APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Gulf Coast State College

Proposal Title: Unmanned Aerial Systems Pilot Boot Camp for Exiting Military

Amount of Triumph Funds Requested: $2,195,000

Total Estimated Project Cost: $2,395,000

Brief Description of Individual/Entity/Organization

Gulf Coast State College (GCSC) is an institution of Higher Education (community/state college) with four campuses located in Panama City, Port St Joe, North Bay and Tyndall Airforce Base. Providing quality academic and workforce training programs since 1957, Gulf Coast State College developed and offered the first AS degree in Unmanned Systems Technology Operations in Florida.

Contact Information **Jose Lopez-Baquero**

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Name of Co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: Unmanned Safety Institute

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed program, *Unmanned Aerial Systems Pilot Boot Camp for Exiting Military* is a nine week program designed to assist exiting military personnel in Bay, Escambia, Franklin, Gulf, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton and Wakulla counties to become certified and qualified as remote pilots of unmanned aerial systems including visual line of sight and beyond visual line of sight in aircraft greater than 20 pounds. Students successfully completing the program will receive 8 certifications in the following areas: Remote Pilot Certification; Small UAS Safety Certification Level 1 and 2; Visual Line of Sight Systems Operations; Advanced Unmanned Safety Certification Level 1 & 2; Advanced Unmanned System Operations Certification; and Professional Remote Operator (PRO) Certification.

The Boot Camp is designed to assist exiting military personnel to participate in a fast-paced instructional program (9-12 weeks) that will result in employment opportunities as remote unmanned aerial systems pilots.

The program is structured to provide training to exiting military in a hybrid format (combination of on-line instruction, face to face instruction, and hands-on training including flight training). The face to face

training will be provided at both the Panama City Campus and Port St Joe Campus of Gulf Coast State College (GCSC).

The Boot Camp is designed to provide students with a career pathway consisting of multiple "exit points". These exit points will enable a student to exit the Boot Camp at specified points in the training with the skills and certifications needed to become employed in specific occupations. The career pathway includes beginning entry level positions (remote pilots) and progresses to pilots of advanced and complex aerial systems. The career pathway provides students the opportunity to participate in all the training, or exit based on their specific occupational goal. Students with previous experience in the operation of unmanned aerial systems will have the opportunity to have this experience evaluated, and where possible, will receive credit for this previous experience. Students wishing to pursue the Unmanned Systems Technology Operations AS degree from Gulf Coast State College, will also be given credit for the certifications earned in the Boot Camp, thus reducing the time and money needed for the AS degree.

Students participating in the Boot Camp will be provided opportunities for internships with leading companies and will also be assisted in finding employment at the conclusion of the Boot Camp. It is projected that students who complete the entire Boot Camp and earn all the related industry certifications (8) will have a 90% placement rate (will become employed) within one year of completing the program.

It is forecast that companies such as Amazon, Google, Textron, Boeing and Verizon utilizing unmanned aerial systems will be hiring approximately 100,000 remote pilots by 2025 with salaries starting at $55,000 and increasing to $130,000 with additional experience. The national average salary for experienced remote pilots is $83,662. The proposed Boot Camp will enable exiting military in the region to receive the fast-tracked training and certifications needed to become employed in this growing field and to earn salaries that are at or above the average medium income in the counties in the region.

The success of the program will be measured by the number of industry certifications in unmanned aerial systems that are received by students enrolled in the Boot Camp program. Eight hundred (800) industry certifications in unmanned aerial systems will be earned and awarded to Boot Camp participants over the next 3 years.

As a result of the demand for remote pilots and the excellent salaries available, the *Unmanned Aerial Systems Pilot Boot Camp* will have a significant impact on the region by providing employment opportunities for exiting military who are leaving military bases in the region and are seeking short termed training that will enable them to find lucrative employment and to stay in the region. While there are numerous employment opportunities (projected to be 19,733 over the next decade, Jenkins 2015) in the region for remote pilots of unmanned systems, there are also employment opportunities that would enable individuals to travel but remain living in the region and continue to support the local economies.

In addition to preparing exiting military in the region for high wage-high skill jobs, the program will also create a workforce pipeline of remote pilots residing in the region, which could result in companies that need to hire remote pilots relocating to the region, establishing facilities and creating additional jobs in the region.

Gulf Coast State College is requesting $2,195,000 from Triumph Gulf Coast to provide training resulting in industry certifications (800) in unmanned aerial systems to exiting military personnel participating in the *Unmanned Aerial Systems Pilot Boot Camp.* After the initial Boot Camp is completed, the program will be repeated by GCSC as needed to meet the job demand in the region.

The cost per certification received is $2,743.75 which includes training for the 8 certifications, ground school, simulation training and flight training.

Gulf Coast State College will provide in-kind contributions of $200,000 for administrative and instructional support in conjunction with training partners.

The timeline for the project is:

November-December 2019   Submission and Approval of Project by Triumph Gulf Coast

January-May,2020   Recruitment and Selection of Exiting Military for Pilot Boot Camp

                                          First Course Begins

June -December 2020   Courses Completed

January -December 2022   Recruitment and Selection of Exiting Military

                                           Courses Begin

                                           Courses Completed