

## Community Outreach Fund

The Empire State College Community Outreach Fund exists to support activities undertaken primarily by the college's regional centers that increase participation in and access to college programs, particularly by current and potential students from underserved and underrepresented populations.

The college's Affirmative Action Committee, which is appointed by the president, manages the Community Outreach Fund. Proposals are submitted to the college's Affirmative Action Officer, Mary Caroline Powers, by e-mail on or before the first day of each month and then distributed to committee members for consideration.

Committee members will confer on the merits of each proposal during the first week of each month. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decision during the third week of the month. A regional center may apply for a total of \$5,000 in grants in a fiscal year, for one or more activities. Most expenses associated with an activity will be reimbursed upon submission of receipts. When pre-activity funding is needed, applicants should apply at least a month in advance of the time when the funds will be required.

Proposals should be for activities that increase awareness of educational opportunities at Empire State College among members of underserved and underrepresented populations. Each proposal submitted should be specific about the intended audience, details of the activity, the timeline for events and the desired outcomes.

To be eligible to apply for funding in future funding cycles, center staff members who worked on the outreach initiative must submit a brief evaluation of the activity that describes what worked and what didn't work, and compares actual outcomes to intended outcomes.

These reports will be posted on the Affirmative Action page on the college's internal web site with the description and budget for each funded activity and be available for the entire college community to develop a better understanding of which outreach activities are effective and which are not.

The college's 2006-2010 Strategic Plan identifies four strategic initiatives; one is to embrace diversity with the goal of making Empire State College among the most open and diverse institutions in the State University of New York.

The Community Outreach Fund was established to help achieve that goal by localizing efforts to reach diverse populations and increase their access to postsecondary education, raise awareness within the college about barriers faced by specific demographic groups, and document efforts across the college to reduce those barriers. As a public institution committed to access, this is one of many initiatives the college can undertake to connect to the many diverse communities in the state and nation.

*(revised May 2008)*