

# Mid-Project Narrative Report

## Agency Overview

Proteus, Inc. was founded in 1967 as a non-profit organization serving farmworkers in the communities of Tulare, Fresno, Kings and Kern counties in the Central Valley. Located in a rich agricultural area of California, Over the years Proteus has maintained its commitment to serving farmworkers and other program participants to improve their lives. Proteus currently administers approximately 37 concurrent programs ranging in farmworker job placement and training, dislocated worker programs, heat and pesticide safety, emergency supportive services, energy conservation programs, foster family services, youth services, community centers, financial literacy, and education. All programs are placed within one of four divisions for implementation and management, Education, Farmworker, Energy and Community & Workforce Development Divisions. Today, Proteus operates within 17 offices conveniently located in our service areas including One-Stop locations.

*Our “**Mission**” is to provide education, workplace training, job placement, and other support services to farm working families, and diverse program participants to empower them to achieve self-sufficiency.*

*Our “**Vision**” is to improve the quality of life of farmworkers and diverse program participants by being the premier provider of services.*

Since its inception, Proteus has provided Academic and Career & Technical Education classes in the communities it serves by strategically locating classes within the cities and rural towns it serves. In 1998 Proteus was granted its first accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In 2015 Proteus officially named its Education Division, the William M. Maguy School of Education, a Division of Proteus, Inc. (WMSE) named after Proteus’ first CEO. Today the school thrives offering academic classes in English as a Second Language, Citizenship, and High School Equivalency. Career & Technical Education training classes are offered in Truck Driving, Sustainable Energy Efficiency Development and Forklift. In addition, WMSE provides Financial Literacy workshops, childcare, and helps facilitate other community educational services such as Spanish Digital Literacy workshops with partnering organizations.

*WMSE “**Mission**” is to provide quality education through career and technical hands-on training and academic instruction that will empower students to obtain marketable skills that lead to employment and self-sufficiency.*

WMSE currently operates in five locations: Visalia, Porterville, Dinuba, Hanford, and Sanger California with twelve full-time and part-time teachers, four support staff, one childcare provider, and two administrators.

### **2024-25 School Year**

Academic Courses:	Current Enrollment:
• English as a Second Language	33
• Citizenship	56
• High School Equivalency	41
Total	130
Career Technical Education Courses:	Current Enrollment:
• Forklift	70
• Truck Driving	74
• Sustainable Energy Efficiency Development	117
Total	261
Total Students Enrolled	391

### **DLAC Team Members**

Team members are Citizenship/ESL teacher Maria Pinedo and Assistant Director of Education Liset Caudillo. Our onsite extended team member is Director of Education, Maria Reveles with additional guidance and support received from Corporate officers Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Michelle Engel-Silva, ED.D, SPHR and Director of Operations, Shawna Rodriguez, other contributing key staff are Program Development Associate II, Randi Espinoza and IT Director, Cory Brooks.

### **IDEAL 101 Course & Development of Site Plan**

We found the IDEAL 101 course to be very well organized with quality information, excellent questions and easy to use by participants with limited technology skills. Our online meetings with coach Yecsenia Delgado have been instrumental to quickly clarify any questions we had and provided creative solutions to implement. In combination with our in person training, presenters and opportunities to interact with other school team members, over time the IDEAL 101 assigned sections became easier to complete, thus

making it easier to complete our Site Plan. As an added bonus, we were notified of a \$50,000.00 grant award received from the California Department of Education to purchase technology equipment for our academic classes. This will enable us to quickly achieve our technology goals and provides us with a solid framework to continue future expansions.

