- **Economic concerns related to the gubernatorial election.** One staff member commented, "We've had a lot of support from the ex-governor so we need to build that relationship with whoever's elected." A second staff member stated, "I fear that [reallocation of state funds] will continue until our piece of the pie is gone to the point where education is basically defunded in Ohio, especially higher education." Two other staff members remarked on the uncertainty of the upcoming election and agreed it has the potential to impact state funding for OCAN.
- **Staff transition.** Two staff members commented on the impact of one staff member's departure from OCAN. One staff member stated, "Reorganization to fill [this staff member's] spot [is a challenge] because it won't be the exact same position that he's leaving. A lot of things will be reallocated." A second staff member remarked on the importance of figuring out how best to align the duties of the new person with other staff's current work.
- **Staff size.** Several staff commented on the small size of the staff compared to the large amount of work. One staff member said, "I think there is only so much that the three OCAN professional staff can do and I think that sometimes things are going to fall through the cracks... [with] our limited staff." A second staff member commented on the need to prioritize tasks, stating, "We do have a small staff and we all work very hard but I think it's just making sure that we allocate the work well and wisely."

- **Data collection.** One staff member commented on the importance and difficulty of collecting data from secondary to postsecondary education. This staff member stated, "But that's a concern for me in the next year. . . just getting the data we need to prove that these things work. And . . . they may not work, in which case we'll have to decide what we're going to do." This staff member discussed the difficulties in obtaining these data due to "roadblocks" put up by the Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Board of Regents.⁴

Concerns about OCAN's future over the past three years were often similar. These concerns included issues pertaining to funding, the successful implementation of a data tracking system (WEST), and competing agendas with other organizations. In addition, in 2006 staff reported new concerns related to the uncertainty of the gubernatorial election, transitioning of staff, and small staff size. Only one concern, financial resources, was reported again and again over the 3-year evaluation. Also, staff members' concern about implementing the strategic plan in 2004 changed to a feeling of a success in 2006.

Staff Comments About OCAN

When asked if they had any other comments about OCAN to share, staff members praised the organization's past and present work using words such as "valuable, responsive, and respected." One staff member said, "I think the level of respect that's given to the organization from the programs has really increased." Another staff member commented, "I would say that OCAN is a really valuable organization to the state of Ohio," thus highlighting the importance of its work. In terms of leadership, a third staff member remarked, "I think the leadership is very strong. They're not afraid of taking on new projects or ideas or making something happen, which I think is necessary in a nonprofit." The last staff member added, "It's a great staff, we're a great team; lots of different skill sets and personalities but I think we all work well together."

While staff members remain optimistic about the current and future direction of OCAN's work, one staff member commented on the existing need at the state level for a vision for higher education to be developed. This staff member stated, "I think OCAN is a really valuable organization, but we do have to rely on some things to come together at the state level. We [OCAN] can provide insight but that's pretty much all we can do." A second staff member commented on the importance of the evaluation process in OCAN's continual development, stating, "I've enjoyed the evaluation process because I think we have learned from this and it has really moved our work forward with getting the reports and feedback and understanding where the holes are and where the gaps are."

⁴ It is not clear whether the "roadblocks" originate from the state bureaucracies or from federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations.

Case Study Summaries

Because OCAN is an intermediary support organization, its success and impact can best be measured by examining the programs it supports (evaluation questions 1a through 1d). The following case study summaries describe the success and limitations of college access programs in providing college access services to Ohioans. The first summary examines all five case study programs as they relate to OCAN's three goals of program development, advocacy, and sustainability. The following two summaries involved case studies of the longitudinal sites and were conducted during the final year of the evaluation (see Appendix H for the complete reports of these studies). The final three case studies were conducted during the second year of the evaluation (see Chadwick, Wood, Hughes, & Huang, 2005 for the full case study reports).

Summary of Program Case Studies

Two programs (CEO and LEAF) that had been visited in 2004 were revisited in late 2005/early 2006. Three other programs (CYC, Ironton, and Lima) were visited once during the 2004-2005 school year. The following summary describes the case study programs as they relate to OCAN's three goals of program development, advocacy, and sustainability.

Program background. Information collected on the communities served by the five case study programs indicates that the programs were serving their target demographic. Although the five member programs served their own unique communities, they all served individuals of similar characteristics: high school seniors from low to middle socioeconomic backgrounds. In terms of ethnicity, two programs (Lima and CYC) served a predominantly Black population and the remaining three served a White population. Two programs (Lima and Ironton) served 1 high school in the surrounding area; CYC served 5 high schools; CEO served 7 high schools; and LEAF served 17 high schools from two counties.

Member programs often stated that the number of staff members limited the amount of services they were able to provide. The programs varied in number of employed staff members. Three programs (CYC, Ironton, and Lima) had 2 or fewer staff members, CEO reported 8 staff members, and LEAF had 12 staff members. It is important to note that the latter two programs served the greatest number of high schools among the five programs. In addition, each of the five programs reported having either a board or advisory committee.

Program development. According to information collected during member program site visits, OCAN has been successful in its goal of program development, which focuses on providing valued services to member organizations to ensure college access and success. OCAN has reached this goal by providing a student tracking database, trainings and technical assistance, and service manuals, as well as by identifying best practices among college access services.

OCAN member programs provide a variety of services related to college access. All five programs reported offering similar services in their local communities, with financial aid counseling being the service provided most often. Other similar services included parental advising and early awareness activities. At the time of each site visit, three (CEO, Ironton, and LEAF) of the five programs provided last dollar grants; one (Lima) of the remaining two programs intended to provide these grants in the school year following the site visit; and one

(CYC) did not plan to offer them. Other services that were provided included campus visits, college entrance exam preparation, and career exploration opportunities

OCAN seems to have effectively communicated the need for programs to engage in data collection and outcome measurement. In terms of recording participant information, two (CEO and CYC) of the five programs maintained paper records of their interactions with service users. Two (Ironton and Lima) other programs reported maintaining participant information electronically. And one program (LEAF) maintained records both on paper and electronically. Typically, the programs collected information on participants' status in school (e.g., grade level, grade point average), contact information, general interests, and intentions to pursue postsecondary education. Although no programs collected outcome measures at the time of each site visit, all acknowledged the need for collecting such outcome data and reported their intentions to track participants following high school graduation. While two programs (Ironton and CYC) did not report how they intended to track these data, two other programs (CEO and Lima) expected to implement OCAN's Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database the following year. The remaining program (LEAF) was currently developing its own system to measure program outcomes. The longitudinal case study sites (LEAF and CEO) made progress toward more sophisticated data tracking because of OCAN's efforts to focus member programs on outcomes tracking. Across the five programs, staff and board or council members reiterated the challenge of collecting outcome data due to confidentiality laws that protect student identification.

The longitudinal case study sites (LEAF and CEO) made progress toward more sophisticated data tracking because of OCAN's efforts to focus member programs on outcomes tracking.

OCAN's professional development opportunities have been well attended by program staff over the past three years. Program staff members reported receiving useful information from the workshops and conferences offered by OCAN. At least one staff member from each of the five member programs had attended a professional development workshop and annual conference provided by OCAN. Typically, however, only one or two staff members from each program regularly attended the workshops and conferences. A few programs reported that their staff members were unable to take time away from their advisory duties to attend these professional development opportunities, and another program reported attending trainings provided by an organization that was geographically closer to its location. This program collaborated with OCAN and has delivered professional development to other member programs, which supports OCAN's role as a network among college access programs.

Advocacy Information from the five case studies suggests that OCAN is achieving its advocacy goal of becoming the recognized leader of college access in Ohio by aligning resources to promote the work and success of OCAN and its members.

In terms of advocating college access in local communities, the five member programs have been effective in communicating their purpose to education personnel in their surrounding service area. According to surveys completed by district superintendents, school principals, and guidance counselors, education personnel were aware of the services provided by their local college access program. The majority of education personnel were familiar with the services provided by their local access programs and their awareness of these services slightly increased across the 3-year evaluation for the longitudinal case study sites (CEO and LEAF). In addition,

education personnel's perceptions of program *effectiveness* slightly increased over the past three years for one longitudinal site (CEO), but remained the same level of effectiveness for LEAF

Depending on the existence of program staff in the schools, education personnel's contact with college access advisors varied across the member programs. For instance, the majority of education personnel associated with the Lima program reported either no contact or infrequent contact with program staff; this program did not have advisors located at the local high school during the time of the site visit. However, contact between the program advisors and the education professionals increased across the 3-year evaluation for the longitudinal case study programs. The percentage of education professionals having at least weekly contact with CEO advisors increased by 20% from early 2004 (63%) to late 2005 (83%). In addition, the percentage of education professionals having at least weekly contact with LEAF advisors increased by 15% from early 2004 (59%) to early 2006 (74%). Notably, contact seems to increase as the ratio of advisors to schools becomes smaller across the programs, most likely because advisors are then able to spend more time at each school.

Across all five programs, staff and board or council members were mixed in their knowledge of OCAN's mission or its purpose. These individuals from two of the five programs (LEAF and Ironton) expressed little understanding of OCAN's role in college access. The majority of staff and board members from two programs (CEO and Lima) reported a general understanding of OCAN's mission. In addition, across all five programs, understanding of the relationship among OBR, OCAN, and KWF was limited.

The majority of education professionals across the five programs believed that it was important to have an organization "champion the cause" of college access in Ohio. Although the majority of education professionals were aware of local access program services, their awareness of OCAN varied across the programs. For CEO, 82% of education professionals were somewhat or very familiar with OCAN in 2004, compared to 22% of education professionals associated with the LEAF program; when measured during the second site visit, these percentages remained approximately the same. Although awareness of OCAN among the education professionals seemed sporadic, perceptions of the network's effectiveness in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans were more consistent. Of the professionals who were at least somewhat familiar with OCAN, most reported that it was performing its functions effectively. An average of 27% of education professionals from the other three programs reported being somewhat familiar with OCAN; their ratings of OCAN ranged from not at all effective to fairly effective.

Sustainability. According to data collected across the five case study programs, OCAN has progressed toward its goal of sustainability for its member programs. Although the five case study programs were individually different and had varying forms of resources, all had seemed to have established themselves with a firm foundation in their respective communities.

Through OCAN's many funding opportunities, the five member programs have received some amount of funding for various program activities over the past three years. Some of these monies have helped the case study programs to replicate best practices, distribute last dollar grants, and conduct professional development seminars.

In efforts to accomplish one strategy of OCAN's sustainability goal, a professional development workshop was provided to member programs to help establish prominent and effective board leadership. Although no board or council members from the case study programs

reported having attended a training offered by OCAN, their suggestions and feedback helped OCAN to identify the needs of member program boards of directors and develop a professional development workshop that was held in early 2006

The majority of board or council members were optimistic that their programs would be sustainable over the next three years.

The majority of staff and board members from the five case study programs agreed that their programs were not capable of serving more participants at its current funding levels. Almost all of these individuals believed that additional funding was essential to expanding their program services. However, according to board or council members from the five case study programs, almost all who were interviewed were optimistic that their programs would be sustainable over the next three years. At their program's current funding levels, individuals from the five case study programs were confident that their programs would continue to provide college access services to their surrounding communities.

Clermont Educational Opportunities

Clermont Educational Opportunities (CEO), an OCAN member program, was selected as one of two longitudinal program case study sites. Edvantia evaluators visited the program in early 2004 and late 2005 to examine the program's activities and operations.

Description of methodology. Edvantia evaluators interviewed staff and council members of the Clermont Educational Opportunities (CEO) program in April 2004 and December 2005. In 2004, interviews were conducted, either in person or by telephone, with all 5 staff members and 6 members of CEO's advisory council. In 2005, 5 staff members, including the executive director, program manager, and 3 advisors, plus 4 members of CEO's advisory council, were interviewed. Length of employment with CEO for staff members interviewed in 2005 ranged from 8 to 45 months. The 4 council members had been involved for a minimum of 2 years.

In addition to conducting interviews with council and staff members, Edvantia researchers distributed a 12-item survey about the awareness of, and satisfaction with, CEO and OCAN. Surveys were mailed to 15 education personnel working at sites currently served by CEO. Of the 12 surveys returned, respondents included 1 superintendent, 4 principals, and 6 guidance counselors; 1 respondent did not identify his or her role.

Program context. The 2000 U.S. census reported the total population of Clermont County to be 177,977. The median age of Clermont County residents was 34.8 years, slightly younger than the median age for the state of Ohio (36.2 years). The majority of the population was White, non-Hispanic (96.6%). No race/ethnicity other than White exceeded 1% of the county's population. Clermont County can be considered economically advantaged in comparison to statewide economic figures; the median household income for Clermont (\$49,386) exceeds Ohio's median household income (\$40,956). Clermont County can be seen as two distinct territories. The eastern portion of the county is considered more rural, and residents in this area often own family-run businesses. The western portion is considered more suburban, and adult residents often have higher educations.

Clermont County has 46 public schools, including 10 high schools. For the past 2 years, CEO has served 7 schools within Clermont County; 2 high schools stopped using CEO's advising services and 2 new high schools were added. CEO currently serves the following high schools: Williamsburg, Clermont Northeastern, Glen Este, and Amelia. CEO also serves the following career and technical education centers: Scarlet Oaks, Diamond Oaks, and Live Oaks. Live Oaks, Williamsburg, Clermont Northeastern, Glen Este, and Amelia have been receiving CEO advisory services for more than 2 years. In addition, CEO has developed a presence in several local libraries. These libraries make brochures and pamphlets available, and the librarians know how to access program-related Web sites.

Although high school seniors are CEO's main service users, CEO also offers the Making it Count program for freshmen and gives several presentations each year for sophomores and juniors. CEO also works with adult GED recipients to provide college information. The majority of students who use CEO's services have traditionally come from the rural and the lower-income populations. A great majority of students who seek CEO's services are first-generation college attendees.

Program history. CEO recently experienced a significant transition with its organizational structure. Initially developed through Clermont 20/20, a leadership development group, CEO gradually became its own 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. However, after being independent for several years, CEO's advisory council decided the program should "come back under the umbrella of Clermont 20/20," ultimately dissolving its standing as a 501(c)(3) organization.

The CEO program has been providing services since 2001. As of 2005, CEO included 7 high schools in Clermont County and six advisors, compared to 7 high schools and five advisors in 2004. The (CEO) program staff is composed of advisors positioned at school sites, a program manager, council members, and an executive director.

Services. Financial aid counseling remains a major focus of advisors. This service is provided mainly to high school juniors and seniors and to parents of students. CEO advisors also assist students by providing last dollar grants and scholarship information. Advisors counsel students on the timelines necessary for successful college application, including testing and general application deadlines. While CEO does not traditionally fund test and college application fees, advisors do assist students in receiving financial assistance from their schools or other sources. In addition, CEO may provide fee waivers to students with significant need. CEO advisors also counsel parents at the school during financial aid nights or at other college nights, and parents are free to contact advisors at any time. Nearly three fourths (72.7%) of education professionals reported that CEO provides parent advising in their schools. Because advisors tailor services to fit each school's needs, they often consult with school guidance counselors. Compared to 2004, CEO now seems to be providing more early awareness activities to high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Various presentations and programs are offered by advisors throughout the school year, and college visits to nearby postsecondary institutions are arranged. Education professionals identified this increase in services, with 55% of education professionals in 2005, almost 10% more than in 2004, aware that CEO advisors provided early awareness activities to their schools.

Although CEO does offer a resource center that serves as a "one-stop shop" to students and adults in Clermont County, CEO advisors and staff noted that because most of their work is

conducted in the schools, there is no need for students to access information at the resource center. In addition to the aforementioned services, CEO has begun to develop resource centers at local libraries. At these resource centers, CEO offers a variety of literature on college access.

CEO received an implementation grant from OCAN to provide a mentoring program at each of the college access sites. One advisor also mentioned the addition of a college reunion program. Still in development, the college reunion program plans to have high school graduates who currently attend postsecondary institutions discuss their college experiences with high school seniors. In a related vein, a few advisors noted that they sometimes advise high school graduates who are interested in postsecondary education.

Data management. As in April 2004, CEO advisors in 2005 maintained paper records of their interactions with students. CEO has not maintained an electronic database; however, the program does plan to use the WEST database developed by OCAN. Because CEO's services are specialized for each school, standard data points are not required and advisors create their own methods of recording interactions, such as a notebook roster or handwritten notes to record student information, including grade point average and college application status. Like maintaining student activity records, collecting student outcome information—for instance, the number of students who apply to college and the number of students who receive scholarships—is also informal for CEO. While some data are collected, the majority of CEO's outcomes are determined by informal reports from students.

Several staff members focused on the financial aspects of outcome data. One staff member stated that to “come back with hard numbers as to what we have done” would greatly assist the program in securing additional funding. In a related vein, a staff member noted that outcome data indirectly affect program sustainability. Because the program depends on continued funding, assessing outcomes will help the program to “show effectiveness” and, in turn, generate new funding resources.

The WEST database would provide CEO with a formalized structure. Because logistics between CEO and the schools are still being fleshed out, a proposed date to start utilizing the database was unknown.

Networking. At the site visits, staff and board members reported good, strong relationships with OCAN and the Greater Cincinnati College Access Network (GCAN). CEO's relationship with GCAN may not be as strong as with OCAN, but staff members often attend trainings that GCAN provides. Staff members did not know about any CEO interactions with KWF or OBR. Like staff members, council members reported good relationships with OCAN and GCAN. While unaware of any contacts during the past two years, council members did report that CEO's relationship with KWF has “diminished since initial funding.”

CEO has maintained positive working relationships with the University of Cincinnati (UC), Clermont 20/20, and local libraries over the past two years. Because CEO is now under the umbrella of the Clermont 20/20 organizational structure, the program maintains frequent, if not daily, contact with the organization. As mentioned earlier, CEO shares staff members with Clermont 20/20. Both staff and council members thought that the relationship between the two organizations was positive and served a collective purpose.

CEO's relationships with local libraries have continued to evolve and strengthen. Staff and council members feel that the recent collaboration with the libraries to develop resource

centers has been very positive. Individuals can also gain access to the Education Career and Opportunity System (ECOS) through the libraries' computers. In addition, staff members report that CEO has a good but sporadic relationship with Student Loan Funding, a student loan lender. Council members stated that CEO maintains peripheral contact with the Chamber of Commerce. In the past, the chamber has provided meeting space for CEO's board of directors. While no specifics were mentioned, one council member stated that the chamber has had recent difficulties, preventing frequent collaborations with area organizations, including CEO. Staff and council members added that no direct contact has been made between CEO and the Ohio Department of Education in the past two years.

Staff members agreed that networking and learning about other college access programs was important to them. CEO maintains close contact with neighboring college access programs. Council members, too, thought that networking and learning about other college access programs was "essential."

Perception of relationships among KWF, OCAN, and OBR. Only the executive director of CEO was asked about the relationships among KWF, OCAN, and OBR. The staff member stated that, while separate entities, the organizations have common goals and their "missions align." The staff member stated, "KWF has invested in OCAN and in college access and made that a priority." This individual added that having an executive from KWF on loan to OCAN is "really critical" because "that's usually the piece that is missing and why state member organizations aren't successful." Council members had limited understanding of the relationships among the three organizations. While most thought the connections were strong, they lacked details.

Awareness of/interactions with OBR/KWF/OCAN. Staff and council members did not seem to be aware of receiving any support, such as professional development or other assistance, from OBR in the past two years. As in 2004, staff and council members in 2005 had a vague understanding of OBR's role in college access. Only one staff member and one council member were able to provide a general understanding of OBR's role in college access.

Similar to OBR, staff and council members were completely unaware of CEO's interactions with KWF in the past two years. Members could not recall if KWF had provided CEO with any training, technical assistance, or other support. Therefore, staff and council members were not able to gauge changes in interactions with KWF. In addition to providing the seed money for access programs, council members described OCAN's basic mission as to serve as a "pivot point" to local member programs. Council members felt that OCAN's main goal was to "improve access for those kids that don't have the right kind of support at home."

CEO's executive director and program manager have sought advice or information from OCAN staff by phone and e-mail in the past two years. Communications between the organizations have focused on use of the WEST database. CEO has sought advice from OCAN regarding the program's organizational structure. OCAN recently hosted a meeting with CEO's executive director and advisory council chair at the OCAN office in Cincinnati. Following the meeting, CEO staff asked OCAN's executive director to attend and speak at CEO's upcoming advisory council meeting. Staff members indicated that they feel comfortable about seeking information or advice from OCAN. Staff members could not think of any ways to improve OCAN staff members' interactions with CEO.

Education personnel awareness of and perceived effectiveness of CEO/OCAN As in 2004, education professionals in 2005 reported high levels of familiarity with CEO's services. Survey responses showed that 66.7% of education professionals at current CEO sites consider themselves very knowledgeable about the services CEO provides to their school, while the remaining respondents report being somewhat knowledgeable. Education professionals in 2005 reported considerably more frequent contact with CEO advisors than did respondents in 2004.

When asked to rate the effectiveness of CEO services in meeting the college access needs of students enrolled in CEO sites on a scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), all survey respondents in 2004 and 2005 reported the highest or second highest rating of effectiveness (2004, $M = 4.4$; 2005, $M = 4.7$).

Of those education personnel who were either very familiar or somewhat familiar with OCAN (2004, 82%; 2005, 83%), most thought it was effective (2004, 33%; 2005, 40%) or very effective (2004, 33%; 2005, 20%) in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans, while a handful (2004, 17%; 2005, 20%) thought it was somewhat effective and a few (2004, 11%; 2005, 20%) did not know.

CEO case study conclusions. During the past two years, CEO has grown to include more sites, advisors, and resource centers. In addition, CEO has aided Clermont 20/20 in developing mentoring programs in each of CEO's college access sites. And CEO continues to shape its services to fit each school, based on identified needs.

While CEO was in a sensitive transition period in 2004, staff and council members hoped that being placed under the umbrella of Clermont 20/20 would increase recognition in the community and provide financial stability. They identified the opportunity for collaborative projects as another benefit of the new partnership. The level of commitment to CEO expressed by the executive director of Clermont 20/20 and the new program manager is a positive reflection of the program's structural rebirth.

The level of commitment to CEO expressed by the executive director of Clermont 20/20 and the new program manager is a positive reflection of the program's structural rebirth.

CEO has experienced considerable gains in the past two years; however, most staff and council members in 2005 were unaware of the relationships among KWF, OBR, and OCAN. OCAN may want to communicate such information to member programs in order to enhance understanding and awareness about their collaborative partnerships.

CEO staff members exhibited both trepidation and excitement about implementing the WEST database for measuring program outcomes. Because current data collection methods include only pen and paper, staff would like to implement a formal, electronic system for recording student interactions and tracking success over time.

OCAN's effectiveness in program development can be supported by CEO's success in providing college access services that assist students in attaining higher education. CEO has taken advantage of OCAN's numerous trainings and technical assistance, and has provided its own trainings to other local access programs. Maintaining tight relationships with other college access programs is important to CEO, as it continually strives to improve by utilizing others' practices that have demonstrated effectiveness.

While continuing to strengthen its services, CEO values the opportunities provided by OCAN. Through CEO, OCAN continues to provide essential services that raise college access awareness to a large population of possible first-generation college attendees, whom CEO is dedicated to helping.

CEO staff, council members, and education personnel continue to lack knowledge about OCAN's effectiveness at influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio. While staff members knew that the program maintains close relationships with area legislators, they were unaware of the relationship between OCAN and OBR.

CEO staff and council members were fairly optimistic that CEO will be able to sustain itself for the next three years. However, in terms of providing services to more students, funding is still a concern.

With OCAN's blessing, CEO's new status as a program of Clermont 20/20 has given staff and board members renewed hope of sustainability. This new structure provides a "home" for CEO, something that staff and board members say was missing in the program's earlier days. Like OCAN and several other college access programs, CEO experienced a significant change in leadership over the past three years. The new leadership structure and recent stability seem to have generated optimism about the program's future, and to have strengthened communications between CEO and OCAN.

Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation

The Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation (LEAF), an OCAN member program, was selected as another longitudinal program case study site. Edvantia evaluators visited the program in 2004 and 2006 to examine the program's activities and operations.

Description of methodology. Edvantia interviewed staff and board members of the Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation (LEAF) in April 2004 and April 2006. In 2004, interviews were conducted, either in person or by telephone, with all 13 staff members and 15 (71%) members of LEAF's board of directors. Interviews were conducted only with board members who had served for more than a year by April 2004; 21 of the 25 board members met the length-of-service requirement for the interviews. In 2006, interviews were conducted with all 11 staff members and 9 (50%) members of LEAF's board of directors; 18 of the 19 board members had served for more than a year by April 2006.

Length of employment with LEAF ranged from 7 months to 9 years for the staff members, with an average of 4.7 years. Length of service for board members was slightly longer, ranging from 1 year to 15 years, with an average of 5.1 years.

In addition to interviews with board and staff members, a 12-item survey about awareness of, and satisfaction with, LEAF and OCAN was distributed to 80 high school counselors, principals, and superintendents in the schools LEAF serves. Of these, 54 (68%) education professionals from 17 school districts returned the survey, including 10 superintendents, 9 principals, 33 guidance counselors, and 2 who did not specify their roles.

Program context. Lake and Geauga counties are located in northeastern Ohio near Cleveland. The 2000 U.S. census reported the total populations of Lake and Geauga counties to be 227,511 and 90,895 respectively. The median age for both counties was a little more than 38.

years, slightly older than the median age in the state of Ohio (36.2 years). White people were the vast majority in Lake (95.4%) and Geauga Counties (97.4%), with African Americans making up 2% of the population in Lake County and a little more than 1.2% of the population in Geauga. Lake County also has a Latino population of about 1.7%; no other races/ethnicities exceed 1% of the population in either county. Both counties are economically advantaged in comparison with statewide economic figures. With a smaller area and a larger population, Lake County is the more densely populated, with roughly 997 people per square mile compared to Geauga County's 225 people per square mile.

