

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Allocation for Competitive Sub-Orbital Unmanned Space Flight Testing

Request: The State Board is asked to approve a total allocation of \$43,624 to four NC Community Colleges (Mitchell Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, Catawba Valley Community College, and Rowan-Cabarrus Community College) to support their participation in a sub-orbital unmanned space flight and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) design, develop and launch competition.

Background: The North Carolina Space Grant (NC Space Grant), in partnership with the NC Community College System, was awarded a \$499,366 grant from NASA entitled “Strengthening the NC Space Grant Partnership with the NC Community College System to Enhance STEM-Based Learning”. This provides competitive scholarships for community college students enrolled in STEM degree programs (specifically targeting women and underserved populations) and promotes team design challenges and competitions statewide. Of the total award, \$294,101 is being disbursed to the System Office over two plus years to be allocated to participating colleges to provide professional development workshops and one-on-one mentoring visits. The remaining amount of \$205,265, handled by the NC Space Grant, will be awarded to students in the form of scholarships.

Rationale for Approving the Allocation: As directed in the grant application, the lead college (Mitchell CC) will select and mentor colleges focusing on sub-orbital flight, including developing payload specs, rules of competition, and NASA’s design cycle. An amount of \$10,906 for each college is needed to support instructor release time, travel for the teams, and a \$1000 scholarship for each student team member (not to exceed ten student team members). This figure was determined by Mitchell CC based upon their past experience participating in NASA related sub-orbital flight competitions.

Method of Allocation: The lead college solicited colleges via email and phone calls based upon proximity to Mitchell CC due to the shortened cycle of the first year (delay in receiving grant award notice and contracts from NC Space Grant). Three colleges (plus Mitchell) demonstrated interest in participating. Mitchell CC required (and has on file) a signed letter of commitment from each of the three colleges that indicated the participating colleges’ understanding of the scope of work and responsibilities.

Allocation Amount and Time Period: The allocation is for the period of December 19, 2014 through August 30, 2015 at a cost of \$43,624 total (\$10,906 per college).

Fund Source and Availability: These funds are available from NC Space Grant Affiliate Program for the period September 19, 2014 through August 30, 2015.

Contact Person:

Dr. Matthew Meyer
Associate Vice President, STEM Innovations