COMMUNITY CONNECTORS
CommunityConnectors.Ohio.gov

Application Template

Application Section I: Community Connectors Program Description

1. The target population is students grades 5-12. Identify the grade level or levels at each school that your program will be targeting. Programs may serve students in one or more grade levels.

   The United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc. Cleveland Coders program will work with students in grades 5-12 in the Richmond Heights Local School District during the three year funding cycle of Community Connectors and beyond.

2. Provide the number of youth in each grade level and at each school your program proposes to serve.

   There will be a total of 100 youth served in Program Year 1, 200 youth served in Program Year 2 and 315 youth served in Program Year 3 as follows:

   Richmond Heights Elementary (Lower) School – **Year 1**: Grade 5 (20 youth), Grade 6 (20 youth). **Year 2**: Grade 5 (20 youth), Grade 6 – 2 classes (40 youth). **Year 3**: Grade 5 (25 youth), Grade 6 – 2 classes (50 youth).

   Richmond Heights Secondary (Upper) School – **Year 1**: Grade 7 (20 youth), Grade 8 (20 youth), Grade 10 (20 youth). **Year 2**: Grade 7 – 2 classes (40 youth), Grade 8 – 2 classes (40 youth), Grade 9 (20 youth), Grade 10 (20 youth), Grade 11 (20 youth). **Year 3**: Grade 7 – 2 classes (50 youth), Grade 8 – 2 classes (50 youth), Grade 9 -2 classes (50 youth), Grade 10 – 2 classes (50 youth), Grade 11 (20 youth), Grade 12 (20 youth).

3. Select one: Which of the following best describes the proposed project? Select one.
   A. X Totally new program developed by this organization
   B. ☐ Replication of an existing model in use by others
   - Please provide the name of this model.
   C. ☐ Expansion of an existing program within the applicant organization
   D. ☐ Extension of an existing program to a new setting

4. Please describe your project. How will it address each of the five Community Connectors core principles and what outcomes will you use to measure success.

   Background: Cleveland Coders ("Coders") is the outgrowth of a strategic plan developed by the United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc. ("UBF") in late 2014. The initiative was approved by the UBF Board of Directors as part of UBF's mission of promoting and supporting innovative community programs in three priority areas: Workforce Development, Education and Basic Needs. One goal of Coders is to expose economically disadvantaged students to the field of computer sciences, especially coding, and the employment opportunities which are increasing dramatically in this field. Another goal is to advocate for the utilization of coding and computer sciences both inside and outside of the classroom to enhance the problem-solving skills, logic and creativity of children, even if they don't pursue a STEM-related education or career. Thus, Community Connectors furnishes a timely opportunity to create a model demonstration program combining time-tested mentoring strategies with a host of other supports to deliver measurable positive change for our young people as they enter the 21st century. This is, in effect, not just mentoring, but mentoring with a mission. (See Attachment A.)

   Program Description: Cleveland Coders will be a multi-faceted mentoring program conducted initially in the Richmond Heights School District, an inner-ring Cleveland area school district where students face the

same challenges as inner city students, but don't have the same "wrap around" support systems in place as in some Cleveland area city schools. We are in pursuit of a regional renaissance in Northeast Ohio education and Coders will be a first step in this process. UBF's vision is to expand this concept over time to other districts and schools. Meanwhile, Richmond Heights is a microcosm with all of the elements of underperforming school districts and a perfect setting for creating and refining sustainable solutions.

Using a cohort model, nine adults will make up a team of mentors assigned to a class of 20-25 students and will be responsible for mentoring that group of young people throughout the entire program. New classes of students will be added each year (see Question # 2) until the project reaches a full complement of 315 students, spanning grades 5-12 in its 3rd year (2017-18).

The program will introduce students to 21st century computational and career readiness skills. They will learn about collaboration, teamwork and innovation. Mentees, along with their mentors, will utilize curricula developed by Code.org, based in Seattle, WA, and currently in use throughout the United States and 20 countries. The success of this program was underscored by President Obama during a White House visit by students from New Jersey on December 8, 2014 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AI_dayIQWV4). Activities and curricula formulated by the Great Lakes Science Center, the National Technical Association (Cleveland Chapter), Cleveland State University and Case Western Reserve University will also be incorporated. Cleveland Public Library branches and PNC Fairfax Connection will be host sites for Saturday sessions where assignments will be completed on state of the art computer workstations.

Members of the mentoring team will be: a parent representative who will serve as the team's captain; the current teacher for that class; a representative from our business partner; a representative from our faith-based partner; a member of the law-enforcement community; a staff person from the Cleveland Public Library system; an IT specialist; and two college students (see Attachment B). We believe strongly in the inclusion of representatives from law enforcement in this model given recent events in the area of police community relations in Cleveland and the nation as a whole. Both police and young people can benefit from closer, more personal involvement in a safe educational environment.

