



### **New Classified Hiring/Position Justification**

**Hiring Division/Department:** Student Services / SparkPoint **Position Title:** SparkPoint Coordinator

#### **Classification**

Position type: Permanent X Full Time X # of months 12  
Part Time \_\_\_\_\_ % of Full Time \_\_\_\_\_ # of months \_\_\_\_\_

Position: General Funds X  
Allocation: External Funds\* \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Budget Information**

Grade 27 Step 1 Annual Salary \$60,348

### **Justification**

Please respond to the following questions in electronic format to the appropriate Dean, Manager or Vice President. Additional information may be provided as relevant for position justification.

1. Describe the specific needs for the position requested and the duties of this position in a brief statement.

SparkPoint at Cañada College (SPCC) would like to request an additional SparkPoint Coordinator to meet the growing demand for financial coaching and education requested both on-campus and off-campus. This position is aligned with the College Mission, strategic goals and grant requirements. It will provide our diverse students with the opportunity to achieve their educational goals by increasing student success and retention, creating and strengthening community connections and promoting organizational development.

SPCC provides personalized financial coaching so students can learn to make better financial decisions, access benefits and resources and connect to career and transfer opportunities. As we expand our partnerships with ACCEL, Career Center, ESL, JobTrain, Transfer Center, TRiO, Workforce Development and other departments across campus and in our community, we need increased staffing in order to meet the growing financial education needs of our students and community. Currently, SPCC is at capacity and is unable to meet this growing demand.

The SparkPoint Coordinator (SPC) assists in the planning, coordination, and implementation of SparkPoint services, manages the data collection, and serves as a financial coach. The SparkPoint Coordinator will report to the Director of SparkPoint.

2. Explain how this position aligns with and supports the mission and strategic goals of the college.

SparkPoint is directly aligned with the College Mission Statement by providing our diverse students with the opportunity to achieve their educational goals. Living in the third most expensive county in California, a growing number of students are struggling with rising housing costs, food insecurity, as well as, increasing transportation and childcare challenges. SPCC is addressing these challenges by proving that students utilizing at least one SparkPoint service demonstrate a 30% increase in persistence over the college persistence average.

SparkPoint is also aligned with the Strategic Goals as follows:

**I. Strategic Goal #1: Student Completion / Success**

SparkPoint services:

- a. are part of the integrated support services offered at Cañada College
- b. comprise a series of comprehensive college-wide approaches designed to improve retention and completion
- c. are outlined in the personal student financial support strand of the Cañada College Promise.

**II. Strategic Goal #2: Community Connections**

SparkPoint:

- a. collaborates with local adult schools to promote educational pathways and access to college.
- b. collaborates with partners to bring high profile signature events to the college.
- c. develops and strengthens community partnerships that provide access and resources for students and the community district-wide.
- d. works with the Transfer Center, the Career Center and with Workforce Development to increase transfer rates, employment opportunities, along with, CTE access and pathways.

**III. Strategic Goal #3: Organizational Development**

SparkPoint:

- a. engages campus constituents while creating innovative practices that support student success while promoting equity.
- b. will be included in the Guided Pathways efforts to address inequity gaps.
- c. is part of the integrated planning process designed to meet institutional and student success outcomes.
- d. promotes a campus culture that fosters a climate of inclusivity
- e. realizes a sense of urgency to create and expand services designed to address the achievement gap faced by our students (specifically our low-income students).

3. Explain how adding this position will strengthen the department or division.

During FY17, the financial coaching team provided 1373 students with low touch services and 531 (unduplicated) students with high touch services 3460 times. As a result of the increasing cost of living in

San Mateo County and the resulting financial challenges that our students are facing, SPCC has experienced an increase in the request for financial coaching and workshops both on campus and off campus (including the Menlo Park Center).

To meet the growing demand for increased financial coaching and workshops, SparkPoint has hired a series of short-term SparkPoint Coordinators. However, due to the short-term nature of the position, SparkPoint has not been able to hire a person with financial literacy background (further details in Question #4).

The California Self-Sufficiency Standard for San Mateo County, which measures the cost of basic needs for a family of two adults and one child, is \$65,295. An additional study by HUD shows that a family of 4 needs an average salary of \$104,000 to make ends meet in the San Mateo County. A recent scan of SparkPoint students identified that 43% of them earn under \$10,000 while reporting that their top 3 areas of interests include 1) affordable housing 2) food assistance and 3) money for school.

With raising costs of living (housing, food, transportation, childcare, education, etc.), a greater number of students are reducing their units attempted/completed, increasing their work hours and are dropping out of school and/or moving out of the area. SparkPoint works with students to become financial stable by designing a budget, accessing resources and managing credit so they can have greater control their income and expenses. By increasing their success, and persistence, SparkPoint also aids in increasing enrollment and student confidence. Early data shows that students participating in SparkPoint are 30% more likely to persist term-to-term and also acquire financial skills that they utilize while at Cañada College and beyond.

4. Explain how this work will be accomplished if the position is not filled.

SparkPoint will have to continue to hire a short-term staff to meet the United Way of the Bay Area grant of objectives. While we can temporarily hire a short-term SparkPoint Coordinator, we have not been able to hire anyone with financial literacy experience since the short-term position is a non-benefited temporary position temporary and includes a salary that is 80% of the permanent salary. Coupled with the high cost of living and low unemployment rate in San Mateo County, individuals who have financial coaching experience are not available at this salary range. Therefore, we have hired individuals who do not have financial coaching experience and who require a 4-6 month training period during which they may find a higher paying job and/or decide to leave for greater job security and earning potential. (We have already lost one short-term financial coach in the last six months).

If we don't meet our grant objective, this will impact our ability to obtain additional funding.

Please submit completed Classified Position Hiring/ Position Justification electronically to the responsible administrator in your division or department.

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**This position has been reviewed by the department or division and is recommended for hiring.**

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**Dean / Director / Hiring Supervisor**

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**Date**