Lake and Geauga counties have a combined total of 89 public schools, with 18 high schools in the two counties. LEAF serves 17 high schools within Lake and Geauga counties, compared to 19 in 2004; due to the schools' financial difficulties, LEAF no longer serves 2 schools (1 in Lake County and 1 in Geauga County). Eleven of those schools, 1 parochial and 10 public, lie within Lake County. The remaining 6 schools are in Geauga County. In addition, LEAF maintains a resource center where advisors counsel parents, students, and other community members about financial aid and related college access issues. LEAF staff members occasionally undertake community outreach efforts. Workshops and presentations are offered to adults, student groups, and other groups at the Technology Learning Center in Auburn, where the LEAF office is housed.

Although LEAF offers early awareness services to elementary and middle school students, the majority of people LEAF serves are high school seniors. Adult student advising and parent advising are also offered by LEAF.

A large number of LEAF service users are the first people in their families to attend college. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 21.5% of the Lake County population over the age of 25 held a bachelor's degree or higher. A total of 31.7% of the Geauga County population over the age of 25 held a bachelor's degree or higher in 2000.

Program history. Incorporated in 1989, LEAF began delivering services during the 1990-1991 school year. Because staff and board members felt that the physical space that housed LEAF was insufficient in size, the program moved its offices in October 2004 to the Technology Learning Center in Auburn, Ohio. The center provides more space for staff workstations and offers multiple classrooms; a boardroom; and other spaces for conducting group presentations, staff trainings, and workshops. LEAF can also take advantage of the technological capabilities offered by the learning center, which include videoconferencing, webcasts, and wireless networking. The Lake Geauga Computer Association (LGCA), also housed in the Technology Learning Center, provides Lake and Geauga County school districts with multiple technological services.

LEAF experienced a loss in state funding during the 2005-2006 fiscal year. One board member approximated the loss of state funding at \$45,000 and attributed the financial loss to multiple budget cuts at the state level. Because the program needed to compensate for the substantial loss in funding, several fund-raising efforts were undertaken. Staff and board members reacted assertively to fill the financial void.

In April 2004, LEAF experienced a major change in leadership. After 8 years of service, LEAF's executive director resigned to accept a position with NCAN, and a new executive

director was appointed. While staff and board members had been satisfied with the former executive director, several commented that the transition in leadership was a welcome change.

Services. Over the past two years, LEAF's financial aid advisors have continued to offer the same types of services. Advising high school seniors and their families about financial aid for postsecondary education remains top priority for LEAF. Advisors assist students in filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), completing scholarship and last dollar grant applications, and applying for fee waivers for college entrance exams and college applications. Students can access these types of information at the schools where LEAF advisors serve or at the LEAF resource center; individuals can participate in group information sessions or one-on-one sessions with advisors. Information on last dollar grants is also available on LEAF's Web site. Parents and families of students can schedule appointments with LEAF advisors to discuss financial aid opportunities; parents may also communicate with LEAF advisors via e-mail or telephone.

Spreading awareness of LEAF's services and information to community members is a major responsibility for board members.

The majority of LEAF board members interviewed agreed that their main objective was to "communicate LEAF's vision to the community." Spreading awareness of LEAF's services and information to community members is a major responsibility for board members.

LEAF capacity. When asked whether their program is capable of serving more people at current funding levels, all LEAF staff members responded "no." Staff members explained that LEAF is "serving as many people as it is funded for," and "would need more funding." One staff member noted, "Schools can only budget so much for our services."

Awareness of and satisfaction with LEAF services. A survey of education personnel was distributed to 80 superintendents, principals, and guidance counselors at schools served by LEAF to assess their awareness of, and satisfaction with, LEAF. Using a 5-point scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), respondents rated their perceptions. Responses averaged 4.5 on the scale. More than half of education personnel (57.4%) stated that LEAF's services were very effective (a 5 on the scale) in meeting the college access needs of their students. The remainder responded that the services were quite effective (29.6%) or somewhat effective (11.1%). One respondent (1.9%) indicated being unsure of how effective LEAF's services were for the students he or she served.

Data management. In terms of outcomes, it has been difficult for staff to collect data on the number of students who apply for college, the number of students who were accepted to universities, and the number of scholarships received. Several staff members mentioned that LEAF distributed surveys to their scholarship recipients in order to measure outcomes. However, one staff member stated, "It's such a small proportion of students (less than 1% of respondents) that it's not useable to make any decisions about."

Although LEAF did not utilize OCAN's Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database to collect student outcomes, the organization has been collaborating with the Lake Geauga Computer Association (LGCA) to develop a database for collecting such data. One staff

member explained, "It's our intent to mimic the K-12 database that is currently in place (Education Management Information System), so that data can be downloaded without much trouble, and will make it more user friendly than our current database." The staff member added that LEAF's current database was modeled after the one used by Cleveland Scholarship Programs; however, this system is outdated. Staff members expected to have the new system up and running by the start of the 2006-2007 academic year.

Program outcomes. Staff cited multiple effects of LEAF's services on students. Perhaps the greatest impact is helping students understand and complete the FAFSA. One advisor noted, "Students are able to get help filling out forms that are lengthy and can be confusing." While some students are knowledgeable about filing their FAFSA, "others have to be walked step-by-step through [the process]." Compared to high school guidance counselors, LEAF advisors provide students with unlimited time to discuss their financial aid opportunities. Students have informed LEAF advisors that when they have talked to school guidance counselors, "there was not enough time to explain their situation." Even when students were not awarded scholarship monies, they have expressed their appreciation to LEAF advisors for "helping them through a complicated process."

Networking. LEAF has had contact with a number of organizations that provided technical assistance and/or training over the past two years. For example, the Auburn Career Center, located across the street from the LEAF offices, provides technology assistance. LEAF staff members have attended training on financial aid from the Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA). Staff members consider OASFAA a "huge resource" and "hope to have them as a partner" because they "lend credibility." Cleveland State University provided training on diversity issues, as did the Fifth Third Bank. A few staff members attended a weeklong training held by the Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

Staff members had limited understanding of the relationships among KWF, OCAN, and OBR. One staff member commented, "I don't know how much KWF is involved with OBR, but KWF and OCAN is very much connected. . . . It doesn't seem like [OCAN] is their own entity, it seems like they have OBR or KWF pulling on them." This staff member went on to say, "It would be nice to see [OCAN] stand on their own, without having influences on decisions that they make."

Staff interactions and awareness of OCAN. Although some staff members reported attending professional development workshops and conferences held by OCAN, they stated that they are often asked to present information or serve as trainers. When not presenting, staff members indicated that they primarily utilize the workshops and conferences as networking opportunities. LEAF perceives itself as a support and resource for OCAN; because LEAF has been in existence longer than OCAN, it is able to lend its experience and expertise to other college access programs across the state. When asked how helpful the professional development workshops have been, staff members generally believed that the workshops had been more helpful to other access programs than to LEAF.

Support from OCAN. Over the past two years, OCAN has provided LEAF with financial resources for funding early awareness activities and additional time for advisors in the schools. OCAN has also provided monies for LEAF to conduct a statewide training for advisors. Other funds were provided to support LEAF's last dollar grants for adult students. Staff members noted that these funds greatly helped LEAF during its loss of state funding.

OCAN staff on-site visits. LEAF staff members reported that OCAN staff visited the LEAF program four or five times over the past two years. OCAN staff typically came out in "support" of LEAF, however, and did not provide on-site technical assistance. One OCAN staff member has attended LEAF's "reports to the community" as a participant, and another has visited the program to get a tour of LEAF's new facility.

Improving interactions between OCAN and local boards. LEAF board members suggested that OCAN increase communications with local boards of directors. Five board members recommended that OCAN staff members conduct personal on-site visits to local access programs to provide (a) updates on OCAN's statewide activities, (b) an overview of OCAN's mission, and (c) information on how OCAN goes about securing funding.

Education professionals' interactions with and awareness of OCAN. Education professionals in the LEAF service area were asked to indicate their familiarity with OCAN. Based on a 4-point scale from 1 (*Never heard of OCAN*) to 4 (*Very familiar with OCAN*), the average familiarity was 2.1. Seventeen percent had never heard of OCAN, 59% had heard of OCAN but were not familiar with it, and 22% were somewhat familiar; no respondents reported being very familiar with OCAN.

LEAF case study conclusions. Various data sources and annual reports indicate that LEAF services have been implemented and integrated into many area high schools. Aside from anecdotal evidence, however, there is a lack of outcome data to assess the impact that these programs have on students after LEAF advisors end their programs within the schools. Attempts have been made to collect such data via student surveys, but the data are too few in number to draw any definitive conclusions. LEAF is collaborating with the Lake Geauga Computer Association to develop a tracking database that will allow staff members to collect information on students relative to services received and postsecondary information. Although no formal outcome data exist on the program's activities, staff and board members believe that LEAF is having a positive effect on students who would not typically have access to higher education.

Although it is clear that LEAF programs have been implemented and are functional, OCAN's effectiveness in program development may be improved by redefining the relationship between OCAN and LEAF. Because LEAF leaders believe that their college access program is more advanced and experienced than OCAN itself, the organizations should clarify their roles and functions with regard to one another. In terms of professional development, OCAN should utilize LEAF to its full capacity for assisting other college access programs throughout the state of Ohio.

The collaborative partnership with the Lake Geauga Computer Association has placed LEAF one step closer to collecting and measuring outcome data on service users. This database will enable staff to assess whether the program is effectively addressing students' college access needs and will help OCAN to better address program design and development for LEAF as well as other college access programs.

In terms of financial resources, OCAN has effectively sustained LEAF over the past year. When LEAF experienced a loss of state funding, OCAN was able to help LEAF recover a portion of the depleted funds. With these funds, LEAF was able to maintain program services, including early awareness activities. Although OCAN assisted LEAF with its financial challenges, without more secure and continuing funding, staff and board members believe that LEAF will not be able to expand its services.

More so than in previous years, LEAF staff members believe that OCAN is serving as an advocate for college access. For instance, OCAN has promoted the successes of college access programs, rather than attributing their successes to OCAN itself. However, LEAF staff members would like OCAN to enhance its role as an advocate for college access. On a statewide level, OCAN should help to promote the credibility and value of college access programs across the state. OCAN can then utilize this credibility platform to increase fund-raising efforts.

Lima/Allen County College Access Program

The Lima/Allen County College Access Program, an OCAN member program, was selected as one of three single-visit case study sites. Edvantia evaluators visited the program in late 2004 to examine the program's activities and operations.

Description of methodology. Edvantia evaluators interviewed 3 staff members (1 paid and 2 volunteer) and 11 board members of the Lima/Allen County College Access Program (Lima). Length of involvement with Lima averaged 13 months for staff members and 1.7 years for board members. In addition to conducting interviews, Edvantia evaluators collected such documents as the program's strategic plan, annual report, brochures, forms, and board minutes. A 12-item survey regarding awareness of and satisfaction with the Lima program and OCAN also was mailed to education personnel in 11 school districts across Allen County. Of the 33 surveys distributed, 18 surveys were completed and returned, for a response rate of 54.5%.

Program context. The Lima program primarily serves Lima Senior High School seniors. Most staff and board members indicated that the majority of people who receive services are from the urban Lima area and are African American. In addition, there is a focus on providing services to pregnant and parenting teens. The program targets lower- to middle-income residents of Allen County. Because many students would be first-generation college attendees, staff and board members stated that postsecondary education often is perceived as unattainable.

Program history. The Lima/Allen County College Access Program began in 2002 and resided within the Chamber of Commerce. This decision has proven to be very effective for the program, because of the close collaboration between the Chamber and the Lima program. Under the supervision of the original director, the program expanded to include early intervention, career development education, campus visits, a resource center, and financial aid support. Due to the relocation of the original director, a new individual assumed the position of director slightly more than a year after the program's inception.

The program has continued to provide campus visits and financial aid support, and a resource center at the Lima Family YMCA was established by the Lima access program to service all interested individuals in Allen County. The director and admissions advisors from local colleges are available at the resource center to provide parents, students, and other community members with financial aid and related college access information. The program also provides assistance with ACT applications, presentations at middle schools, and other early awareness programs.

Board and staff members indicated that the Lima/Allen County College Access Program has received support from various local sources, including grants from the Lima Community Foundation, funding from all seven local colleges, and matching grants from KWF. In addition,

the program received the Thomas L. Conlan Award and \$1,000 at the annual OCAN conference in October 2004.

Program organization and services. The Lima program is unique in that its director is the only paid staff member. The program director is responsible for developing, establishing, and sustaining all aspects of the program, including fund-raising, tracking students, developing and staffing program events, and recruiting local college admission advisors for various workshops and the resource center. Currently, no program advisors are situated within the schools. College and financial aid advisors serve as volunteers and provide additional support to the program. Volunteers staff the resource center, provide various workshops and presentations, and help parents and students complete FAFSA forms. Other services include campus visits to local colleges, a College Day to provide ACT preparatory services, and a postsecondary options program that offers high school students college credit for enrolling in college courses. College advisors are available from October through December, and financial aid advisors are available from February through March.

The Lima program is unique in that its director is the only paid staff member.

A majority of board members are on the Lima Chamber of Commerce Education Committee or have positions in local city schools or colleges. Members indicated that their main responsibilities include supervising the director and volunteers, planning long-term strategies, reviewing financial information, and aiding the director with fund-raising and programming efforts. Several board members indicated that it would not be possible to serve more people without additional funds and staff, while other respondents stated that the program could expand in specific areas but agreed that the program could not handle an overall increase in programming without additional funding and staff. When asked for their perceptions about this program's sustainability over the next three years, board member responses varied. The majority of the board was hopeful, and members spoke of the connection to the Chamber of Commerce as a means of sustainability. Additionally, members believed that through existing connections with the community and board members' contacts, the program would be sustained, at least for the next two years.

A survey was distributed to education personnel across Allen County to assess the awareness of and satisfaction with the program's services. The majority of respondents (82.4%) indicated that they were somewhat knowledgeable about the services this program provides. When asked whether they had contact with program staff at their schools, half (50%) of the responding education personnel stated that they had no contact; almost half (44.4%) stated that they had sporadic, infrequent contact; and one participant (5.6%) reported monthly contact. When asked to rate the effectiveness of program services in meeting the college access needs of students on a scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), 40.0% of survey respondents reported the highest or second-highest rating of effectiveness ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 1.8$). Survey responses indicated that the majority of respondents (60%) were unsure of what services the program provides to their schools, while 40% ($n = 6$) indicated that they were knowledgeable of these services.

Data management. The program director maintains information on participants, using Excel spreadsheets and Word documents. Information tracked through these applications includes names, services utilized, number of people served at the resource center, and attendance

at all workshops. Unfortunately, without an electronic database, the Lima program is unable to collect data needed to measure outcomes of the activities (e.g., the number of students who apply for college or are accepted to universities). Despite this, staff said they believed the program had a very positive effect on high school students. This belief is based on "anecdotal stories of progress" and word of mouth. For example, students told program staff that they intended to apply to schools they visited or that program activities have increased knowledge for both them and their parents. The majority of board members also believed that the program has contributed to improving students' access to college.

Networking. In addition to OCAN, OBR, and KWF, staff reported that they received assistance from a variety of local organizations to help achieve their program goals. Staff cited the Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA, the local library, and the Rotary as organizations that have provided significant resources to the program.

Perception of relationships among OCAN, OBR, and KWF. Because volunteers primarily contribute to the program by staffing activities, they do not fully understand the relationships among OCAN, KWF, and OBR. The director, however, interacted with these entities and viewed their relationship as collaborative. Although the board understands that the director interacts with the three organizations, members were not knowledgeable about the specific goals of these entities and how they have contributed to the program.

Awareness of/interactions with OBR/KWF/OCAN. Among program staff, the director is the only individual to have interacted directly with OBR. The topics of these interactions included attendance and tracking forms as well as technical assistance and training. While half of board members were unsure of OBR's role in college access, a few said it was to facilitate and support college access programs.

As with OBR, the director is the only individual to have knowledge and interactions with KWF. The director referred to KWF as a foundation that provides funding for education initiatives across the state, including, for example, the Ohio High School Transformation Initiative.

The majority of staff and all board members indicated having an understanding of OCAN's mission. Board and staff responded that OCAN's goal is to provide consistent resources to students regarding college, to help develop access programs across the state, and to provide resources to support these programs. As with OBR and KWF, only the program director has maintained interactions with OCAN staff. Sporadic interactions between OCAN and board members have occurred through site visits, the annual OCAN conference, e-mails, and newsletters, and through board members' places of employment.

Only the program director and board members have attended OCAN trainings and the 2004 OCAN annual conference. In addition, a representative of OCAN has visited and presented information on various topics, including a tracking database, ACT preparatory software, the Education Career and Opportunity System (ECOS), and videoconferencing. The director said the workshops and conference have been very helpful, particularly when she was able to meet, network, and share ideas with other program directors and OCAN staff. In terms of improving OCAN professional development training, the director suggested that it would be helpful if OCAN provided start-up materials to new programs, training that is specific to new programs, and coordination of new directors' site visits to established programs.

In addition, board members were asked to rate on a scale of 1 (*not valuable*) to 5 (*very valuable*) the potential value of specific board training topics that OCAN could provide. Value ratings were reported in the following order: Fund-raising ($M = 4.6$), new board member orientation materials ($M = 4.1$), strategic planning ($M = 4.0$), resource management ($M = 3.8$), board development ($M = 3.6$), and nonprofit legal issues ($M = 2.8$).

Lima/Allen County College Access Program conclusions. Staff and board members agreed that the Lima/Allen County College Access Program has contributed to the growth of the Allen County and Lima communities, although this program has been operating for only two years. Respondents indicated that the success of the program can be documented by the recent Conlan award, presented by OCAN to recognize (a) excellence in local college access programs and (b) the commitment of people to inspire Ohio students to pursue postsecondary education. Despite having only a part-time paid director who must rely on volunteer staff, the program reaches students, parents, and adults through a variety of means. However, board and staff members say services are functioning at capacity, and limited funding prohibits the program from extending services at this time.

Despite various changes in OCAN leadership, which initially led to confusion, board and staff indicated that OCAN has been effective in program development and is an essential source of support. Board and staff members suggested several ways OCAN might improve its effectiveness in program development. For instance, OCAN could continue to create a support network of various college access programs across the state and a database that is capable of tracking students' financial aid and choices for postsecondary education. In addition, the roles of each organization (e.g., KWF, OBR, and OCAN) involved in the college access partnership need to be clarified.

According to Lima program staff and board members, OCAN's contribution as an advocate for college access programs in Ohio is indispensable. Because staff and board members' evidence of OCAN serving as an effective advocate pertained to coordination of conferences and training, OCAN's effectiveness may be increased by expanding or continuing the state-level work it has begun, such as marketing and public awareness campaigns.

Finally, considering the shortage of state, local, and private funding, college access programs face numerous sustainability issues. If OCAN were to be more proactive in leveraging funds and resources, programs could expend more time and energy on programming and daily operations. Training in fund-raising or grant writing for staff and board members could increase the sustainability of local programs that may not have "experts" in these areas.

Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" Program

Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" Program, an OCAN member program, was selected as one of three single-visit case study sites. Edvantia evaluators visited the program in late 2005 to examine the program's activities and operations.

Description of methodology. Edvantia evaluators interviewed 2 staff members (1 paid and 1 volunteer) and 5 advisory committee members of Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" college access program. One of the staff members interviewed had been involved since the beginning of the program; the second staff member began in October 2004. All but one of the committee members had served since the program began, with the fifth having served for 2

years. In addition to conducting interviews, Edvantia evaluators collected various documents, including the program's financial aid and scholarship information, student information sheet, program objectives and outcomes, participant surveys, program service report, and program flyers. A 13-item survey regarding awareness of and satisfaction with the "It Might As Well Be You" program and OCAN was administered in person to the principal and guidance counselors at Ironton High School.

Program context. The "It Might As Well Be You" program operates in Ironton High School; the primary recipients of the program's services are seniors at the school. A majority of Ironton High School's students are White, with African Americans representing 7.8% of the student body. More than one third (36.5%) of the students are economically disadvantaged. The program has also begun to serve Ironton Middle School by providing presentations on early career awareness. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 10.3% of Lawrence County residents age 25 and older have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Thus, with an increasing number of students at Ironton High School pursuing postsecondary opportunities, most of them will be coming from homes where parents do not have the experience to help their children navigate the postsecondary system.

Program history. In 1999, the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) chose Ironton High School as one of two GEAR UP program sites. Although that program brought many needed services to the students, college advising was missing from the program, a component the high school's guidance counselors did not have time to fully implement, given their other duties. With the blessing of OBR, the GEAR UP Ironton staff applied for OCAN funds to support a college advisor at Ironton High School. The "It Might As Well Be You" College Access Program began in 2001.

The leadership of this college access program has remained stable. However, the program currently has its third advisor. The first advisor served for a year, the second advisor served for 2.5 years; and the current advisor has served for 2 years (since October 2004).

Since the program began, the endowment has grown from \$50,000 to \$130,000, which adds some security to the college access services. In addition to obtaining additional funds from the Ironton City Schools Foundation, the program has obtained OBR's college readiness funds.

More services have been added since the original advisor began working with seniors. Now the program provides early awareness programs to 7th- and 8th-grade students, financial aid and FAFSA workshops, and college campus visits.

Program organization and services. The "It Might As Well Be You" program operates out of the Ironton GEAR UP office just off the Ohio University Southern campus. The GEAR UP director, who volunteers his time as director of "It Might As Well Be You," has his office in this building. As the "It Might As Well Be You" program director, he supervises the college advisor, whose office is located at Ironton High School. In addition, he is responsible for fund-raising, communicating with the advisory committee, and monitoring all aspects of the program.

The college advisor meets with students one-on-one and in groups, emphasizing the importance of being knowledgeable about the ACT and SAT, financial aid, scholarships, and the college application process. The advisor's main role with parents is to help them make the transition from full responsibility for their child's future to helping their child become

responsible. The "It Might As Well Be You" program takes part in some early awareness activities. However, because of the GEAR UP and JumpStart programs at the high school, there is little need for the college access program to spearhead early awareness programs.

The advisory committee members attend semiannual meetings at which they are updated on the status of the project. They are expected to provide input, feedback, and suggestions for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the program.

When asked if the "It Might As Well Be You" program is capable of serving more people at current funding levels, several committee members indicated that it would not be possible to serve more people without additional funds and staff, nor would it be possible to provide more last dollar grants. However, other committee members and staff commented that providing certain services to more people was possible, including printed college access information to students and invitations for students and parents from other schools in the county to attend workshops. When asked to predict this program's sustainability over the next 3 years, some committee members were concerned that the ending of the GEAR UP grant could negatively affect the "It Might As Well Be You" program. Others commented on the wise investment decision made with the endowment fund and how good financial planning would continue the program, regardless of the existence of the GEAR UP program.

Committee members indicated that the program was not capable of serving more people at current funding levels.

A survey of education personnel was administered in person by the Edvantia evaluator because only two guidance counselors and the principal at Ironton High School would receive it. Frequency of contact between the college advisor and the education professionals who were interviewed ranged from sporadic to almost daily. One respondent said that he or she was somewhat knowledgeable about the services the "It Might As Well Be You" advisor provided, and two said they were very knowledgeable. All three respondents were aware of the services provided by the program. When asked to rate the effectiveness of program services in meeting the college access needs of students on a scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), all respondents rated the program a 4, or "quite effective." In addition, respondents were asked in what ways, if any, they felt the program helps their students. Two of the respondents commented on how the college advisor helps parents understand the process of college admission and financial aid. Two also noted that the college advisor takes the time that the guidance counselors cannot take to help students step by step through the application process.

Data management. Although the "It Might As Well Be You" program does not have a sophisticated electronic database, the advisor does maintain information on participants electronically. Because all students who use the program's services are also GEAR UP participants, student surveys have been conducted by the GEAR UP evaluator. It is difficult to separate, however, the influence of GEAR UP from that of the advisory services; together, the two programs seem to provide comprehensive college advising and preparatory services. Staff and committee members did express an interest in some additional data collection, including college retention data and cross-program comparative data.

One of the major effects of the program has been increased awareness by students about postsecondary opportunities and how to pursue them. In addition, several committee members reported that the actual college-going rate has increased for Ironton High School graduates over

the past several years. This program also has expanded the number of scholarship opportunities for Ironton students; to date, the program has distributed \$51,000 in last dollar grants. Finally, many staff and committee members believed the program was having a positive impact on parents and the business community.

Networking. The "It Might As Well Be You" program has a close relationship with Ohio University Southern because of the GEAR UP grant and the proximity of the university. Another important networking association includes the relationship with Ironton City Schools Foundation, which provided seed money for the endowment and has provided additional funds for scholarships. In addition, KnowledgeWorks Foundation has provided funding and leadership, and OCAN has posted resources on its Web site and provided staff to make site visits to discuss fund-raising with program staff and committee members.

Perception of relationships among OCAN, OBR, and KWF. None of the committee members and only one staff member knew the nature of the relationships among OCAN, OBR, and KWF. The one staff member understood that KWF has worked with OCAN and OBR to plan how OCAN would be developed and funded; this staff member has been an active participant in regular meetings with OBR.

Awareness of/interactions with OBR/KWF/OCAN. Program staff were aware that OBR is an advisory group involved in college access initiatives, although it is not a governing agency. In addition, program staff have received professional development from OBR and have written proposals for additional funding from OBR. However, committee members were not as certain about the role of OBR in college access, with some commenting that OBR might be involved in funding and raising awareness.

Staff and some committee members were aware that KWF provides funding and leadership in the state for college access initiatives.

Only one staff member and one committee member were knowledgeable of OCAN's mission, while other staff and committee members had a limited understanding of OCAN or were aware of only part of OCAN's mission as reflected in OCAN's activities. The director has attended every OCAN conference and has taken the GEAR UP advisors and the college advisor with him to the conferences. The new advisor had attended only one professional development workshop so far, while the other staff member had attended many OCAN workshops. Both staff members reported that the trainings had been very helpful. One staff member thought it could be helpful if OCAN were to develop workshops for advisory boards.

In addition, board members were asked to rate on a scale of 1 (*not valuable*) to 5 (*very valuable*) the potential value of specific board training topics that OCAN could provide. Value ratings were reported in the following order: strategic planning ($M = 4.2$), new committee member orientation materials ($M = 4.2$), fund-raising ($M = 3.8$), resource management ($M = 3.8$), board development ($M = 3.6$), and nonprofit legal issues ($M = 3.0$).