The structure will also guarantee consistency and frequency in the number of "touches" a mentee will receive and will compensate for mentor attrition over time, thereby providing a constant presence of caring adults serving as a "safety net" around the children with human capital to catch them. Teachers who have yet to totally embrace 21st century skill sets will also be able to enhance their own professional development in a job embedded way as they learn through observation in a non-threatening environment. Teachers will also have the opportunity to attend gifted students conferences where they will learn how to 'recognize the genius in our children' and thus better assist in the classroom portion of the program.

Each class of Cleveland Coders mentees will be a mutually supportive group with its own unique identity. The fifth graders entering the program in September 2015 will be known in name and graphically as Cleveland Coders '23 (see Attachment C), their anticipated year of graduation from high school. Sixth graders will be known as Cleveland Coders '22, etc.

Curricula will be age appropriate and become increasingly challenging as participants advance through the eight-year program cycle. There will be inter-team events such as "Code Jams" where students can showcase to their peers, parents and other adults what they have learned and created.

Mentors and Coders will be able to maintain contact with one another 24/7 through a proprietary computer and mobile app called iReach (see Attachment D) conceived by one of our partners who is currently involved in a High School mentoring program in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Participants will be included in the real time refinement of the app and assist in its field testing for their benefit and other young people in similar programs in the state and nation.

iReach will allow for the creation and execution of tasks between mentoring sessions and the earning of points which can be redeemed for rewards.

The United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc. will serve as the lead agency and fiscal agent. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland, Inc. (BBBS) will provide overall project management, including mentoring. Program metrics and evaluation will be carried out by staff employed by Case Western Reserve University.

Core Principles Addressed and Outcomes Measured:

1) Setting Goals to be Prepared for the 21st Century Careers: Cleveland Coders will utilize a process which allows mentors and students to work together on selecting goals related to program activities and academic performance at the beginning of the year. This will be based on a "Youth Outcomes Development Plan" and an open ended survey regarding STEM-related knowledge and attitudes which will be developed by Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the National Technical Association and Code.org consultants. The iReach application, accessible on both computers and smart phones, will allow youth to review their goals with members of the mentoring team in real time to determine whether they are on track and, if not, what steps can be taken to improve performance. Each youth's "master plan" will be updated annually. Additionally, mentors will be able to review report cards with mentees and their teachers throughout the academic year. This helps keep mentees accountable in all areas of their lives, and helps set achievable academic goals. The unique nature of Cleveland Coders lies in the fact that demonstrable progress can be achieved, recognized and celebrated by youth and their mentors on specific tasks mastered during each mentoring session. We have built into this model regular opportunities for youth to learn new skills in a positive, supportive environment and build pride of accomplishment through showcasing their achievements to their parents, teachers, mentors and peers. Whether students have ardent, latent or no career interests in technical fields, this eight year experience will benefit all participants since all 21st century careers are impacted in one way or another by technology. Outcomes to measure success: Goal setting should ultimately lead to stronger academic performance and increased educational expectations in both STEM and non-STEM related fields on the part of the youth. We will use these indicators, as measured through our Youth Outcomes Survey, to determine the level of success for this core principle.

2) Building Character: Cleveland Coders will use a school-based mentoring activities system developed by Big Brothers Big Sisters, in collaboration with Cardinal Health, that teaches the value of a strong work ethic and positive behaviors that are needed to be successful in school and in the workforce. These social-emotional activities are aligned with Paul Tough's research in his 2012 book *How Children Succeed*, which demonstrates that character development is critical for all children, particularly those dealing with the consequences of living in poverty. Students will complete activities that 1) help them define their values; and 2) help with anger management and the ability to cope with emotions. Outcomes to measure success: Self-discipline and optimism are two character traits proven to have a positive impact on a young person's future (Tough, 2012). We will review three areas on our Youth Outcomes Survey: attitudes towards risky behaviors and truancy (to assess self-discipline) and educational expectations (measuring optimism) to measure the success of this core principle.

3) Developing Pathways to Achievement (decision making and critical thinking skills): Computer science and coding, by their very nature, aid greatly in the development of computational and critical thinking skills, whether or not IT is a child's eventual career path. New computer science courses under development not only focus around seven big ideas at the core of computer science—creativity, abstraction, data, algorithms, programming, Internet and impact - but are also applicable to analysis in many disciplines. Cleveland Coders will give mentees an opportunity to participate in fun and meaningful hands-on activities each week that teach new skills and build self-confidence. For example, their participation in the further development and testing of the iReach application will give them real world experience in creating something they will personally use in the program, thus showing what it is like to be both a creator and a consumer of information technology. Saturday field trips to the Great Lakes Science Center and other STEM related activities will allow Coders to engage in hands-on workshops and other events that bring to life what they have been learning during the week. Students will also be exposed to life skills activities such as financial literacy, consumerism on the internet and exercises to build organizational skills. Outcomes to measure success: Attitudes towards risky behaviors and truancy correlate strongly with positive decision making and critical thinking skills. Consequently, we will use these indicators from our Youth Outcomes Survey to measure the success of this core principle.

4) Building a sense of Resiliency: The consistency of the cohort mentoring model of Cleveland Coders, combined with the capacity to be in touch 24/7 through iReach, will give participants the necessary additional supports and reinforcements from adults to deal with various challenges and crises as they arise. Belonging to an identifiable group that is accomplishing significant tasks will create a sense of pride and self-confidence that will, over time, demonstrate to young people that they have the wherewithal to overcome any obstacle. As mentees sit side by side with peers and adults working on challenging projects, they will experience the process of problem solving with its inevitable pattern of testing, setbacks, revisions, re-testing and eventual success. Outcomes to measure success: Our Youth Outcomes Survey will utilize items from the Search Institutes' Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) to measure key resiliency factors. The DAP is a 58-item assessment that has been tested and validated

with multiple types and ages of youth populations. The 58 DAP asset items are scaled into multiple internal asset items (support, empowerment, boundaries and constructive use of time), external asset items (commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies and positive identity), and context areas (personal, social, family, school and community).

5) Believing in a Positive Future: The program will be enhanced by exposure to successful adult role models who have come from a wide variety of backgrounds like those of the participants, and who have overcome many challenges to achieve what they have. Adding college students to the cohort will allow young people to interact with them and find out how and why these students made their educational choices. Economic status will have no significance in Cleveland Coders. All "team members" will have access to the same tools (computers and tablets), team apparel (logo tee shirts and caps) and benefits (special events, supplies, meals, transportation, etc.), enabling mentees to experience life unfettered by financial concerns while they are participating in upbuilding, positive activities. Outcomes to measure success: Three areas of our Youth Outcomes Survey - educational expectations, scholastic efficacy and health and well-being - measure a youth's belief in a positive future. Consequently, we will use these indicators from our Youth Outcomes Survey to measure the success of this core principle.

5. Please describe the specific activities your program will conduct. (See Attachment E)

Two weekly mentoring sessions will be held in-school either during a prescribed period in the day or after normal school hours. One session will be devoted completely to the Code.org curriculum. By the end of each course, students will create interactive games or stories that they can share with anyone. The courses are flexible so we will be able to tailor them to each class based on students' developmental level and prior experience. The lessons align to CSTA Computer Science and ISTE standards, and reinforce concepts and skills taught in other subject areas by integrating national Math, English Language Arts and Science standards (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNIM1fzJ8u0).

Content for the other weekly session will derive from the three guiding principles of relationship building, character development and literacy. Five key programming concepts to be considered under these principles are: 1) Academics (10-12 activities per school year): organization, study and test-taking skills and time management; 2) Social and Emotional Development (10-11 activities per school year): communication, conflict resolution, interpersonal skills and leadership; 3) Life Skills (4-5 activities per school year): etiquette, health and wellness, money management and safety; 4) Diversity (1-4 activities per school year): celebrating diversity, cliques and bullying, cultural differences, prejudice reduction, stereotypes and labeling; and 5) Civic Engagement (1-2 activities per school year, including a day of community service): charity, community service and empathy.

Two Saturdays per month will be used for field trips to a branch of the Cleveland Public Library or PNC Fairfax Connection (a program funded by one of our business partners, PNC bank) where computer time will be reserved for additional activities in the computer sciences. School bus transportation, lunch and snacks will be provided. Mentors and mentees will wear their Cleveland Coders apparel during all such weekend activities to create a sense of team spirit, as well as heighten awareness of the program in the larger community.

Four times per year, all Coders teams will go to the Great Lakes Science Center for various activities, including hands-on workshops and movies in the Cleveland Clinic OMNIMAX Theater.

Twice a year, the program will hold a Saturday "Code Jam" where teams from all grades will assemble together at either Cleveland State University or Case Western Reserve University at the Schools of Engineering to exhibit coding and robotics projects they have completed during the prior months.

During the summer months, there will be special week long summer camps held at either Great Lakes Science Center or Case Western Reserve University. Mentors will maintain weekly contact during school summer vacation via iReach and various weekly gatherings so that momentum will not be lost. The program will draw heavily on the resources afforded by the National Technical Association.

Cleveland Coders is designed to provide no less than 24 hours per month of direct contact and a minimum of an additional 30 hours per month of virtual contact from the mentoring team via the iReach application.

6. Discuss how the program will utilize best practices to ensure program success. Are there successful mentor programs after which you will model your program? Please name the program and describe what makes it successful.

The evidence base for Project Mentor, a signature program of Big Brothers Big Sisters, is strong. Public/Private Ventures has conducted a large-scale, national, random assignment evaluation of Big Brothers Big Sisters School-based mentoring. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio was one of ten agencies to participate in this study, which included 1,139 youth participants. The study, released in August 2007, found that youth who participated in Big Brothers Big Sisters' School-based mentoring programs showed statistically significant improvements relative to their non-mentored peers in eight academic outcomes: 1) overall academic performance; 2) performance in science; 3) performance in written language; 4) performance in oral language; 5) quality and number of assignments turned in; 6) fewer serious school infractions; 7) scholastic efficacy; and 8) reduced skipping of school (Herrera et al., 2007).

