

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. (“Triumph Gulf Coast”) has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Florida State University College of Law

Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization: Located in Tallahassee, Florida, Florida State University College of Law was founded in 1966.

Contact Information:

Primary Contact Information: Paolo Annino
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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: None

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This pre-application process will **not** result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be scored, and then considered for award in the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

Executive Summary
FSU College of Law Center for Economic Opportunity
for Veterans and Small Businesses

I. The Amount of Funds Being Sought from Triumph Gulf Coast

\$600,000 (\$200,000 per year for 3 years). A detailed budget will be submitted with the application.

II. Amount and Identity of Other Sources of Funds for the Proposed Project or Program

Florida State University College of Law will provide any required matching funds.

III. Location of the Project or Program

Crawfordville, Wakulla County, Florida

IV. Summary Description of the Proposed Program

The FSU College of Law Center for Economic Opportunity for Veterans and Small Businesses will provide veterans and small businesses with free legal services that will be transformational in helping to remove the impediments to full participation in the economy, and will thereby promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement in Wakulla County. Legal services will be provided at a rented office in Crawfordville, staffed by two staff attorneys/graduate fellows who will be supervised by FSU College of Law faculty and assisted by law students. This model will not only allow direct legal services to be provided to clients, but will also help train and inspire students for future public interest legal work with veterans and small businesses.

A. Veterans

1. The Need

When Jeff M., a veteran living in Crawfordville, was threatened with contempt of court for failure to pay child support, he had no access to free legal help in Wakulla County. He had lost his job, but continued to pay child support until he exhausted his savings. He tried to navigate the legal system, but without a lawyer, was unsuccessful. When he missed a few child support payments, his driver's license was suspended. Jeff had become one of many veterans caught in this trap—without a driver's license, he was unable to get a good job. Without a good job, he was unable to catch up on his child support.

Seeking free legal help meant traveling to Tallahassee, to seek help from the Tallahassee Veterans Legal Collaborative advice and referral clinic. TVLC lawyers were able to work out an agreement on the contempt motion and Jeff was able to work out a deal with Department of Revenue to have his license reinstated and was able to get a good-paying job. He is now able to

support himself and his daughter and is a productive member of the economy in Wakulla County.

Wakulla County is home to an estimated 3,000 veterans. Unfortunately, many of these veterans do not have access to transportation to Tallahassee, so finding legal help is even more difficult.

2. A Solution: Access to Legal Services

The Center will provide free legal services for low-to-moderate-income veterans in a variety of areas related to economic productivity. For example, veterans can receive assistance with expungement of criminal records that may be preventing them from obtaining jobs or professional licenses. Additionally, assistance with child support modifications and conversion of court fees to community service hours may enable veterans to obtain reinstatement of their drivers licenses, which will enable them to obtain employment.

B. Small Businesses

1. The Need

Finding competent legal advice can also be a struggle for small business owners and entrepreneurs seeking to start a new venture and facing a myriad of common legal issues. One study¹, commissioned by a legal insurance company, surveyed over 1,000 businesses having 1 to 250 employees and concluded that “more than 13 million, or nearly 60%, of all small businesses experienced significant legal events in the past two years.” Of those, nearly 60% did not engage an attorney for assistance with the matter with 3 million overall citing cost as the reason. Issues that commonly arise include reviewing and negotiating contracts, state and federal tax matters including audits, employee and independent contractor concerns as well as new business formation and related issues arising among co-founders. These issues can slow or otherwise impede the formation of new businesses and the growth of existing businesses.

2. A Solution: Access to Legal Services

The Center will provide free legal services for low-to-moderate-income business owners, and entrepreneurs in Wakulla County to remove barriers to new business development and to improve the legal security of small businesses owners and their employees.

The Center will provide services that include assisting entrepreneurs with proper business formation:

- Limiting personal liability
- Ensuring the business is tax efficient
- Facilitating co-ownership and investment

¹ Legal Needs of Small Business Survey, commissioned by LegalShield. Survey of 1,007 business owners conducted May 2 through May 14, 2013. See: https://business.legalshield.com/sites/default/files/reports/legal-needs-of-small-business_0.pdf (last visited November 1, 2017)

Other services provided will include: 1) advising business owners on state and federal tax matters, compliance with regulatory requirements, and day-to-day transactional law matters; 2) drafting contracts appropriate for typical transactions, and 3) securing trademarks and other Intellectual Property protection.

V. Summary Timeline for the Proposed Project or Program

As soon as possible after funding is available, office space will be leased in Wakulla County, and two staff attorneys/graduate fellows will be hired to begin providing legal services to veterans and small businesses. At the beginning of the following academic semester, law students will be assigned to the Center and the availability of free legal assistance will be publicized. The Center will be open 52 weeks of the year.

The project is intended to be a long-term project, and continued funding will be provided after the third year to allow the Center to provide legal services even after funding from Triumph Gulf Coast is no longer available. A detailed plan for continued funding will be submitted with the application.