

BUSINESS PLAN
OF
EUREKA STREET CORPORATION
a Texas nonprofit corporation

1 Executive Summary

Many undergraduates at Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) do not send the best application possible when applying to top graduate programs. Often this is due to lack of mentorship and a limited professional network. At the same time, many scientific ideas do not reach the public because they are written in technical language. We will match undergraduate students at MSIs and other underserved schools with mentors who will help with their application materials. The corporation will pay the application fees for up to two programs. The students will be asked to translate a scientific paper of their choosing into plain English that will be publicly available on the internet and the corporation will directly contact the appropriate principal investigators to showcase the writing as evidence of the interest in the group and understanding of the science being done by the principal investigator. This will increase the chances of the students of being admitted to top programs.

2 Opportunity

There are talented undergraduate students at minority serving institutions (MSI) who can excel at top graduate programs but do not submit the strongest application possible due to lack of mentoring. They also have limited access to a professional network that includes students and professors at those schools or who are known to professors at top schools. At the same time, exciting scientific ideas that can be understood by non-experts abound but rarely escape the pages of scientific papers that are read by professionals working in the field. We will provide access to mentoring and connections to students at MSI and other underserved schools in exchange for rewriting a scientific paper of their choosing in plain English. A percentage of our mentees will be international.

3 Execution

We will build an online hub to connect undergraduate students at MSIs interested in applying for graduate school at top programs with mentors who will provide detailed feedback about every part of the application, including personal and research statements. The students will have the opportunity to translate scientific articles of their choosing into plain English in exchange for the Corporation to pay the application fee at up to two graduate programs. Translating articles out of the group(s) they are interested in joining is encouraged. Officers and volunteers of the Corporation will use their professional network to personally contact the head of the group in which each student is interested in joining and will let her or him know both of the interest of the student and the article(s) that the student rewrote in plain English. Translated articles will be available to the public on our online hub and other appropriate online publishing platforms and will be used as evidence of the interest, commitment, and abilities of the student. We understand that science is an international affair and we expect 10-20% of our mentees to come from countries outside the US.

Our pilot will start in the Fall of 2018 and we will start mentoring students applying for graduate school in physics and chemistry to programs with deadlines in December 2018 or early 2019. We expect to mentor about two dozen students during our pilot. Depending on the response, we will expand our operation in 2019 to summer research programs, to additional fields, and to a larger number of mentees. We will keep track of our results and will compile an annual report.

We will utilize existing communication channels established by science organizations such as the American Physical Society (APS), the American Chemical Society (ACS), the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), the National Society of Hispanic Physicists (NSHP), the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP), etc. to put the word out about our project. We expect mentors to be recruited mainly by word-of-mouth, but also be able to join as volunteers using our online hub.

4 Team and company

We will leverage our connections and reputation. Prof. Jorge Lopez, recipient of the 2018 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (the highest national mentoring award bestowed by the White House) is part of our Board, for example. Another Member of the Board, Prof. Jorge Munoz, is a member-at-large of the Forum on Physics and Society of the APS. The Members of the Board also have a good relationship with SACNAS, NSHP, and NSBP. A friend of the organization, Prof. Luis Echegoyen, has been active in ACS leadership and is currently running to become President-elect of that organization.

5 Financial plan

We will raise money for our pilot on online platforms such as gofundme.com and we will accept donations which eventually will be tax deductible. The main expense will be paying application fees, although we expect that many graduate programs will waive the fee for our mentees after assessing their seriousness and hearing about our program. Webhosting fees are low and the website will be built by one of our officers at no cost. Administrative fees will be kept at a minimum and include things such as taxes and bookkeeping. One of our Board members is a lawyer and will provide legal help. We anticipate \$2,500 to be enough for the pilot part.

If we are to expand the program, expenses will naturally increase and we will need professional website design, contractors to handle fiscal and legal aspects of the business, etc. In addition to online donations, we will apply for grants from government agencies and from charitable foundations.