A meta-analysis of youth mentoring programs found that the greater the number of research-supported best practices the mentoring program employed, the greater the positive outcomes youth participants displayed (DuBois, Holloway, et al., 2002). The best practices cited in the study are followed by our agency: Monitoring of program implementation; Screening of prospective mentors; Mentor/youth matching; Mentor pre-match training; Expectations: frequency of contact; Expectations: length of relationship; Supervision: our program coordinators maintain frequency of contact with mentors and youth; Ongoing training; Structured activities for mentors and youth; and Parent support/involvement.

The 2007 Public/Private Ventures study also found that longer matches and closer relationships are associated with stronger impacts. To increase the length and strength of relationships, the authors recommend: Starting matches as early in the school year as possible; Ensure that volunteers provide at least one school year of mentoring; Build programs in feeder schools to sustain matches through school transitions; Select supportive schools for program involvement and continually foster those partnerships; and Provide mentors and mentees with opportunities to communicate during the summer months.

Finally, a 2013 study conducted by The Boston Consulting Group compared the life outcomes of 500 former Little Brothers and Little Sisters with a control group of individuals from similar backgrounds who did not participate in a BBBS program. The study found that, over the course of their working lives, youth who were mentored through a BBBS program will earn on average $315,000 more than those who were not mentored. The study calculated an average social return on investment of $18 for every dollar invested. Few other interventions for children facing adversity can match the proven value of Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring.

7. Describe your organization's previous experience with this type of program OR a program of a similar scale, including previous evaluations, size and duration of previously implemented programs, goals, and outcomes.

As the lead agency for this project, the United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc. has financially supported and evaluated scores of programs in its 33 year history involving mentoring/tutoring, STEM and academic enhancement. In the last three fiscal years alone, UBF issued 27 grants to organizations that served over 9500 students in greater Cleveland from K-12. As one of our three priority areas of funding, we seek to support educational programs that emphasize early childhood development, middle schools and high schools, college preparation and academic mentoring programs. Programs we fund should reflect a strong commitment to education and access for low income and underserved populations. Educational programs should enrich participants' lives by including activities that lead to a change in knowledge, skill or level of appreciation rather than one-time events.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland, the Program Administrator for this grant, began advocating a district wide mentoring plan for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) in 2006. At the time, BBBS had more

than ten years of experience operating school-based mentoring programs, with programs in over ten schools. BBBS finalized a plan with CMSD and in July of 2007, BBBS School Based Mentoring was formally launched with the expansion of their program to various middle schools.

Mentors and students in the CMSD program were matched when students began sixth grade. Most sixth grade students attend the same school in seventh and eighth grade, making it much easier for mentors to be matched with the same students for multiple school years. Seventy percent of sixth grade mentoring relationships from 2012-13 stayed together into the next school year. We know from national research that length and strength of mentoring relationships drives outcomes (Herrera et al., 2007). In 2013-2014 more than two-thirds of the mentors in the program were in their second year or more of participation. Therefore, youth in the program are benefitting from being matched with experienced mentors.

Our Strength of Relationship survey results indicate closeness between the mentors and youth. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland administers the Strength of Relationship survey to all mentors and youth, ages nine and older, three months after the mentoring relationship begins, and again at the end of the year to assess the relationship between the mentor and youth. This data helps inform how we can improve the quality of our services to mentors and mentees with the goal of achieving longer, stronger mentoring relationships. For the School-based Mentoring programs in 2013-14, the average score for volunteer responses across all dimensions combined was 4.0 out of a five-point scale, and the average score for student responses across all dimensions combined was 4.7 out of a five-point scale.

As these results demonstrate, mentors consistently indicate that they have close relationships with their mentees. Even more striking is how strong the mentees rate their relationships with their mentors. These results are a reminder that youth in our program have few adult role models; consequently, they value greatly the friendship and guidance they receive from their Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Our Youth Outcomes Survey was developed by three of the top mentoring researchers in the country - Jean Rhodes (University of Massachusetts at Boston), Jean Grossman (Princeton University) and Carla Herrera (Public/Private Ventures) – for use by Big Brothers Big Sisters affiliates. The Youth Outcomes Survey is administered to youth within a month before the youth is matched and then at the end of the school year for school-based relationships. It is then administered on a yearly basis for the length of the mentoring relationship.

