



June 30, 2009

Barry Ballard, President
Sharon Seals, Team Leader
Ouachita Technical College
P.O. Box 816
Malvern, AR 24115

Dear President and Team Leader:

Thank you for the report on your Achieving the Dream activities and expenditures. MDC has completed a review of the report, approved it, and recommended to the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation that the next installment of funding be released. If you have not already received this payment, you can expect to receive it very soon.

The report helped us better understand the challenges your college faces and the progress you are making toward increasing student success.

We are encouraged by several things including:

Committed Leadership

- The commitment shown by the president, administrators, faculty, and staff to student success and closing achievement gaps.
- An increased focus on student success.

Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services

- The use of disaggregated, longitudinal data in institutional decision-making.



Broad Engagement

- The involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders in decision making.
- Professional development for faculty and staff.

Systemic Institutional Improvement

- The growing culture of evidence at your institution.
- The increased capacity of the institutional research office.

Based on your report and our observations of your work over the past year, we urge you to pay special attention to the following issues in the coming year. Your data facilitator and coach can help you address these challenges.

Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services

- Continue to strengthen the institution's IR capacity so it can be responsive to requests for information and generate useful information for institutional decision-making.
- Assure that adequate IT systems are in place to allow for user-friendly retrieval and analysis of data.
- Increase sample size of interventions to accurately assess results.

Broad Engagement

- Further strengthen plans for sustained community, staff, student, and faculty engagement.
- Further involve faculty and student services staff on committees concerned with student success.



- Continue to encourage dialogue among different areas and stakeholders at the institution and in the greater community.

Systemic Institutional Improvement

- Continue to strengthen plans to scale up and/or institutionalize successful interventions.
- Further reallocate institutional funds to continue student success interventions that are shown to be successful.

Since Ouachita Technical College is moving into its 2nd year of implementation, you should expect up to 9 days assistance from your coach and 9 days assistance from your data facilitator in the coming year. While you will receive fewer days of technical assistance from your data facilitator and coach, this does not reflect a reduction in their commitment, or ours, to support your Achieving the Dream work. Both will continue to participate in the annual Strategy Institute, providing another opportunity to lend support and advice.

In order to maintain uniformity in your budget format and line items, please use the 2009 financial report in all Achieving the Dream budgetary matters. If the college needs to revise any line item by more than 10 percent, and that line item is greater than \$5,000, the college must seek advance approval from MDC. At the end of this fiscal year, any remaining funds may be carried over into the next year's budget while staying in the line item. Any deviation needs advance approval from MDC. Please contact ATD@mdcinc.org for more information.



Thank you for your leadership in Achieving the Dream. We especially commend Ouachita Technical College's courage in identifying and addressing the achievement gap between African American male students and the rest of the student population.

We look forward to another year of collaboration with you and to seeing you at the 2010 Strategy Institute.

Sincerely,

Carol A. Lincoln

Cc: John Brockman, Coach
Mike Flores, Data Facilitator
Terri Smith, MDC Inc.
Bill Rahn, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation