

Request for Proposal

Quinsigamond Community College
670 West Boylston St.
Worcester, MA 01606
Contact: Victor Somma, Director of Marketing and Public Affairs

Section I: Statement of Purpose

Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) wishes to solicit the services of a reputable, first-rate, marketing, advertising, and public relations firm with a highly proven track record. The College wants this firm to develop an imaging, branding, and positioning program which will establish the College as the premier public two-year institution of high education in Worcester, all of Central Massachusetts, and in the peripheral surrounding commuting distances of Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. The College wishes to firmly establish a strong and consistent local and regional identity as a top quality institution of higher education and workforce training.

Based on the strength of written entries submitted, a selective number of bidders will be asked to make a single oral presentation, up to three separate times, of not less than 15 minutes nor more than 20 minutes before the President and Senior Staff, Enrollment Management Task Force, the Marketing Strategies Work Group, and possibly others. It is likely, however, that the presentation will only have to be completed once. The presentation will be conducted on **Tuesday, September 13** at a time designated by the College upon invitation to present. The subject of said presentation shall center on how the firm intends to create an image for Quinsigamond Community College and establish the College as a leading brand. The College insists the firm(s) include strong means to fully measure the effectiveness of its plan. The firm(s) will be evaluated on the strength of concepts and ideas *not* on how fancy promotional and advertising materials can be produced. The written entry must be submitted to the Director of Marketing and Public Affairs on or before **Friday, September 2 by 12 noon.** This project will move forward based on the availability of funding.

Section II: Who We Are

QCC: Your Community's College

For over 41 years, Quinsigamond Community College has provided thousands of area men and women opportunities for a first-rate education and personal growth, whether preparing them for immediate entry into the workforce, transfer to bachelor level programs in four-year colleges and universities, or for personal and cultural enrichment. Area and regional businesses and professionals such as Kennedy Diecast, Waters Corporation, Ken-Weld, Verizon, Saint Gobin-Norton, UPS, and Intel Corp. have benefited as well through regular and customized workforce training and education programming designed in partnership.

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QCC was established in 1963 to provide access to higher education to residents of Central Massachusetts. Since the early 60s, enrollments has grown from 300 to over 7000 full and part-time day and evening students. Over 70 associate degree and certificate programs are offered in Business, Health Care, Technology, Liberal Arts, and Human Services. The tuition rate at Quinsigamond is one of the lowest around with a three credit course costing \$360. That's only \$120 per credit. There are a number of financial aid programs available as well. Academic advising and career counseling is always readily available. The College also offers a wide variety of non-credit courses, workshops, and seminars. Credit and non-credit courses are also available On Line at www.qcc.mass.edu. In addition, a vital arm of the College is its Workforce Development and Training division in the Continuing Education Department. This division offers non-credit business, industry, technology, manufacturing, health, and other professions standard and customized training on a contractual basis. The College has an impressive 95% job placement rate.

QCC's faculty is second-to-none. Professors and instructors combine advanced degrees in their respective fields with unending dedication to the success of each and every student, taking the care and time to get to know students individually. In addition, many faculty members have published books, held corporate management positions, and have served as consultants in their fields thereby bringing practical experiences to their classrooms as well. Faculty and administration continually update programming, equipment, facilities, and institutional systems to ensure the College continues to deliver the best education in a changing world.

The student body at Quinsigamond is as diverse as the communities from which it comes. Some are traditional age 18 year olds coming directly out of high school. Other have been out for high school for two or three years and decide to return to improve their skills. Some have been out of school for several years and now want to pursue different avenues. There are others who have attained undergraduate and graduate degrees already and have decided to return to enhance their skills or gain new ones. And others come to improve skills with a goal of getting a promotion at work. And yet still, others attend because they are beginning a new chapter in their lives.

Many QCC students have family obligations as well as full and part-time jobs. The College provides flexible scheduling in most programs to help accommodate as many needs as possible. On-campus child care is also available. In addition, the College has a number of specialized programs designed to foster continued success. The Individualized Learning Center, Communication Skills Lab, and Math Lab are services that can assist students in realizing their fullest potential. Individualized attention is paid to everyone using these centers. They help in boosting backgrounds in English, math, and science.

The College is easily accessible to metropolitan Worcester residents and those in its surrounding cities and towns. The main campus of six buildings and a facilities equipment maintenance hut sits on 53 acres of land at 670 West Boylston St. Worcester, MA. A seventh building, three floor state-of-the-art wired library and learning resources center opened in 2004. In addition to a main campus, the College operates facilities at

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four other locations. Its Downtown Center for Education is located in the heart of the city of Worcester at 100 Front St. Called QCC College at City Square, adult basic education and English as second language are the areas of concentration offered. Customized workshops, seminars, and training programs are conducted at City Square as well as at the main campus. Blackstone Valley High School in Upton, MA is the location of QCC's Automotive Technology program. The Worcester Senior Center serves as the home of QCC's Hotel and Restaurant Management program. And at Southbridge High School, the College runs evening classes throughout the year. Quinsigamond does not currently have residence halls.