The Youth Outcomes Survey has 33 questions that examine eight dimensions of the mentoring relationship: 1) Social Acceptance (e.g., “I find it hard to make friends”); 2) Scholastic Efficacy (e.g., "I feel that I am just as smart as other kids my age”); 3) Educational Expectations (how sure the child is that he/she will reach different levels of schooling); 4) Academic Performance; 5) Attitudes towards Risky Behaviors (such as drug and alcohol use, cheating and skipping school); 6) Parental Trust (e.g., “My parents/guardians respect my feelings”); 7) Truancy; and 8) Presence of a Special Adult in the Child’s Life (other than a parent/guardian).

These measures have been found to be reliable and valid, and have been used in previous youth development research. Youth respond to the questions on a four-point scale, except for the questions about academic performance, for which a five-point scale is used.

The overwhelming majority (94%) of youth participants in Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland’s School-based Mentoring programs reported improvements in at least one of the eight categories measured in 2013-14. More than two-thirds (68%) of the youth reported improvement in at least two of the eight categories.

8. What will make this collaboration successful? What will the indicator(s) of success be for this collaboration?

We have assembled a strong team of leaders who not only bring their expertise to this process, but their wholehearted support and a long history of caring about the future of our young people. The enthusiasm which all have demonstrated in the short time we have worked together on this proposal is a fore gleam of the successes we will achieve in the long term. The concepts included in this proposal are indicative of the vision with which the team members have approached this opportunity. Through constant monitoring, evaluation and feedback received from all involved, we will continue to grow and modify the model where

necessary to achieve our mission.

The greatest indicator of success will, at a minimum, be a 100% high school graduation rate and 75% or more pursuing post-secondary options such as college, vocational school or the military. While striving for this ultimate goal, we will seek consistent, improved mentee performance over the 2014-15 school year baseline data in attendance, behavior and coursework as measured by the School District.

Application Section II: Program Management

9. Leadership Team: The leadership team should be comprised of no less than one member of each partnering organization. Please provide a brief bio of each leadership team member, including a brief description of the team member's passion for the program and interest in working with young people. Bios should also include:
    - Name and title
    - Responsibilities for this grant project. (Percent of time should be included in the budget document.)
    - Qualifications
    - Prior relevant experience

A. **Rachel Marie Angel, Phar.D.** is President/Executive Director, IReach, Inc., a non-profit organization founded to address the need for "re-establishing moral character, work ethic, social awareness, education and community pride among youth." Dr. Angel is a product of Richmond Heights High School, our school district partner, and earned a Doctorate of Pharmacy from Hampton University at age 24. Having overcome the effect of parental separation, moving through multiple school systems and eventually finishing her secondary education on her own, she went on to be a volunteer counselor, tutor and mentor beginning with the Boys and Girls Club in Hampton, VA. In addition to running iReach, she works as a Staff Pharmacist and is a mentor at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Career Campus of CMSD working with at-risk youth. Dr. Angel will be working with our team on the development of the iReach mobile mentoring application.

B. **Yolanda Y. Armstrong, MSSA, LSW** is the President & CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland, Inc. (BBBS). She holds a B.S. in Health Services Administration from Ohio University and a Master's Degree in Social Work Administration from Case Western Reserve University. Yolanda, who has been both a mentee and a mentor, has more than 25 years of experience in the social service and non-profit field. She is a licensed social worker and a past part-time Professor for Cuyahoga Community College. Among her community service, she serves on the Board of Trustees of the Black Professionals Association Charitable Foundation. Ms. Armstrong and the staff of BBBS will provide agency oversight for Cleveland Coders as well as implement the recruitment, screening and training plan for volunteers.

C. **Dr. Bilal M. M. Bomani** currently serves as the Vice President of the National Technical Association – Cleveland Chapter. He is a Senior Research Scientist by profession, a member of the Graduate faculty at two Ohio universities, a part-time lecturer and adjunct faculty member at an Ohio community college. He has mentored over 100 students over the past four years and has hosted over 5,000 in his STEM lab. He has been internationally recognized for his innovative approach to alternative, renewable and sustainable global solutions by way of a TED talk - http://www.ted.com/talks/bilal_bomani_plant_fuels_that_could_power_a_jet.html. Dr. Bomani organizes a STEM fair twice a year that is held at Cuyahoga Community College. The fair exposes hundreds of students to STEM fields and supports programs that incentivize STEM for middle school, high school and community college students.

D. **Reverend Shawn Braxton** is the Pastor of New Life Cathedral located in the City of East Cleveland where the church is actively involved in meeting the needs of its members and the community. Prior to becoming the Pastor of New Life Cathedral, Shawn served for eight years as an associate minister at Omega Baptist Church, and worked in the church in several ministries. He currently serves as the President of East Cleveland Concerned Pastors where he works with the member churches to identify resources to address the needs of the residents of the city of East Cleveland and Greater Cleveland. Shawn is also the President and CEO of Braxton Educational and Technology Consulting that operates programming in several school districts in the state of Ohio. He also works with several nationally based educational technology

companies to develop products and services to meet the needs of our students from kindergarten to college. Shawn has worked professionally as a teacher, consultant and college professor, and has worked with schools and educators throughout the United States. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Municipal School District, Central State University and Cleveland State University. Shawn will assist with curriculum planning and mentor training.