Education professionals were asked to indicate their familiarity with OCAN. Based on a 4-point scale of 1 (*never heard of OCAN*) to 4 (*very familiar with OCAN*), 1 respondent was "somewhat familiar" (3 on the scale) with OCAN and the other 2 respondents had heard of OCAN but "[were] not familiar" (2 on the scale). The respondent who was somewhat familiar thought OCAN was quite effective at meeting the college needs of Ohioans but did not know

how effective OCAN was at influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio.

“It Might As Well Be You” Program conclusions. Staff, committee members, and education professionals at the high school agreed the program was filling a vital niche in college access services for the students at Ironton High School. Having the program so closely intertwined with GEAR UP has been mainly a positive for the program. Because of the evaluation resources available through the GEAR UP grant, and the fact that all students who now use the college advisor’s services also are GEAR UP students, the staff of this program have access to more evaluative information about the program than do staff of other programs. However, the deployment of OCAN’s student tracking database will help the program to track college-going rates and the college-retention rates.

OCAN’s workshops and knowledgeable staff were particularly helpful to the staff of this program during its early days. As the program has matured and the executive director has become more comfortable in the role, he has felt less need for the trainings; however, he encourages his advisors to go.

As with other college access programs, the roles of each organization (e.g., KWF, OBR, and OCAN) involved in the college access partnership need to be clarified. With the exception of the executive director, not many of those involved with the program in Ironton were clear about OCAN’s role in college access, and they knew even less about the roles of the other two organizations.

Furthermore, not many staff or advisory committee members knew much about OCAN’s advocacy efforts. Thus, if OCAN were to communicate more effectively with local member program advisory boards, advisory board members would discover that local program goals and OCAN’s goals in the area of advocacy were very much alike.

If the sustainability of local member programs is a reflection of OCAN’s success in promoting sustainability, then “It Might As Well Be You” is a shining example of how programs can flourish in impoverished areas. The sizeable—and growing—endowment fund is helping to ensure the program will continue over the next several years. Offering training on fund-raising and strategic planning to local member program advisory boards is one method through which OCAN could assist local programs with sustainability issues.

Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center

The Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center, an OCAN member program, was selected as one of three single-visit case study sites. Edvantia evaluators visited the program in 2005 to examine the program’s activities and operations.

Description of methodology. Edvantia evaluators interviewed 6 staff members and 2 board members of the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative (CYC) college access program. One staff member had been involved for 9 years; 5 staff members had been involved for 3.5 years or less. One board member had served since the program began, and the other had served for more than 10 years. In addition to conducting interviews with staff and board members, Edvantia evaluators collected such documents as the program’s annual report, board minutes, fact sheets, and handbook. A 13-item survey regarding awareness of and satisfaction with both CYC’s college access program and OCAN was administered by telephone to the director of education.

and 4 teachers at the Cincinnati Arts & Technology Center (CATC). Because CYC's initial and only grant from OCAN was utilized solely to establish a college resource center, this case study focused primarily on issues surrounding the resource center.

Program context. The majority of students receiving CYC college access resource center services were from the Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center (CATC). These students came from five high schools within the Cincinnati Public Schools district. Across all five schools, a majority of the students (85.5%) were African American; 12.6% were White. A little more than half of the students (52%) were economically disadvantaged. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 26.6% of Cincinnati residents age 25 or older have attained a bachelor's degree or higher.

Program history. The Cincinnati Youth Collaborative provides both mentoring and college access programs to Cincinnati-area youth. The college access sector of CYC started in the late 1980s as a College Information Center, located at a department store in downtown Cincinnati and staffed by volunteers. The College Information Center was then funded as a re-entry component through an Educational Talent Search (ETS) grant awarded in 1991. Over the next several years, the center changed locations before making its current home at the CYC building. In the meantime, CYC was awarded a GEAR UP grant to provide tutoring and after-school services to middle school students. In January 2003, the College Information Center discontinued services because a local institution received an Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) grant. One staff member explained that an ETS grant can have a re-entry component only if an EOC does not exist within the same service area; therefore, the College Information Center was forced to discontinue operation.

After learning about OCAN and the funding opportunities available, CYC staff acknowledged the need for a resource center to serve as an information source to Cincinnati youth. Following receipt of a \$30,000 grant from OCAN, the college resource center re-emerged at the Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center (CATC) in Longworth Hall in January 2004. Because CATC donated space for the resource center at its facility, OCAN funds were used primarily for furnishings, supplies, and the salary of the resource center staff member.

In addition to developing the resource center, CYC implemented Cincinnati's Opportunity and College Help (COACH) program, adding a fourth component to the college access sector. CYC recently started another program to complement its college resource center. In collaboration with the Dell Corporation, The Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and Allen Temple A.M.E. Church, CYC opened a community "Cyber Center" at Jordan Crossing in Bond Hill. Part of the Cyber Center is a satellite resource center that will provide the same services as the resource center in Longworth Hall.

During the CYC college access program's short existence, its leadership has remained stable. However, the program currently has its second college resource center coordinator. The first coordinator served for approximately 9 months—leaving the center vacant for 2 to 3 months—and the current resource center coordinator began in late August 2004.

Program organization and services. The vice president and director of college access programs are both located in the CYC building in Cincinnati's uptown district. The vice president supervises ETS, GEAR UP, and general activities such as the college resource center.

The college resource center coordinator, who works full-time, meets with students one-on-one by telephone or in groups, providing college access information related to financial aid, scholarships, career exploration, and college preparation. She also conducts workshops within the service area for adults and high school students interested in pursuing higher education.

In the past few years, CYC has observed a significant increase in the number of Cincinnati Public School seniors who complete last dollar grant applications.

Because the CYC's GEAR UP and ETS programs provide college awareness activities to middle school students, there is little need for the college resource center to spearhead early awareness programs. In addition, because the neighboring Cincinnati Scholarship Foundation provides last dollar grants, CYC does not offer these funds. However, the college resource center coordinator does encourage students to complete the application for last dollar grants. In the past few years, CYC has observed a significant increase in the number of Cincinnati Public School seniors who complete these grant applications.

Advisory board members preside at meetings and interact with other board members and college access staff. Board members are involved in shaping policy, strategy, vision, and mission for the college access program. In addition, they offer guidance and react to programmatic issues presented by staff members.

When asked if the CYC's college resource center was capable of serving more people at current funding levels, staff and board members' responses were mixed. Several staff members and one board member indicated that it would not be possible to serve more people without additional funds. Other staff members and a board member commented that the resource center needs a more centralized and accessible location to serve more people. When asked to predict this college resource center's sustainability over the next three years, one board member was optimistic that the center would continue to provide services, especially with the CYC's strong financial backing and community support; however, the second board member expressed less enthusiasm and noted that the resource center would require more private funding to continue services.

A survey of education personnel was administered to CATC staff by telephone by the Edvantia evaluator. Frequency of contact between the college resource center coordinator and the education professionals ranged from weekly to almost daily contact. One respondent reported being somewhat knowledgeable about the services the college resource center coordinator provided, and 4 said they were very knowledgeable. All 5 respondents were aware that the resource center provided financial aid counseling and career exploration services. When asked to rate the effectiveness of program services in meeting the college access needs of students, on a scale of 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), all 5 respondents rated the program a 5. In addition, respondents were asked in what ways, if any, they felt the program helped their students. Two respondents commented that the resource center provides hope and encouragement to the CATC's students, and another respondent mentioned that the technology utilized at the resource center is exceptional and provides students an advantage over those who do not seek out the resource center.

Data management. Although the CYC's resource center does not have a sophisticated electronic database, the college resource center coordinator does maintain participant information in hard copy, including students' aspirations, grades, and interests in school.

Because the 2004-2005 school year was the resource center's first full academic year in operation, no data have been collected on outcome measures. When asked about OCAN's Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database, staff members expressed similar responses: they agreed that the database could be a useful tool for college access programs but felt that it would not be beneficial for tracking all of CYC's college access activities. Because CYC is a multidimensional organization, students often participate in more than one program, including CYC's college access and mentoring initiatives.

One of the major effects of the program has been students' increased awareness about postsecondary opportunities and how to pursue them. In addition, some students who attended CATC during the previous school year returned to the resource center because they needed college access information and were aware of the services provided. Staff and board members also believed the resource center was having a positive impact on parents and education personnel in the Cincinnati Public Schools.

Networking. Because of physical proximity to the institutions, GEAR UP, and other college access programs, CYC maintains close relationships with the University of Cincinnati and Cincinnati State Technical and Community College. College information workshops are offered jointly by the university and the program. Other important networking associations and partnerships include relationships with the Cincinnati Public Schools, Student Loan Funding, OCAN, LINKS, and KWF.

Perceptions of relationships among OCAN, OBR, and KWF. Although several staff and board members were not knowledgeable of the relationships among OCAN, OBR, and KWF, most agreed that the organizations shared similar goals.

Awareness of/interactions with OBR/KWF/OCAN. Most staff members described OBR as a coordinating body, but only two were able to provide detailed perceptions of OBR's role in college access and the interactions between CYC and OBR. In addition, staff and board members were aware that KWF provides funding in the state for college access initiatives. All staff and board members indicated having at least a general understanding of OCAN's mission, describing OCAN as a resource to college access programs across the state.

The vice president of CYC's college access programs regularly attends OCAN workshops, and nearly all staff members had attended at least one OCAN training or workshop. In addition, the vice president has attended two OCAN conferences, with the college resource center coordinator and director of college access programs attending one of the conferences with him. Several staff members commented that they appreciate the opportunities the workshops provide to network with other college access professionals.

One board member was asked to rate on a scale of 1 (*not valuable*) to 5 (*very valuable*) the potential value of specific advisory board training topics that OCAN could provide. The board member rated the aspects of board development, new board member orientation materials, and fund-raising as very valuable; strategic planning and nonprofit legal issues trainings received a rating of 3; resource management was considered least valuable, with a rating of 2.

Education professionals were asked to indicate their familiarity with OCAN. Based on a 4-point scale from 1 (*never heard of OCAN*) to 4 (*very familiar with OCAN*), 1 respondent was "somewhat familiar" with OCAN, 2 had "heard of OCAN but [were] not familiar," and 2 had "never heard of OCAN." The respondent who was somewhat familiar with OCAN rated OCAN's effectiveness in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans as a 3 on a scale of 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*)

Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center conclusions. Although the college resource center had been in operation for only one full academic year, staff, board members, and education professionals were highly confident that the center was filling a void in college access services for Cincinnati students. Although college access programs were already in place at CYC and neighboring organizations, the establishment of a college resource center provided a "go to" place for students in need of higher education assistance. As a multidimensional organization, CYC has the capability to intertwine mentoring and college access programs with efforts to provide a comprehensive network of services directed to students and adults.

OCAN's workshops were particularly helpful to the vice president of college access programs following his employment at CYC. Other staff members also have benefited from trainings and resources provided by OCAN. Keeping local member boards informed of OCAN's mission and activities and offering workshops for board members are ways in which these staff and board members reported OCAN could better serve local programs.

Few staff or board members knew much about OCAN's advocacy efforts. OCAN may benefit by communicating its advocacy efforts more effectively to member programs, in addition to identifying itself as a separate entity from KWF and OBR.

CYC itself has continued to prosper with the addition of multiple mentoring and college access programs. Such sustainability has provided the organization with a positive reputation for assisting with collaboration efforts and spreading awareness on college access issues. To continue its growth, CYC constantly seeks new funds to increase service capacity and to strengthen its role in college access.

CONCLUSIONS

The purposes of this third-year evaluation report are (1) to reflect on OCAN's effectiveness to date in the areas defined in its strategic plan and (2) to summarize the learning from the evaluations so that recommendations can be made. The following conclusions are organized around the three areas that have structured this evaluation: program development, advocacy, and sustainability.

Consistent with 2004 and 2005 evaluation findings, OCAN seems to be performing its intermediary support organization functions effectively (evaluation question 6a). Member programs generally view OCAN as having been effective in (a) program development, including serving as a credible clearinghouse of information about college access and creating a resource exchange network for college access programs; (b) advocacy, including serving as a credible advocate for college access and college access funding to policymakers in Ohio; and (c) sustainability, including securing funding for itself and disseminating funds to local college access programs. Overall, member program perceptions of OCAN are positive; they view the organization to be effectively engaged in achieving its three strategic goals.

OCAN and Program Development

In August 2006, 35 member programs operated within the Ohio College Access Network, the same number of programs that were operating in 2005. Thirty-three of the 35 programs remained the same, while 2 new programs had replaced 2 existing programs.

Member programs receive various types of technical assistance and support from OCAN staff (evaluation question 1a). Although not a significant difference, programs that had worked with OCAN longer reported less frequent requests for OCAN assistance as compared to programs that had not worked with OCAN for long; this relationship has weakened over time, however, which suggests that OCAN may be offering services geared specifically toward more established programs. Compared to 2005, member programs in 2006 requested assistance from OCAN more often; half of member programs in 2006 requested assistance from OCAN at least once a quarter, compared to only 29% in 2005. Newer member programs seem to benefit more from OCAN's services than do more established member programs. OCAN staff members agreed that newer programs often benefit more from professional development opportunities than do more established programs.

Over the past year, OCAN has placed a greater emphasis on data collection and outcome measurement. Through the development of the Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database, multiple workshop sessions, and funding opportunities, OCAN staff members have communicated the critical importance of measuring outcomes. In addition, the development of the Seals of Good Practice and Excellence further emphasize the importance of such data collection. Member programs seem to have received the message, as more have reported their intent to or use of monitoring and tracking service outcomes and activities in 2006, compared to 2005 and 2004. Results from the 2006 Member Program Survey indicate that 8 (31%) of the 26 responding member programs already utilize the WEST system; almost half (47%) of those not currently using the system plan to use it and 26% are unsure if they will use the system. It is possible that those programs (26%) not planning to use the WEST system are utilizing other methods to track outcomes (e.g., LEAF's use of a different tracking system). While the system

has been implemented in several member programs, program staff members continue to offer suggestions on improvements to the system.

Professional development workshops provided by OCAN have taken on a new format over the past 9 months. While continuing to provide statewide workshops, OCAN introduced regional workshops in December 2006. Each regional workshop is offered at two locations, which helps participants minimize staff and travel time and costs. Feedback from workshop participants suggests that attendees appreciate the more intimate setting provided by regional workshops, where they have more opportunities for discussion and networking. OCAN also has responded to member programs' need for various topics of professional development. In addition to the annual advisor training workshop, OCAN added a board member training session that covered various aspects of program board development; member programs were encouraged to invite members from their boards of directors.

The Member Advisory Council (MAC), established in 2005, held three meetings between January and August 2006. Like the initial meeting in 2005, the MAC meetings in 2006 continue to be well attended, with an average of 24 participants per meeting. Due to member programs' interest in establishing membership levels and standards for college access programming, the MAC focused heavily on these two issues during its meetings. OCAN also sought the MAC's assistance on identifying difficulties encountered when collecting outcome data. During each MAC meeting, member program representatives expressed their appreciation to OCAN for considering their feedback and suggestions. The development of the MAC, combined with good attendance by member programs, indicates that OCAN strives to and is successful at developing avenues to engage its network of programs toward the goal of program- and network-improvement.

Feedback from OCAN staff and local access program staff indicates that OCAN staff members have conducted more on-site visits to access programs over the past year than in previous years. The on-site visits typically involved providing technical assistance and support to local member programs. Staff members have talked to local programs and their boards of directors about the student tracking database and advised newer member programs on issues related to program development.

As in 2005, member programs were most satisfied with the in-person support services and e-mail and phone support provided by OCAN staff in 2006; in 2004, member programs were most satisfied with OCAN's annual conference and in-person support services (evaluation question 1b). Although still moderately satisfied, programs were least satisfied with the newsletter and other informational mailings. The newsletter and other mailings received the lowest satisfaction ratings in 2005 and 2004, as well; however, programs consistently increased their level of satisfaction for the newsletter and other mailings over the 3-year evaluation.

For four of the five services provided by OCAN over the past three years, member programs increased their average level of satisfaction; the fifth service decreased by only .01 of a point in 2005. OCAN's e-mail and phone support (.84), and in-person support (0.71) received the greatest increases in satisfaction across the years. In addition, all services received at least one positive comment from member program representatives.

Although financial resources continue to be a common need among the member programs, representatives from local access programs seemed to rate OCAN as more effective at securing public and private funding for local access programs in 2006 than in 2005 or 2004.

(evaluation question 1d). Member program comments from 2005 focused on the perception of OCAN as a competitor to member programs regarding funding opportunities. Since becoming aware of this perception, OCAN staff members say they have attempted to communicate fund-raising efforts more effectively to member programs

OCAN and Advocacy

For the past few years, OCAN has maintained its status as a line item in Ohio's state budget. The governor's support for OCAN also landed the organization an additional \$1.3 million in 2006. However, OCAN's financial security in the state budget could be in jeopardy with the upcoming gubernatorial election. To prepare for a transition in state funding, OCAN staff members reported developing relationships with individuals representing both gubernatorial candidates.

Although non-earmarked funding levels for college access and readiness initiatives have increased only slightly during the past three budget cycles, it is important to note that OCAN received a specific reference in both the governor's recommended FY06-07 budget and in the legislation authorizing that budget (evaluation question 3d). It is also important to note that Ohio's General Assembly complied with Governor Taft's request and appropriated all the funds he recommended for the College Readiness and Access line item in the FY06-07 budget. Thus, although funding levels have demonstrated only a moderate increase, the reference to OCAN in the budget, and the legislature's willingness to appropriate all funds requested by the governor, indicates that OCAN specifically and college access generally are priorities for Ohio's current government. That elected leaders recognize the importance of the program and its mission indicate that OCAN and its allies have been successful in communicating with legislators, the governor, and other key leaders about the importance of supporting college access initiatives in Ohio.

Compared to 2004 and 2005, key informants in 2006 seemed slightly more optimistic that Ohioans were aware of OCAN (evaluation question 3b). While key informants at all three time points generally agreed that familiarity with OCAN varied by geography or some other factor, fewer key informants in 2006 believed that awareness of OCAN increased if a local member program existed in the community. It is also important to note that fewer key informants were willing to be interviewed in 2006. Whether this indicates a lessening of interest in OCAN or its evaluation among key decision makers in the state is an open question.

Education professionals, including principals, guidance counselors, and other personnel, were typically not very familiar with OCAN; this finding echoed those of 2005 and 2004. However, education professionals did report being aware of the services provided by their local college access program. In addition, multiple personnel reported interacting fairly often with the college access advisors in their schools. The support for college access from education professionals is a positive reflection of local access programs' work in their surrounding communities. Furthermore, this finding is supported by results from the Member Program Survey, which found that local access program staff believed that OCAN has done a more effective job at training access program staff to effectively advocate for college access programs in 2006, compared to 2005 or 2004. While this item received the greatest increase in rating over the three years, three of the five functions related to advocacy increased from 2004 to 2006; the

other two functions decreased slightly from 2004 to 2005, but showed an increase in effectiveness in 2006.

OCCAN and Sustainability

OCCAN's uncertain future in terms of state funding resources has been a top concern for staff members over the past year. While Ohio's gubernatorial candidates travel the campaign trail, OCCAN finds itself campaigning for its own win as a line item in the new governor's state budget. OCCAN staff members acknowledge that state funding has been a major contributor to the organization's sustainability. However, staff members understand the need for OCCAN to seek funding from private sources (e.g., foundations, businesses). Member programs' perception of OCCAN as a competitor for private funding sources has been minimized over the past year, allowing OCCAN to engage more actively in grant opportunities that will be allocated to its member programs.

Because private funding sources have yet to be acquired, OCCAN may find itself at a disadvantage if state resources are not awarded in the next fiscal year. With the imminent exit of two of OCCAN's staff members, the organization has redefined the vacant positions to focus on fund-raising efforts, specifically in private venues. Employing individuals with fund-raising expertise could serve OCCAN well in its efforts to expand funding opportunities.

Evaluators examined Ohio's recent biennial budgets to determine the extent to which public support for OCCAN has changed over the years (evaluation question 5a). This examination revealed that funding levels for college access and readiness initiatives have increased only slightly during the past three budget cycles. However, OCCAN received a specific reference in both the governor's recommended FY06-07 budget and in the legislation authorizing that budget. Further, the General Assembly appropriated all the funds the governor recommended for the College Readiness and Access line item in the most recent budget. The specific reference to OCCAN in the budget and the legislature's willingness to appropriate all requested funds suggest that Ohio's current government recognizes the importance of college access initiatives and is willing to provide support for their missions. Such recognition and support are important for OCCAN in attaining long-term sustainability. The challenge for OCCAN in the coming years will be to maintain and build on that support to ensure sustainability regardless of changes in elected leadership.

OCCAN's transition in focus from starting up new college access programs to helping existing programs achieve sustainability seems to be working. It is interesting to note that sustainability functions directed to local college access programs received the greatest improvement in ratings from 2005 to 2006 on the Member Program Survey. Member programs rated OCCAN more effective in 2006, than in 2005 and 2004 at helping local access programs to sustain their programming; this function received the highest improvement ratings among the sustainability functions across the three years, with the average rating in 2004 being "not very effective" and "effective" in 2006. Member program staff also perceived OCCAN to be more effective in 2006 at training access program staff to engage in effective fund-raising efforts, compared to 2005. Such high perceptions of OCCAN reflect well on its goal to support the continuing work of established member programs.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR OCAN

Although significant progress has been made since the first- and second-year evaluations, several recurring issues surfaced in the third year that could potentially affect OCAN's future effectiveness. OCAN might consider the following recommendations related to program development, advocacy, and sustainability.

Program Development

The services offered by OCAN to develop and support member programs have been a large part of the organization's success. Although OCAN has been successful at providing quality professional development, it has not always been successful at offering this training in a format available to all member programs. The transition from statewide workshops to regional workshops has been widely praised by member program representatives who have attended the workshops over the past year. OCAN should continue to offer these regional workshops that help member programs cut time and travel costs. Also, information and documents that are distributed at these workshops should continue to be posted on OCAN's Member Intranet, which allows those individuals who were unable to attend the workshops to access the information.

Over the past few years, OCAN has emphasized the importance of collecting data and measuring outcomes. The implementation of OCAN's Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) system has allowed member programs to collect data that will help them to measure their program outcomes. Now, the question of "Now what?" is likely to surface as member programs begin to generate data. OCAN should consider providing professional development or other services that assist member programs in determining the multiple uses of collected data. For instance, OCAN could help local access programs determine the best way to present their outcomes in grant writing or marketing campaigns. In addition, member programs may find data useful for needs assessments and improving program services. Because most, if not all, member program staff are not trained data analysts, such information should be presented in a manner that can be easily applied to their own programs. Finally, OCAN should continue to seek suggestions on improving the WEST system to assist member programs in maximizing their data collection efforts.

The newly implemented Member Advisory Committee (MAC) has received positive feedback from member program representatives. However, a few comments from member programs suggest that some individuals are not satisfied with the alignment between the MAC, OCAN, and OCAN's board of directors. In efforts to communicate this alignment, OCAN may want to consider a more systematic process of linking input from the MAC to its board of directors, and vice versa.

Advocacy

OCAN has engaged in multiple efforts to increase public awareness and influence public opinion about college access. According to multiple data sources across the evaluation, OCAN has been effective at advocating for college access on a statewide level, as well as training member program staff to advocate on the local level. Because dollars are needed to support college access programs and OCAN itself, OCAN should continue working to increase the recognition of college access programs among influential sectors, including business, education, and policy.

Although OCAN has been successful at securing itself a line item in state budgets and receiving other public support, it still needs to focus fund-raising efforts on private entities. Even if OCAN is a line item in the state's next biennial budget, it should still maximize efforts to expand financial resources from private sectors. OCAN understands the mistake of relying on public support and should set specific and realistic goals for securing private dollars that are measured and increased each year.

Sustainability

OCAN has been successful at offering funding opportunities to member programs over the past three years. In addition, such opportunities over the past year have focused on improving local access programs' sustainability. And although money is often the bottom line, several member programs have proven their longevity by utilizing volunteer and limited staff members. A few have even recruited students to serve as sources of information about their college access services. OCAN should continue to assist member programs with finding ways to sustain their programs, particularly with efforts other than funding. Finally, OCAN needs to continue advocating for data collection and outcome measurement among its member programs, which can ultimately influence sustainability.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Key Informant Interview Protocol

Key Informant Interview

Hello, this is _____ from Edvantia in Charleston, West Virginia. We've contracted with the KnowledgeWorks Foundation in Cincinnati to conduct an independent evaluation of the Ohio College Access Network, also known as OCAN. As part of this 3-year evaluation, we are seeking to determine what influential people in Ohio know and think about OCAN. You have been selected to participate in our interview because of your role with _____ *[indicate person's affiliation]*

We know that your time is valuable. This interview should take not more than 15 minutes.
[Emphasize that you will try to keep the interview brief.]

If now is not a good time for you to talk to me, I'd like to schedule a better time with you while I have you on the phone. Otherwise, we can go ahead and do the interview now.

[Wait for a response. If interviewee wants to reschedule, arrange for a specific date and time. Confirm new interview time and phone number.]

Rescheduled Interview: _____
(Day, Date, & Time)

Phone Number: _____

[If interviewee wants to proceed, thank them and continue.]

Thank you very much. We have 6 items to discuss today. Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability. Your responses will be kept confidential and you will never be identified by name or role when we report the results of these interviews. Let me know if you would like to skip a question because you don't know how to respond to it.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

[If yes, answer questions briefly to the best of your ability. If you do not know, refer interviewee to appropriate Edvantia, KWF, or OCAN staff member.]

[If no, continue with interview.]

