

# The Missouri College Advising Corps: Helping South Central Missouri Students Go To College

*The Missouri College Advising Corps (MCAC), a college-access advising program was established in 2007 through a \$1M grant from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. MCAC helps high school and community college students understand that they can complete a 4-year college degree, find their “best fit” institution, and navigate the process of applying for admission and financial aid. MCAC, providing services across the state, is headquartered at the University of Missouri-Columbia.*



## **SOUTH CENTRAL REGION:**

MCAC has three college guides placed in the south central region. One serves both the Cuba and Bourbon High Schools. MCAC actively partners with the following high schools and one community college in the south central region:

- Bourbon High School, Crawford County R-1 School District, Crawford County
- Cuba High School, Crawford County R-2 School District, Crawford County
- Salem High School, Salem R-80 School District, Dent County
- East Central College, Union, Franklin County

## **SOUTH CENTRAL REGION OUTCOMES:**

2009-10 (August 2009 – January 2010):

- 2,969 students advised
- 726 students advised one-on-one
- 91 workshops delivered
- 2,243 students advised in workshops
- 71% of students advised are seniors and 13% juniors
- only 58% of students advised are not first-generation college
- 49% of students advised are male and 51% female
- students applied to 42 unique colleges and universities
- students were admitted to 29 unique colleges and universities

*Having Alex Withrow serve full-time at Salem High as a near-peer advisor to students who previously felt they had no avenues for pursuing a college education has been a tremendous asset for us. Our counselors are so grateful for the extra, well-informed and thorough help that she is able to provide, given how thinly their own limited resources have to be stretched. And our students see in Alex a real beacon of hope that they can, like her, attain a college education. As a result of Alex's work, many more Salem High students will successfully apply for college this year; the importance of this fact cannot be overestimated in a county and region where the rate of college completion has historically been well below the state average.*

– Superintendent Steve Bryant,  
Salem School District

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*"My work as an MCAC College Guide is so rewarding precisely because it is not just "work." For me, MCAC is so much more than just a job; it is an opportunity to change lives. And in my experience, it is very rare in life that an opportunity such as this one comes around. Not often are we presented with the chance to truly make a difference, to actively and aggressively champion for a cause in which we believe. College access (and social justice in general) is that cause for me, and MCAC is the tool I have been given to advocate for and secure it. Therefore, I intend to seize this opportunity and to throw myself passionately and unreservedly into this work. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to use my skills and talents to encourage others to discover and sharpen their own and hope to, in doing so, positively transform lives and communities in need."*

– Jessie Fischer, College Guide,  
Cuba and Bourbon High Schools

## CURRENT FUNDING SOURCES:

- College Access Challenge Grant (overseen by the Missouri Department of Higher Education)
- The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation (this grant launched the program)
- TG grant
- University of Missouri-Columbia

## PROGRAM COSTS:

Based on the distribution of MCAC college guides in 14 schools across Missouri, the annual program budget is ≈\$625K.

- \$192,960 – total south central region program cost with 4 college guides
- \$48,240 – total cost of 1 college guide including program support costs

## CONTACT:



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**National College Advising Corps**  
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Division of  
Enrollment Management