E. **Danyll Lockhart Jones** is Director of Youth and Family Engagement, Great Lakes Science Center. Ms. Jones has worked in the field of Youth Development for the past 28 years. Her previous experience includes roles with Cleveland Public Schools and the Cleveland Job Corps Center, as well as being the owner/operator of her own company that provided afterschool education programming and a thriving summer arts enrichment camp. She holds a BA in Psychology with a concentration in Education from Cleveland State University and an Executive MBA from Indiana Wesleyan University. She is also a certified Community Leader and College and Career Readiness Advisor with training in counseling. She will oversee all Cleveland Coders activities at the Great Lakes Science Center.

F. **Cecil Lipscomb** has been Executive Director of The United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc. (UBF) since 2011. Prior to this, Mr. Lipscomb was Senior Director of Institutes at Cleveland Clinic and worked as Director of Fundraising for Case Western Reserve University's School of Engineering. Before 2004, he worked in commercial and government sales, management and marketing in the telecommunications sector for ten years with two Fortune 100 companies that eventually merged to create Verizon. He received his undergraduate degree from Ursuline College, his MBA from Weatherhead School of Management and certificate of nonprofit management from Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Case Western Reserve University. He is a board member for the Center for Community Solutions, the premier statewide resource for providing objective research, analysis and advocacy to improve the health, social and economic conditions of all Ohioans, with a focus on Northeast Ohio. Mr. Lipscomb will personally provide UBF's administrative oversight for Cleveland Coders.

G. **Jerry Primm** is National Sales Director and Vice President of Sales for Primme Unlimited, a minority-owned technology company based in Northeast Ohio which specializes in information management, document management solutions, IT networking, hardware infrastructure and software. Mr. Primm is a product of the local school system, graduating from Lincoln West Senior High School after which he attended Central State University. In addition to being a parent, he has been involved at many levels volunteering in Cleveland area school districts. Jerry serves on the Board of Directors of United Black Fund, Heights Football Booster Club, and is a frequently requested speaker at UBF capacity building training sessions and other organizations. He will lend his expertise to the curriculum planning process, particularly as it relates to coding and the life skills mentoring activities. Mr. Primm will also actively recruit mentors from his peers in the business community.

H. **Nichole Shabazz** is the Youth Outreach and Programming Coordinator for the Cleveland Public Library (CPL). She is responsible for managing system-wide programming that provides enriching opportunities for young patrons to reach their full potential as information literate, critically thinking, and engaged global citizens throughout the library's 28 branches; she is also an educational liaison between the library and the greater educational community. Ms. Shabazz is an educator, a K-12 librarian, a certified teacher leader and an advocate for literacy, as a vehicle, and literature, as a tool, to transform and transcend the lives of youth and young adults. Nichole received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science with a concentration in Public Policy Studies from Clark Atlanta University. She also holds a Master of Arts degree in Curriculum & Instruction, with an emphasis in Social Science, from the Master of Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST) program at Cleveland State University and earned her K-12 School Library Media certification from The University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia. In addition, Nichole obtained an Education Specialist degree (Ed.S) in Instructional Leadership with a focus on Brain-Based Learning from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and is currently pursuing her PhD in the Instructional Design for Online Learning (IDOL) doctoral program at Capella University in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nichole will be the liaison between Cleveland Coders and CPL and will serve on the planning team to assist in scheduling the use of the Library system by mentees.

I. **Rodney Thomas** – Mr. Thomas is the Principal owner of Northcoast Evaluation Services, LLC and Senior Research Associate at the Dr. Semi J. and Ruth Begun Center for Violence Prevention, Research and Education at Case Western Reserve University. He has more than 20 years of experience developing and executing evaluation and research projects for a multitude of clients, including the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, New York City Public Schools, multiple Cuyahoga County agencies, the State of Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, and countless community-based organizations. For the past

seven years, he has served as the Project Director for the evaluation of MyCom, funded by the Cleveland Foundation and Cuyahoga County Family and Children First Council.

J. **Renee T. Willis, PhD** is the new Superintendent of the Richmond Heights Schools and committed to the renaissance of the District. She is also the CEO and Lead Consultant for an LLC which provides educational consulting services and strategic planning for entities seeking to close achievement gaps. She earned a BS in Mathematics from Spelman College, a MA in Education Administration from Baldwin-Wallace University and a Doctorate of Philosophy in Urban Education from Cleveland State University where she is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the College of Education. Her dissertation focused on mitigating disparities among urban achievers in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). Prior to her role as Superintendent, she was the Chief Strategic Implementation Officer & Chief Transformation Officer for CMSD where, among other things, she maintained oversight of the Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) Program that saw dramatic increases in graduation percentages and GPA with its first four year cohort. She also served for three years as Deputy Chief of PreK-8 Education for CMSD where she created a TurnAround Zone for the lowest achieving K-8 schools. In 2009, she was a member of an Ohio Grantmakers Forum policy think tank taskforce that authored "Beyond Tinkering: Creating Real Opportunities for Ohioans to come." She has been a school administrator, teacher, author of many professional papers and publications on education and is the recipient of several awards. Dr. Willis is featured in the February 2015 issue of the "AASA School Administrator" magazine. She will be our planning team's chief contact with the Richmond Heights School District, will provide oversight in all matters relating to the students, teachers and parents and will also serve on the planning team.