Interview Questions

1. How familiar are you with the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN)? How familiar with OCAN are most Ohioans who are interested in pursuing postsecondary education?
2. How effective is OCAN in leveraging public and private resources (i.e., funding) in support of college access program in Ohio? What makes you say that? [*Probe for evidence/rationale.*]
3. In your estimation, what is the likelihood that OCAN will remain a viable organization throughout the next decade? [*Probe for evidence/rationale.*]
4. What does OCAN do to increase public awareness or influence public opinion about college access? How effective are these efforts? [*Probe for evidence/rationale.*]
5. How does OCAN use its experience and expertise to engage in activities aimed at influencing policy decisions regarding college access? How effective are these efforts? [*Probe for evidence/rationale.*]

APPENDIX B

Member Program Survey



MEMBER PROGRAM SURVEY

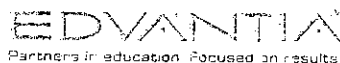
The Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) is currently undergoing a three-year evaluation to gauge its effectiveness as an organization supporting college access programs in Ohio. Edvantia, a research organization in Charleston, West Virginia, has contracted with KnowledgeWorks Foundation to conduct this evaluation of OCAN.

In this final year of the evaluation, Edvantia is sending two copies of the enclosed survey to the director of each member program. One copy is for the director; the director is to give the second copy to the board or advisory committee chairperson. If your program does not have a board of directors, or advisory board/committee, please give the second copy to your program director, or to some other person who is very knowledgeable about the program. Questions on the survey will revolve around member program functioning as well as OCAN's three strategic goals of program development, advocacy, and sustainability.

Due to the limited number of people to whom this survey is being sent, every person's response is critical to formulate an accurate statewide portrayal of OCAN. Your responses will help OCAN staff make adjustments and improvements to better serve Ohio's college access community. Please answer each question and return the survey to Edvantia within a two-week period. Your responses will be kept confidential with only the Edvantia research staff having access to your survey. Edvantia staff will report the findings to OCAN and KnowledgeWorks Foundation staff in group summary format. No individual or program names will be reported. Returning the survey is considered your consent to participate and there are no risks associated with refusing to participate in the survey.

If you have questions about this survey, please contact Dr. Kristine Chadwick at Edvantia (304-347-0429 or kristine.chadwick@edvantia.org).

Thank you for your assistance in helping to make OCAN an effective resource for local college access programs.



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P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325

MEMBER PROGRAM SURVEY

When answering the questions, please completely darken the bubble corresponding to your answer. Unless otherwise instructed, please answer the questions according to how your program has operated for the past year. Please return the survey within two weeks of receiving it.

In order to track responses across years and measure change in individual programs, please complete the identification number section below.

Directions:

Please fill in the four digits of your "Identification Number" on the grid to the right. It consists of the last two digits of your Social Security Number (SSN) and the two digits for the day of the month (not the month) on which you were born. This identification number will only be used by the researchers to match your responses across the three years of this evaluation project. This number will not be shared outside of Edvantia and no individuals will be identified in any reports using these data.

Identification Number

Last 2 Digits SS#	Day Born (01-31)
0 0	0 0
1 1	1 1
2 2	2 2
3 3	3 3
4 4	4 4
5 5	5 5
6 6	6 6
7 7	7 7
8 8	8 8
9 9	9 9

1 What is your role?

- ☐ Executive Director / Director
- ☐ Program Director / Project Director
- ☐ Board or Advisory Committee Chair
- ☐ Other (Specify): _____

Your College Access Program

2 How many years has your program worked with OCAN? 0 (less than one year)

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7

3 How many schools does your program serve?

0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

4 How many schools of each level does your program serve? (Total should add to the total listed in question 3 above)

Elementary
Schools:

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

Middle
Schools:

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

High
Schools:

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

Other K-12
Configuration:

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

5 How many school districts does your program serve?

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

6 How many paid staff members does your program support (in FTE)?

FTE=Full Time Equivalent

*If your program has 1 full-time employee and
10 half-time employees, you would bubble in
06 (at 1x1 0 FTE + 10x0.5 FTE)*

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

7 How many volunteers work with your program?

0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

8 How many sources of funding do you use to pay for the college access services your program provides? Sources may include grants, fee-for-service, donations, etc.

Funding sources for operational costs and services: # Funding sources solely for scholarships:

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

9 What types of services does your program offer? (Choose all that apply)

- ☐ Academic preparation (e.g., tutoring)
- ☐ Financial aid counseling
- ☐ College access resource center
- ☐ College admission and selection counseling
- ☐ Participation in college visits and fairs
- ☐ High school early awareness activities (for students in grades 9 through 11)
- ☐ Middle school early awareness activities (for students in grades 6 through 8)
- ☐ Elementary school early awareness activities (for students in grades 5 or 6 and lower)
- ☐ Fee waivers for tests and/or college applications
- ☐ College entrance exam preparation / information
- ☐ Last dollar grants / scholarships
- ☐ Career exploration
- ☐ Adult returning student activities or advising
- ☐ Parental advising
- ☐ Other: _____

- 10 If you received planning and/or start-up funding from OCAN, how likely is it that your program will continue to offer college access services after OCAN funding ends?
- ☐ Not at all likely
 - ☐ Somewhat likely
 - ☐ Very likely (will continue, or you already are continuing without OCAN funds)

Managing Program Information

- 11 Does your program have a formal, written system for monitoring and tracking staff interaction with students and other clients?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes
- 12 Does your program have a formal system to monitor and track the outcomes of services and activities (e.g., number of students receiving financial aid and scholarships, number of students going to college)?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes
- 13 Do you use the Web-enabled student-tracking (WEST) database that OCAN has developed?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Not Sure
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ Do not know anything about it
- 13a If you are not already using the Web-enabled student-tracking (WEST) database that OCAN has developed, do you plan to during the next academic school year?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Not Sure
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ Do not know anything about it
- 14 Does your program conduct annual surveys or interviews with students regarding satisfaction with program services and/or intentions to pursue postsecondary education?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes
- 15 Does your program track students after high school graduation?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes
- 16 Does your program conduct annual surveys or interviews with school staff (e.g., principals, guidance counselors) to assess satisfaction with the program's services?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes
- 17 Overall, how effective do you believe your program is in increasing college access for students and others in your community?
- Very effective (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Very ineffective (0) Don't know

17a What evidence do you have to support your response in Question 17?

Your Program and the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN)

18 How important do you believe it is for Ohioans to have an organization support and advocate for college access at a statewide level?

Very important ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Not at all important

19 In the past year, how much contact overall have you had with OCAN staff (e.g., phone calls, e-mail, trainings, conference)?

- ☐ At least weekly contact
☐ More than once a month
☐ Once a month
☐ Quarterly
☐ A couple of times during the year
☐ Once a year
☐ Never

20 How often in the past year have you asked OCAN staff to help you with an activity or assist you with a problem?

- ☐ Weekly
☐ More than once a month
☐ Once a month
☐ Quarterly
☐ A couple of times during the year
☐ Once a year
☐ Never

21 How satisfied are you with the e-mail and phone support you have received from OCAN staff in the past year?

Very satisfied ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Very dissatisfied ① Not applicable (none received)

Comments about or suggestions for improving e-mail and phone support?

22 How satisfied are you with the in-person support you have received from OCAN staff in the past year?

Very satisfied ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Very dissatisfied ① Not applicable (none received)

Comments about or suggestions for improving in-person/on-site support?

23 How satisfied are you with the annual OCAN conference?

Very satisfied (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Very dissatisfied (0) Not applicable (did not attend)

Comments about or suggestions for improving the annual conference?

24 How satisfied are you with the workshops and trainings OCAN provides to member programs?

Very satisfied (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Very dissatisfied (0) Not applicable (did not attend)

Comments about or suggestions for improving the workshops and trainings?

25 How satisfied are you with the usefulness of the OCAN newsletters and other informational mailings sent by OCAN?

Very satisfied (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Very dissatisfied (0) Not applicable (do not receive)

Comments about or suggestions for improving the newsletters and mailings?

26 How satisfied are you with the usefulness of the resource materials (e.g., advisory services guidebook, marketing materials, You Can Go to College materials) that OCAN makes available to member programs?

Very satisfied (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Very dissatisfied (0) Not applicable (do not receive)

Comments about or suggestions for improving the resource materials?

27 How satisfied are you with OCAN's Member Advisory Council (MAC)?

Very satisfied (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Very dissatisfied (0) Not applicable (did not attend)

27a How effective do you believe OCAN's Member Advisory Council (MAC) is in improving the Ohio College Access Network?

Very effective (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Not at all effective (0) Not applicable (did not attend)

Comments about or suggestions for improving the Member Advisory Council (MAC)?

OCAN Effectiveness

28 From the OCAN member program perspective, how effective do you believe OCAN is in performing the following functions as a state-level college access organization?

		<u>Very effective</u>		<u>Somewhat effective</u>		<u>Not at all effective</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a	Creates a resource exchange network for college access programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
b	Disseminates "best practice" ideas	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
c	Develops new member programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
d	Supports existing member programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
e	Serves as a credible clearinghouse of information/resources about college access	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
f	Promotes collaboration among college access programs and community organizations	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
g	Trains access program staff to effectively manage college access programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
h	Trains access program staff to effectively advocate for college access	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
i	Trains access program staff to engage in effective fund-raising efforts	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
j	Advocates for college access funding in Ohio	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
k	Serves as a credible advocate for college access to policy makers in Ohio	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
l	Serves as a credible advocate for college access to Ohio communities	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
m	Influences state policy around college access issues	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
n	Promotes a culture of continuous learning for all Ohioans.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

How effective is OCAN in performing these functions?

	<u>Very effective</u>		<u>Somewhat effective</u>		<u>Not at all effective</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
o. Influences public attitudes and awareness of college access issues	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
p. Portrays itself as a growing, viable organization	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
q. Secures private foundation funding for itself	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
r. Secures private foundation funding for local college access programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
s. Secures public (state) funding for itself	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
t. Secures public (state) funding for local college access programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
u. Disseminates funds to local college access programs in an efficient manner	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
v. Disseminates funds to local college access programs in a fair manner	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
w. Meets the program development needs of local college access programs	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
x. Helps local college access programs to sustain their programming	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

Future Needs

- 29 OCAN staff is interested in knowing what local member programs need in order to sustain themselves and grow. Please use this space to let OCAN staff know what they can do to better meet your program's needs.



30. OCAN staff would like to know if there is anything OCAN can provide to local member program boards and advisory committees that would help them function more effectively. How helpful would learning more about any of the following topics be to the board of your program?

		<u>Very helpful</u>		<u>Somewhat helpful</u>		<u>Not helpful</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a	Board development	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
b	New board member orientation materials	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
c	Resource management (e.g., budgeting)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
d	Strategic planning	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
e	Non-profit legal issues (e.g., incorporation)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
f	Fund-raising	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
g	Personnel issues	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
h	Operations	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)

*Thank you for your time. Please return the survey to
Dr. Kristine Chadwick, Edvantia, PO Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325*

APPENDIX C

OCCAN Staff Interview Protocol

Staff Interview Protocol

I'm _____ from Edvantia in Charleston, West Virginia. Edvantia contracted with KnowledgeWorks Foundation in Cincinnati to conduct an independent evaluation of the Ohio College Access Network. As part of this 3-year evaluation, we are conducting annual staff interviews in order to determine what OCAN staff members think about OCAN successes and the challenges facing the organization.

I know that your time is valuable. This interview should take **not more than 50 minutes**. Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability. Your responses will be kept confidential and you will never be identified by name or role when we report the results of these interviews. Responses will be reported in the aggregate and individual responses will be attributed to an "OCAN staff member." Let me know if you would like to skip a question because you don't know how, or do not wish, to respond to it.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Questions

- 1 How long have you been working for OCAN?
- 2 Please describe your role with OCAN.
- 3 In what kinds of activities does OCAN engage to nurture the growth of new college access programs? How effective has OCAN been in nurturing new college access programs? [*Probe for evidence/rationale*]
- 4 In what kinds of activities does OCAN engage to assist established college access programs? How effective has OCAN been in assisting established programs? [*Probe for evidence/rationale.*] Follow-up: Do needs differ depending on age of program or along some other dimension?
- 5 How effective is OCAN in leveraging public and private resources (i.e., funding) in support of college access program in Ohio? What makes you say that? [*Probe for evidence/rationale*]
- 6 In your estimation, what is the likelihood that OCAN will remain a viable organization throughout the next decade?
- 7 What does OCAN do to increase public awareness or influence public opinion about college access? How effective are these efforts? [*Probe for evidence/rationale*]

- 8 How does OCAN use its experience and expertise to engage in activities aimed at influencing policy decisions regarding college access? How effective are these efforts? [*Probe for evidence/rationale.*]
- 9 Looking back over the past year, what have been OCAN's greatest successes? [*Probe for successes in internal organization functioning, sustainability, advocacy, and program development.*] Follow-up: What contributed to these successes?
- 10 Looking back over the past year, what have been the greatest challenges OCAN has faced in achieving its goals? [*Probe for challenges in internal organization functioning, sustainability, advocacy, and program development.*] Follow-up: What factors have contributed to these challenges? How has OCAN managed these challenges?
- 11 What are your main concerns for OCAN for the upcoming year? [*Probe for concerns about internal organization functioning, sustainability, advocacy, and program development.*]
- 12 Is there anything else you'd like to say about OCAN?

APPENDIX D

Member Program Case Study Protocol

Member Program Case Study Protocol

A Introduction to the Case Study

A1 Case study questions

a. Questions of each individual case

- (1) What are the characteristics of the community served by the program?
- (2) What events have shaped the program?
- (3) How is the program organized (e.g., number and types of staff)?
- (4) What services does the program offer?
- (5) What kinds of data does the program collect about its activities?
- (6) To what extent is the program collecting valid and reliable evidence on its outcomes?
- (7) How extensive are the program's connections with other organizations, including OBR, KnowledgeWorks, and others?
- (8) What has been the nature of the program's contacts with OCAN?
- (9) Does the program desire specific board development trainings from OCAN?
- (10) How aware are key education personnel in the community of the program's activities? Does this differ by the role held by the respondent (superintendent, guidance counselor, principal)?
- (11) How satisfied are key education personnel in the community with the program's activities? Does this differ by the role held by the respondent (superintendent, guidance counselor, principal)?
- (12) How aware of OCAN are key education personnel in the community? Does this differ by the role held by the respondent (superintendent, guidance counselor, principal)?
- (13) How satisfied with OCAN are key education personnel in the community? Does this differ by the role held by the respondent (superintendent, guidance counselor, principal)?
- (14) What has been the program staff's level of satisfaction with its interactions with OCAN?
- (15) What suggestions does staff and key education personnel in the community have for improving OCAN?
- (16) What is this program's outlook for the future (i.e., sustainability)?
- (17) Do program staff and board members differ in their responses to the above questions, excluding question 9?

b. Questions relating to the pattern of findings across cases

- (1) Along what dimensions do programs vary by community or program history?
- (2) What are the barriers and facilitators to effective data collection on program outcomes?
- (3) What is the perceived effectiveness and usefulness of the various types of assistance offered by OCAN to member programs? What other training do programs desire?
- (4) What program factors influence how much programs use OCAN services or the extent to which programs find OCAN useful?
- (5) How sustainable are these programs over time? What are the major barriers to sustainability? What networks do the programs have in place to facilitate sustainability?

- (6) According to program staff, board members, and key education personnel in communities served by these member programs, what is OCAN's role in college access?
- (7) What are the differences and similarities between an old program and a new program in how their interactions with OCAN change over a two-year time frame?
- c Questions regarding the entire study
 - (1) How effective is OCAN in assisting member programs with development and sustainability?
 - (2) In what kinds of advocacy could OCAN engage that would benefit the current work and sustainability of member programs, and the cause of college access in Ohio?
 - (3) In what kinds of advocacy is OCAN engaging, or in which OCAN has engaged in the past, that aids the cause of college access in Ohio?
 - (3) What factors affect the sustainability of OCAN?
 - (4) Overall, how well does OCAN function as an intermediary support organization in the field of college access in Ohio?
- d Normative questions about policy recommendations and conclusions
 - (1) What is the "value-added" that OCAN brings to college access in Ohio?
 - (2) What do the findings from this evaluation suggest for OCAN's future direction?

A2 Theoretical framework for the case study

The Ohio College Access Network operates as an intermediary support organization. Such organizations do not typically supply direct services to the ultimate beneficiaries, which in this case would be those Ohioans interested in pursuing postsecondary education. Instead, such organizations support the work of local organizations that do provide direct services. Support may be in the form of advocating for the issue at the county, state, or national level; fund-raising to help support local programs; providing training and technical assistance to local programs; developing marketing and other materials that can be used by all programs; and serving as an information clearinghouse on the issue. Because intermediary support organizations are a step removed from direct service, it is difficult to measure their impact on the organizations they serve.

As an intermediary support organization, OCAN has three strategic goals, around which the evaluation is focused. The case studies represent one of five major components of the evaluation. The other components consist of a member program staff survey, Key Informant Interviews, observations of OCAN events, and a policy study.

OCAN is to engage in program development (strategic goal 1) of the local member programs, aiding potential programs that have pre-development grants as well as assisting new programs and existing programs. OCAN also has an advocacy goal. This goal targets two levels of advocacy: (1) To advocate for the need for college access programs and funding at the state level, and (2) To heighten awareness in local communities of the importance of college and the availability of assistance for interested students. Sustainability is OCAN's third strategic goal. This task includes

activities aimed at helping to sustain local member programs as well as activities directed toward the sustainability of OCAN itself.

B Data Collection Procedures

B1. Names of sites to be visited

- a Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation
- b. Clermont Educational Opportunities
- c. The Access Program in Lorain County
- e Connect to Success in Washington County
- f Cincinnati Youth Collaborative

B2 Data collection plan

a Longitudinal Sites

- (1) LEAF: April 5-6, 2004, and two days in March or April, 2006 Three site researchers for 2 days, or 2 site researchers for 3 days
- (2) CEO: April 20-21, 2004, and two days in March or April, 2006 Two site researchers for 2 days

b. Single-Visit Sites

- (1) Ironton's "It Might As Well Be You" Program: February 2005 One site researcher for 2 days.
- (2) Lima/Allen County College Access Program: October 2004. Two site researchers for 2-3 days
- (3) Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Resource Center: March 2005 One site researchers for 2 days

B3 Expected preparation prior to site visits

- a. *Staff Interview*: All staff, with the exception of administrative assistants, are to be interviewed
- b. *Board Member Interview* At least 75% of board members who have been on the board for a minimum of 1 year are to be interviewed.
- c. *Survey of Education Personnel*: Principals, guidance counselors, and superintendents in districts served by the program are provided a 12-item survey. Advisors of the program are to hand-deliver the survey to the personnel at the schools they serve. Superintendent surveys are mailed
- d. *Document Review*: Strategic plans and annual reports are collected from each program. Other documents as found relevant by executive directors or their designees
- e. *Observation*: Advisors are observed at the schools as appropriate, without breaching confidentiality of minor students
- f. *Public Data*: School report cards and Census data on the schools/communities served by the program are collected

C Outline of Case Study Report

- a. Purpose of case study
- b Description of methodology

- Staff Interview A 1-2
 - Board Interview A 1-2
 - Survey of Ed Personnel: 1-2
- c Description of community served by program
 - Staff Interview C 1-2 or 1-3
 - Board Interview C 1
 - Census Data
- d Program history
 - Staff Interview B1-2
 - Board Interview B 1-2
- e Program organization
 - Staff Interview D 2
- f Program services
 - Staff Interview A 3, D 1, D 3, D 4
 - Board Interview D 1-2, D 5
 - Survey of Ed Personnel: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
- g Data management for activities and outcomes
 - Staff Interview E 1-5, F 1-2
 - Board Interview E 1-3, F 1-3
- h Networking/interactions with organizations other than OCAN, OBR, or KWF
 - Staff Interview G 1, 2
 - Board Interview G 1
- i Awareness of/interactions with OBR
 - Staff Interview G 3
 - Board Interview G 2, G 3 (except last question)
- j Awareness of/interactions with KWF
 - Staff Interview G 4
- k Awareness of/interactions with OCAN
 - Staff Interview H 1-8, I 1-5, J 1-5, K 1-7, L 1-4
 - Board Interview H 1-6
 - Survey of Ed Personnel: 8, 9, 10-12 (and comments, as appropriate)
- l General Comments
 - Staff Interview D 5, G 3 (last question), M 1, M 2
 - Board Interview D 3, D 4, H 6, I 1, I 2
 - Survey of Ed Personnel (Open-ended comments, as appropriate)
- m Conclusions
 - How is this program functioning?
 - What does this case study tell us about OCAN's effectiveness in program development?
 - What does this case study tell us about OCAN's effectiveness as an advocate for college access?
 - What does this case study tell us about OCAN's effectiveness around sustainability?

APPENDIX E

Member Program Staff Interview Protocol

MEMBER PROGRAM CASE STUDIES

Member Program Staff Interview Protocol

The purpose of this interview is to allow us to gain better insight into how your program operates and the ways in which OCAN may be helping your program to achieve its goals. This interview is part of a case study that will allow us to understand how OCAN interacts with member programs. I am not evaluating your program. You may not be able to answer each of these questions, especially if you have not been with the program long. Please answer each question to the best of your ability, and let me know if you would like to skip a question because you don't know how to respond to it.

A. *Personal*

1. How long have you worked for this college access program?
2. What is your title?
3. What are your duties?

B. *Program History*

1. Do you know when this college access program began?
2. What can you tell me about the history of the program? For instance, what major events have happened? [Changes in leadership, expansion / contraction, crises, awards / recognitions, new partners / sponsors]

C. *Program Context*

1. How would you describe the populations your program serves? [Probe for number served, age ranges, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, differences among sites]

D. *Service Capacity*

1. What services do you provide to this/these population(s)?

	Major or minor focus	Where offered	How gain access
Financial aid counseling			
Last dollar scholarships			
College access center ("one stop shop")			
Parental advising			
Early awareness activities			
Other			

2. [For Executive Director or Program Manager only] Please describe the organization and assignment of your program's staff. For instance, who is assigned to perform what tasks at what locations?
3. Is your program capable of serving any more people at current funding levels? If so, in what activities?
4. Would your program need anything other than money in order to serve more people?

5 What do you think are the greatest barriers facing college access programs in Ohio today?

E Data Management

- 1 Do you formally keep track of the people you serve in your program's activities? [Ask for description if affirmative]
- 2 What kind of forms do you complete to keep track of staff interactions with students and other clients? [Probe for types of data collected about individual students/clients]
- 3 Do you collect data on any outcome measures of your activities? For instance, number of students who apply to college, number of students who are accepted to universities, scholarships received.
- 4 Have you encountered any barriers or problems in trying to collect outcome data on your program?
- 5 What forms of assistance would help you to be better able to track the outcomes of your program's activities? [Probe for source as well as type of assistance needed]
- 6 How valuable is collecting outcome data to this program? And if valuable, how/why? [Probe for ways in which program would benefit from outcome data]

F Program Outcomes

- 1 What effects have your program's activities had on high school students? [Prompt for forms of evidence, how does respondent know?]
- 2 What effects have your program's activities had on other members of this community, such as adults, parents, guidance counselors, etc.? [Prompt for forms of evidence, how does respondent know?]

G Extent of Networking with KWF, OCAN and Others

- 1 What organizations do you have contact with on a regular basis that help your program achieve its goals? Please do not include organizations from which you receive training or technical assistance. I'll ask about those separately.
Organization, purpose of contact (partner, delivery or provision of service), perceived strength and quality of relationship
- 2 What organizations have provided the staff of this program with technical assistance and/or training in the past three years?

Tell me about the types of training and technical assistance staff has received from [non-OCAN and non-KWF providers]

[Ask about Ohio Board of Regents if respondent does not offer OBR on his/her own in answering above question]

- 3 Has this program had contact with the Ohio Board of Regents in the past three years?
If so,
Was this program provided with training, technical assistance, or other forms of assistance? If so, what kind? If not, what was the nature of the contact?
Has this program's interaction with OBR staff changed over these three years?
- 4 What is your understanding of the Ohio Board of Regents' role in college access in the state of Ohio?
- 5 What is your understanding of the relationship among KnowledgeWorks Foundation, OCAN, and OBR?

- 6 What do you know about OCAN's purpose or mission? [Prompt for respondent's understanding of OCAN's role in college access in the state of Ohio]

H OCAN Trainings and Workshops

- 1 What types of OCAN trainings and workshops have staff completed in the past three years?
- 2 Do all staff members participate? How often?
- 3 How helpful have workshops been to you personally?
- 4 Has any particular workshop been more helpful than others?
If so, which, and why?
- 5 What, if anything, do you think should be changed or added to the workshops in order to make them more relevant and useful to college access program staff?

I OCAN Annual Conferences

- 1 How important to you is it to have opportunities to network with other college access programs?
- 2 How many annual OCAN conferences have staff members attended?
- 3 How many staff members attend?
- 4 Have you found the conferences to be useful?
If so, how?

J OCAN Phone / E-mail Support

- 1 Do you ever seek advice or information from OCAN staff by phone or e-mail?
If so,
- 2 What kinds of information, advice, or support have you needed?
- 3 Did OCAN staff make you feel comfortable making these requests?
- 4 Did OCAN staff members help you get what you needed?
- 5 Could OCAN staff members improve the way they interact with you via phone or e-mail in any way?

K OCAN Staff On-Site Visits

- 1 Have OCAN staff members visited your program to provide you with technical assistance or to help you with a particular event or problem?
If so,
- 2 How many times has OCAN staff visited this program over the past three years?
- 3 What kinds of technical assistance have you received during on-site visits?
- 4 Were OCAN staff members as responsive as you needed them to be? In other words, did they visit when you needed them?
- 5 Did OCAN staff members provide you with the types of assistance you needed?
- 6 Has your program changed because of on-site support you've received from OCAN staff?
- 7 Could OCAN staff members conduct on-site visits and the delivery of technical assistance differently that would better meet the needs of programs like yours?

L Other Types of Support from OCAN

- 1 If you think over the past three years, has interaction between your program and OCAN changed over time? For instance, do you consult them more now, less now, or was there a period during which you consulted them more or less frequently than average?

- 2 In addition to workshops, annual conferences, and technical support via e-mail, phone, or on-site visits, have you received any other types of support from OCAN?
If so,
- 3 What types of support have you received?
- 4 In what ways did this support help your program move toward achieving its goals?

