The purpose of these funds is to:

These funds will be used to invest in a coordinated effort to increase the presence and management of pre-law opportunities at Montana State University. This includes hiring a temporary 0.5 FTE pre-law coordinator at MSU who can:

- develop an organized presence for pre-law information on the MSU website (including new website development and incorporation of existing web materials)
- meet with departments regarding course offerings most likely to be valuable for students interested in law school
- develop a formal mechanism for communicating information to pre-law students and recent MSU alums interested in law school
- identify emerging trends in law school admissions
- identify and facilitate the development of a team of faculty pre-law advisors in several stakeholder departments and centers across campus
- develop information sessions and forums for students interested in law school, deliver these during spring semester 2010 in coordination with MSU Career Services, and put in place a structure for low-cost future delivery by the advising team
- organize a centralized library of materials for students to use when considering a pre-law strategy, housed in the Career Services center
- identify a set of prospective alumni, lawyers, associations, and other interested parties who could be solicited for longer term support funds for pre-law at MSU and coordinate this with the MSU Foundation

At present, there are approximately 100 pre-law students on campus and one designated pre-law advisor, Professor Susan Dana, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, MSU College of Business. Professor Dana does a great job advising pre-law students, and approximately 50 MSU students and recent alums apply to law school each year (with approximately 40 of these accepted). Professor Dana developed a pre-law FAQ website for the university (http://www.montana.edu/wwwprov/lawfaq.html), meets with prospective students interested in law school, advises the Prelaw Club, liaisons with law schools interested in meeting students, individually meets with 20-25 individual students per semester to advise on everything from career opportunities to LSAT prep, and holds periodic group information sessions about law school and careers in law. She does this all on an overload basis, and her time resources available for this important job are very limited. In comparison, the University of Montana pre-law advising program has a much larger presence on the internet, is more coordinated, and includes advisors from many departments (http://www.cas.umt.edu/prelaw/default.cfm).

A one-time investment in developing and coordinating a sustainable structure for a larger presence for pre-law on campus would reduce some of this workload and also spread some of this work across departments, increasing pre-law's visibility for current and potential students.
The Return On Investment from these expenditures will be:

Investment in a pre-law coordinator at MSU will provide returns in the form of increased enrollment, increased retention of students interested in law as they gain a connection with the pre-law community on campus, and development of a team of faculty pre-law advisors across departments on campus to make the larger pre-law presence sustainable after the initial investment and over the longer term. Returns are also expected from outside the university as the coordinator works to identify potential donors to the program. Longer term, pre-law alumni who graduate with this support structure in place are much more likely to become future donors to MSU. The generation of 2-4 additional students per year from these activities, which is highly plausible, would result in increased revenue of between $20,000 and $40,000 per year (assuming a .63/.33 mix of resident/non-resident enrollment). The program would therefore be expected to pay for itself within one year and generate only positive gross monetary streams thereafter. Given the relatively low cost of this investment, ROI in the first year could easily be 25%. After the first year, the increased revenue would come with no additional monetary cost.

Budget Justification:

- Personnel Services: $25,000 ($25 per hour * 40 hours * 25 weeks - spring semester through June 30). Because it is temporary, this appointment would not be eligible for health benefits. Other costs (FICA, etc.): $25,000*.1911 = $477.75. Total: $25,477.75.
- Operations: $250 for position advertisement in Bozeman Chronicle; $2,500 for travel to Law School Admissions Council forums and conferences; $1,500 for office supplies. Total: $4,250
- Capital: $2,500 for computer supplies; Career Services has agreed to provide office space and house the proposed pre-law library.

Temporary Pre-Law Coordinator – Questions & Answers

1. **What is the plan for sustaining this going forward?**
   (Wendy Stock) As the proposal states, one of the tasks of the temporary coordinator would be to “identify and facilitate the development of a team of faculty pre-law advisors in several stakeholder departments and centers across campus.” It is anticipated that this “one-time investment in developing and coordinating a sustainable structure for a larger presence for pre-law on campus would reduce some of this workload and also spread some of this work across departments,” thus making the program self-sustaining going forward (without additional injections of funds from Deans/Provost).

2. **Is there any way to know if this will attract new students or redirect existing MSU students?**
   (Wendy Stock) We estimate that the increased visibility of pre-law would generate 2-4 new MSU students per year. Since this RFP did not have a lengthy pre-proposal study period during which mini-experiments could be conducted to truly assess behavior changes resulting from the proposals’ programs, I expect that NONE of the proposals will be able to generate reliable historical data from a controlled experimental assessment of enrollment changes resulting from their proposed programs. That is, no proposal responding to this RFP can estimate increased enrollment accurately since there is no counterfactual against which to compare what enrollment would have been at MSU had the proposal not been funded.