QCC is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Membership in the Association indicates that an institution has been stringently evaluated and found to meet high standards agreed upon by qualified educators. In addition, a number of programs are accredited through agencies adhering to stringent industry specific standards.

Section III: How Some of Our Potential Targets Perceive Us

The image of community colleges to those who have graduated from or even taken a single course at one is terrific. To a vast many others, a community college is looked upon as the last resort to gaining any kind of education. For the traditional aged student, a community college is not typically a first or even second choice of college. Unfortunately, the long lasting stigma of a community college student being a "second class citizen" is still with us.

Nothing can be further from the truth. To look at the scope of what Quinsigamond Community College offers is truly impressive. To that end, the College is looking to a reputable advertising and public relations firm to assist it in creating an image, character, audience perception, and "look" that is in keeping with what it truly is today and will continually be developing in the 21st Century.

Section IV: How We Perceive Ourselves

Quinsigamond Community College is metropolitan Worcester's and it surrounding cities and towns foremost public two-year college providing top quality education and training in the fields of Business, Technology, Health Care, Human Services, Liberal Arts, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development. *America 2000*, a federal study of education in the US, states that "a person will not necessarily need a four-year higher education but will need at least two years beyond high school." In fact, many people attending Quinsigamond hold baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees who have stated they chose to come to us to learn skills now required on the job that they did not gain having attended their former institutions of higher learning.

We all know that higher education is no longer a one-time deal. To survive in today's

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world, one's education must be a never ending quest. People being laid off from companies downsizing are finding they must learn new skills or greatly improve upon the ones they already know to find new jobs. Many of those people come to us for help.

In the words of many of our former and current students, "no time is wasted here; the programs are designed toward an end goal; the focus is on the end result." The "end result" is the confidence in knowing you possess newly acquired skills that will be attractive to prospective employers. No longer can one expect to serve a company loyally for many years to retirement. The new mantra in the workforce for the 21st century is "produce or move on." If one does not possess the necessary skills needed, "moving on" comes fast.

Approximately 85% of students enrolled in our College know exactly what they want to achieve, and they know we are not the alternative college; we are their best choice. People who do not think of us at all and those who do, but have the stigma of "last resort," "second class," or "the vocational school on the hill" image imbedded in their minds, are the ones we need to reach. And there are those who "know" of us but are not quite sure about all that we do and can do who also need to be reached.

Based on the background of the College presented here and upon further information that can/will be provided by the College if requested, the firm should be able to develop a written proposal from which the College can make a decision as to which firm(s) will be chosen to give the aforementioned presentation.

Section V: Specifications

1. Task

That an **imaging, branding, positioning** program be designed, upon approval of the College, which will establish and sustain a strong consistent local and regional identity for all of the College's many target markets including, but not limited to, traditional aged students, adult learners, single parent(s), employees/employers, career changers, displaced workers, enrichment learners, and more. The end result of this design will affect the production of print and electronic marketing/advertising/public relations efforts. All of this must address a College that serves a diverse population which includes but is not limited to American, Hispanic, African-American, Vietnamese, Armenian, Portuguese, Albanian, and Brazilian heritages.

In addition, we propose the firm design a program to enhance the College's internal marketing efforts in such a way as to not only target the thousands those who visit the campus yearly but to bring a continued effort to enhancing the corporate culture as faculty, administration, and staff strive to develop and deliver the best customer service.

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The firm must submit an example(s) of similar projects it may have previously completed where imaging, branding, positioning, as well as internal marketing were the key areas of focus. NOTE: It is not necessary that all examples be related to higher education. The College is also interested in the firm's performance as related to business and industry.

In order for the College to make sound future cost efficient decisions concerning its marketing effort, the firm must design these projects to include strong tracking and measurements tools.

2. Depending on funding, the proposed deliverables follow. NOTE: They may need to be modified, and some may need to be cut and/or deemed as Phase II or III at a later date.

A. Print

We propose that firm design and produce a series of six, two-color, print ads, which will rotate throughout the year in publications such as the Worcester Telegram and Gazette, Worcester Magazine, Worcester Business Journal, The Holden Landmark, Blackstone Evening Tribune, Southbridge Evening News, and others as deemed appropriate. In addition, we propose the firm design and produce a series of six, two color, print ads, which will rotate throughout the year in high school and college/university newspapers. Copy to be written by the firm and approved by QCC. The sizes will be determined based on local/regional printed publications such as newspapers, magazines, tabloids, inserts, or other in which the College will place advertising. The design could also apply to brochures, depending on application. Copy to be written by the firm and approved by QCC.