M. Concluding Questions

- 1 Are there any general suggestions for improvement you'd like to make to OCAN?
- 2 Are there any other general comments you'd like to make about OCAN?

APPENDIX F

Member Program Board Member Interview Protocol

MEMBER PROGRAM CASE STUDIES

Member Program Board Member Interview Protocol

As part of a case study that will allow us to understand how OCAN interacts with member programs, we are interviewing the board members of this program. The purpose of this interview is to allow us to gain better insight into how your program operates and the ways in which OCAN may be helping your program to achieve its goals. I am not evaluating your program. You may not be able to answer each of these questions, especially if you have not served on the program's board for long. Please answer each question to the best of your ability, and let me know if you would like to skip a question because you don't know how to respond to it.

A. Personal

1. How long have you served on the board of this college access program?
2. How were you selected to be on the board? [Probe for community sector represented]
3. What are your duties as a board member?

B. Program History

1. Do you know when this college access program began?
2. What can you tell me about the history of the program? For instance, what major events have happened? [Changes in leadership, expansion / contraction, crises, awards / recognitions, new partners / sponsors]

C. Program Context

1. How would you describe the communities and populations this program serves? [Probe for number served, age ranges, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, differences among sites]

D. Service Capacity

1. Do you believe this program is capable of serving any more people at current funding levels?
If so, in what activities?
2. Would this program need anything other than money in order to serve more people?
3. What do you think are the greatest barriers facing college access programs in Ohio today?
4. What are the greatest barriers facing this program in its efforts to achieve its goals?
5. Given what you know about this program's resources and functioning, what is your best prediction about this program's sustainability over the next 3 years? [Probe for program expansion, decline, or maintenance, stability, and reasons for answer]

E. Data Management

1. Are you ever provided with outcome data on this program? For instance, number of students who apply to college, number of students who are accepted to universities, scholarships received. [Probe for types of outcome data, quality of data, frequency of data]
2. What kinds of data/information would you like to have that you do not currently receive?

3. How valuable is collecting outcome data to this program? And if valuable, how/why?
[Probe for ways in which program would benefit from outcome data.]

F Program Outcomes

1. What effects have this program's activities had on increasing students' access to college?
[Prompt for forms of evidence, how does respondent know?]
2. What effects have this program's activities had on other members of this community, such as adults, parents, guidance counselors, etc.? [Prompt for forms of evidence, how does respondent know?]
3. Do you believe this program is meeting its goals?

G Extent of Networking with KWF, OCAN and Others

1. What organizations does this program have contact with on a regular basis that help the program achieve its goals? Please do not include organizations from which training or technical assistance is received. We're asking staff about those contacts

Organization, purpose of contact (partner, delivery or provision of service), perceived strength and quality of relationship

[Ask about Ohio Board of Regents if respondent does not offer OBR on his/her own in answering above question]

2. Has this program had contact with the Ohio Board of Regents in the past three years?
If so,
Was this program provided with training, technical assistance, or other forms of assistance? If so, what kind? If not, what was the nature of the contact?
Has this program's interaction with OBR staff changed over these three years?
3. What is your understanding of OBR's role in college access in the state of Ohio?

H OCAN

1. What do you know about OCAN's purpose or mission? [Prompt for respondent's understanding of OCAN's role in college access in the state of Ohio.]
2. What kind of interaction have you had with OCAN staff?
3. How valuable would it be for this board member to have OCAN offer training or technical assistance on board development, new board member orientation, resource management, strategic planning, or non-profit legal issues?

Potential Training	1=Not valuable to 5=Very valuable	How would it serve you?
Board development	1 2 3 4 5	
New board member orientation materials	1 2 3 4 5	

Resource management	1 2 3 4 5	
Strategic planning	1 2 3 4 5	
Non-profit legal issues (e g., incorporation)	1 2 3 4 5	
Fund-raising	1 2 3 4 5	
Other:	1 2 3 4 5	
Other:	1 2 3 4 5	

- 4 How could OCAN staff members improve the way they interact with local member program boards of directors to increase OCAN's usefulness to local boards and programs?
- 5 How important to you is it to have opportunities to network and learn about other college access programs?
- 6 What is your understanding of the relationship among KnowledgeWorks Foundation, OCAN, and OBR?

I Concluding Questions

- 1 Are there any general suggestions for improvement you'd like to make to OCAN?
- 2 Are there any other general comments you'd like to make about OCAN?

APPENDIX G

Survey of Education Personnel (Example from Lima/Allen County)

MEMBER PROGRAM CASE STUDIES

Survey of Education Personnel (Example from Lima/Allen County)

Lima/Allen County College Access Program is a member program that receives some funding from the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN). This survey is part of an effort to determine the effects OCAN has (directly and indirectly through its local member programs) on college access in Ohio. Only the superintendents, principals, and guidance counselors at schools served by a select few of OCAN's funded local programs are being surveyed. Thus, *your responses are critical, whether or not you are aware of Lima/Allen County College Access Program and OCAN services*. Responses from all education personnel will be combined and summarized for Lima/Allen County College Access Program and OCAN staff. Please take a few minutes to complete this 12-item survey.

1 What is your role?

- ☐ Superintendent ☐ Principal ☐ Guidance Counselor ☐ Assistant Principal ☐ Other

2 We need to be able to describe the distribution of people who respond to this survey. Please mark the school district in which you work.

- ☐ Allen East Local ☐ Apollo Career Center ☐ Bath Local ☐ Bluffton Local
☐ Delphos Local ☐ Elida Local ☐ Lima City Schools ☐ Perry Local
☐ Shawnee Local ☐ Spencerville Local ☐ Private School ☐ Other Public

3 How much contact do you have with Lima/Allen County College Access Program staff?

- ☐ No contact
☐ Sporadic, infrequent contact (not more than 7 times per school year)
☐ Monthly contact
☐ Weekly contact
☐ Daily/almost daily contact

4 How knowledgeable are you about the services Lima/Allen County College Access Program provides to your school(s)?

- ☐ Not at all knowledgeable [You don't know what the Lima/Allen County College Access Program does for your school(s)]
☐ Somewhat knowledgeable [You know the Lima/Allen County College Access Program but you are not aware of all it does]
☐ Very knowledgeable [You know about many or all of the tasks performed at your school(s) by the Lima/Allen County College Access Program]

5 Which of the following services does Lima/Allen County College Access Program provide to your school(s)?

☐ You don't know OR Choose all that apply:

- ☐ Financial aid counseling
☐ Last dollar grants/scholarships
☐ A college access center / resource center
☐ Parental advising
☐ Early awareness activities (students under 11th grade)
☐ Fee Waivers for tests (ACT/SAT) and college applications
☐ Other: _____

6 How effective are Lima/Allen County College Access Program's services in meeting the college access needs of your students?

Very effective ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Very ineffective ① Don't know

- 7 To what extent does your school or schools' student population need or depend on the services Lima/Allen County College Access Program provides?

Greatly needed by many/
most students ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Not needed by many/
most students ① Don't know

- 8 How important do you believe it is for Ohioans to have an organization "champion the cause" of college access in the state?

Very important ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Not at all important

- 9 How familiar are you with the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN)?

- ☐ Never heard of OCAN
☐ Heard of OCAN but not familiar
☐ Somewhat familiar _____
☐ Very familiar _____

Answer questions 10-12 if you are
somewhat to very familiar with
OCAN

- 10 How effective is OCAN in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans?

Very effective ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Very ineffective ① Don't know

- 11 How effective is OCAN in influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio?

Very effective ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Very ineffective ① Don't know

12. What are the three most important activities OCAN could *support* or *provide* that would most effectively help to increase college access for students in Ohio? (Choose three)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Financial aid counseling | <input type="radio"/> Last dollar scholarships | <input type="radio"/> College access resource centers |
| <input type="radio"/> Parental advising activities | <input type="radio"/> Early awareness activities | <input type="radio"/> Fee waivers (tests/applications) |
| <input type="radio"/> Technical assistance for
local college access programs | <input type="radio"/> Advocacy at state level
on issues of college access | <input type="radio"/> Fundraising for local college
access programs |

Please make any suggestions for improving the Lima/Allen County College Access Program or OCAN in the space below

Thank you for your time.

Please return the survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope or mail to Dr. Kristine Chadwick, Edvantia, PO Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325 Questions? Contact Kristine at kristine.chadwick@edvantia.org * (304) 347-0429

APPENDIX H

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM CASE STUDIES

CLERMONT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

(CEO)

Purpose of the Case Study

The Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) acts as an intermediary support organization to the Clermont Educational Opportunities (CEO) program. CEO works within Clermont County to provide students with direct services pertaining to educational opportunities after high school. Because OCAN is an intermediary, its success and impact can best be measured through the longitudinal examination of programs it supports. The following summary describes the CEO program as it evolved in 2004 and 2005, including its successes and limitations in providing college access services to Ohioans within Clermont County.

Description of Methodology

Edvantia evaluators interviewed staff and council members of the Clermont Educational Opportunities (CEO) program in April 2004 and December 2005. In 2004, interviews were conducted, either in person or over the telephone, with all five staff members, including four advisors and a fifth advisor who was serving as the interim executive director, and six members of CEO's advisory council. In 2005, five staff members, including the executive director, program manager, and three advisors, plus four members of CEO's advisory council were interviewed.

Length of employment with CEO for staff members interviewed in 2005 ranged from 8 to 45 months. The four council members had been involved for a minimum of 2 years.

In addition to conducting interviews with council and staff members, Edvantia researchers distributed a 12-item survey about the awareness of, and satisfaction with, CEO and OCAN. Surveys were mailed to 15 education personnel working at current CEO sites. Of the 12 surveys returned, respondents included one superintendent, four principals and six guidance counselors; one respondent did not identify his or her role. Survey respondents reported working within the following school districts: Clermont-Northeastern (3), West Clermont Local (4), Live Oaks Career Development Center (3), and Williamsburg (2).

Program Context

Basic Demographics for Clermont County, Ohio

As of the 2000 U.S. census, the total population of Clermont County was 177,977. The median age of Clermont County residents is 34.8 years, which is slightly younger than the median age for the state of Ohio (36.2 years). The vast majority of the population is White, non-Hispanic (96.6%). No race/ethnicity other than White exceeds 1% of the county's population. Clermont County can be considered economically advantaged in comparison to statewide economic figures; the median household income for Clermont (\$49,386) exceeds Ohio's median household income (\$40,956). Geographically, Clermont County covers 452 square miles, with roughly 394 people per square mile. Clermont County can be seen as two distinct territories. The eastern portion of the county is considered more rural, and residents in this area often own family-run businesses. The western portion is considered more suburban, and adult residents often have higher educations.

Sites

Clermont County has 46 public schools in total, including 10 high schools. For the past 2 years, CEO has served 7 schools within Clermont County; 2 high schools quit using CEO's

advising services and 2 new high schools were added. According to one of the advisors, the schools that terminated CEO services did so because it was difficult to measure the worth of the program: "My philosophy is we need to have a good working relationship with the principal and guidance counselor, and I don't think we had that in place in that time period. . . . Without communication flow, we weren't able to articulate the worth we were bringing to that school." CEO currently serves the following schools: Williamsburg, Clermont Northeastern, Glen Este, and Amelia. CEO also serves the following career and technical education centers: Scarlet Oaks, Diamond Oaks, and Live Oaks. Live Oaks, Williamsburg, Clermont Northeastern, Glen Este, and Amelia have been receiving CEO advisory services for more than 2 years. In addition to serving local high schools and career and technical centers, CEO has developed a presence in several local libraries. These libraries make brochures and pamphlets available, and the librarians know how to access program-related Web sites.

Populations Served by CEO

Age. Currently, CEO service users include freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior local high school students. Although seniors are CEO's main service users, CEO also offers the Making it Count program for high school freshmen and several presentations each year for sophomores and juniors. CEO also works with adult GED recipients to provide college information.

Ethnicity and culture. The majority of CEO service users are White, non-Hispanic students, which is aligned with the demographic composition of Clermont County.

Socioeconomic status. Staff and board members have not observed a change in the socioeconomic status of Clermont County residents during the past 2 years. While there are pockets of middle and upper class populations, the majority of students who use CEO's services have traditionally come from both the rural and the lower-income populations.

First-generation college attendees. According to the 2000 U.S. census, 20.8% of the Clermont County population over the age of 25 achieved a bachelor's degree or higher. A great majority of students who seek CEO's services are first-generation college attendees. A few staff members reported scenarios in which CEO assisted students who had no financial or emotional support at home to continue their education.

Program History

Foundation/Early Days

The CEO program has provided services since 2001. As of 2005, CEO has included seven high schools in Clermont County and six advisors, compared to seven high schools and five advisors in 2004.

Organizational Infrastructure

CEO recently experienced a significant transition with its organizational structure. Initially developed through Clermont 20/20, a leadership development group, CEO gradually became its own 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. However, after being independent for approximately 5 years, CEO's advisory council made the decision for the program to "come back under the umbrella of Clermont 20/20," ultimately dissolving its standing as a 501(c)(3) organization. The executive director of CEO explained:

I put together a budget and proposal for that. In doing that, I am familiar enough with the program to kind of have an understanding of where I felt we were lacking, so the structure I proposed to the board was very appealing. The decision we made is that CEO would continue to stand alone as its own 501©(3) for the remainder of this fiscal year. As long as it was fitting for [CEO] and it was working for Clermont 20/20, the transition would begin to occur to dissolve the 501©(3) and then CEO would become a program of Clermont 20/20.

The board of directors was concerned that the change might affect the program's relationship with OCAN. A staff member stated, "We were concerned . . . because that relationship with OCAN was critical, it's a critical piece of this effort." However, the staff member described OCAN's reaction to the change as positive: "I think what we found and what [OCAN is] finding is that as long as you can protect the mission of college access, and that there's not mission creep and it doesn't get sucked into a vortex of another program, then the opportunity to hook into a strong infrastructure makes a lot of sense." Council members are in favor of a closer relationship between CEO and Clermont 20/20. One thought that the change was a "good thing, to give [CEO] a little more of a home . . . with a more mature program." Another council member added that the change was the "most effective use of resources."

Expansion

CEO currently has information resource centers located at local libraries in Clermont County. While the centers are not yet staffed, librarians are available to assist students with information about college access.

In addition, Clermont 20/20 recently secured a grant from OCAN to develop a mentoring program. A staff member explained,

Our mentoring program came about as a result of one of [Clermont 20/20's] leadership programs. [The program] was very driven by the needs as expressed by area schools [with students] who had been identified as being likely to drop out of high school. Those kids had potential, but they were disadvantaged in some way, or they just didn't have the opportunities that other students had. So we began a mentoring program whereby we would recruit two volunteers who would begin to work with these students 45 minutes a week . . . on things like setting goals and other life skills.

The volunteer mentors encourage students to achieve their goals in life and to actualize high school graduation as a reality. The staff member added, "Many of these kids are going to be first-generation high school graduates." With the award of the mentoring grant, Clermont 20/20's goal is to "have a mentor team in every school where we have college access advisors." Staff believe that the relationships CEO has built with area schools will help strengthen both the college access and mentoring programs.

Changes in Leadership

In addition to the transition in organizational structure, CEO has experienced changes in leadership over the past 2 years. After the initial executive director passed away in 2003, CEO assigned an interim executive director to lead the program while searching for a new director. The interim director served for approximately 1 year and was replaced when a new part-time director

was hired in 2004. A staff member reflected, "[We thought] that person would fulfill responsibilities in the same way that [the former executive director] did in the first year and a half, and that structure really did not work." The chairman of the board met with the new director every 2 weeks to "monitor progress toward goals and objectives." A council member reported that the director unfortunately "let things drop." He explained, "It wasn't a good fit. I put pressure on her to perform." After serving as director for approximately 1 year, "she took a new job somewhere else." CEO once again found itself in transition without leadership. Shortly after the executive director resigned, CEO created a new position, program manager. This position was filled by a previous advisor, and the executive director of Clermont 20/20 took over leadership responsibilities for CEO.

Program Organization

The Clermont Educational Opportunities (CEO) program staff is composed of advisors positioned at school sites, a program manager, council members, and an executive director. Advisors report to the program manager, who then reports to the executive director. The executive director reports program activities and related information to the council. In addition, CEO has an administrative assistant who is funded through Clermont 20/20.

Program Services

Staff and Board Duties

Advisors. All CEO advisors work part-time and average 8 hours of service each week. As in April 2004, CEO advisors continue to provide multiple college access services that are tailored to each school's needs.

Financial aid counseling remains a major focus of advisors. This service is mainly provided to high school juniors and seniors, as well as parents of students. Students who seek financial aid counseling can sign up to see the advisor or attend financial aid nights offered throughout the school year. Advisors often receive referrals from guidance counselors and teachers on students who need financial aid counseling. CEO advisors also assist students by providing last dollar grants and scholarship information. Students who don't actively seek scholarship information from advisors may receive scholarship applications from advisors through the mail or at school. Applications also can be acquired at financial aid nights. All education professionals who responded to the survey reported that CEO provides financial counseling at their schools, and most (81.8%) reported the availability of last dollar grants.

Advisors also counsel students on the timelines necessary for successful college application, including testing and general application deadlines. While CEO does not traditionally fund test and college application fees, advisors do assist students in receiving financial assistance from their schools or other resources. In addition, CEO may provide fee waivers to those students with significant need. As expected, less than one third (27.3%) of survey respondents recognized this as one of CEO's services in their schools. CEO advisors also counsel parents at the school, during financial aid nights or at other college nights, and parents are free to contact advisors at any time. Nearly three fourths (72.7%) of education professionals reported that CEO provides parental advising in their schools. Because advisors tailor services to fit each school's needs, they often consult with school guidance counselors.

Compared to 2004, CEO seems to be providing more early awareness activities to high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in 2005. Various presentations and programs are offered by advisors throughout the school year, and college visits to nearby postsecondary institutions are arranged. Education professionals identified this increase in services. Fifty-five percent of education

professionals in 2005, almost 10% more than in 2004, were aware that CEO advisors provided early awareness activities to their schools.

Although CEO does offer a resource center that serves as a "one stop shop" to students and adults in Clermont County, CEO advisors and staff noted that most of their work is conducted in the schools and there is no need to access information at the resource center. This low level of use was reflected in the awareness of school staff; equal percentages (54.5%) of education professionals in 2004 and 2005 identified that CEO offers a resource center.

In addition to the aforementioned services, CEO has begun to develop resource centers at local libraries. At the resource centers, CEO offers a variety of literature on college access.

CEO has also received an implementation grant from OCAN to provide a mentoring program at each of the college access sites; the mentoring program is expected to start in January 2006. One advisor also mentioned the addition of a college reunion program. Still in development, the college reunion program plans to have high school graduates who currently attend postsecondary institutions discuss their college experiences with high school seniors. The seniors will have the opportunity to ask questions and gain a real-world perspective from the college students. In addition, advisors hope that the college students will be able to encourage those students who have yet to apply to a postsecondary program to seek information on college access. In a related vein, a few advisors also noted that they sometimes advise past high school graduates who are interested in postsecondary education.

Program manager. The program manager's main responsibility is to supervise the advisors. Because CEO's program manager was formerly an advisor, she is very knowledgeable and aware of advisor duties and can also substitute for advisors when necessary. In addition, the program manager attends a variety of professional development sessions and relays applicable information to CEO advisors and staff. The program manager also assists with program plans and development.

Executive director. The executive director of Clermont 20/20 also serves as the executive director of CEO. The director's core responsibilities for CEO are related to strategy and administration. Her main duties include supervising the program manager and office manager, communicating program information to the advisory council board, and building relationships with schools.

Office manager. The office manager for Clermont 20/20 also assists CEO with general administrative tasks, including bookkeeping and records management.

Board/council members. Two of the four council members interviewed said they were invited by the prior executive director to participate on the CEO's council at the inception of the program. A third council member said his invitation was because of his former role as president of the chamber of commerce. The remaining council member is an administrator at Live Oaks Career Development Center, one of CEO's eight sites.

The four CEO council members who were interviewed each had unique duties. The main role of the chairman is to supervise CEO's executive director. The second council member noted involvement in the committee to select the recently appointed program manager; this member also reported being involved in the distribution of awards and scholarships.

Services and Capacities

Board members expressed optimism about CEO's ability to sustain its current level of functioning over the next 3 years. Two board members seemed very certain that CEO would sustain

itself. One council member spoke of the commitment and passion of the program's board members, saying that "when you have those, you generally have success." Another reported that CEO has a positive future because of its solid financial backing. Although CEO is not making a profit, this board member added, "That's not necessary [to sustain the program]." A third board member offered a slightly different opinion on CEO's future, stating, "I think [sustainability] is there if OCAN can support efforts with grants and in-kind resources. But we need some financial commitments, and rather substantial ones, to be doing what we're doing." An additional board member could not predict CEO's ability to sustain its current level of functioning and commented that the cost for schools to participate may be a deterrent to future growth.

Awareness of and Satisfaction With CEO Services

As in 2004, education professionals in 2005 reported high levels of familiarity with CEO's services. Survey responses showed that 66.7% of education professionals at current CEO sites consider themselves very knowledgeable about the services CEO provides to their school, while the remaining respondents report being somewhat knowledgeable. Education professionals in 2005 reported considerably more frequent contact with CEO advisors than did respondents in 2004. Two education personnel (16.6%) reported having sporadic or monthly contact with CEO advisors at their schools; 41.7% reported weekly contact; and 41.7% reported daily or almost daily contact with CEO advisors. The percentage (83.4%) of education professionals in 2005 having at least weekly contact with CEO advisors was more than double the percentage (31.8%) of respondents in 2004.

When asked to rate the effectiveness of CEO services in meeting the college access needs of students enrolled in CEO sites on a scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), all survey respondents reported the highest or second highest rating of effectiveness ($M = 4.7$). Similarly, when respondents were asked if their school or school's student population needs or depends on the services CEO provides, 58.3% reported the highest or second highest rating, indicating that the services are greatly needed by more than half of their student population ($M = 3.9$). This rating slightly decreased from 2004 when the mean was 4.4.

Education personnel provided no suggestions for improving CEO's services to their schools. However, two respondents reflected on the positive relationships they have established with their CEO advisors. Said one, "More and more of our students are going to college and her (advisor) guidance is tremendous in that process." Another wrote of the same advisor, "She acts as a liaison for the [guidance] counselors regarding parent workshops, displays fantastic bulletin boards, et cetera."

Data Management

Maintaining Student Activity Records

As in April 2004, CEO advisors in 2005 maintain paper records of their interactions with students. No formal electronic database is used. As one advisor commented, "Computer written notes are not necessary." Yet, another staff member argued that paper data must be transferable. Because CEO's services are specialized to each school, standard data points are not required and advisors create their own methods of recording interactions. One advisor simply maintained a notebook roster of the names of students with whom she has met, along with a "few notes about what I talk to them about." Another advisor relied on hand written notes to record student information, including grade point average and college application status. A third advisor worked in two schools and maintained a paper notebook for each school. This advisor reported having students complete a student information sheet at the start of the school year that queries their plans for

college. Because of the lack of formal data management, one staff member stated that "more focused energy on that needs to happen."

While CEO does not maintain an electronic database, the program does plan to use the WEST database developed by OCAN. One staff member was familiar with the database, but voiced concern about schools releasing student identification information. Apparently, some schools are hesitant to disclose student information that can be electronically transferred. In a related vein, one advisor noted that some parents are reluctant to complete the FAFSA online "because of releasing confidential information."

Gathering Student Outcome Information

Like maintaining student activity records, collecting student outcome information, for instance the number of students who apply to college and the number of students who receive scholarships, is also informal for CEO. When asked about collecting data on outcome measures, one advisor commented, "I would say if we were to do that, it would be difficult to do."

While some data are collected, the majority of CEO's outcomes are determined by informal reports from students. The two remaining advisors reported that they did collect outcome data albeit informal in nature. One advisor received scholarship information through the school; however, this information was aggregated and did not specify students who received CEO services. The advisor added that she "relies on students to report [scholarship] information." A third advisor simply asked graduating seniors about their plans for college.

Program Outcomes

Despite the lack of formal data, several staff and council members noted positive effects the program has had on high school students. Two staff members reflected on instances where students who did not have the financial support at home to go to college were assisted with completing the FAFSA and were awarded last dollar grants. For one of these instances, a staff member perceived a cultural attitude particular to Appalachia that affected application for financial aid. The staff member explained, "When it comes to filling out FAFSA forms, families don't want to tell the government their business, and that's just part of the culture." While this staff member believed the attitude existed in more rural areas, she felt that "those are also the areas that need [financial assistance] more than others."

Aside from financial help, CEO advisors help students get general college information. One staff member noted that some students are overwhelmed by the college application process and need guidance. Simply making phone calls with students to seek information helps lower their anxiety, which is "definitely a positive outcome."

College visits have also encouraged students to seek postsecondary education. An advisor reported that a recent visit to a neighboring institution helped several students decide to attend college. In addition, this advisor focused on the talents of one student in order to encourage him to enroll in a postsecondary program. The advisor reflected, "Last year I had a student who decided he was not going to college. I asked around and found out he really liked to bowl. So I asked him if he ever considered going to college on a bowling scholarship. He ended up going to college and is bowling there."

Board members were also optimistic that the program was having a positive impact on high school students. Several members cited the appreciation they have received from students who have been awarded last dollar grants. In addition, council members have received anecdotal information

from advisors, verifying the numbers of students assisted and “increased partnerships at different campuses ”

Many staff and council members believed that CEO’s services were having a positive impact on members of the surrounding community as well. One staff member described an economic benefit of CEO’s college access services, stating, “It’s a long-term positive impact on the workforce. We are never going to be able to get the level of business here in this county if we cannot provide a skilled workforce.” Although Ohio is historically a manufacturing state, staff members believed that students understand the state’s changing economics and that more organizations are requiring employees to have some type of postsecondary education or training. One council member added that the program’s positive impact helps to increase the community’s awareness of CEO.

Staff members also believed that the program is having a positive impact on parents. As one staff member commented, “Sometimes it’s not that they don’t want their children to get into college, they just don’t know they can.” Educating parents on the college application process is sometimes as important as educating their children.

