**Brief Summary of Project or Initiative:**
The Western Michigan University Lyceum is a free, weeklong summer philosophy camp for high school students in Kalamazoo, MI. Now in its third year of operation, the camp has two aims: (i) to improve students’ critical thinking and writing skills in a fun, engaging manner and (ii) to expose students to the study of philosophy in a college setting. To achieve these aims, the Lyceum uses a theme-based curriculum: daily class sessions combine critical thinking exercises and discussions that are focused on a specific topic within the camp’s larger theme.

The planning for this year’s Lyceum (June 25-29) is well underway. Our theme is Philosophy and Technology and we will be looking at a range of exciting and important issues—e.g., the ethics of self-driving cars, censorship and social media, the nature of artificial intelligence. We have also planned a field trip to WMU’s new Virtual Reality Lab.

Building on the Lyceum’s success in its first two years, we have developed a two-part growth initiative that we will launch this year:

1. Broaden and build. Last year’s Lyceum had eleven students, most of whom came from affluent families. This year we are planning to have up to 30 students. We have also broadened our recruitment efforts to draw in significantly more students from socioeconomically disadvantaged schools in Kalamazoo.

2. Measuring success. To gain a better understanding of how high school students become interested in both studying philosophy and going to college (big issues here at WMU), we have developed a set of survey questions for students attending the camp (e.g., rate your interest in [studying philosophy/go to college]; did the Lyceum increase your interest in [studying philosophy/go to college]?: what part of camp did you find most enjoyable?). By administering these questions at the beginning and end of the camp, we will not only gain insight on how to improve our program, but will also be better able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the camp as we seek addition funding for the 4th Lyceum (summer 2020) and beyond.

The Lyceum is organized by the Philosophy Department at Western Michigan University. Instruction is facilitated by the graduate students and faculty of the WMU Philosophy Department. The Lyceum’s leadership team consists of a graduate student committee (Adam Waggoner, Ian Everitt) and a Faculty Mentor (Charlie Kurth, Associate Professor). The Lyceum website can be found here: https://sites.google.com/view/wmulyceum

**Describe How Funds Would Be Spent:**
Funds from the Berry Grant will be used to help pay for the expansion of the program. At present, we have secured funds through sources here at WMU that will cover the cost of approximately 15 students. The Berry Grant funds would allow us to pay for the additional 15 students that we plan to have in enrolled in this year’s Lyceum.

This year, the per student cost is approximately $70; this includes daily lunches for all participants and a philosophy book for each student. Both of these expenditures are central
to the Lyceum’s success. By providing lunch for all participants ($50: $10/day), we give students the opportunity to engage with the Lyceum instructors outside of the classroom. By giving each student a book that is selected based on their individual philosophical interests, we help promote continued interest in philosophy ($20). Past students have mentioned both the lunches and the books as highlights of their experiences at the camp.

Moreover, while the Lyceum is currently free, we plan to transition to a self-sustaining, “fee and scholarship” model starting with the 4th Lyceum (summer of 2020). This model uses a modest tuition fee (approx. $100) paid by more affluent families to provide scholarships for less affluent students. However, in order to make this transition successful, we must show parents and students in the Kalamazoo community that we can provide a fun, educational camp for a large number of students from diverse backgrounds. By supporting our growth initiative, the Berry Funds will help us demonstrate the value of the Western Michigan Lyceum.