10. A timeline of all major activities must be provided. Assessment, planning and initial training must be completed by September 7, 2015. Services must begin by September 7, 2015.

(See Attachment F)

Activity	Timeline
Begin planning for administrative controls, curricula and evaluation system. Develop program and marketing materials. Start mentor recruitment. Schedule venues for extracurricular sessions. Continue development of iReach. Implement local match fundraising. Deliver parental permission forms to schools.	April 2015
Order Coders apparel, supplies and tablets. Execute vendor contracts for transportation and meals.	May 2015
Begin mentor screening and training.	June 2015
Teacher orientation.	August 2015
Student orientation. Implement evaluation system. BBBS starts on-site supervision and records maintenance. Gather remaining parental permission forms.	September 2015

11. Describe the implementation process for reaching the following milestones:

    a. Screening, orientation, supporting, and monitoring process for mentors and other personnel working directly with youth;

    After potential volunteers make an initial inquiry into Big Brothers Big Sisters, they complete an application and undergo a comprehensive screening. The purpose of the screening is to protect youth by identifying and screening out applicants who pose a safety risk, are unlikely to honor their time commitment or are unlikely to form positive relationships with youth. The screening procedures include gathering and verifying information on volunteer applications; checking references; processing criminal background checks (including the Ohio Sex Offender database) as well as child and domestic abuse record checks; and conducting in-person interviews.

b. Identification and intake process for mentees;

Every student at each participating school is assessed prior to beginning the program to reveal which students are at-risk for dropout and delinquency and are most likely to benefit from a mentoring relationship. The assessment criteria are low scores on the Ohio Achievement Assessment in Math or Reading, with some exceptions for students who are recommended by their teachers as demonstrating a special need for inclusion in the program.

c. The means by which you will involve families of youth in your program; ongoing training of mentors throughout the life of the program, including topics and frequency;

Parents will be invited and warmly welcomed to pre-arranged events where they can learn more about their child's experience in the program and what they are learning. In addition to the child's maturation process, this is critical to the development of the in-home portion of the mentee's support network as he or she is exposed to computer sciences.

Our program coordinators will be available to make home visits, if necessary, to any family with a student in Cleveland Coders. The home visits help us build rapport with families, especially those who have special needs; give our coordinators a better understanding of the challenges the students are facing; and help us coach our mentors on the youth's needs as part of a comprehensive plan of support. Through the home visits, we can connect our families to needed supportive services to increase family stability, and ultimately enhance the outcomes of our youth participants. The families also come to visualize us as a resource and ally; often initial visits lead to subsequent visits/phone calls with requests for assistance.

We also mail information about the program to parents prior to making the mentoring relationship, and contact parents of mentees periodically throughout the school year to update them on day-to-day issues and successes of their children. We also contact parents over the summer months with a greater focus on summer learning loss.

Cleveland Coders volunteers receive training from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland on mentoring adolescents. The two-hour training covers program requirements and rules, pre-teen and adolescent development and behavior, definitions of what a mentor is and is not, stages of a relationship, listening skills, building on mentee's strengths, the asset-building model and anger management. Additionally, a BBBS program coordinator holds separate orientation sessions at the school for mentors and students at the start of each school year.

d. Assessing fiscal accountability and faithful implementation of project plans; and

The United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc. has the administrative systems in place from its 30+ years of grant making activity for monitoring both the fiscal and programmatic integrity of programs that it funds, and it will utilize these same mechanisms for Cleveland Coders.

e. Any other critical information you would want the Community Connectors team to know.

Cleveland Coders was developed as a program which: 1) delivers maximum impact; 2) can be replicated; 3) is a realistic start vis-à-vis numbers of students served, with the anticipation of measured growth; 4) will provide a skill set for participants in addition to traditional mentoring; and 5) encourages, on a long-term basis, the development of

leadership skills. We have targeted this innovative model to first-ring suburban communities where children, who moved with their families from the inner city, now reside and are failing or not graduating "on time" with their cohort in record numbers. It is our intention to stem that tide, over time, by addressing this issue at an earlier age. In summary, we believe that quality, and not quantity, is the order of the day when assessing the merits of this program.

12. Describe how each applicant partner plans to contribute to the overall program plan including, but not limited to, time contribution, personnel contribution, monetary contribution, shared responsibilities, use of facilities, etc. Complete the Roles and Responsibilities worksheet attachment.