Relationships with guidance counselors have also been a positive impact of CEO’s activities. Because CEO tailors its services to fit the needs of each school, advisors have freedom to consult with the schools’ guidance counselors and better determine areas on which to focus. As one advisor put it, “My approach with guidance counselors is, I want to work with you, I want to help.” This collaborative approach to college access is perceived as a great benefit for the schools and CEO. Another advisor commented, “I think that the guidance counselors in my building know that I do [college advising] all the time, and they see my services there as a time-saving for them, so they can focus on bigger issues.”

Disseminating Outcome Data to Council Members

Two of the four council members interviewed reported receiving no outcome data on CEO in the past two years. One member stated that a primary reason for hiring the program manager was because the board “doesn’t spend a lot of time numbers crunching.” The council member added that if such information exists, it is probably with the program manager.

Most council members interviewed wanted to determine the program’s longitudinal effects on students who receive services. For instance, after a student graduates high school and enrolls in a postsecondary program, members want to know whether the student remains in school and if he or she completes the program. As one council member stated, this type of information is “essential to the program. Are we a success in the long run? [CEO] needs to be able to say what [it’s] accomplishing.” Another wanted to know that “obstacles are being removed” to help students stay in a baccalaureate program. A third council member expressed interest in continuing CEO services to students following high school graduation. This member stated, “I think it’s really to understand what programs are doing and [the] impact it has. Not a matter of getting [students] in, but supporting [them] throughout the time. I would like to give an ongoing scholarship throughout the years. Maybe expanding services in college [to] support them staying in school.”

One council member was interested in receiving information on the services being provided by other college access programs. This member noted, “In order to set standards, it’s important for us to know what other programs are doing. Are we as good as other programs?”

Utility of Outcome Data

Although one staff member did not know, four staff members perceived the collection of outcome data as very valuable for multiple reasons: validating effectiveness to schools, grant writing, fund-raising, and assessing program impact. Three staff members agreed that outcome data help the program to market services and potential benefits to area schools. Said one staff member, "I think that we're just going to have to have very clear outcomes that show what value it is to [schools], because it's what it's all about, what's in it for me?" Another staff member echoed this sentiment, adding that outcome data aid in building relationships with school districts. Outcome data help CEO to say, "This is how our services are important to you."

Several staff members focused on the financial aspects of outcome data. One staff member stated that to "come back with hard numbers as to what we have done" would greatly assist the program in securing additional funding. In a related vein, a staff member noted that outcome data indirectly affect program sustainability. Because the future of the program is dependent on continued funding, assessing outcomes will allow the program to "show effectiveness" and in turn, generate new funding resources.

Barriers to Collecting Outcome Data

In relation to assessing outcome data, the difficulty of tracking students following high school graduation in 2004 remained a prime concern for staff members in 2005. As one put it, "They're hard to keep track of once they're gone, especially the disconnected student." Because three of CEO's sites are career and technical centers, tracking students who attend these centers is even more difficult because they graduate from other schools. However, the advisor noted that instructors at these sites are responsible for following up with the students 6 months after graduation. The staff member was optimistic that she could get follow-up information to determine students' education status.

Proposed Facilitators to Collecting Outcome Data

Three staff members spoke of plans to utilize OCAN's WEST database in order to track student outcomes. The WEST database would provide CEO with a formalized structure that the program is currently lacking. While one advisor foresees the benefits of using the database, she is concerned about the logistics surrounding its use. She explained, "I can't see myself sitting there and completing it while I'm talking to [students]. Maybe at the end of the day, have some time for data entry." Because advisors are only in the schools for 8 hours a week, they want to maximize their time with the students. Because logistics between CEO and the schools are still being fleshed out, a proposed date to start utilizing the database was unknown.

Networking

Networking With OCAN, GCAN, OBR, or KWF

Staff and board members reported good, strong relationships with OCAN and the Greater Cincinnati College Access Network (GCAN). Staff members focused on professional development opportunities offered by OCAN and GCAN. Staff members' contact with OCAN also included development and use of the WEST database. As one staff member stated, "[OCAN] helps us to not reinvent the wheel, we can go to them for anything." CEO's relationship with GCAN may not be as strong as with OCAN, but staff members often attend trainings that GCAN provides. Staff members did not know about any CEO interactions with KWF or OBR.

Like staff members, council members reported good relationships with OCAN and GCAN. CEO's most recent contact with OCAN regarded a grant proposal request. Council members consider this evidence of a positive relationship between the two organizations. While unaware of any recent contacts during the past two years, council members did report that CEO's relationship with KWF has "diminished since initial funding."

Networking and Interactions With Organizations Other Than OCAN, OBR, and KWF

CEO has maintained positive, working relationships with the University of Cincinnati (UC), Clermont 20/20, and local libraries over the past 2 years. One staff member commented that CEO works with UC on financial aid issues. While this relationship is "still evolving," the quality is good. A council member added that two individuals from UC serve on CEO's board of directors. CEO also receives scholarship dollars from UC.

Naturally, the relationship between CEO and Clermont 20/20 is strong and good. Because CEO is now under the umbrella of the Clermont 20/20 organizational structure, the program maintains frequent, if not daily, contact with the organization. As mentioned earlier, CEO shares staff members with Clermont 20/20. Both staff and council members thought that the relationship between the two organizations was positive and served a collective purpose.

CEO's relationships with local libraries have continued to evolve and strengthen. Staff and council members feel that the recent collaboration with the libraries to develop resource centers has been very positive. While CEO has yet to staff the resource centers, library staff are available to help students or others who seek college access assistance. Individuals can also gain access to ECOS through the libraries' computers.

In addition, staff members report that CEO has a good but sporadic relationship with Student Loan Funding, a student loan lender. When needed, CEO contacts Student Loan Funding for presentations regarding financial aid. These presentations are often made at financial aid nights offered throughout the year.

Council members stated that CEO maintains peripheral contact with the Chamber of Commerce. In the past, the chamber has provided meeting space for CEO's board of directors. While no specifics were mentioned, one council member stated that the chamber has had recent difficulties, preventing frequent collaborations with area organizations, including CEO.

Contact has also diminished between CEO and 3M Precision Optics, Midland, and Batavia Transmission. In the past, individuals from each of the three local organizations served on CEO's advisory council. In addition, the organizations contributed scholarship dollars to the program. However, because those representatives no longer serve on the board, a council member stated that there is "not mainstream involvement anymore" between CEO and the organizations.

Staff and council members added that no direct contact has been made between CEO and the Ohio Department of Education in the past two years.

Perception of Relationship Among KWF, OCAN, and OBR

Only the executive director of CEO was asked her understanding of the relationships among KWF, OCAN, and OBR. The staff member stated that, while separate entities, the organizations have common goals and their "missions align." The staff member stated, "KWF has invested in OCAN and in college access and made that a priority." She added that having an executive from KWF on loan to OCAN is "really critical" because "that's usually the piece that is missing and why state member organizations aren't successful."

Council members had limited understanding of the relationships among the three organizations. While most thought the connections were strong, they lacked specific detail. One council member identified umbrella missions, saying, "KWF is funding, OBR is strategy, and OCAN is a state program to support educational initiatives." Another member guessed that funding ties the organizations together. And a third said that while information regarding the relationship was probably shared with him, it is "not as important as knowing that resources are there." One council member seemed concerned about the strength of the relationship following the gubernatorial transition. The individual suggested that the future governor may not share the current governor's passion for college access, leaving concern about "programs sustaining themselves "

Awareness of and Interactions With OBR

Receipt of training, technical Assistance, or other support from OBR. Staff and council members did not seem to be aware of having received any support from OBR in the past two years. One council member thought that any interactions with OBR may have been indirect, but was not sure. Likewise, staff and council members could not recall having received any professional development or other assistance from OBR.

Understanding OBR's role in college access in Ohio. Like 2004, staff and council members in 2005 had a vague understanding of OBR's role in college access. Only one staff member and one council member were able to provide a general understanding of OBR's role in college access. The staff member thought that the organization's overall goal is to "get younger people to higher education, since that's what they govern." The individual added that OBR does provide trainings, although she was unaware of specific details regarding such professional development.

The council member thought that OBR helps to determine "curriculum kinds of things." However, the member could not define how and in what ways the organization supports college access.

Awareness of and Interactions With KWF

Receipt of Training, Technical Assistance, or Other Support From KWF. Similar to OBR, staff and council members were completely unaware of CEO's interactions with KWF in the past two years. Members could not recall if KWF had provided CEO with any training, technical assistance, or other support. Therefore, staff and council members were not able to gauge changes in interactions with KWF over the past 2 years.

Awareness of and Interactions With OCAN

OCAN's Purpose or Mission. In addition to providing the seed money for access programs, council members described OCAN's basic mission as to serve as a "pivot point" to local member programs. Council members felt that OCAN's main goal was to "improve access for those kids that don't have the right kind of support at home." Because many of the students CEO serves are first-generation college students, "parents may not know how to do it." Another council member echoed this statement, saying, "I understand that [OCAN] gives students opportunities to attend post-secondary education who may not have the resources to do this."

Interactions With OCAN Staff

CEO's executive director and program manager have sought advice or information from OCAN staff by phone and e-mail in the past 2 years. One staff member had questions concerning the Ohio Career Information System (OCIS) and needed to contact OCAN for answers. The other staff member contacted OCAN to discuss CEO's recent transition in respect to Clermont 20/20. Communications between CEO and OCAN have also focused on use of the WEST database.

CEO staff members recalled that an OCAN staff member recently attended an open house for staff and board members of CEO; however, staff members were not sure if OCAN has visited the program to provide technical assistance or to help with other events and problems in the past 2 years. Yet, one staff member added that a lack of on-site visits could be linked to diminished communication on part of CEO. Said the staff member, "I know that efforts were made [by OCAN] to communicate or to get information to us, and it just wasn't followed up on the way it should have been. So in no way, shape, or form is that a reflection on OCAN."

CEO seems to value OCAN's opinion and has sought advice regarding the program's organizational structure. OCAN recently hosted a meeting with CEO's executive director and board chairman at the OCAN office in Cincinnati. A staff member noted that the focus of the meeting was the "recent transition under Clermont 20/20." Said the staff member, "Remembering that initial stipulation in the grant that we had to be our own 501(c)(3), and knowing that that relationship with OCAN was critical, [along with] the board asking Clermont 20/20 to pull CEO back underneath its wings, one of my first priorities was to talk with [OCAN's executive director] and to see what she thought about it." Following the meeting, CEO staff asked OCAN's executive director to attend and speak at CEO's upcoming advisory council meeting.

Staff members indicated that they feel comfortable when seeking information or advice from OCAN. As one staff member said, "It's wonderful to work with them." CEO staff members perceived OCAN staff to be "very willing to help" when needed. A staff member elaborated, "Even when I ask about something that doesn't exactly fall under what [OCAN] does, they always find other people or resources to help me." Staff members could not think of any ways to improve OCAN staff members' interactions with CEO.

Networking and Learning About Other College Access Programs

Staff members were in agreement that networking and learning about other college access programs was important to them. One staff member stated that because "nobody wants to recreate the wheel," it is important "to have an opportunity to share best practices and hear what other programs are doing." CEO maintains close contact with neighboring college access programs. One staff member recently conducted a board development workshop for a local college access program, "because that's my expertise." In addition, the program has contacted another OCAN college access member program to seek their guidance on creating a "laundry list" of services offered to schools. Another staff member commented that networking with other access programs was helpful to "use and copy others' resources."

Like staff members, council members thought that networking and learning about other college access programs was "essential." One council member thought that networking helped to "understand what the standards [of college access] are." While council members perceived networking as very valuable, a few noted that "we don't do that as well as we should," and "the difficulty is having enough time." In terms of networking, one council member thought that "it's more important to advisors to have that. As board members, it's important for us to know that [networking] is going on."

OCAN Conferences

Only two staff members have attended OCAN conferences in the past two years. As with the workshops, advisors would be required to attend the conferences on their own time because a limited number of hours are available in the schools each week. One advisor did register for the 2005 OCAN annual conference but was unable to attend.

CEO staff members who attended OCAN conferences found them to be very useful. At the last OCAN conference, one staff member attended sessions on an administrative track while another attended sessions on an advisor track. Because CEO was going through an organizational transition at the time of the conference, one of the staff members could attend only one day. Yet, staff members stated that learning "what works [and] what doesn't work" at the conferences is helpful and prevents them from reinventing the wheel.

CEO Staff Participation in OCAN Trainings and Workshops

On average, at least one staff member attended monthly OCAN trainings and workshops, though some staff members admitted not attending the workshops at all. Because staff have a limited number of hours in the schools, most felt that attending professional development sessions was not a productive use of their time. However, the staff member who regularly attends the workshops often trains other staff members upon return to the program office.

Value of OCAN workshops

The one staff member who has attended OCAN workshops has found the trainings to be "very helpful." Recently, the staff member recalled attending workshops on financial aid, volunteering, and OCIS. The staff member added that the workshops on financial aid are more helpful than others, because the forms are "always changing." These workshops "keep you up on what's current, see familiar faces [OCAN] is a growing organization but you still see people you know." The staff member suggested that OCAN post PowerPoint presentations or other resources from the workshops on its Web site so that staff members who could not attend would be able to access the information.

Perceived Value of Potential OCAN Training Topics

Council members were asked to rate on a scale from 1 (*not valuable*) to 5 (*very valuable*) the potential value of specific board training topics that OCAN could provide. Council members were split in their perceived value of board development training ($M = 3.3$). Two members considered such training helpful because "although we all think we do a good job, it would help us focus efforts and better serve." Board development training would also help "to make [the board] more cohesive." Two other council members considered the training as less valuable because "most [members] are experienced business leaders and they understand their roles on the board of directors," and because individuals are typically members of more than one board, making them familiar with board development.

All council members considered new board member orientation materials helpful ($M = 4.3$); however, one added that because council members are "inundated with materials," this training might be more beneficial in another format, such as an interactive CD-ROM. Council members said these materials would help familiarize new members with the program; one member added that a follow-up survey would be helpful to determine the member's knowledge of the program so that the council could best utilize the individual's talents.

Training on resource management was considered less useful ($M = 2.8$) than the aforementioned trainings. While some council members thought such training would help the board understand the tools available to them, others recognized little need for the training or were already familiar with resources available to the board.

As with resource management, council members did not state a great need for training on strategic planning ($M = 2.5$). While one felt such training would be useful in order to “make sure where [the board is] going based on resources,” most members felt there was “little need” for such training and that “most folks on the board are experienced in strategic planning.”

Training on nonprofit legal issues ($M = 2.8$) was also perceived to be of less value to council members. Two members felt that simply serving on a nonprofit board made members familiar with legal issues. One stated, “A lot of people who sit on the board are involved in nonprofits.” Other members stated that it “always helps to have” nonprofit legal issues training and, while it may be the executive director’s responsibility, another member would “love to be educated” on such issues.

All council members perceived training on fund-raising ($M = 4.5$) as valuable to CEO’s board of directors. One member simply stated that fund-raising training was a constant need. Another added that “people are always looking at fund-raising.” A third member commented that the “board needs to use contacts and influence” in order to contribute to fund-raising. And yet another said that such training would help the board “identify ways to go about sustaining resources.”

Improving OCAN Staff Interaction With Local Boards of Directors

As in 2004, council members in 2005 expressed a desire for more face-to-face interactions with OCAN staff at local meetings. Members stated that such contact would be helpful to keep the board up to date on new trends and the services available to their program. As one member stated, “Keeping [the board] apprised of what’s going on would be very helpful.” Issues of interest to board members include programmatic issues, best practices, and funding. Because council members may not be very familiar with OCAN, one member would like the organization to “educate us about what you have, what you do, OCAN’s responsibilities in this process.” One member added, “It’s not one-size-fits-all, what they’re doing up in Cleveland is not the same thing we’re doing here. I think you’ve gotta do what’s best for the community.” In terms of frequency of contact, council members would like OCAN staff to attend their meetings once or twice a year.

Education Professionals’ Awareness of and Interactions With OCAN

Among the 12 education professionals who returned surveys, all but 1 thought it was very important (92%; $n = 11$) for Ohioans to have an organization “champion the cause” of college access in their state; one respondent perceived this item as important with a rating of 4 on a 5-point scale. A majority (67%; $n = 8$) was somewhat familiar and 17% ($n = 2$) were very familiar with OCAN, while others had heard of OCAN but were not familiar with it (17%; $n = 2$). Figure X displays the percentages of respondents who were familiar with OCAN in 2005, compared to those in 2004.

Of those education personnel who were either very familiar or somewhat familiar with OCAN ($n = 10$), most thought it was effective (40%; $n = 4$) or very effective (20%; $n = 2$) in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans, while 2 (20%) thought it was somewhat effective and 2 (20%) did not know. The same group of 10 people indicated that the four most important activities OCAN could support to increase college access for students in Ohio included parental advising activities, financial aid counseling, and early awareness activities. Figure X displays the

percentages of respondents who thought OCAN was effective in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans in 2005, compared to 2004.

Surprisingly, most people (80%; $n = 8$) among the group who had familiarity with OCAN ($n = 10$) did not know about its effectiveness in influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio, while one person thought OCAN was somewhat effective and another reported very effective in that enterprise. Figure X displays the percentages of respondents who thought OCAN was effective in influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio in 2005, compared to 2004.

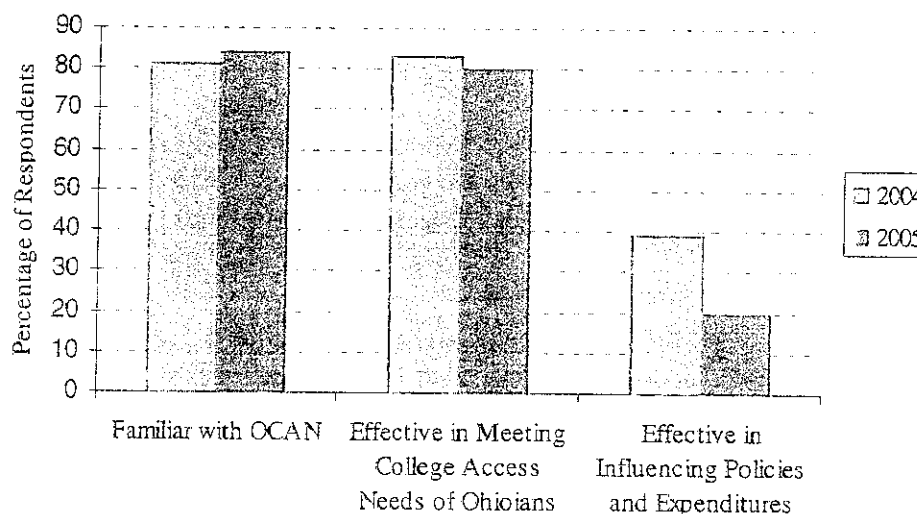


Figure X Percentage of education personnel responding to each item

Although the 2005 ratings for OCAN's effectiveness in meeting college access needs of Ohioans and influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio decreased from 2004, more individuals do seem to be aware of the OCAN name. There were no individuals in 2005 who reported never hearing of OCAN, compared to one respondent in 2004. In addition, no respondents rated OCAN as ineffective in meeting college access needs of Ohioans in 2005, compared to one individual in 2004. More respondents in 2005, compared to 2004, thought it was very important to have an organization such as OCAN to pursue the cause of college access in Ohio.

General Comments

Barriers Facing College Access Programs in Ohio

Staff and council members noted five barriers facing CEO or other college access programs in Ohio: (a) lack of funds for college access programs, (b) lack of awareness in the community, (c) determining worth to schools, (d) lack of consistent leadership, and (e) the general public's lack of education concerning need for higher education.

The first, lack of funding, was frequently mentioned as a significant barrier. More specifically, funding has an indirect effect on staffing and scholarship dollars. CEO would like to increase the number of hours advisors spend in the schools, but is unable to do so without increased funding. Advisors want to provide services to students, parents, and other interested individuals, but those services are 'very difficult to do' in only 3 hours a week. Likewise, low funding levels hinder

the amount of scholarship dollars CEO can make available to students. Said one council member, "We need some help, some financial commitments--and rather substantial ones--to be doing what we're doing."

Second, lack of awareness of CEO's services in the community was a concern for staff and board members. Not only would spreading awareness and improving communication about CEO's services help to increase the number of students assisted, but successful marketing could also increase the program's financial foundation. One council member felt that publicity would help "increase use by the students and will increase opportunities for endowment dollars for the scholarships." This member added that college access programs are a "great global secret" and that "people have to be more aware of the tremendous opportunity" access programs provide. Another staff member echoed these statements, saying, "Students are not aware. Parents are not aware. Schools don't know what we do until we do it."

Third, because CEO depends on schools to pay for their services, CEO faces a barrier in determining its worth to the schools. Said one staff member, "I think that we're just going to have to have very clear outcomes that show what value it is to [the schools], because it's what it's all about, what's in it for me." The individual goes on to say that simply telling schools about CEO's value is not enough, "it's got to be more substantial than that."

Fourth, a lack of consistent leadership was perceived to be a barrier for this college access program and perhaps for college access programs in general. Staff members thought that the recent turnover in leadership at CEO could affect the program's overall vision and message. Without a clear, consistent vision, the program has difficulty communicating and marketing its services to the general public.

Last, college access programs struggle with communicating the need for higher education to communities with a traditional job base that has not required higher education. One staff member explained, "In this area, there's a culture of saying we don't need further education. My job was eliminated at the Ford Company, [there is] no work intended for that plant right now. They see their kids working there, but that's 1,300 jobs lost. 3M is changing and leaving the area. Economically the area is changing a lot, people need more education."

Suggestions for Improving OCAN

Staff members provided few suggestions for improving OCAN. While CEO staff members find OCAN's trainings and workshops beneficial, they would like more workshops to be held in Cincinnati, closer to the CEO program's location. In addition, staff members expressed interest in getting the WEST database up and running. As always, funding is a significant need and one staff member asked for OCAN's assistance in improving that aspect of CEO.

Like staff members, council members provided few recommendations for improving OCAN's services to their access program. A few members would like to receive more information on best practices and current trends. Because "most board members have not had exposure to other access programs," they would like to be well informed of the services offered by other programs in order to improve CEO. One council member suggested working more closely with local access programs to "get the support and help that we need."

General Comments

Few staff and council members had additional comments to make about OCAN. Those who have had interactions with OCAN staff were very satisfied with the level of service provided. As

one individual stated, "We're really grateful [OCAN] is working with us. The impact that it will have long-term on the state and the community will be phenomenal." All staff and council members seemed to be genuinely invested in the importance of providing college access services to individuals who have a great need and desire for continuing their education.

CEO Case Study Conclusions

Program Functioning

During the past 2 years, CEO has grown to include more sites, advisors, and resource centers. In addition, CEO has aided Clermont 20/20 in developing mentoring programs in each of CEO's college access sites. Advisors continue to focus primarily on financial aid assistance, with the goal of helping all students overcome barriers to achieve higher education. And CEO continues to shape its services to fit each school, based on identified needs.

While CEO was in a sensitive transition period in 2004, staff and council members are optimistic that the recently adopted organizational structure will strengthen services and improve the program's outcomes. They hope that placing CEO under the umbrella of Clermont 20/20 will increase recognition in the community, as well as provide financial stability. The opportunity for collaborative projects is another benefit of the new partnership. The level of commitment to CEO expressed by the executive director of Clermont 20/20 and the new program manager is a positive reflection of the program's structural rebirth.

While CEO staff members exhibit considerable enthusiasm about the work they are doing for college access, they remain concerned that more time needs to be spent in the schools. Because some schools are experiencing growth in student enrollment, the advisors feel they are not able to reach all students in the limited number of hours available. Although CEO may not have financial support for additional staff, the program may want to seek volunteers or other alternatives to assist advisors with their activities.

Education personnel are equally eager for CEO advisors to spend more time in the schools. These personnel find CEO's services extremely valuable and greatly appreciate the advisors' presence and work in their schools. CEO seems to have developed positive working relationships with school personnel, as evidenced by the responses from the education personnel survey. While relationships with guidance counselors seemed a bit rocky in 2004, the recent survey results indicate that relationships with school personnel have improved over the past 2 years. All guidance counselors indicated that they were very knowledgeable about the services CEO provides and all maintain at least weekly contact with advisors, compared to 67% who reportedly maintained weekly contact in 2004.

CEO has experienced considerable gains in the past 2 years; however, the program has room to grow. As in 2004, most staff and council members in 2005 were unaware of the relationships that exist among KWF, OBR, and OCAN. OCAN may want to communicate such information to member programs in order to enhance understanding and awareness about their collaborative partnerships.

CEO staff members exhibited both trepidation and excitement about implementing OCAN's WEST database for measuring program outcomes. Because current data collection methods include only pen and paper, staff would like to maintain a formal, electronic system for recording student interactions and tracking success over time. However, several staff members are apprehensive that the WEST database system may hinder their relationships with schools. Staff reported that some school personnel are concerned about utilizing students' identification information in an electronic

Web-based system. OCAN will need to assist member programs with communicating with schools and students' parents that such data tracking is in the best interest of all students. Explaining the rationale for such a project may calm fears and reduce anxiety.

Finally, there still seems to be a need to educate the general public about the importance of having a college or other postsecondary education. Unlike in the past, the economic state of Clermont County is constantly changing and available jobs are beginning to demand a higher level of skill and knowledge than those typically obtained with a high school diploma. CEO may want to focus on changing the perception that completing high school constitutes sufficient education. While helping students to access college is important to CEO, the program may achieve greater results if it takes a step back and focuses some public awareness activities on answering the question, "Why access college?"

OCAN's Effectiveness in Program Development

OCAN's effectiveness in program development can be supported by CEO's success in providing college access services that assist students in attaining higher education. CEO has continued to develop, in part due to OCAN's assistance, and to become a known and respected entity in the surrounding community.

CEO has taken advantage of OCAN's numerous trainings and technical assistance, as well as providing its own trainings to other local access programs. Maintaining tight relationships with other college access programs is important to CEO, as it continually strives to focus on improving its program by utilizing others' practices that have demonstrated effectiveness.

