Duet (formerly Match Beyond)

Website: [https://duet.org/](https://duet.org/)

**Summary of Innovation:** Duet, affiliated with the Match Charter School Network, offers accelerated associate’s and bachelor’s degree programs through a hybrid approach in partnership with Southern New Hampshire University – College for America. The organization provides personal coaching, study support, and job placement services to high school graduates and GED-recipients in Boston. Students complete a series of project-based modules to earn competency-based credits for completion.

“[Duet] is designed to address a growing problem in Boston and across the nation. Among Americans over the age of 24 who attempted college, one in three left without attaining any degree and only half received a bachelor's degree. Eight in ten low-income college matriculants do not earn a bachelor's degree by age 24. This has negative consequences for the many who fail to complete – and for the local and national economies, which increasingly demand a more and better-educated workforce. Some estimates suggest that 14 million jobs will go unfilled in the next decade due to skills gaps.”

Duet provides a personal coach for academic support and motivation, study space at a physical campus in downtown Boston, computer and internet access, lunch and dinner, transportation costs, personalized career coaching.¹

SNHU provides accredited Associates and Bachelor's degrees via an online and project-based program. low-cost and high flexibility, and timely reviews of student work and feedback.

The program currently focuses on six degrees – an associate’s degree in healthcare management, an associate’s degree in general studies with specializations in either business or customer experience, a bachelor’s degree in communications with concentrations in business and healthcare, a bachelor’s degree in healthcare management with concentrations in business and global perspectives, and a bachelor’s degree in management with concentrations in insurance services, logistics and operations, and public administration.

The tuition cost for each program amounts to $5,500, which is divided between $3,000 to SNHU – College for America and $2,500 to Duet (billed through SNHU). Students can access federal financial aid via Pell Grants.

**Targeted Population of Learners:** Seeks students who live in Boston, have a high school degree or GED, want to earn a postsecondary degree, and seek a path to advance career. For reference, over 90 percent of students at Match Public Charter School identify as people of color.²

**Partners:** The program has developed partnerships with several key Boston-based employers, including:

- Boston Children’s Hospital
- Boys and Girls Club

¹ [https://www.matchbeyond.org/get-a-degree/](https://www.matchbeyond.org/get-a-degree/)
² [https://www.matchbeyond.org/student-profiles/tena/](https://www.matchbeyond.org/student-profiles/tena/)
• Brigham and Women’s Hospital
• Bright Horizons
• Comcast
• Eastern Bank
• Plymouth Rock
• Wellington Management

There are also more than twenty referral partners, including:
• Bottom Line
• Brooke Charter Schools
• College Bound Dorchester
• Match Charter Public School
• More Than Words
• Phoenix Charter School
• YearUP
• Youth Villages

**Bringing Innovation to Scale:** Duet began in 2013 with nine students. As of 2017, it had grown to 130 students, and there are plans to grow beyond 500 within five years. In a recent announcement, Duet will receive $20 million in funding from The Shapiro Foundation over a five year period to provide scholarships to 1,000 DACA students, so they can enroll in SNHU—College for America.

Duet has identified the following issues for future focus as it scales its offering:

- balancing academic support and services with the College for America program;
- evaluating what’s “lost” in the shift from a traditional college experience to the online approach;
- quality of projects offered (higher order thinking skills);
- scaling costs; and
- struggles with public perception that they only serve Match students.

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