B. Video, DVD, and CD

We propose that firm design and produce two 5-8 minute College videos, and/or DVDs/CDs specific to our traditional day division credit, continuing education division non-credit sides, and to our corporate workforce development programming. These would follow the tenets of the "new" image/character/look of the College. The footage would be shot in a manner that will allow for future development of broadcast television advertising. The master would be shot on location at the College's main campus and/or at its off-site locations as well as at any companies or organizations at which the College has done or is doing customized training. Number of each is 5000 for a total of 10,000 DVDs. An interactive College catalog and college viewbook, respectively, CD will also be designed and produced by the firm. Number count is 5000 for CDs. Both DVDs and CDs also need either windowed paper sleeves or plastic containers "boxes."

C. Television

We propose that the firm create six :30 television commercial advertisements for the following categories--Business, Technology, Human Services, Liberal Arts, Health Care,

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Continuing Education. These will be rotated over the course of one year airing on local, and regional broadcast stations and on cable. Copy for these should be written so as to have the potential to be adapted to radio scripting. All copy, visuals, and auditory to be approved by QCC. Copy to be written by the firm. Footage from the above video, DVD, and/or CD could possibly be used here depending on quality and circumstances and approval from the College. The firm will negotiate airing costs from local and regional television stations and cable stations for a period of six to 12 months, with the potential airing of the ads between 5pm to 12am, Monday, Wednesday, Friday evenings, three times each night and/or as otherwise deemed appropriate.

D. Radio

We propose that the firm create six :30 and six :60 radio commercial advertisements in each of the following categories--Business, Technology, Human Services, Liberal Arts, Health Care, Continuing Education. Copy to be written by the agency and approved by QCC. The firm will negotiate airing costs from local and regional radio stations for a period of six to 12 months, with the potential airing of the ads morning and evening drive time, and/or ROS, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, four times each day and/or as otherwise deemed appropriate.

E. Direct-mail

We propose that the firm design and produce six, 6" x 9", five-color, direct-mail postcards for information nights and recruiting purposes. Counts will range from 6000 to 25,000 depending on specific targets. In addition, we propose that the firm design and produce four, five-color, 8 ½ " x 11" folded over and tabbed self-mailer recruiting pieces with a return reply, postpaid perforated flap/card. Count will range from 6000 to 25,000 depending on specific targets. We propose that the firm negotiate mailing fulfillment costs from its sources.

F. Billboards

We propose that the firm design and produce four billboard advertisements: possible sizes, depending on locations and vendors, 14' x 48' or 12' x 25'. Timeframes to be determined according to the potential locations.

G. Internet

The College launched a new web site on July 1. We propose that the firm design and produce a number of "web ads" and placement of links in strategic locations. (The College's new web site is located at www.qcc.edu.)

H. Internal and External Electronic Communication

We propose that the firm create an internal and external electronic communications program, which will include, but not be limited to, emailing and streaming video.

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I. Photography

We propose that the firm take a series of photographs throughout the year which will depict campus life, campus student organizations, service learning/volunteerism, classroom and lab activities, student and faculty interaction, sports activities, business and industry workforce development, and more. These visuals will be taken at locations on and off campus. We envision two, two-day shoots for the first year, coordinated with faculty and student organization coordinators.

J. Publications

The College produces primary and secondary publications such as catalogs, viewbooks, program books, schedule books, program brochures, teasers, mailers, slip sheets, and others. We propose the firm design and produce the College viewbook, five program books, direct mail piece(s), cover to the College catalog (inside text is produced in-house), annual report, a series of College brochures and/or other publications as deemed appropriate.

Section VI: Bidding

1. Response to this proposal must be in writing and submitted to Victor Somma, Director of Marketing and Public Affairs, Quinsigamond Community College, 670 West Boylston St., Worcester, MA 01606 **on or before Friday, September 2 by 12 noon.**
2. The response must contain a complete, thorough, and detailed description of the approach to this project along with the best use of the budgeted amount of **\$100,000**. The College fully realizes additional costs may incur depending on what is chosen to be completed and implemented. NOTE: As funds are available, more resources may come to bear. The firm should realize that the College may find it necessary to move forward with these projects in phases. The College needs to have an understanding of approximate costs for all sections contained herein A-J as phases move toward development.
3. Analysis of costs must be in an itemized breakdown format.
4. The best original written presentation will be the determining factor for inviting a number of bidders to conduct oral presentations.
5. The award of this project contract will be made to the firm with the best oral presentation satisfying all of the tenets as prescribed herewith.
6. Written response to and/or any subsequent oral presentations connected to this proposal do not guarantee a contract award.

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7. Upon the College's final review of all written responses, the Director of Marketing and Public Affairs will notify by telephone and/or email those firms chosen to make the **15-20 minute** oral presentation to be conducted on **Tuesday, September 13** at a time designated by the College.

8. The College apologizes in advance for the tightness of deadlines here, but due to unforeseen circumstances, they had to be set as such.

***Any and all questions regarding this proposal must be directed to Victor Somma
Director of Marketing and Public Affairs at 508-854-2729.***