### **Accomplishments Year to Date**

WMSE has been able to accomplish the development of its Education technology goals and developed an action plan for implementation. We have submitted our contractual agreement to OTAN for access to Canvas and completed the CASAS Proctor and Coordinator required training for administering student eTests and submitted our testing agreement to CASAS. Two testing rooms have been set up in our Dinuba and Porterville locations for High School Equivalency students to take their official HiSET or GED exams with an online proctor. Successful online testing has already occurred with passing students. This setup has greatly benefited our students as they are able to test in a comfortable and familiar location, and they don't have to travel out of town to test. Our IT department is currently purchasing the technology equipment with the CDE grant award we received. We plan to have the equipment installed and ready to use for the 2025-26 school year. We are in the process of implementing Canvas and CASAS eTests proctor training for all teachers and support staff this summer. We will continue to offer on-going additional support and training opportunities to teachers for their continued development of Canvas, CASAS, and other technology instructional uses.

### **How has Proteus Inc, used the skills learned at the training sessions**

#### **Team Building Skills**

The Team Building sessions and exercises have helped us reflect on the effectiveness of the current teams we've had on particular projects and how having a variety of individual strengths on a team helps to have the elements needed to be an effective team. We have an understanding of the 5 elements of a highly effective team, getting results, hold every team member accountable, establish everyone's buy-in commitment and practicing trust among members. Within our DLAC team we are knowledgeable of everyone's strengths, the expertise they bring and have established the two year commitment it takes. Most importantly, we have the trust and confidence of relying on each other and ask for help when needed in order to reach our goals.

#### **Handling Conflict Skills**

We learned the 5 different styles of conflict; competing, collaborating, compromise, avoiding and accommodating. We have practiced some of these skills through our journey. We constantly accommodate to each others busy schedules in order to make time to discuss or work on assignments. We meet in person or use whichever technology is most suitable: text, emails or Google Meets to get our tasks done.

### Communication Skills

The communication skills learned have been useful in teaching us to be alter to the many facets of effective communication with others. Such as having good listening skills, effective body language and the use of appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication. As important, to be aware of common distractions that can minimize the effectiveness of our intent and to continuously work on minimizing those distractions. For example, some team members identified distractions are, making assumptions, being too judgemental at times, and giving too much premature advice. Within our team we practice listening to each other and keep an open mind on each other's ideas.

### Using and Encouraging Strengths

Our entire team took the gallup skills assessment at the initial part of our DLAC program to identify our strengths. We agreed with several outcomes and learned new ones about each other. While working together, we encourage and support each other and ask for help when needed.

### **Challenges, barriers and setbacks encountered**

Having a two member team delegated more responsibilities to each member. In November, our Admissions and Testing Coordinator was out on medical leave. This delayed our ability to complete the CASAS proctor and Coordinator online trainings for administering eTests prior to submitting our agency's agreement. Unfortunately after returning from her surgery, she suffered an unexpected health challenge that put her out again. We are hopeful for her return soon so that we may continue to train staff and coordinate our eTests protocols for the incoming school year.

### **What changes have been made**

The school has set up two rooms at our Dinuba and Porterville sites to be used for official High School Equivalency testing. The rooms meet the required building and technology standards for an online proctored test option.

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### **Planned “Next Steps”**

1. Begin with teacher etests proctor training
2. Setup purchased technology equipment in classrooms
3. Schedule CANVAS in person training with OTAN trainers
4. Develop E-tests protocols and procedures and train staff

### **Team support needed**

Continued on-going support from our coach and OTAN staff as we journey through teacher training in Canvas and other technologies.

### **Other areas of importance and relevancy to our project**

In addition to technological improvements, the school plans to make admissions and orientation changes as needed and increase student assessment data reviews in order to measure the effectiveness of the changes made.

### **Summary**

We continue to progress and develop our technical capabilities in the classrooms. Our intent is to enhance each student’s learning capabilities that will help them achieve their educational goal and help them with future technological needs should they pursue higher education, employment, community engagement or any other personal needs. Having the opportunity to participate in the DLAC academy has been a great benefit and learning experience for Proteus. By having OTAN’s knowledgeable staff readily available, it has helped us fastrack our implementation goals effectively.