**Need Statement**

Laney College has an annual enrollment of 16,000 students and serves a very diverse population. As of 2022–23, the largest populations Laney serves are Hispanic/Latinx (29%), Asian (22%), and Black / African American (21%), and White (17%). A majority of students are female and younger than 25 (56%). In 2021-22, 64% of Laney students received financial aid, and 81% of them were full-time, first-time degree/certificate seeking undergraduate students. The college offers more than 100 programs with over 44 associate degrees in the liberal arts and science fields and associate degrees for transfer. Most students transfer to either a California State University or University of California institution, particularly those that are in close proximity to Oakland.

Focusing on our priority population of low-income students pursuing degrees in the designated STEM disciplines, approximately 25% of the population identify as Black / African American, 20% as Latino/Latina, and around 33% as Asian. Furthermore, over 50% of these students are first-generation college students. While just over a third identify as female, approximately 60% identify as male, with the remaining either unknown or unreported.

The institutional context underscores the importance of addressing the unique challenges faced by low-income students, particularly those pursuing STEM degrees. Laney has implemented various support structures, including basic needs/food pantry programs, math tutoring, and writing centers to assist students.Moreover, the establishment of the MESA program demonstrates Laney’s commitment to supporting first generation, low-income students pursuing Calculus-based STEM fields.