United Black Fund – Funding, in-kind administrative support, meeting facilities (planning team), marketing and communications support, mentor recruitment.
Big Brothers Big Sisters – In-kind program and administrative support, mentor recruitment.
Richmond Heights School District – In-kind administrative support, teacher support, computer workstations, space, school buses, mentor recruitment.
Primme Unlimited – Curriculum development, business sector mentor recruitment.
PNC Bank & PNC Fairfax Connection (see attached letter of support) – Funding, program space, computer workstations, mentor recruitment location.
New Life Cathedral (see attached letter of support) – In-kind IT and values-based curriculum development, program space, mentor recruitment location, mentor training.
Cleveland Public Library (see attached letter of support) – In-kind planning support, program space, computer workstations, mentor recruitment location.
Great Lakes Science Center (see attached letter of support) – In-kind curriculum development and planning support, free and discounted admissions to venue.
National Technical Association (Cleveland Chapter) (see attached letter of support) – Computer science and robotics activities development, mentor recruitment.

Application Section III: Evaluation Plan

13. The evaluation plan is intended to provide lead organizations with a framework that will ensure the program is on track to positively impact the lives of students and identify needs for additional support when challenges arise. Each evaluation plan must list the scope of work and describe the following:
    a. Plans for keeping records of mentor contact hours, unduplicated count of students served each month, mentor training hours, etc. for ongoing reporting;
    b. Gathering of data to measure progress of program towards meeting the selected goals;
    c. Projected indicators of success; and
    d. Anticipated barriers to successful evaluation including data collection and measurement of progress toward outcomes.

Program information such as number of active mentoring relationships is recorded and tracked using AIM (Agency Information Management), an online database created by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America for use by its affiliates to track key indicators and demographics pertaining to mentoring relationships.

The Big Brothers Big Sisters Outcomes System tracks the length of the mentoring relationship, the strength of the mentoring relationship and the outcomes that resulted from the mentoring relationship. The measures we use to gather outcomes data are:

- Length: Average Match Length and Retention Rate. Numerous studies have shown that the longer the mentoring relationship lasts, the stronger the benefits for the mentored youth.
- Strength: A Strength of Relationship Survey is administered to mentors and youth three months after the mentoring relationship begins, and again at the end of the first year of the mentoring

relationship. This survey is used to evaluate whether the mentor and youth are developing a close relationship.
- Outcomes: The Youth Outcomes Survey.

The Youth Outcomes Survey is administered to the youth within a month before the youth is matched and then at the end of the school year for school-based relationships. It is then administered on a yearly basis for the length of the mentoring relationship. The Youth Outcomes Survey contains 33 questions that examine eight dimensions of the mentoring relationship.

These measures have been found to be reliable and valid and have been used in previous youth development research. For example:

- Increases in scholastic efficacy are associated with improved mental health and higher grades in both children and adolescents (Hagborg, 1998).
- Increases in social acceptance predict improvements in peer relations and school conduct, increase school achievement, and decrease the chances of dropping out (Asher & Paquette, 2003).
- Educational expectations have been linked to increases in school performance and increased standardized test scores (Khattab, 2005).
- Parental trust has been linked with improved grades and attendance, as well as reduced substance use (Rhodes, Reddy, & Grossman, 2005).

The projected indicator of success for this program is that at least 60% of the youth will show improvements in at least two of the eight outcome areas measured by the Youth Outcomes Survey.

We anticipate no barriers to successful evaluation, data collection and measurement of progress.

14. Applicants are to complete the program model.

Application Section IV: Sustainability

15. Describe how you plan to maintain the program after the grant funding period. Include a discussion about financial sustainability and sustainability of the partnership commitment. Applicants are not required to include cash as part of their local contributions; however, funding sustainability is critical to the Community Connectors program. Applicants that show the potential for funding sustainability will be given preference in application scoring.

The United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, Inc., as the lead agency on this project, is fully committed to growing this model and fully supporting it beyond the initial three years of State funding. The Board of Directors recognizes that this will involve devoting organizational resources to this effort. As part of our recently adopted Strategic Plan, a grant writer will be hired. We have also invested in state-of-the-art fundraising software to identify potential local and national donors.

The nature of the Cleveland Coders program, and our partner relationship with Code.org, opens up a host of opportunities with tech-related entities such as Google, Microsoft and Amazon. UBF Board members from major institutions will lend their influence and expertise in the acquisition of funding. We enjoy an excellent relationship with local foundations. Several individuals of means have indicated their interest in supporting initiatives such as Cleveland Coders. Finally, partners, will exhaust all possibilities in providing cash and in-kind support. Funds have already been committed from several sources.

Application Section V: Program Budget

16. Complete the budget form attachment and justify each of the budget items by creating a budget justification.

By clicking this box, ☒ *I (Insert Name) Cecil Lipscomb agree, on behalf of this applicant, and any or all identified partners, that this application and all supporting documents contain information approved by a relevant executive board or its equivalent.*