While continuing to strengthen its services, CEO values the opportunities provided by OCAN. For instance, CEO's strong relationship with OCAN has secured additional funding for the development of a mentoring program at each of CEO's college access sites. Although CEO staff would like more time in the schools, they are encouraged by the results of the services they do provide and are optimistic that the program will continue to grow and strengthen.

OCAN's Effectiveness as an Advocate for College Access

Through CEO, OCAN continues to provide essential services that raise college access awareness to a large population of possible first-generation college attendees. Staff and board members report that a large majority of individuals in Clermont County have not attended any form of postsecondary education, therefore making their children susceptible to the same future. CEO is dedicated to helping these potential first-generation college-goers.

CEO staff, council members, and education personnel continue to lack knowledge about OCAN's effectiveness at influencing policies and expenditures related to college access in Ohio. While staff members report that the program maintains close relationships with area legislators, they were still unaware of the relationship between OCAN and OBR. Staff and council members are concerned about the future of access programs following the end of the current governor's term.

OCAN's Effectiveness on Sustainability

CEO staff and council members are fairly optimistic that CEO will be able to sustain itself for the next 3 years. However, in terms of providing services to more students, funding is still a concern. While confidence about continuing the current level of service is high, staff and board members would like to increase services but are unable to do so with available resources. While OCAN has recently awarded the program an implementation grant for the mentoring program, more funds are needed to increase services for existing activities.

With OCAN's blessing, CEO's new placement as a program of Clermont 20/20 has given staff and board members renewed hope that sustainability is possible. This new structure provides a "home" for CEO, something that staff and board members say was missing in the program's earlier days. Like OCAN and several other college access programs, CEO experienced a significant change in leadership over the past 2 years. The new leadership structure seems to have generated optimism about the program's future, and to have strengthened communications between CEO and OCAN.

LAKE/GEAUGA EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOUNDATION

(LEAF)

Purpose of Case Study

The Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) acts as an intermediary support organization through their provision of support to the Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation (LEAF). LEAF is a local program within Lake and Geauga Counties designed to provide direct services to students pertaining to educational opportunities after high school. Because OCAN's role is intermediary, measurement of success and impact can best be measured through the evaluation of programs they support. The following summary describes the LEAF program as it evolved in 2004 and 2005, including its successes and limitations in providing college access services to Ohioans within Lake and Geauga Counties.

Description of Methodology

Edvantia interviewed staff and board members of the Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation (LEAF) in April 2004 and April 2006. In 2004, interviews were conducted, either in person or over the telephone, with all 13 staff members and 15 (71%) members of LEAF's board of directors. Interviews were conducted only with board members who had served for more than a year by April 2004; thus, 21 of the 25 board members met the length of service requirement for the interviews. In 2006, interviews were conducted with all 11 staff members and 9 (50%) members of LEAF's board of directors; 18 of the 19 board members had served for more than a year by April 2006. Staff members participating in the 2006 interviews included eight financial aid advisors, the scholarship manager, the program director, and the executive director. Length of employment with LEAF ranged from 7 months to 9 years for the staff members, with an average of 4.7 years. Length of service for board members was slightly longer with a range of 1 year to 15 years and an average of 5.1 years.

In addition to interviews with board and staff members, the Edvantia evaluator was able to observe the advisor meeting held on the morning of April 3, 2006. Documentation was also collected, including LEAF's annual report, student and adult record cards, informational brochures, and a fact sheet. A 12-item survey about awareness of, and satisfaction with, LEAF and OCAN was distributed to 80 high school counselors, principals, and superintendents in the schools LEAF serves.

Program Context

Basic Demographics for Lake and Geauga Counties

Lake and Geauga counties are located in northeastern Ohio near Cleveland. As of the 2000 U.S. census, the total populations of Lake and Geauga counties were 227,511 and 90,895 respectively. The median age for both counties is a little more than 38 years, slightly older than the median age in the State of Ohio (36.2 years). White people are the vast majority in Lake (95.4%) and Geauga counties (97.4%) with African Americans comprising 2% of the population in Lake County and a little more than 1.2% of the population in Geauga. Lake County also has a Latino population of about 1.7%; no other races/ethnicities exceed 1% of the population in either county. Both counties are economically advantaged in comparison with statewide economic figures. Median household and median family incomes in both Lake (\$60,200; \$67,427) and Geauga (\$48,763;

\$57,134) exceed Ohio's median household and family incomes (\$40,956; \$50,037). Geographically, Geauga is the larger of the two counties, covering 404 square miles whereas Lake County covers only 228 square miles. Owing to a smaller area and a higher population, Lake County is the more densely populated county, with roughly 997 people per square mile compared to Geauga County's 225 people per square mile.

Sites

Lake and Geauga Counties have a combined total of 89 public schools, with 18 high schools in the two counties. LEAF serves 17 high schools within Lake and Geauga counties, compared to 19 in 2004; due to the schools' financial difficulties, LEAF no longer serves two schools (one in Lake County and one in Geauga County). Eleven of those schools, one parochial and 10 public, lie within Lake County. The remaining six schools are in Geauga County. The number of students in each school varies greatly. The size of graduating classes at the schools ranges from "around 40 students" to "around 800 students." In addition to serving area high schools, LEAF maintains a Resource Center where Advisors counsel parents, students, and other community members about financial aid and related college access issues. LEAF staff members occasionally undertake community outreach efforts. Workshops and presentations are offered to adults, student groups, and other organizational groups at the Technology Learning Center in Auburn, where the LEAF office is housed.

Populations Served by LEAF

Age. LEAF service users range in age from elementary school through adulthood, but the target population is about 17 years old, or roughly the age of high school seniors. Although LEAF offers early awareness services to elementary and middle school students, the vast majority of people LEAF serves are high school seniors. Adult student advising and parental advising is also offered by LEAF advisors.

Ethnicity and culture. Although LEAF advisors serve all different ethnic groups, the majority of LEAF service users are White students, which is aligned with the demographic composition of Lake and Geauga counties. However, advisors mentioned that one school has a large Hispanic population.

Socioeconomic status. Although LEAF endeavors to serve all socioeconomic groups, the focus is on people from mid- to low-SES backgrounds.

First-generation college attendees. A large number of LEAF service users are the first people in their families to attend college. According to the 2005 U.S. census, 23.7% of the Lake County population over the age of 25 achieved a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 21.5% in 2000. A total of 38.8% of the Geauga County population over the age of 25 achieved a bachelor's degree or higher in 2005, compared to 31.7% in 2000.

Program History

Foundation/Early Days

The Lake/Gauga Educational Assistance Foundation (LEAF) began in 1989 when a group of business people and community leaders in Lake County perceived a need to increase the number of local students going to college. The founders of the organization established the nonprofit LEAF

to provide information and assistance to students interested in pursuing post-secondary education. Incorporated in 1989, LEAF began delivering services during the 1990-1991 school year.

Expansion

LEAF has continued to provide college access services to both Lake and Geauga Counties over the past two years. Because staff and board members felt that the physical space that housed LEAF was insufficient in size, the program moved its offices in October 2004, to a space housed at the Technology Learning Center, in Auburn, Ohio. While the center provides greater space for staff workstations, it also offers multiple classrooms, a boardroom, and other forms of space for conducting group presentations, staff trainings, and workshops. LEAF is also fortunate to take advantage of the technological capabilities offered by the learning center, some of which include videoconferencing, webcasts, and wireless networking. The Lake Geauga Computer Association (LGCA), also housed in the Technology Learning Center, provides Lake and Geauga school districts with multiple technological services. Some of LGCA's services include internet connections, professional development, technology leadership, and student services support. LEAF has formed a partnership with the LGCA to develop a student tracking database to collect information on their service users.

One board member commented on the expansion of LEAF's scholarship administration, which "has been seen as a positive thing in the community." For instance, the board member reported that LEAF received a large endowment fund from his community. The board member attributed the additional dollars to LEAF's long history, as well as the level of trust that has developed between the program and the community.

Another board member stated that LEAF has recruited more business professionals to serve on its board over the past two years so that LEAF "has a better cross between educators and business people."

Although staff members discussed tentative plans for expanding LEAF services to Cuyahoga County in 2004, staff members did not mention plans for including this county in their service area.

Funding

LEAF experienced a loss in state funding for the program's 2005-2006 fiscal year. One board member approximated the loss of state funding to \$45,000. This board member attributed the financial loss to multiple budget cuts at the state level. Knowing that the program needed to compensate for the substantial loss in funding, several fund-raising efforts were undertaken. Staff and board members reacted proactively to fill the financial void. One board member explained some changes to fund-raising efforts:

We have been successful through going after new grants, different avenues of funding, plus, we've tried to step up our fund-raising. We've always had a smaller cost raffle that was just a spaghetti dinner, but [since the loss in state funding] we've stepped it up and had a nicer facility with the raffle. And the tickets cost twice as much. Just knowing that we had to do something, we've increased our fund-raising efforts.

Change in Leadership

In April 2004, LEAF experienced a major change in leadership. After 8 years of service, LEAF's executive director resigned to accept a position with NCAN. Because the program wanted to attract a leader of high caliber, it sought advice from the Cleveland Foundation. Staff from the Cleveland Foundation assisted LEAF in identifying the type of executive leader they wanted to represent LEAF and the ways in which to recruit that individual. After an exhaustive application process that included 50 applicants, a new executive director was appointed in April 2004.

While staff and board members were satisfied with the former executive director, several commented that the transition in leadership was a welcome change. One staff member stated, "[The executive director's] overall management style is different. Personally, I feel as though she is open to using all personnel to their capacity. [This is] something we didn't have with our previous supervisor. I didn't feel the opportunity for personal growth was there."

Staff Organization

The executive director oversees the organization and is responsible for securing the funding of the organization (i.e., grant writing and administration), public relations, and is also in charge of general operations and supervises staff members. The executive director is supervised and works with LEAF's board of directors.

Reporting to the executive director are the administrative assistant, scholarship manager, and the program director. The administrative assistant is responsible for bookkeeping and general administrative duties such as answering the phones and organizing mailings.

The scholarship manager manages and updates the scholarship database, which is a "collection of local scholarship offered in [LEAF's service area]." The scholarship manager also publishes a paper copy of the scholarship list and posts available scholarships on LEAF's Web site.

The program director develops and coordinates programs offered by LEAF, particularly the high school advisory program. In addition, the program director trains LEAF's financial aid advisors.

Program Services

Financial Aid Advisors

Over the past two years, LEAF's financial aid advisors have maintained the same types of services offered to service users. Advising high school seniors and their families on financial aid for postsecondary education remains top priority for LEAF advisors. Advisors assist students in filing the FAFSA, completing scholarship and last dollar grant applications, and applying for fee waivers for college entrance exams and college applications. Students can access these types of information at the schools where LEAF advisors serve, or at the LEAF resource center; individuals can participate in group informational sessions or in one-on-one sessions with advisors. Information on last dollar grants is also available on LEAF's Web site. Parents and families of students can schedule appointments with LEAF advisors to discuss financial aid opportunities; parents may also communicate with LEAF advisors via e-mail or telephone.

In addition to financial aid advising, advisors also conduct early awareness activities to eighth, and ninth-grade students. One program, HEP CATZ, involves talking with eighth-grade

students about financial aid, academic preparation for college, and college application information. Early awareness activities are offered at the schools served by LEAF.

While the resource center provides nearly all the services offered by LEAF advisors in the schools, it also serves as a "go-to" place for adult learners interested in postsecondary education. One financial aid advisor is responsible for all appointments made at the resource center.

Board Members

Board members had been recruited to serve on the board in a variety of ways. Two of the nine board members interviewed had become affiliated with LEAF through Leadership Lake County. One of these board members stated, "[Through Leadership Lake County], I heard about the need for board members in organizations and one of them was LEAF." A few board members believed they were recruited because of their positions as school superintendents. Others commented about their personal connection to LEAF. Interestingly, one individual became a board member as a result of his or her interest in volunteering. This board member commented, "I was at a presentation by [LEAF staff member], and was very interested in what LEAF does . . . and I said, 'well, I have some interest in this.' I wasn't really looking to be a board member, just looking how to volunteer."

The majority of LEAF board members interviewed agreed that their main objective was to "communicate LEAF's vision to the community." Spreading awareness of LEAF's services and information to community members is a major responsibility for board members. The president of the board of directors serves as the "main liaison with the executive director," meaning that information distributed to board members is passed by the president first for her approval. In addition, the president coordinates the executive and general meetings of the board. One individual described the board of directors as a "working" board. As such, board members noted multiple other duties in which they are involved. Several board members stated that they helped the organization raise funds. One individual, specifically, held a more active financial role, stating that he or she had a major responsibility of "reviewing, analyzing, and understanding the finances of the organization. And making sure proper controls are in place." One board member noted that he or she served as a sounding board for policies and practices that help LEAF to grow and develop. This individual also serves as a resource for helping connect LEAF to local businesses. An additional board member stated that, in general, his or her duty was to review the progress of the organization, including LEAF's fiscal status and program initiatives.

LEAF Capacity

When asked if the LEAF staff members believe that their program is capable of serving more people at current funding levels, all staff members responded "no." Staff members explained the LEAF is "serving as many people as it is funded for," and "would need more funding." One staff member noted that "schools can only budget so much for our services."

Board members agreed with staff members and indicated that LEAF is not currently capable of serving any more people at current funding levels. Although board members acknowledged the need to serve more students, doing so at its current funding levels would not be possible. One board member defined LEAF as a "pretty lean operation." Another agreed, stating that LEAF was "maximizing its return on investment, so I do not think there is waste. I think we're getting out of it what we put in." A few board members noted the loss of state funding as a major deterrent to serving more people. Although one board member believed that LEAF would be able to expand if

the organization increased their cost for services, additional staff and resources would still be needed for that to occur.

Awareness of and Satisfaction with LEAF Services

A survey of education personnel was distributed to 80 superintendents, principals, and guidance counselors at schools served by LEAF to assess their awareness of, and satisfaction with, LEAF and OCAN. Fifty-four education professionals from 17 school districts returned the survey, including 10 superintendents, 9 principals, 33 guidance counselors, and 2 education professionals who held an unspecified role.

The majority (85.2%) of respondents indicated that they were very knowledgeable about the services LEAF provides to their schools, including many or all tasks performed at school by the LEAF advisor. A few (14.8%) stated that they were somewhat knowledgeable of these services, indicating that while they know of a LEAF advisor at their school, they were not aware of all that he or she does.

When asked whether they had contact with LEAF staff at their school, 7.4% of respondents indicated that they had no contact, 11.1% had sporadic/infrequent contact, 7.4% had monthly contact, 70.4% reported weekly contact and 3.7% had daily/almost daily contact.

When asked about their knowledge of the services LEAF provides at their school, only one person did not know what services LEAF provides at his or her school. Of the respondents who were knowledgeable of the services LEAF provides at their schools, all indicated that they were aware that LEAF provides financial aid counseling. In addition to financial aid counseling, 84.9% of respondents were aware of last dollar grants/scholarships, 60.4% were aware of college access center/resource centers, 92.5% were aware of parental advising services, 64.2% knew of early awareness activities for students under 11th grade, and 86.8% were aware of fee waivers for tests and college applications. Education personnel indicated that they were also aware of other services, including filing FAFSA forms, meeting with all senior students, and offering group presentations for parents in the evenings.

Using a five-point scale from 1 (*very ineffective*) to 5 (*very effective*), respondents rated their perception of the effectiveness of LEAF's services in meeting the needs of their students. Respondents reported an average of 4.5. More than half of education personnel (57.4%) stated that LEAF's services were very effective (a 5 on the scale) in meeting the college access needs of their students. The remainder responded that the services were quite effective (29.6%) or somewhat effective (11.1%). One respondent (1.9%) indicated that he or she was unsure of how effective LEAF's services were for their students.

Based on a five-point scale from 1 (*not needed by many/most students*) to 5 (*greatly needed by many/most students*), education personnel rated their perception of the student need for LEAF services at their school. Respondents reported an average of 4.1. Thirty-five percent stated that these services were greatly needed and only 2% reported that the services were not needed by many/most students. Almost half of the respondents (41%) marked a 4 on the five-point scale. Twenty-two percent of the respondents marked a 3 on the five-point scale, and one respondent reported a rating of 2.

Data Management

Maintaining Student Contact Logs

As in 2004, staff members in 2006 reported their use of "student record cards" for maintaining staff interactions with students. One staff member referred to the record card as "the Bible." The record card is a piece of paper used to record the following student information: Name, address, phone number, birth date, where the student works, where the parents work, grade point average, and FAFSA information. Advisors also record their interactions with the student on the back of their record card. Such information may include the date of the interaction, and the purpose and general nature of the interaction. Students and parents who attend group sessions are also asked to fill out a record card. Staff members indicated that they submit their student record cards to a LEAF staff member, who then transfers the paper forms to an electronic database. However, one advisor also maintained an electronic spreadsheet of his or her student record cards for ease of use.

In terms of outcomes, it has been difficult for staff to collect data on outcome measures of their activities, such as the number of students who apply for college, number of students who were accepted to universities, and scholarships received. Several staff members mentioned that LEAF distributed surveys to their scholarship recipients in order to measure outcomes. However, one staff member stated that "it's such a small proportion of students (less than 1% of respondents) that it's not useable to make any decisions about." In addition, LEAF staff members have been unable to follow up with telephone calls. Unless students re-apply for a scholarship, LEAF is unable to maintain contact with them. A few advisors noted that they attempt to collect information about college application and acceptance at their schools; however, no formal method of data collection is utilized.

A few staff also cited that they are often challenged by issues of confidentiality and privacy, particularly since students are not required to give their social security numbers to staff. Without social security numbers, staff indicated that they have not been able to track students after LEAF programs end in the schools. One staff member stated that the lack of support from the state has hindered the measurement of outcomes. A few advisors indicated LEAF's challenge of lacking the funds to staff an individual for data collection purposes.

Although LEAF is not utilizing OCAN's Web-Enabled Student Tracking (WEST) database to collect student outcomes, the organization is working collaboratively with the Lake Geauga Computer Association (LGCA) to develop a database for collecting such data. One staff member explained, "It's our intent to mimic the K-12 database that is currently in place (EMIS), so that data can be downloaded without much trouble, and will make it more user friendly than our current database." The staff member added that LEAF's current database was modeled after the Cleveland Scholarship Program, however, this system is outdated. Staff members expect to have the new system up and running by the start of the 2006-2007 academic year.

Most board members agreed that the collection of outcome data is very difficult. Although no board members reported receiving statistical data on student outcomes, several mentioned other types of data they had received about the program. Most frequently, board members reported receiving information on the number of individuals served by the program, the number of times individuals visit the resource center or meet with an advisor, and the number of scholarships awarded. Those board members reporting that they have received this information thought that it had been presented once or twice a year, either at a community event or board meeting. Another board member mentioned that the data is provided in LEAF's annual report. One board member stated that communicating the need for such data is difficult. The board member elaborated:

"[Students] don't realize the value for us in knowing how they did and what we can do to improve the situation for their siblings or their children down the road. That communication is tough."

When asked what types of data and information board members would like to have that they do not currently receive, the majority of respondents indicated that they were interested in tracking students who have received assistance from LEAF. Specifically, board members would like information regarding students' enrollment in college, retention rates, and degree received. Board members believed that collecting such data is important to determining LEAF's success. One board member stated, "You want to know if your kids are ultimately being successful."

Staff members believed that collecting outcome data would be very valuable to the program. A few staff members commented that outcome data would support funds. One stated,

A lot of the funders and the public have begun to ask questions. A lot of money is wasted on programs that don't have outcomes at all, and people want outcome data that is impossible for the access programs to collect. . . . We need to get something in place [to collect outcome data] because funders won't fund us if our program is going to die out.

Not only is outcome data needed for presentation to funders, but, "high schools need to know that their dollars are making a difference." Another staff member added, "We've got a 15-year history, we should have data, we should be able to say what our graduates of 1990 are doing." Other staff members offered different uses of outcome data. One mentioned that outcome data "would help evaluate our effectiveness. It could help evaluate what the needs are out there." A few staff members noted the necessity of data for funding acquired through grants. Staff members believed that the reporting of outcomes in grant applications helps strengthen the program's chances of being funded.

Program Outcomes

When asked what effects program activities have had on high school students, staff provided several responses. The majority of staff indicated that the effects they have witnessed were primarily on an individual level, such as positive verbal feedback from students. A few staff members mentioned that some evidence also comes from success stories or thank you notes that are submitted by students.

Staff sites multiple effects that LEAF's services have on students. Perhaps the greatest impact LEAF has on students is helping them understand and complete the FAFSA. One advisor noted, "Students are able to get help filling out forms that are lengthy and can be confusing." While some students are knowledgeable about filing their FAFSA, "others have to be walked step-by-step through [the process]." Compared to high school guidance counselors, LEAF provides students with unlimited time to discuss their financial aid opportunities. Students have informed LEAF advisors that when they do talk to school guidance counselors, "there was not enough time to explain their situation." Even when students were not awarded scholarship monies, they have expressed their appreciation to LEAF advisors for "helping them through a complicated process." LEAF's services have also helped students understand additional aspects of postsecondary education, such as "how to register for the ACT and apply to college." In addition, early awareness activities with younger students help them develop a relationship with LEAF advisors so that they "feel more comfortable coming to LEAF advisors with questions and concerns."

Staff also believed that their program's activities aided other members of the community, such as guidance counselors and parents. The majority of LEAF advisors and staff members believed that guidance counselors are very appreciative of the services offered by LEAF. One individual spoke specifically about school guidance counselors:

I've never talked to a more grateful group. They don't have time to keep up, and it's always in the back of their mind to service the students because they want what's best for [them]. A lot of them say, 'if you weren't there, the students wouldn't get [to college] at all.' The principals say those things as well, they want all students to have that opportunity to go to college. They're on the same page as we are, they think our program is so great for their schools.

In addition to anecdotal information from guidance counselors, LEAF also conducts an annual survey that is distributed to guidance counselors in order to gauge their perceptions of LEAF's services. Survey results indicate that guidance counselors rate LEAF "very highly." In addition, several comment that "they're grateful for the fact that they don't have to know the financial information."

In addition to guidance counselors, parents were also affected by the program's activities. One staff member explained, "Often, parents would only have the college financial aid offices as a resource because financial aid is not a topic that is discussed in any detail by the staffs at schools." Several staff stated that their "financial aid nights have been well attended" by parents and students. In addition, parents schedule one-on-one appointments with LEAF advisors at their child's school to discuss financial aid options. One staff member summarized LEAF's impact on parents, stating, "Parents see us as a great resource for information."

While one board member did not know, the majority stated that they were aware of several positive effects their program had on high school students. The majority of evidence for these effects included anecdotal information, feedback from students at board meetings, and reports from guidance counselors in the schools LEAF serves. One board member commented, "I know there are youngsters from our high school that are going on to higher education that would not have."

Members of the board also cited that LEAF has also affected various members of this community. Most board members mentioned the effects that the program's activities have had on parents. From conversations with parents at various community events, board members commented that parents are grateful to receive the information provided by LEAF. One board member heard from a parent, "College wouldn't be a reality without the support of a LEAF advisor." Another board member commented, "I had a parent the other night [who] said that as soon as he gets his kid through college, he is [going to] donate to LEAF because of how much they've helped him." A few board members mentioned the effects that LEAF's activities have had on other members of the community, such as guidance counselors. One stated, "Just the mere participation of the individual school guidance counselors when it comes to LEAF programs is indicative of how we are reaching out to the community, and how effective we are." Because some schools have had to reduce their number of guidance counselors, a board member stated that these individuals greatly rely on LEAF advisors. The guidance counselors "view the [advisor] as highly trained, highly skilled, and very effective." By talking with various community members, one board member reflected on the difficulty in accessing a postsecondary education: "I see so few succeeding to college... You need a guide through the system to get there, it's like getting lost in the forest."

All board members believed that LEAF was meeting its goals as a college access program. One board member stated, "I think the primary purpose is to educate folks and help them to seek

financial assistance and to go to college. I think they have done what they have set out to do.” Another board member stated that the program is meeting its goals because the number of students served increase from year to year. In addition, the program is receiving more public recognition for its work in college access. While one board member agreed that the program was accomplishing its goals, he or she also stated that “there is so much more [the program] could do if [it] had higher revenue streams, grant money, or foundation money that would allow [LEAF’s services] to expand. In a related vein, another board member perceived that LEAF was accomplishing its goals, but the program has limited control over external issues, such as fiscal instability at local high schools, which inhibits the amount of services that LEAF can provide.

Networking

Networking/Interactions with Organizations other than OCAN, OBR, or KWF

LEAF staff reported that they received assistance from a variety of organizations to help achieve their program goals. Over the past two years, LEAF has maintained contact with all but two organizations (Business Volunteers Unlimited and the United Way). LEAF staff has maintained collaborations with various colleges and community colleges, including Lakeland Community College, Lake Erie College, and Kent Geauga College. Staff also cited funding organizations, such as the Cleveland Foundation, the Martha Holden-Jennings Foundation, the Western Reserve Junior Service League, and KWF as resources for LEAF. In addition, the Lakeland Area Counselors Association provides some funding, but it mostly utilized as a network. LEAF staff uses the online resources provided by the Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations. The Chambers of Commerce serves as a networking resource and helps LEAF to publicize its services. LEAF also maintains memberships with the Ohio Association of Guidance Counselors and the Ohio Retired Teachers Association. In addition, the National Scholarship Organization provides LEAF with information on scholarships.

LEAF staff also had contact with a number of organizations that provided technical assistance and/or training over the past two years. For example, the Auburn Career Center, which is located across the street from the LEAF offices, provides LEAF with technology assistance. LEAF staff members have attended training on financial aid from OAFSAA. Staff members consider OAFSAA a “huge resource” and “hope to have them as a partner” because they “lend credibility.” Cleveland State University has also provided LEAF with training on diversity issues, as has the Fifth Third Bank. A few staff members attended a weeklong training held by the Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

Board members cited four organizations with which they had interactions or contact with that help LEAF achieve its goals. Two organizations were higher education institutions: Lakeland Community College and Lake Erie College. These two institutions provided LEAF with financial support and guidance on financial aid and college admissions. Board members described the board’s relationship with Lakeland Community College as very strong; staff members from the institution serve on LEAF’s board of directors. The Cleveland Foundation and Martha Holden-Jennings Foundation were two other organizations that provided LEAF with support. These foundations supplied LEAF with funding for program operations and development. Board members stated that the relationship with these organizations was positive and strong.

