

Regional Challenge Grant - LOI

“TGMC/CU RCG Partnership”

Lead Applicant: The Global Majority Consortium

Point of Contact: Baionne Coleman, Co-Founder of TGMC

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Fiscal Agent: College Unbound

Why are the partner organizations that are or will be included in this work the ones that came together to address educational attainment through place-based work in your region?

With funding from the Washington Student Achievement Council's (WSAC) Regional Challenge Grant (RCG), [The Global Majority Consortium](#) (TGMC) will come together with [College Unbound](#) (CU) in an emerging partnership. Our partnership will focus on post secondary attainment for adults from the Rainier Valley region in South Seattle. During the Partner Formation Grant period, TGMC and CU will identify cross-sector organizations willing to come together in partnership, with the shared goal of creating a collaborative, community-driven approach to overcome the barriers our focal population faces when attempting to pursue educational advancement. We will make a plan to increase educational access and degree completion in our service area to be implemented in partnership with TGMC, CU and additional cross-sector partners.

While [Seattle is above average](#) nationwide in its proportion of adults with a college degree, certain communities have been left behind: in Renton, for example, [17.5% of people over 25 have Bachelor's degrees](#), as compared to the 78% of residents of Mercer Island, just 10 miles away. These discrepancies are correlated with socioeconomic status and racial diversity of each location. In 2021, over 70% of residents who moved to King County from another state or country within the previous year held a bachelor's degree or greater. At the same time, 89% of high school graduates from South King County aspire to earn their degree, however only [29% of those graduates](#) have earned their degree by their mid 20's. White and Asian residents of King County hold college degrees at rates of [59.2% and 67.2%](#), respectively, while only 28.5% of Black and 30.7% of Hispanic residents hold a college degree.

The Global Majority Consortium began in 2011 by visionary husband and wife team, Jaycee and Baionne Coleman, and was officially established as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2020. TGMC was conceived to serve the Rainier Valley community with the mission to actively dismantle systemic oppression through a holistic eco-system approach that embraces the inherent assets and strengths of marginalized communities. TGMC is committed to creating lasting change by prioritizing the agency, resilience, and unique contributions of the community. Through philanthropic transformation, educational evolution, community empowerment, cultural change, and the promotion of justice and healing, TGMC aims to forge a more equitable and inclusive future that builds upon the inherent assets of every individual. TGMC's vision is for a future where systemic oppression is replaced with systems that harness the strengths of Black, Indigenous, and marginalized voices to create inclusive, just, and equitable environments. In this vision education is a source of liberation, and community wealth is leveraged to build sustainable well-being for all.

To this partnership, TGMC brings a deep connection with the community. The activities of TGMC are already removing many of the barriers to postsecondary education that low-income adult learners face. However, bringing together other cross-sector organizations through our RCG partnership will help propel individuals from the community to engage with post secondary options and work towards degree completion. TGMC's involvement in our RCG partnership will ensure local knowledge drives program design. Priority issues will be identified and defined by residents and their voices will be included in program design, implementation, and evaluation.

TGMC believes that in order for education to become an anti-racist sector we must develop and accelerate a teacher pool that mirrors our sector's scholar population. TGMC has built the foundation for a teacher pipeline program providing resources and support to diversify the educator workforce. In partnership with CU, TGMC will take a multigenerational approach to degree attainment by identifying pathways to access higher education for educators interested in earning their teaching certification and parents ready to earn their degree, resulting in a college going culture in the community, first for parents and educators and in turn for their children. Our RCG partnership will open opportunities for community members to receive not only a BA, but also a student-driven education that enables them to transform their lives as well as the lives of their families and their communities through deep engagement coupled with opportunity for economic advancement.

TGMC has chosen to work in partnership with College Unbound, an accredited college, designed to meet the needs of adult learners who are furthest from educational justice, working to end cycles of poverty for adults and their families through BA completion. The mission of College Unbound is to reinvent the higher education experience for underserved adult learners, using a students-driven model of rigorous and engaged scholarship. CU believes everyone has a right to postsecondary education; colleges bear the responsibility to remove barriers that prevent historically underserved students from completing their degrees. With the ability to embed itself in the community, CU's model is designed to identify and serve the specific needs of the community through place-based and partnerships and employment-based professional pathways. As part of the RCG partnership, CU will help eliminate educational opportunity gaps by providing a college program designed for working and parenting adults to successfully earn their degree, with the ability to build in support services to meet the specific needs of the community in Rainier Valley.

Over the course of the planning year, TGMC and CU will formalize partnerships with organizations already affiliated with TGMC, as well as other cross-sector organizations that are embedded in the community. We will identify organizations to join our RCG partnership with the ability to provide support services for future students from our focal population who will need to learn about the opportunity to enroll, engage, and successfully complete their degree.

How is or will the partnership be structured?

The Global Majority Consortium will act as the lead applicant with Baionne Coleman as the point of contact. College Unbound will act as the fiscal agent for the partnership with Megan Demeroutis as the point of contact.

