

ParentLink is seeking \$25,000 in seed money to create a student-centered project called **Student-Parent Success**. The goal of Student-Parent Success is to enable student parents to: problem-solve based on interpersonal interactions, learn from academic resources, and to both access and discover community resources in order to enhance their educational experience while promoting better familial interaction in the face of academic needs. Recent research shows that student-parents, while gaining support from family, experience higher rates of attrition and life-stress (Scott, Burns & Cooney, 1996). This is why we at ParentLink believe that there is a need for an intervention concerning student-parents, which is an underserved audience on all college campuses.

Student-Parent Success will be student designed and enacted under the guidance of faculty and staff. Therefore, we foresee this project developing out of an interface between ParentLink and the College of Education as guided by an advisory council made up of a diverse sample of student networks such as PIC (Parents in College), Residential Life, and the Student Parent Center, which is a full-service child care facility available to student parents who attend the University of Missouri. Furthermore, we have the intention and are currently pursuing future associations with valuable departments like the School of Journalism, Division of Information Technology Services, and the Art Department. The advisory council will act as a conduit for information and direction, and meet on a regular basis with project coordinators. **Student-Parent Success** will acquire matching funds, as shown on the attached budget.

We intend to provide measurable results within one year, wherein we expect to have successfully designed and implemented the project, a highly interactive and exciting university-maintained webpage. The **Student-Parent Success** website will already have a strong foundation due to its connection with the Student Parent Center and their inspiring efforts to establish such a website. Furthermore, this program will demonstrate the University of Missouri's pioneering and leadership in innovative teaching, research, and service with the support of information technology.

The Student-Parent Success website will be **professionally guided** and will promote student-parents acting as **e-mentors** to one another forming an online community by way of a moderated forum. Here, student-parents may discuss issues like parenting, time management, stress/coping, learning, and academic skills. Using this **professionally guided e-mentoring forum** student-parents will create a rapport with each other while helping each other in the process. For example, a student-parent may begin a conversation about finding a child-friendly establishment to study while their children are supervised and set up a play-date/study session with other parents who are part of the online community.

To enhance the website, a breadth of **the most current research-based information** will be compiled and made available to aide student-parents in making sound decisions regarding the balance between family needs and academic needs. An example might be a summary of an article on effective learning strategies for students with limited time resources, as is often the

case being a student-parent. **Research-based resources** will be updated by both students and faculty involved in running the project. Also, a list of **local resources** will be created, maintained, and divided into community specific links on the website, wherein both on-campus project coordinators and student-parents can add to the list for their community. The website will also have access to ParentLink's toll-free WarmLine. The WarmLine gives parents access to information, resources, and support. All parents, including student-parents served by this project, are encouraged to utilize WarmLine services.

Podcasts will be created to supplement the moderated forum, increasing the salience of available state and local resources to student-parents; whereby the simple act of seeing another individual enhances the feeling of an online community. The **podcasts** will be distributed on a bi-monthly basis via the website and will cover a wide range of topics that the student-parents in the program submit to the website. For example, if a topic such as learning ways to relax in the midst of a stressful academic and/or familial situation is requested, a licensed professional counselor from the community may describe practical coping techniques on the **podcast**.

The final objective of Student-Parent Success is to **provide access to student-parents on all University of Missouri system campuses and neighboring non-University of Missouri campuses**. In collaboration with the School of Journalism, the Art Department and the Division of Internet Technology services, advertisements for both the UM system campuses and non-UM system campuses will be created. For example, an advertisement may be collaboratively designed with the School of Journalism and Art Department, but then advertised through the Division of Internet Technology services by using the weekly Wednesday mass list-serve or other university website forums.

Therefore, given the potential results of the Student-Parent Success project, we foresee the improvement of teaching and learning, improving access to learning materials, increasing retention, promoting success in courses, and encouraging student learning beyond the classroom based on the availability of research-based information, pertinent resources, and podcasts on the Student-Parent Success website. Furthermore, we believe that the forum on the Student-Parent Success website will increase student engagement and promote peer involvement and tutoring through multi-campus dialoging and e-mentoring.