Awareness of/Interactions with OBR

When asked if LEAF staff have received any training, technical assistance, or other forms of assistance from the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) in the past three years, the executive director and program director both responded "no." While no direct training has been received, one staff member indicated that OBR has provided LEAF with general information on state budget updates.

Staff members reported that LEAF's interaction with OBR has not changed over the past two years; however, one staff member believed that OCAN might have more frequent interactions with OBR due to OBR's involvement with OCAN in developing a student tracking database.

Although one staff member felt that OBR's role in college access was "confusing," the individual believed that "OBR and KWF were part of the formation of OCAN. OCAN's money funnels through the OBR. They are the people who get the GEAR UP money that comes in on a statewide basis." Another staff member described OBR's fiscal activities similarly, stating that OBR "basically manages the state money that is given out, grant wise."

Only a few board members were aware of OBR's role in college access in the state of Ohio. These board members understood OBR to be a governing body for college access that "sets guidelines for acceptance of students in [state] institutions," "provides leadership," and "establishes the criteria for [college] entrance and course sequence." Another board member spoke about OBR's role in the P-16 initiative and how it relates to college access, "I know one of the primary things with OBR is to deal with P-16 and make sure K-12 is an appropriate pipeline to feed into higher education to make sure they come out with the proper [education]."

The majority of board members were not sure whether or not LEAF had contact with the OBR in the past two years. One board member was aware that LEAF staff members and a few board members had contact with OBR "as part of an OCAN conference held in Columbus." Another board member reported that LEAF has had interactions with OBR for the purpose of gathering demographic data on students who pursue postsecondary education. Board members were unsure of how LEAF's interaction with OBR has changed over the past two years.

Program Understanding of Relationship among KWF, OCAN, and OBR

Staff members had limited understanding of the relationship among KWF, OCAN, and OBR. One staff member commented, "I don't know how much KWF is involved with OBR, but KWF and OCAN is very much connected. . . . it doesn't seem like [OCAN] is their own entity, it seems like they have OBR or KWF pulling on them." This staff member went on to say, "It would be nice to see [OCAN] stand on their own, without having influences on decisions that they make."

The board's awareness of the relationship between KWF, OCAN, and OBR was limited. The majority of board members indicated the lack of a clear understanding of the relationship between the various organizations. Two board members were able to provide a general understanding of KWF's role in college access, yet they were knowledgeable about the organization's direct relationship with OCAN. One board member explained, "[KWF] provides a leadership role, but they also support initiatives that may be collaboratively developed with the OBR. I am not sure how OCAN plays in there. I am only mainly familiar with KWF [in] the partnership program grants (P-16). Another board member considered the relationship to be based on information and data sharing. The member remarked, "KWF is trying to assist organizations like LEAF to have a broader array of information as a database, per say. Because the stuff that we have access to is very much from our small area, it is hard to even understand sometimes how LEAF is accomplishing our mission compared to other agencies similar to ours across the state." Although

one board member stated that he or she was unaware of the relationship among the three entities, the member knew where to access the information.

Awareness of/Interactions with KnowledgeWorks Foundation (KWF)

Although staff members perceive LEAF's relationship with KWF as positive, no direct training or technical assistance has been provided to LEAF by the foundation. The executive director has been in recent contact with KWF regarding a P-16 grant; LEAF would be involved in the planning stages with this initiative if awarded the grant.

Staff Interactions and Awareness of OCAN

Although some staff members reported attending professional development workshops and conferences held by OCAN, they stated that they are often asked to present information or serve as trainers. When not presenting, staff members indicated that they primarily utilize the workshops and conferences as networking opportunities. LEAF perceives itself as a support and resource for OCAN; because LEAF has been in existence longer than OCAN, it's able to lend its experience and expertise to other college access programs across the state. Only two LEAF staff members attend the professional development opportunities offered by OCAN; these staff members typically attend OCAN training functions two or three times a year.

Value of OCAN Workshops and Trainings

When asked how helpful the professional development workshops have been, staff members generally believed that the workshops had been more helpful to other access programs than they had been for LEAF. One staff member commented, "[The workshops] have a lot of value, and you can't really quantify that. I would not say that they're not helpful to other folks, just because they're not helpful to us. Some programs have staff turnover and need continuous training." This staff member further commented that the workshops were valuable opportunities for networking with other college access programs.

Value of OCAN Annual Conferences

Similar to the OCAN workshops, only two LEAF staff members attend the annual conferences held by OCAN. LEAF staff members were also involved in presenting at the OCAN conference held in 2005. A staff member indicated that this specific conference was "very good" and useful. The staff member stated, "It was a lot more structured [than previous conferences, but] still needs more structure." One staff member believed that the OCAN conference involved too many audiences:

The conferences are trying to meet too many agendas. They're called the Ohio Success conference and they do them in conjunction with OBR, they're doing access agendas, talking about guidance counselors. I don't know who they've defined [as] their audience. If they just left it to access personnel, they couldn't afford to put it on. I applaud their forward thinking, [but] they often put the cart before the horse.

When staff members were asked about how valuable they perceived opportunities for staff to network with other college access programs, responses ranged from "it's not a priority" to "very important." Several staff members believed that networking with other access programs was

important for LEAF as an organization, but not necessarily for individual advisors. Yet, staff members added that networking helps to assist with problem solving. One stated, "If I have an issue, I can check out and see if there is support [from other access programs], or am I standing alone on this issue?" Networking allows staff members to "share information with others. We may be missing something that other access programs do that we don't do."

Seeking Information and Advice from OCAN

Only two staff members have sought information or advice from OCAN by phone or e-mail over the past two years. The information typically sought focused on funding opportunities. Staff members have contacted OCAN for information related to grants and requests for proposals. Staff members have not contacted OCAN for technical advice or financial aid information, but they have requested details about professional development workshops and reauthorization.

When asked if they felt comfortable requesting information, staff members reported that OCAN staff have been very helpful and are "approachable" individuals. OCAN staff has been very responsive to LEAF staff members regarding requests for information. One staff member commented about OCAN, "They return phone calls quickly, they're very kind and thorough, they do listen."

Staff members were unsure how OCAN could improve their interactions with them. One staff member explained, "I think OCAN is still finding themselves and finding their role, but it's really hard to say how they can improve their interactions [with us]."

Other Types of Support from OCAN

Over the past two years, OCAN has provided LEAF with financial resources for funding early awareness activities and additional time for advisors in the schools. OCAN has also provided monies to LEAF for the program to conduct a statewide training for advisors. Other funds were provided to support LEAF's last dollar grants for adult students. Staff members noted that these funds greatly helped LEAF during its loss of state funding.

Staff members also expressed their concern regarding some of OCAN's grant opportunities. One member explained, "[OCAN] should be a little more aware of the request for proposals and the information they're asking. . . . They want outcome information that we can't provide them."

OCAN Staff On-Site Visits

LEAF staff members reported that OCAN staff visited the LEAF program four or five times over the past two years. OCAN staff typically came out in "support" of LEAF, however, and did not provide on-site technical assistance. One OCAN staff member has attended as a participant at LEAF's "reports to the community," and another has visited the program to get a tour of LEAF's new facility. Other visits were related to OCAN's WEST database.

Staff members indicated that LEAF's interactions with OCAN have changed over time. LEAF contacts OCAN far less frequently for assistance with problem solving. One staff member explained the nature of the interactions with OCAN now:

[OCAN] has become more receptive to information that we have, or ideas that we have, or things that we've developed that they would like to use. They seem more open to the idea that they need to catch up with us instead of us catching up with them. And in fact, they've

given us a grant to do the college access advisory training for the state.

Staff also talked about other changes that have occurred over the past few years. One commented, "They use to call our successes their successes . . . And now they're saying, 'here's the college access program, we're helping them or we're an advocate for them,' it's been a nice change, makes the relationship a little less adversarial."

Board Interactions and Awareness of OCAN

Most LEAF board members were knowledgeable or somewhat knowledgeable of OCAN's role in college access in Ohio. They described OCAN as a statewide, advisory organization that "provides oversight and support to access programs throughout the state of Ohio." Their role is also to "disseminate information on best practices, help develop other [access] programs, and make sure those services are reaching a broad number of students." Along with starting up new access programs, board members noted that OCAN also "helps [established programs] to maintain what [they are] doing. Board members also stated that one of OCAN's main roles is to serve as a medium for information sharing and professional development. In addition to OCAN's statewide role, board members also spoke specifically about its relationship with LEAF. One board member stated that because LEAF is older than OCAN, "[OCAN] always seems to be very receptive to LEAF and actually counts on LEAF to help them with other network access programs." Another added, "I know OCAN has talked about using [LEAF] as the model program for the other [access programs] to start up with."

One only board member reported having interactions with OCAN staff in the past two years. The board member had a brief, informal conversation with an OCAN staff member at a KWF meeting.

Value of OCAN Trainings or Technical Assistance

Using a five-point scale (1 = *not valuable* and 5 = *very valuable*), board members rated how valuable various types of trainings would be. The trainings included board development, new board member orientation materials, nonprofit legal issues, resource management, strategic planning, fund-raising, and other. The average ratings are located in Table 1. The board rated fund-raising as the most valuable training ($M = 4.0$), while the remaining trainings were rated as somewhat valuable.

Table 1. Board Ratings of Value of Trainings

Training	Mean Rating	Not Valuable (1)	Almost Not Valuable (2)	(3)	Valuable (4)	Very Valuable (5)	N
Board development	3.4	0	2	2	4	1	9
New board member orientation	2.8	2	2	2	2	1	9
Resource management	3.0	0	4	2	2	1	9
Strategic planning	3.8	0	1	3	2	3	9
Nonprofit legal issues	3.7	0	2	1	4	2	9
Fund-raising	4.0	0	0	3	2	3	8
Other	3.0	0	0	2	0	0	2

Fund-raising. Board members considered a fund-raising training most valuable. Approximately 56% of board members rated this training as valuable or very valuable. The remaining 34% rated it as somewhat valuable. As one board member explained, "Fund-raising is always an issue for nonprofits." Because board members are "tired of reverse raffles," they would like suggestions on "different ways" to raise funds.

Strategic planning. Board members considered strategic planning to be the second most valuable training. More than half (56%) of board members rated this training as valuable or very valuable. Three board members (33.3%) rated it as being somewhat valuable; only one board member considered the training not very valuable. One board member felt that such training would be valuable "to prepare for the future and make sure we keep our goals in sight. Don't try to get outside where it's unattainable, try to always have a goal to work towards." Another provided similar thoughts, stating that training on strategic planning "gives us a better insight as to what direction to go, how to plan, strategizing what we want to do, and where we want to go." As one board member summarized, "Every organization needs a healthy plan in order to move forward." Two other board members expressed that this training would not be as valuable because several board members have served on "lots of other boards" and are knowledgeable about strategic planning.

Nonprofit legal issues. Over half (66.7%) of board members rated this training as valuable or very valuable. One board member rated it as somewhat valuable; the remaining two (22.2%) rated the training as not very valuable. Board members noted that such training would be valuable because nonprofit issues are "different than the business world." Another stated that the training would help the board "make sure that [it] did not get into any difficulties in terms of operations, audits, personnel decision, contracts, budgets, or anything that could be a problem." Another board member commented that the training would be helpful because nonprofit legal issues "seem to [constantly] change."

Board development. Over half of the board members (56%) rated a board development training as valuable or very valuable. Twenty-two percent rated the value of the training somewhat valuable (e.g., gave it a rating of 3), two members (22%) rated such training as not very valuable, and two others rated board development training as not valuable at all. Board development training would be valuable for board members to help "get the most out of the board, recruit new people, and best utilize the people that you do have." While board development training could help "refine" the duties of board members, it could also serve to provide a "broader understanding of what [the board] is trying to accomplish, [and] how that plays into the bigger picture."

Resource management. Board members felt that training on resource management would be somewhat valuable. Approximately 33% considered it to be valuable or very valuable, while the remaining (66.6%) considered it to be somewhat or not very valuable. Because of their professional backgrounds, two board members felt that they were already knowledgeable about this topic and did not value further training. Two other board members thought that resource management was the responsibility of the executive director and staff members, thus indicating no need for training.

New board member orientation materials. Board member provided mixed ratings when asked about potential training on new board member orientation materials and considered this training the least valuable. Three board members (33%) rated training on new board member orientation materials as valuable or very valuable. Twenty-two percent rated it as somewhat valuable, and another 22% rated the training as a 2, or "not very valuable." The remaining (22%) rated the materials as not valuable at all. While some board members thought that board member

orientation materials would help provide a greater understanding of the board's objectives, others felt that the board already does "an effective internal job."

Other. According to one member, the LEAF board would benefit from receiving training on nonprofit financial literacy. The member stated, "I do not believe that some board members really understand how to review and critique nonprofit financials." Another board member requested an informational training session that describes the ways in which OCAN works at the state level to secure funding and how OCAN goes about determining fund allocation to member programs

Improving Interactions between OCAN and Local Boards

Board members suggested that OCAN increase communications with local board of directors. Five board members recommended that OCAN staff members conduct personal on-site visits to local access programs to provide (a) updates on OCAN's statewide activities, (b) an overview of OCAN's mission, and (c) information on how OCAN goes about securing funding. One other board member thought that OCAN could effectively communicate with board members through e-mail. The board member stated, "The more we communicate with each other, the better we [help] the student get into college."

Networking with Other College Access Programs

Board members were split on their level of importance to have opportunities to network and learn about other college access programs. Four board members expressed a great need for board members to network with other access programs. A few of these members commented that networking can increase information building and idea generation. One member stated, "Networking lets you balance what you are doing against what is happening in the state. It might spark some new ideas that we have not thought about." Another added, "As a [newer] board member, I have not been exposed to [networking] as much as some who have been around for a longer period of time." Two board members placed moderate importance on networking, stating that while it might be beneficial to help determine best practices, networking is probably more helpful to the program's executive director than to board members.

Education Professionals Interactions With and Awareness of OCAN

Using a five-point scale from 1 (*Not at all important*) to 5 (*Very important*), personnel were asked to indicate the importance of having an organization "champion the cause" of college access in Ohio. With an average rating of 4.6, the majority of respondents (65%) considered such an organization to be very important. Twenty-six percent considered such an organization as important; one respondent rated the topic a 3, or "somewhat important." And one respondent gave a rating of 2 on the 5-point scale.

Respondents were asked to indicate their familiarity with OCAN. Based on a four-point scale from 1 (*Never heard of OCAN*) to 4 (*Very familiar with OCAN*), the average familiarity was 2.1. Seventeen percent had never heard of OCAN, 59% had heard of OCAN but were not familiar with it, and 22% were somewhat familiar; no respondents reported being very familiar with OCAN.

Those personnel who were somewhat or very familiar with OCAN ($N = 12$) were asked to rate its effectiveness in meeting the college access needs of Ohioans and influencing policies related to college access. Respondents rated OCAN's effectiveness in meeting the college access need of Ohioans as somewhat effective, or a 3.6 on a 5-point scale from 1 (*Very ineffective*) to 5 (*Very effective*); fifty percent of the respondents considered OCAN to be effective or very effective in

meeting the college access need of Ohioans, and the remaining 50% said OCAN was somewhat effective. Respondents provided an average rating of 3.3 for OCAN's effectiveness in influencing policies related to college access. Thirty-eight percent of respondents considered OCAN to be effective or very effective in influencing policies and expenditures related to college access, and 38% reported OCAN was somewhat effective; twenty-five percent reported that OCAN was not very effective.

In addition, these respondents were asked to indicate the three most important activities OCAN could support or provide. The most important activities included financial aid counseling ($n = 8$), parental advising activities ($n = 7$), technical assistance for local college access programs ($n = 5$), and advocacy at the state-level ($n = 5$). Detailed results are located in Table 2.

Table 2. Number and Percentage Rating Each Activity as One of the Three Most Important Activities OCAN Could Support or Provide ($N = 12$)

Activity	Number	Percent
Financial aid counseling	8	66.7
Parental advising	7	58.3
Technical assistance for access programs	5	41.7
State-level advocacy	5	41.7
Early awareness activities	3	25.0
Fund-raising for college access programs	2	16.7
Last dollar grants/scholarships	2	16.7
College access resource centers	2	16.7
Fee waivers	1	8.3

General Comments

Barriers Facing College Access Programs

Staff members identified several barriers facing college access programs in Ohio. Most frequently mentioned barriers was funding, public awareness, support from schools, and outcome measures. While several staff members felt that funding is always an issue, one believed that "funding can be overcome" if outcome measures and credibility exist. Regarding public awareness, one staff member commented, "What is always a challenge is to educate the general public that we're here and what our services are." Lack of school support was also perceived as a barrier, specifically because students are allotted little time throughout their school day to meet with a LEAF advisor.

Board members reiterated barriers facing LEAF and other college access programs that were identified by staff members. Commonly listed barriers included funding, community awareness of the issue, and measuring outcomes. Board members most often listed funding as the primary or "number one challenge" facing college access programs. While one board member described funding as a "problem for most nonprofits," another stated that depleted fiscal resources "limit the number of students impacted by the program." In addition, one board member believed that "more statewide funding" should acknowledge the need for college access programs.

Board members frequently identified lack of awareness as a second major barrier facing college access programs. Several staff members mentioned the need for parents, students, and the community in general to be knowledgeable about the services provided by LEAF. One board member commented specifically about parents, stating "Parent perception of higher education and

what it takes to prepare students to access student education can be a barrier. Sometimes parents don't think about it until graduation."

According to a few board members, measuring student outcomes is a great challenge for college access programs. For instance, confidentiality laws "make it difficult to gather the data to understand how our students are doing and to better serve our students." In addition to measuring effectiveness, another board member commented that data collection is important for supporting funding opportunities. Although board members recognize the challenges surrounding data collection, they are aware that "funders want to know the statistics."

Finally, one board member identified the factor of trust as a barrier facing college access programs. This board member posited that college access programs struggle to develop trust with parents, school guidance counselors, and community members. These groups want to ascertain that college access programs are providing "accurate information."

Suggestions and Comments Related to OCAN and LEAF

Staff members. Several (6) of the staff members interviewed did not have suggestions or comments related to OCAN; most of these staff members reported not being familiar enough with OCAN to provide suggestions. Other staff members offered their suggestions, which focused on fund-raising and credibility.

One staff member envisioned OCAN's role as the "advocate for college access." This individual wants OCAN to help build credibility for college access programs on a statewide level. Moreover, the staff member suggested that OCAN "raise money on a state or regional basis. . . . I'd rather have them get the money than OBR." OCAN needs to go after the big corporations for dollars that access programs "can't touch," such as companies like Kellogg, Lily, and Coca-Cola.

Additional comments regarding OCAN focused on the need for OCAN to utilize LEAF's services. One staff member stated, "I want OCAN to realize what a resource we are." Another mentioned, "As an individual organization, we work very hard on our programs, and they need to catch up with us and not us with them. And they know this. It's going to take some time for them to offer training or other types of assistance that we can benefit from."

Board members. Although three board members did not have suggestions for OCAN, others provided recommendations related to increasing OCAN's communication with local college access boards of directors. In order to "make their presence more known," one board member suggested inviting OCAN staff members to speak at a board member dinner. Other board members suggested that these visits could inform them about OCAN's plans for enhancing college access for students.

Another board member sought information about OCAN's financial status. The board member recalled visiting OCAN's Web site, "One of my concerns was I was able to find the budgets for a lot of the college access programs, but I didn't find their [OCAN's] budget. . . . I wanted to find out how much money they were getting from the state and where that money is being spent."

When asked to comment about OCAN, a few board members spoke of OCAN's importance to college access programs. One board member commented specifically about OCAN's leadership, stating "I think the new executive director is much more proactive and tries to sort out resources to help and find ways to improve the organization." Another stated, "I think OCAN has been a good partner to us, helping us out." However, this board member wanted OCAN to utilize LEAF as a resource for assisting other college access programs. Other board member comments focused

primarily on LEAF. One remarked, "I think that LEAF serves a vital function and I think we've got a great program going in our access model, and we just need to continue to look for ways to make that better." Another summarized, "[LEAF] is a good organizations, its good people, [and] serves a good purpose. I don't think we try to overstate what we do. We try to help people, and that's the main thing."

Education professionals comments. Nine of the 54 personnel surveyed made comments or suggestions for improving LEAF. Two respondents suggested that LEAF advisors spend more than two days a week at their schools. One respondent suggested that LEAF provide local scholarship information in a Web-based format. This respondent also wanted business cards from LEAF advisors to pass along to students. A fourth respondent suggested that LEAF conduct more advertising about its services. Additional help on the FAFSA form was suggested by another respondent. One respondent commented that he or she had had little contact with the LEAF advisor at the high school. Two other respondents reported positive feedback about LEAF's services. One stated, "The program [LEAF] meets the needs of students where I may not be able to as the only counselor." Another commented, "The current services are really helpful to all involved."

Conclusions

Program Functioning

It is clear that LEAF services have been implemented and integrated into various high schools through various output data and annual reports. Aside from anecdotal evidence, however, there is a lack of outcome data to assess the impact that these programs have on students after LEAF advisors end their programs within the schools. Attempts have been made to collect such data via student surveys, but the data lacks strength in numbers and is therefore inadequate to draw any conclusive results. LEAF is collaborating with the Lake Geauga Computer Association to develop a tracking database that will allow staff members to collect information on students regarding services received and postsecondary information. Although no formal outcome data exists on the program's activities, staff and board members believe that LEAF is having a positive effect on those students who would not typically have access to higher education.

As in 2005, board and staff members in 2006 stated that LEAF services are functioning at capacity, as funding constraints prohibit LEAF from extending their services to other schools or populations.

OCAN's Effectiveness in Program Development

Although it is clear that LEAF programs have been implemented and are functional, OCAN's effectiveness in program development may be improved by re-defining the relationship between OCAN and LEAF. Because LEAF leaders believe that their college access program is far more advanced and experienced than OCAN itself, the organizations should clarify their roles and functions regarding the impact each has on the other. In terms of professional development, OCAN should utilize LEAF to its full capacity for assisting other college access programs throughout the state of Ohio. In addition, LEAF advisors have little to no relationship with OCAN; except for staff visits from OCAN at community events, LEAF advisors have not received technical assistance or professional development from OCAN. LEAF leaders reported utilizing OCAN's workshops and trainings primarily for networking purposes, and not for the acquisition of new information.

Because LEAF advisors have had little to no interactions with OCAN, they are generally unaware of OCAN's responsibilities or role in program development. However, LEAF leaders

communicated that the advisors have received professional development from other college access organizations and likely are more familiar with these organizations. Thus, researchers gleaned that LEAF leaders may perceive OCAN as a less valuable entity for LEAF advisors than other college access organizations. Although several LEAF advisors were aware that LEAF leaders maintained interactions with OCAN, they were unsure what types of communication occurred between the two organizations. By defining the role LEAF and OCAN serve between each other, LEAF advisors may better understand the purpose of the relationship.

LEAF's collaborative partnership with the Lake Geauga Computer Association has placed them one step closer to collecting and measuring outcome data on service users. Data from this database will be able to assess whether the program is effectively addressing students' college access needs. Utilizing this information will allow OCAN to better address program design and development for LEAF as well as other college access programs.

OCAN's Effectiveness Around Sustainability

In terms of financial resources, OCAN has effectively supported LEAF's sustainability over the past year. When LEAF experienced a loss of state funding, OCAN was able to help LEAF recover a portion of the depleted funds. With these funds, LEAF was able to sustain program services, including early awareness activities.

Although OCAN assisted LEAF during its financial constraints, LEAF's budget still does not allow enough time for advisors to serve all students in the high schools. Because school budgets are limited, LEAF can only provide an advisor part-time in each school, which prevents the program from reaching all students. Without more secure and continuous funding, staff and board members believe that LEAF will not be able to expand its services. Thus, funding efforts need to be enhanced in order to help the sustainability and growth of OCAN and local college access programs.

OCAN's Effectiveness as an Advocate for College Access

More so than in previous years, LEAF staff members believe that OCAN is serving as an advocate for college access. For instance, OCAN has promoted the successes of college access programs, rather than attributing their successes to OCAN itself. However, LEAF staff members would like OCAN to enhance its role as an advocate for college access. On a statewide level, OCAN should help to promote the credibility and value of college access programs across the state. OCAN can then utilize this credibility platform to increase fund-raising efforts.

APPENDIX I

PROGRAM EVALUATION STANDARDS CHECKLIST

Program Evaluation Standards Checklist

To interpret the information provided on this form, the reader needs to refer to the full text of the standards as they appear in Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, *The Program Evaluation Standards* (1994), Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage. The Standards were consulted and used as indicated in the table below (check as appropriate):

Descriptor	The Standard was addressed	The Standard was partially addressed	The Standard was not addressed	The Standard was not applicable
U1 Stakeholder Identification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
U2 Evaluation Credibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
U3 Information Scope and Selection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
U4 Values Identification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
U5 Report Clarity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
U6 Report Timeliness and Dissemination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
U7 Evaluation Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
F1 Practical Procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
F2 Political Viability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
F3 Cost Effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P1 Service Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P2 Formal Agreements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P3 Rights of Human Subjects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P4 Human Interactions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P5 Complete and Fair Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P6 Disclosure of Findings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P7 Conflict of Interest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
P8 Fiscal Responsibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A1 Program Documentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A2 Context Analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A3 Described Purposes and Procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A4 Defensible Information Sources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A5 Valid Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A6 Reliable Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A7 Systematic Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A8 Analysis of Quantitative Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A9 Analysis of Qualitative Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A10 Justified Conclusions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A11 Impartial Reporting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
A12 Metaevaluation				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The Program Evaluation Standards (1994, Sage) guided the development of this (check one):

- ☐ request for evaluation plan/design/proposal
☐ evaluation plan/design/proposal
☐ evaluation contract
☒ evaluation report

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(e.g., author of document, evaluation team leader external auditor, internal auditor)