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Our RCG partnership will be granted access to use of the facilities for community meetings at the following organizations:

First Place - Central District

Africatown Community Land Trust - Central District

- Rainier Valley Leadership Academy - Rainier Valley
- Radiant Covenant Church - Renton

TGMC is made up of [brilliant abolitionists](#) who are steadfast in their mission to effect change across various systems and will bring their knowledge and expertise to help formalize our RCG partnership. TGMC is deeply connected to established cross-sector community organizations including; First Place, Africatown Community Land Trust, Radiant Covenant Church, Rainier Valley Leadership Academy, Seattle Aquarium, Tubman Center for Health and Freedom, and Stay and Play Childcare Center. These organizations will be available to help TGMC and CU connect with community members to first contribute to collaborative conversations about the strengths, needs, and barriers their community members face in accessing post-secondary options as well as degree completion; and second, these organizations will help us connect to community members who are interested in earning their degree. Based on our learnings from these collaborative conversations, TGMC and CU will reach out to other cross-sector organizations to join our RCG partnership and support successful degree completion for adults furthest from education justice in the Rainier Valley Region.

How have or will the partner organizations learn from each other and the communities served, and how does or will the partnership incorporate this learning into ongoing work?

College Unbound has shown great success in supporting adult students through graduation. While incorporating community voice, CU will identify and implement key elements of their model that have proven success in leading to high rates of degree completion. By partnering with community based organizations CU can lift up the existing high-quality relationships and create cohorts of students built on familiarity and trust, thus radically impacting college completion outcomes for our partner organizations.

With deep knowledge of the Rainier Valley community, TGMC will work with CU to engage with community members to identify the strengths they bring with them, barriers they face when trying to access higher education, and what organizations are trusted by the community to provide the support services they will need to ensure they have the information they need to access post-secondary options and are supported in the admissions process through degree completion. Suggestions from GMC and community input will determine what other cross-sector organizations we will bring into our RCG partnership, where how many cohorts CU will launch, where they will meet, who will serve as CU Lab Faculty, and what support services will need to be provided to support successful degree completion.

Baionne Coleman of TGMC currently attends two community listening sessions a month; one at Africatown and other with a group of elders to take a grassroots approach, elevate community voice, and influence strategic planning efforts made by TGMC. Through this approach, TGMC is able to identify what the community really needs and adjust their approach and resource allocation accordingly. These are groups our RCG partnership will be able to engage with to help determine how we will approach and support degree attainment in the community.

Who are the focal populations in your partnership’s work, and what assets do learners and families in these populations bring to their educational journeys?

Our RCG partnership will work with adults from the Rainier Valley Community ready to earn their degree, with focus on working with those who are furthest from educational justice. Through this RCG partnership we will identify the systemic barriers adults face to accessing and completing post secondary education, with focus on solutions to overcoming barriers created by society and acknowledging a lack of a degree does not reflect any deficit within the individual.

The Rainier Valley community embodies the saying “it takes a village”, coming together, pooling resources, and doing whatever it takes to support each other when the need arises.

What is the geographic region where the focal population(s) that would be served by this investment live?

Our RCG partnership will serve our focal population in the Rainier Valley Region. TGMC has defined the Rainier Valley Region based on historical redlining practices to include the area from the Central District to Rainier Valley and Renton.

What are some of the systemic barriers that learners and families in your focal population(s) encounter?

Our RCG partnership will incorporate community voice to update and refine this list, however these are systemic barriers to post secondary access and attainment that have previously been identified by the community:

- Access to information and education about available post secondary options, including where to go, how to go, and how to pay
- Transportation services
- Childcare needs
- Affordability and fear around taking on more debt
- Information about the impact having a BA can have on ending cycles of poverty
- Access to career coaches

What work do you propose undertaking during the granting period?

We are proposing \$125,000 in funding to support the emerging partnership between TGMC and CU. Over the course of the one year partner formation grant period, TGMC and CU will incorporate community voice to identify systemic barriers to degree completion. Based on the barrier that are identified, TGMC and CU will bring in other cross-sector organizations that are currently embedded in the community and willing to work in partnership to create an ecosystem that will create a college going culture in the community, provide the most relevant resources required for system navigation and support services so our focal population is able to overcome barriers to post secondary access and degree

completion. Food, childcare, and transportation stipend will be provided at meetings to gather community input.

Action items:

- Planning meetings between TGMC and CU:
 - Monthly planning meetings
 - Prompt communication between TGMC and CU via email, phone, text with additional meetings planned as needed
 - Inviting additional cross-sector organizations to join our RCG partners as soon as it is appropriate
- Incorporating community voice:
 - Small group meetings (8 small group meetings hosted)
 - One on one interviews (40 interviews conducted)
 - Community Discussions (4 community meetings hosted)
 - Survey (50 surveys completed)
- Cross-sector RCG partnership development
 - Sign MOU's with at least 6 cross-sector organizations to contribute to our RCG partnerships
 - Identified partners and sign MOU's prior to implementation, Fall 2025

How will the proposed work contribute to increasing educational attainment for the focal population(s) in your region?

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Identify systemic barriers focal population faces in pursuit of degree attainment
- Identify cross-sector organizations that are embedded in the community and available to support adult community members overcome systemic barriers to degree attainment
- GMC has increased capacity to help direct adult community members to access best fit postsecondary options
- CU development of student cohort partnerships with employers with the goal of enrolling students starting in Fall 2025 or Winter 2026
- The expansion of GMC and CU RCG partnership to include additional cross-sector organizations providing services to increase our focal population's access to education attainment, degree completion, and career advancement
- A plan for our RCG partnership team to engage with our focal population and support them in working towards earning a degree or other post secondary credential with conditional MOU's for services provided and an implementation timeline