

**Midwestern State University  
Legislative Appropriations Request  
Exceptional Item Funding Requests  
Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017**

**I. Academic Expansion and Revitalization Project – Capital Funding**

Midwestern State University (MSU) requests capital funding in the amount of \$73 million to provide expanded and revitalized academic space. This request was developed following an in-depth master plan study that analyzed existing campus space and academic requirements. This capital request includes a new building for the Gunn College of Health Science and Human Services, including an annex for athletic training and exercise physiology. Enrollment in the Gunn College of Health Sciences and Human Services represents 39% of the university's total student population while existing facilities provide less than one-half of the needed space when compared to similar colleges at Texas peer institutions. A new 98,500 gross square foot (GSF) building would accommodate programs in respiratory care, radiologic sciences, social work, nursing, and dental hygiene, as well as the Dental Hygiene Clinic, the Simulation Center, and multiple classrooms and health sciences laboratories at an estimated cost of \$49 million. A \$12 million, 25,750 GSF Health Sciences and Human Services Annex Building would accommodate the athletic training and exercise physiology programs with a Didactic Lab, Biochemistry Lab, Bio-Mechanics Lab, Cycling Performance Lab, strength and conditioning space, and two classrooms.

The project additionally would address rehabilitation needs across the campus totaling \$12 million. This includes the relocation of the university's Information Technology operation from a 1945 army barracks building to a more secure location, at a cost of \$3 million. Facilities included in this project would be MSU's Moffett Library, built in 1965 and expanded in 1986; Hardin Administration Building, built in 1937; and Fain Fine Arts Theatre, built in 1978. The project would also concentrate on the Bolin Science Hall, built in 1966 and refurbished in 1997. Bolin Science Hall houses the College of Science and Mathematics and has a rich history of producing graduates who become medical doctors, dentists, Ph.D. qualified chemists, biologists, and physicists. The college is a leader in the fields of ecology, environmental science, petroleum geology, and pre-medical study. Bolin Science Hall must be reconstructed in order to modernize all biology and chemistry labs to improve air quality, safety, and accommodate modern teaching equipment. The project would also address electrical infrastructure upgrades, HVAC upgrades, improved egress, the addition of fire sprinklers in two auditoria, and improved accessibility to include elevators, ramps, and restrooms throughout the buildings mentioned.

**II. Hazlewood Waiver Reimbursement**

Midwestern State University appreciates the Legislature's approving a \$30 million supplemental appropriation during the 83<sup>rd</sup> legislative session to reimburse higher education institutions for costs associated with the Hazlewood Program. This resulted in a much-needed allocation of \$269,753 to MSU. We are proud of the veterans and their family members who choose to attend MSU. Wichita Falls is home to Sheppard Air Force Base and many former servicemen and women remain in our area when they leave the military. While the program greatly benefits our veterans and their dependents, the growth in program participation has placed a financial burden on our institution. In FY 2008, MSU enrolled 116 Hazlewood recipients and the cost of the waived tuition and fees was

\$271,000. In FY 2014, the program provided waivers to 245 Hazlewood participants at a cost of \$1.24 million. This represents an annualized growth rate in the number of participants and cost to the institution of 11% and 24% for each of the six years respectively. The university estimates the size of the program will continue to grow at this rate or greater owing to the military draw down. More than one-third of the students attending Midwestern State are classified as low-income (eligible for Pell grants). The university and the Board of Regents have restrained the amount of tuition and fee increases during this time period in order to maintain the university's affordability. However, the continued absorption of these waivers without additional state funding is unsustainable with the current tuition and fee levels. The university respectfully requests the state consider fully funding the Hazlewood Waiver program for Midwestern State University at an estimated cost of \$1.82 million in FY16 and \$2.07 million in FY17.

### **III. College Access and Success Program for Economically Disadvantaged Students**

With the well-documented need for the state of Texas to educate underrepresented groups, primarily Hispanic, and as evidenced by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Closing the Gaps by 2015 initiative, MSU requests assistance in funding additional recruitment and support of Hispanic students in higher education. This request represents a partnership between MSU, Vernon College (VC), and the Wichita Falls Independent School District (WFISD). Specifically, this request seeks \$250,000 for the biennium to engage Café Con Leche, working with the Zavala Hispanic Cultural Initiative, in four areas: (1) community events outlining the paths to college (Community Cafes); (2) financial aid workshops; (3) early intervention programs targeting middle school students and their families (Road to College); and (4) a mentoring program for college students. With this request, MSU and its partners will be in a better position to affect Hispanic access and completion at college.

#### Context

According to the Texas State Demographer, the Hispanic population in Wichita County is expected to increase 26.65% by 2030, compared to overall population growth of 6.89% over the same time period (Texas State Data Center (<http://txsdc.utsa.edu/Data/TPEPP/Projections/Index.aspx>)). Equally striking is the growth differential in Wichita County Hispanic and overall population, ages 18 to 24, at 17.76% and 2.38%, respectively. When applying the 2000 to 2010 migration rate to the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area, the Hispanic population is expected to increase by 52.94% by 2030, compared to overall population growth of 3.53% over the same time period. Similarly, the growth differential in Hispanic and overall Wichita Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area population, ages 18 to 24, is 42.24% and 0.93%, respectively.

As is with Texas as a whole, growth of the Hispanic population will continue to surpass overall population growth in Wichita County and the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area. Given this reality, the income gap between White and Hispanic residents in Wichita Falls is particularly concerning, with 12.2% of White Non-Hispanics realizing income below the poverty level, compared to 26.3% of Hispanic or Latino residents. Educational attainment and subsequent earnings of Hispanic residents will be increasingly important to Wichita County.

#### Program

The program is a college readiness initiative designed to educate parents and students regarding the essential steps necessary for realizing a post-secondary education. The program focuses on creating a

college-going culture in the home, working directly with families to promote school achievement, and college preparation activities. In the proposed project, a multifaceted, longitudinal approach will be implemented to continue to support and educate the community about the importance of post-secondary education, as well as equip students and their families with the tools to navigate the often unfamiliar journey to success in higher education.

Café Con Leche's approach is to engage economically disadvantaged students by understanding norms and cultural issues, and building rapport and trust. Understanding that traditional college access programs are not designed to address issues such as language barriers, cultural biases, and personal experiences, Café Con Leche strives to bridge the educational gap through education and understanding of the socio-economic factors affecting economically disadvantaged families. Café Con Leche staff and Zavala Hispanic Cultural Initiative volunteers have the linguistic and cultural knowledge needed to relate with students and their families, which fosters relationships, trust, and confidence.

More specifically, the program will implement multiple phases to support Hispanic students in elementary, middle, and high school, as well as students currently enrolled in post-secondary education. The project will consist of:

- Community informational sessions (Community Cafes): Café Con Leche will offer four informational sessions at different community gathering places, such as churches, community centers, and schools.
- Financial aid workshops: Workshops will be held at different venues in Wichita Falls in order to provide access and convenience to families and students. Families will receive assistance with tax preparation, completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and completion of the Texas Application for State Financial Aid.
- Road to College curriculum: Café Con Leche works with economically disadvantaged families at three different elementary or middle schools. The Road to College program occurs during the evening once per week for six weeks. Café Con Leche's curriculum will provide parents with strategies to create a college going culture at home, school, and community. At each session, parents and students will work together learning about key academic indicators to achieve educational success from elementary school to college. Targeted tutoring for students begins at this level.
- Mentoring: A mentoring program for economically disadvantaged students will be coordinated and overseen by Café Con Leche. Oversight includes selection, training, and evaluation of mentors.

The partner institutions of MSU, VC, and WFISD believe a community-based approach, such as provided by Café Con Leche and the Zavala Hispanic Cultural Initiative, will positively impact college access and completion of Hispanic students in Wichita County.